



GEORGIAN  
YOUNG  
LAWYERS'  
ASSOCIATION

# 2024 ANNUAL REPORT

# 30 YEARS OF PROTECTING HUMAN RIGHTS





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**2024**  
**ANNUAL**  
**REPORT**

**30 YEARS**  
**OF PROTECTING**  
**HUMAN**  
**RIGHTS**



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It is my honor to present to you and summarize with you the activities of GYLA in the 30th year since its establishment. The establishment of GYLA and its functioning relate to the history of independent Georgia. Since 1993, when the work on the Constitution of Georgia began, young lawyers have come together to assist this process. It was the first interest group to engage in relevant activities and was later officially established in 1994. During these 30 years, GYLA has played an important role in protecting human rights, strengthening democracy and establishing the rule of law.

Over the past 30 years, GYLA has provided legal aid to more than 1,300,000 people. GYLA was the first organization to create free legal aid services for citizens in order to make justice accessible to them. The organization continues to work in this direction to this day and helps women, children, the elderly, people with disabilities, internally displaced persons, those illegally dismissed from work, activists, journalists, torture victims and all those who need our help the most. A number of precedent-setting cases won by GYLA have changed people's lives in a positive direction. At the same time, the organization observes and monitors the activities of all branches of government and their compliance with human rights standards, prepares studies and reports, develops recommendations and advocates for positive changes both domestically and internationally.

2024 is probably the most difficult year in the history of GYLA. The events that have developed in the country - the government's open attacks on the non-governmental sector, the growing trend of restricting civil space, the regression of the country's democratic development - have posed a significant threat to the organization's further activities. In the spring of 2024, the Georgian Dream government, after an unsuccessful attempt in 2023, re-initiated and adopted the Russian-style law "On Transparency of Foreign Influence". This law causes irreparable damage to the country and poses a real threat to the activities of civil society organizations. During the period of the law's adoption, GYLA's central office was twice vandalized, which was orchestrated by a Georgian Dream MP. Unfortunately, these facts remain uninvestigated to this day.

Despite these difficulties, public support for GYLA's activities is very high. It is also noteworthy that in the wake of difficulties, coordination of civil society organizations and joint efforts to address problems are increasing. A good example of this is the fact that a legal support group was formed under the leadership of GYLA and continues to work, uniting 12 organizations. Through this group, a hotline was launched for activists arrested at rallies and it became possible to provide them with legal assistance, as well as to initiate joint strategic litigation against the "Russian law" on behalf of non-governmental organizations in both the Constitutional Court and the European Court of Human Rights. We believe that the legal struggle will bring appropriate results.

The year 2024 was also notable for GYLA. The organization's observation mission made a significant contribution to the process of observing the parliamentary elections. On election day, our mission covered more than half of the polling stations established inside and outside the country and informed the public about the violations found. Among other things, GYLA launched a large-scale legal dispute to protect the rights of voters. Based on relevant evidence, we initiated a dispute in the courts over the violation of the right to secrecy of the vote, and this process is still ongoing. The case concerns the violation of the principle of secrecy of the vote at all polling stations, conducted using technology, which is the basis for the invalidation of 90% of the votes. This means that the results of the parliamentary elections are unconstitutional, and the elections must be re-run.

Finally, I would like to thank our society for their trust, journalists for bringing our message to the public, as well as our partners and donors, without whose support our work would not be possible. Special thanks to the members of GYLA, board members and employees. These are the people who have created the 30-year history of the organization. Despite the difficulties, I believe that GYLA will continue its activities and will always remain faithful to and defender of human rights, the rule of law, and democratic principles.

*Sincerely,*

***Nona Kurdovanidze***

***Chairperson of the Georgian Young Lawyers' Association***



# GYLA OFFICES AND THEIR FOUNDING YEARS

TBILISI OFFICE – 1994 YEAR  
ADJARA OFFICE – 1995 YEAR  
RUSTAVI OFFICE – 1995 YEAR  
KUTAI SI OFFICE – 1996 YEAR  
GORI OFFICE – 2000 YEAR  
OZURGETI OFFICE – 2001 YEAR  
TELAVI OFFICE – 2002 YEAR  
DUSHETI OFFICE – 2002 YEAR  
ZUGDIDI OFFICE – 2014 YEAR



GEORGIAN  
YOUNG  
LAWYERS'  
ASSOCIATION



## WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO?

The Georgian Young Lawyers' Association (GYLA) is a membership-based organization with more than 400 members. It was founded in 1994 and since then it has been gradually expanding its field of activity. Today, GYLA, through 9 offices, operates throughout the country, serving to establish the rule of law and protect human rights both at the level of individuals and institutions.

GYLA carries out content activities within the framework of three program areas. These are:

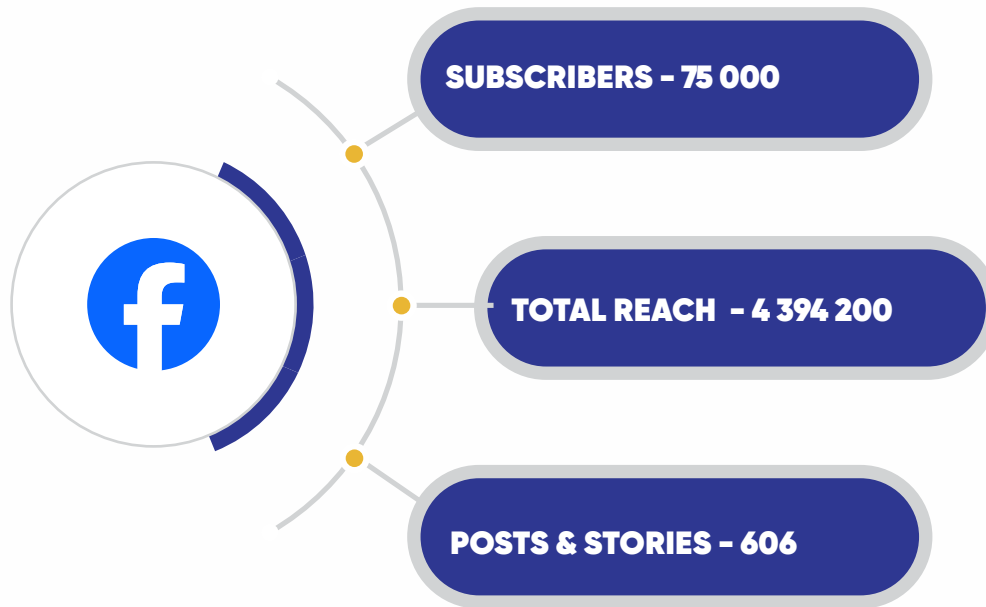
- **LEGAL AID PROGRAM**
- **HUMAN RIGHTS PROTECTION PROGRAM**
- **DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS SUPPORT PROGRAM**

Following the statute and the established tradition, this time we present to you the 2024 report of activities carried out by GYLA Tbilisi and 8 regional offices. Reporting period: November 1, 2023 - October 31, 2024.



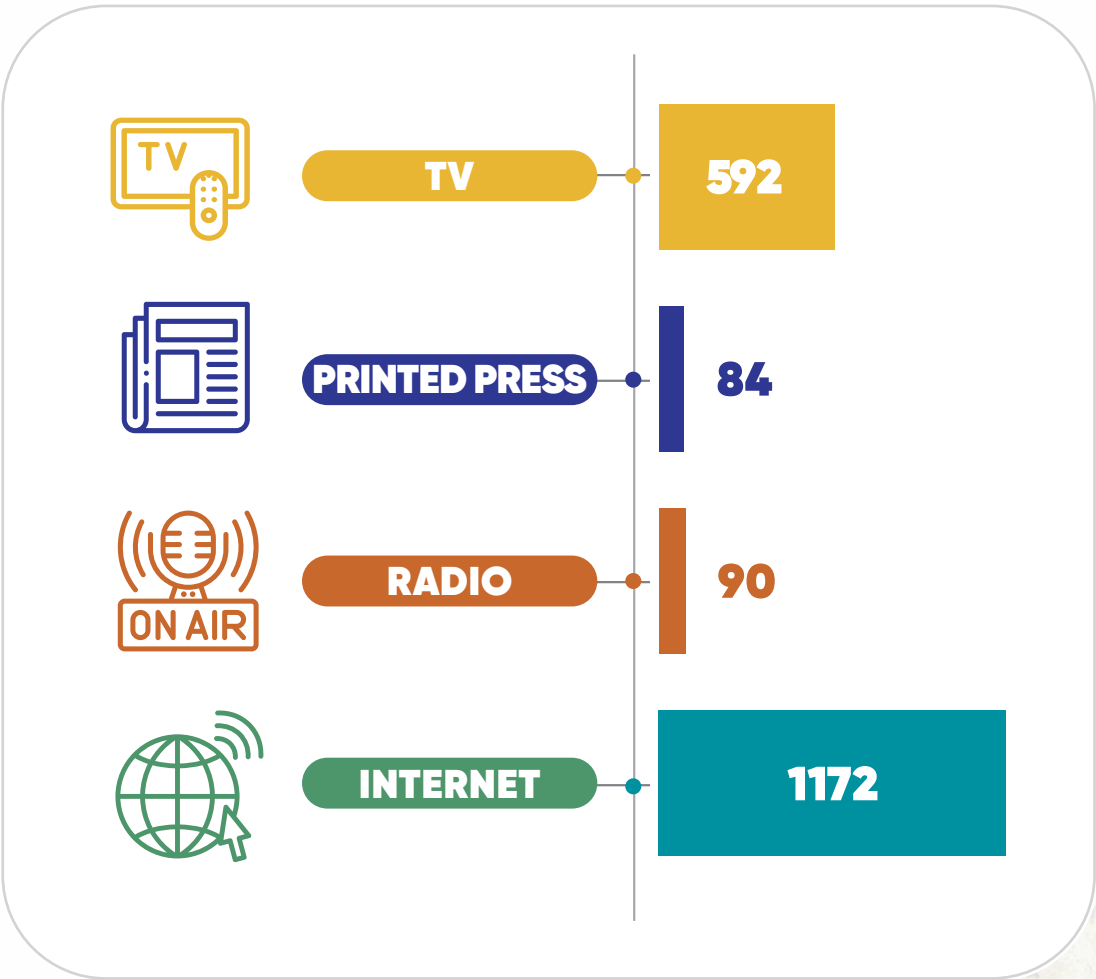
# MEDIA MONITORING

## GYLA ON THE SOCIAL MEDIA



# MEDIA MONITORING

## MEDIA COVERAGE



**TOTAL - 1942**



1



**LEGAL AID**



## PROGRAM PRIORITIES

The Georgian Young Lawyers Association's legal aid program worked in 4 priority areas during the reporting period:

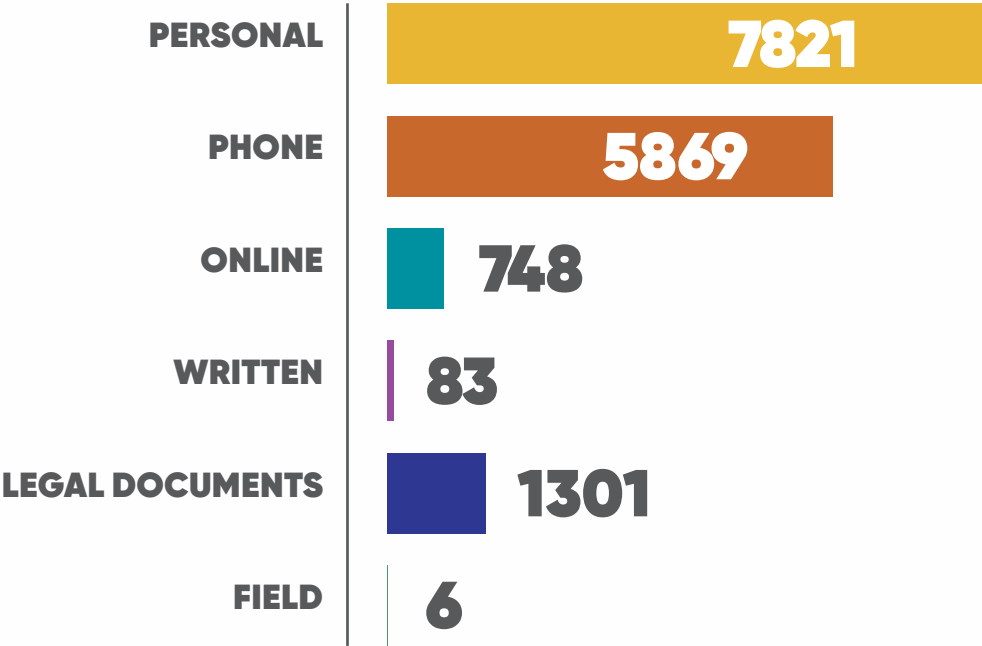
- LEGAL ASSISTANCE
- STRATEGIC LITIGATION
- USE OF ENFORCEMENT MECHANISMS
- RESPONDING TO SYSTEMIC PROBLEMS IDENTIFIED AS A RESULT OF LITIGATION

**DURING THE REPORTING PERIOD, GYLA PROVIDED LEGAL ASSISTANCE TO 15 831 INDIVIDUALS, INCLUDING:**





**CONSULTATIONS PROVIDED BY TYPE:**



**DURING THE REPORTING PERIOD, GYLA WON 44 CASES AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL.**



## INCLUDING:



## **GYLA IS CURRENTLY PROCESSING 362 CASES:**

### **CRIMINAL LAW CASES**



**79**

### **ADMINISTRATIVE LAW CASES**



**146**

### **CIVIL LAW CASES**



**47**

### **STRATEGIC LITIGATION IN THE CONSTITUTIONAL COURT**



**32**

### **STRATEGIC LITIGATION AT INTERNATIONAL MECHANISMS**



**58**



# STRATEGIC LITIGATION IN THE CONSTITUTIONAL COURT

## SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED CASES

### GYLA WON 3 CASES IN THE CONSTITUTIONAL COURT.



In the case “Mariam Gogvadze v. Parliament of Georgia” - the Constitutional Court **fully upheld GYLA's claim.**



In the case “Georgian Young Lawyers’ Association v. Parliament of Georgia” - the legislative body **amended the disputed norm in accordance with GYLA's request.**



The Constitutional Court **made an important clarification** for 1 case.

Among them:

#### ■ MARIAM GOGVADZE V. THE PARLIAMENT OF GEORGIA

On October 24, 2024, the Constitutional Court fully upheld GYLA’s claim and recognized the norm of the Law of Georgia unconstitutional “On Notaries”, which granted the right to return to the position of notary under a simplified procedure to persons who left the position by personal application between April 1, 2008 and April 1, 2010.

#### ■ **GYLA V. THE PARLIAMENT OF GEORGIA**

During the reporting period, GYLA applied to the Constitutional Court and requested to declare Article 13, Part 3, of the Organic Law of Georgia “On Common Courts” unconstitutional. This norm obliged common courts to issue their decisions with the personal data (name, surname) of the parties crossed out, if a final decision of a higher instance had not been made on the case. In GYLA’s opinion, the court’s decision should be made public immediately upon its adoption. The Parliament shared the organization’s position, and the disputed norm was changed in the shortest possible time after the claim was filed. As a result, the full text of the court’s decision is published as public information upon its adoption.

### **NEW CASES**

#### ■ **GIORGI GOROSHIDZE AND LASHA MGELADZE V. THE PARLIAMENT OF GEORGIA AND THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION AND SCIENCE OF GEORGIA**

GYLA has appealed to the Constitutional Court the statute approved by the Minister of Education and Science of Georgia, according to which an employment contract with an associate professor is concluded for a period of 7 years. GYLA is also disputing the article of the Law on Higher Education, which defines the term of office of an assistant professor as 3 or 4 years.

#### ■ **NATALIA PERADZE V. THE PARLIAMENT OF GEORGIA**

The subject of the dispute in this case is the provision of the Code of Administrative Offenses, which prohibits the issuance of an oral remark if this sanction has already been applied to a person once in the past and more than one year has passed since the remark. Despite the expiration of this period, if the person continues to commit a minor offense, the disputed provision prohibits the judge from applying the remark again.

# STRATEGIC LITIGATION AT THE EUROPEAN COURT OF HUMAN RIGHTS

## SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED CASES

### GYLA WON 4 CASES AT THE EUROPEAN COURT OF HUMAN RIGHTS.

#### ■ TSAAVA AND OTHERS V. GEORGIA

On May 7, 2024, the European Court of Human Rights, in the case of 26 individuals (2019) who were victims of the anti-occupation protests, found the state in violation of the European Convention on Human Rights. The court found a violation of Article 3 (prohibition of torture) of the Convention and ordered the state to pay the applicants a total of EUR 153,600 in damages. On September 23, 2024, the Grand Chamber of the Court granted the applicants' lawyers' request and referred the case to the Grand Chamber for consideration.

#### ■ MAMULASHVILI V. GEORGIA

The case is about the ongoing psychological pressure and harassment inflicted on Zaza Mamulashvili in the Penitentiary Institution No. 18. He was deprived of his rights as a prisoner and threatened with physical punishment. The applicant was severely beaten until he lost consciousness and suffered injuries to his waist and various parts of his body. As a result, he still has difficulty moving and suffers severe pain. The state failed to conduct an effective investigation into the facts of torture and inhuman treatment. The court found a violation of Article 3 (prohibition of torture) in its procedural and substantive parts.



#### ■ LTD “BEKANASI” V. GEORGIA

Beknasi LTD, which held a state-issued sand and gravel mining license, was fined by the Environmental Protection Supervision Department for mining 1 m<sup>3</sup> of inert material outside the licensed area. The court found Beknasi LTD guilty of an administrative offense. It was fined 1,000 GEL and ordered to pay 201 GEL in compensation for environmental damage. In addition, the company was confiscated a tractor worth 54,650 USD as a weapon used to commit the offense.

The court found a violation of Article 1 of the First Additional Protocol to the Convention and ordered the state to return the confiscated tractor to the company in the condition it had before the confiscation, and if this was not possible, imposed an obligation to pay appropriate compensation.

## NEW CASES

#### ■ MILADZE V. GEORGIA

The complaint concerns a violation of Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights (freedom of expression), specifically, the recognition of a person as an administrative offender and his fine due to the content of a video uploaded to the social network TikTok. According to the circumstances of the case, Irakli Miladze uploaded a video on the TikTok platform regarding the existing transport policy in the city and rudely referred to, in general, law enforcement officers who violate the law, and to the state that tolerates such actions by officials.

#### ■ GABITASHVILI AND OTHERS V. GEORGIA

On June 13, 2015, Davit Gabitashvili was driving in the Vake-Saburtalo area of Tbilisi when he died as a result of a natural disaster. The complaint emphasizes that the state was negligent during the natural disaster: on the one hand, it failed to protect the population from natural disasters, both through preliminary monitoring of risks and timely warning of the public, and on the other hand, it failed to take appropriate measures to reduce the devastating consequences of the natural disaster, which was reflected in improper management of the emergency situation.

## **COMMUNICATIONS SENT UNDER RULE 9**

With the involvement of GYLA, 6 alternative reports were sent to the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe:

- **2024.01.24 – TISNTASABAZE GROUP - CRIMES COMMITTED BY LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS**
- **2024.02.23 – TSINTSABADZE GROUP (OCHIGAVA) - INDIFFERENCE OF THE SPECIAL INVESTIGATION SERVICE AND THE MINISTRY OF JUSTICE TOWARDS THE OCHIGAVA CASE**
- **2024.08.01 – A. D. V. GEORGIA - ISSUES OF LEGAL GENDER RECOGNITION**
- **2024.08.01 – IDENTOBA GROUP - PERSECUTION AND HARASSMENT OF PEOPLE BASED ON DISCRIMINATION**
- **2024.10.11 – BEQANASI - EVASION OF INTERNATIONAL OBLIGATIONS BY THE MINISTRY OF JUSTICE IN CONNECTION WITH THE BEQANASI LTD CASE**
- **2024.10.22 – TKHELIDZE GROUP - CASES RELATED TO FEMICIDE AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**



## MECHANISMS USED AGAINST "RUSSIAN LAW"

On April 3, 2024, the Georgian Dream, after an unsuccessful attempt in 2023, reintroduced the draft law "On Transparency of Foreign Influence", which was followed by continuous, mass, peaceful protests in the country. The law envisages the creation of a discriminatory and stigmatizing registry for non-governmental and media organizations that receive more than 20% of their annual funding from foreign sources. According to the updated version of the law, such organizations must register as "organizations carrying the interests of a foreign power" and submit relevant declarations. In case of failure to fulfill this obligation, the law envisages heavy financial sanctions, which will ultimately make it impossible for the organizations to function.

**GYLA, together with 122 non-governmental and media organizations, filed a claim against this law with the Constitutional Court in July 2024.**

In October 2024, the law and its severe consequences were **appealed in the European Court of Human Rights:**



ON BEHALF OF **16** MEDIA ORGANIZATIONS



**120** CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS AND



**4** INDIVIDUALS

## LEGAL AID NETWORK

A free legal aid network, which unites 12 non-governmental organizations, was established under the leadership of GYLA and continues to operate to this day. The goal of establishing the network was to protect the rights of individuals detained, injured, and fined during the protests against the “Russian law” in April-July 2024.

**THE NETWORK'S LAWYERS PROVIDED LEGAL ASSISTANCE  
TO MORE THAN **400** PEOPLE.**



**41 PEOPLE** who received various degrees of body injuries during peaceful protests have **OBTAINED VICTIM STATUS.**



2



# **PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS**



## PROGRAM PRIORITIES

Human rights protection is one of the main strategic objectives of the Georgian Young Lawyers' Association. The organization studies the current situation in the country in this regard, analyzes challenges and promotes changes at the policy level. During the reporting period, the Human Rights Protection Program worked in 4 priority areas:

- WATCHDOG FUNCTION
- ANALYTICAL ACTIVITIES
- INTERNATIONAL ADVOCACY
- PROMOTION OF LEGAL EDUCATION

Below is information about the challenges, achievements, and activities that GYLA carried out on a project or volunteer basis during the reporting period.

**THROUGH AN EVIDENCE-BASED RAPID RESPONSE APPROACH, 36 STATEMENTS/ASSESSMENTS OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS WERE PUBLISHED ACROSS THE COUNTRY, WHICH ALSO INCLUDED MONITORING OF PROTESTS.**



## AS PART OF THE ANALYTICAL WORK,

THE PROGRAM'S LAWYERS PREPARED:



IN-DEPTH LEGAL RESEARCH



REPORTS

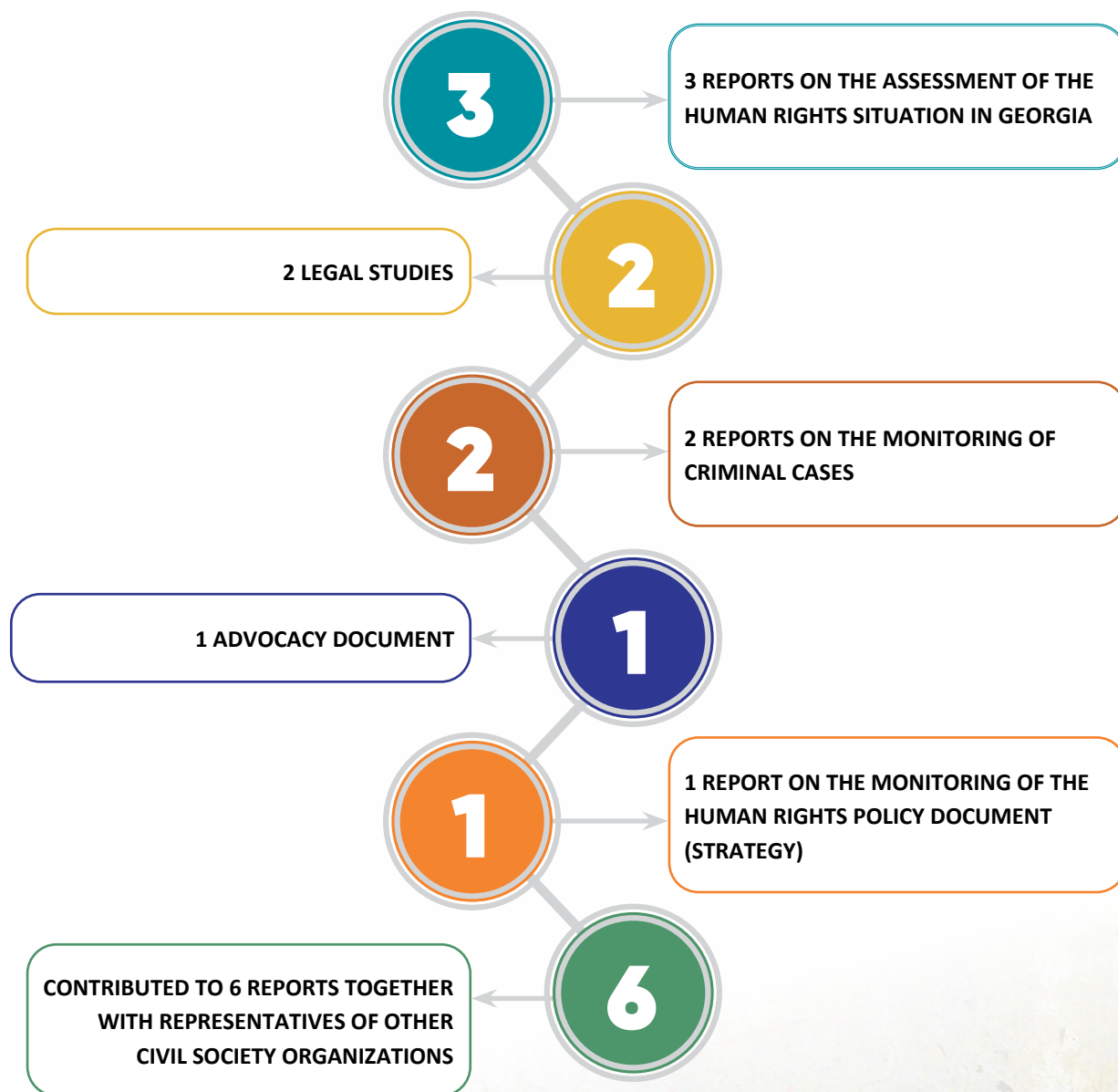


ADVOCACY DOCUMENTS ON IMPORTANT HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES IN  
GEORGIA

The topics studied included monitoring the human rights situation in Georgia during the reporting period. Among them were the following issues:



## THE PROGRAM ANALYSTS PREPARED:



In addition to the above, an **informational video** was produced on the rights of victims of gender-based violence.



Within the framework of the program, the following was prepared in the direction of **international advocacy**:



**6 WRITTEN OPINIONS TO 5  
UN SPECIAL RAPORTEURS  
AND THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE  
COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN  
RIGHTS**



**3 ALTERNATIVE REPORTS TO UN  
TREATY BODIES (CESCR, CRC)**

Program representatives participated in **6 international conferences or sessions** organized by the European Union (Belgium), OSCE (Poland and North Macedonia), Council of Europe (Hungary), as well as organizations such as the European Implementation Network (EIN) (Germany), ILGA Europe (Belgium), and the European Institute for Media Law (ERA EMR) (Germany).

**IN ORDER TO IMPROVE CIVIL SOCIETY ADVOCACY MECHANISMS, PROMOTE LEGAL EDUCATION, AND TRAIN THE NEXT GENERATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS:**

**2 TEXTBOOKS WERE  
PUBLISHED**



**40 STUDENTS WERE  
TRAINED WITHIN THE  
FRAMEWORK OF WINTER  
AND SUMMER SCHOOLS**

**10 STUDENTS WERE  
TRAINED WITHIN THE  
FRAMEWORK OF COURT  
MONITORING**

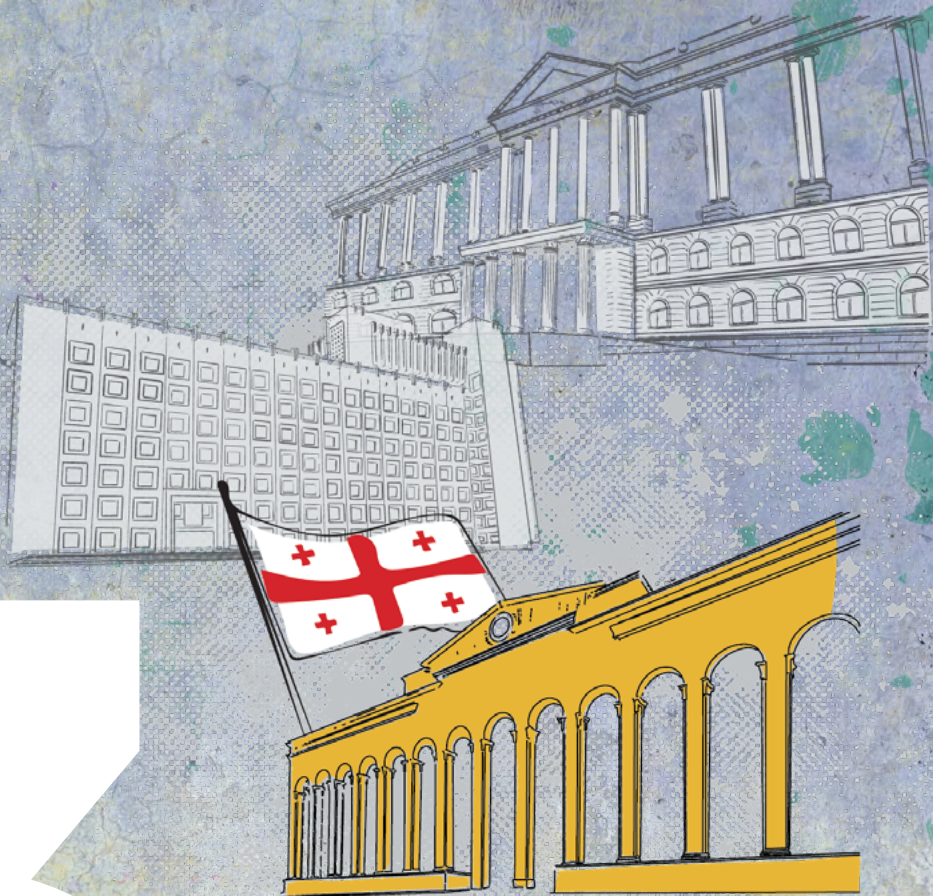


**5 STUDENT BLOGS WERE  
PUBLISHED**



3

**SUPPORT FOR  
DEMOCRATIC  
INSTITUTIONS**





## PROGRAM PRIORITIES

The goal of the Georgian Young Lawyers' Association's (GYLA) Democratic Institutions Support Program is to promote transparent and accountable governance in the country.

- **THE PROGRAM WORKS IN SEVERAL STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS:**
- **JUSTICE SYSTEM**
- **ELECTIONS**
- **IMPROVING PARLIAMENTARY LIFE**
- **STRENGTHENING THE PRINCIPLES OF PUBLIC GOVERNANCE AT THE CENTRAL AND LOCAL LEVELS**
- **PROMOTING EFFECTIVE SELF-GOVERNMENT**
- **EUROPEAN INTEGRATION**

During the reporting period, the program's activities included the preparation of various types of analytical documents, as well as information campaigns, meetings with international/local partners and the population.

## IN THE FIELD OF JUSTICE,

GYLA PUBLISHED:



**2** STUDIES



**17** STATEMENTS (14 OF WHICH - IN COALITION, AND 3 - INDEPENDENTLY)



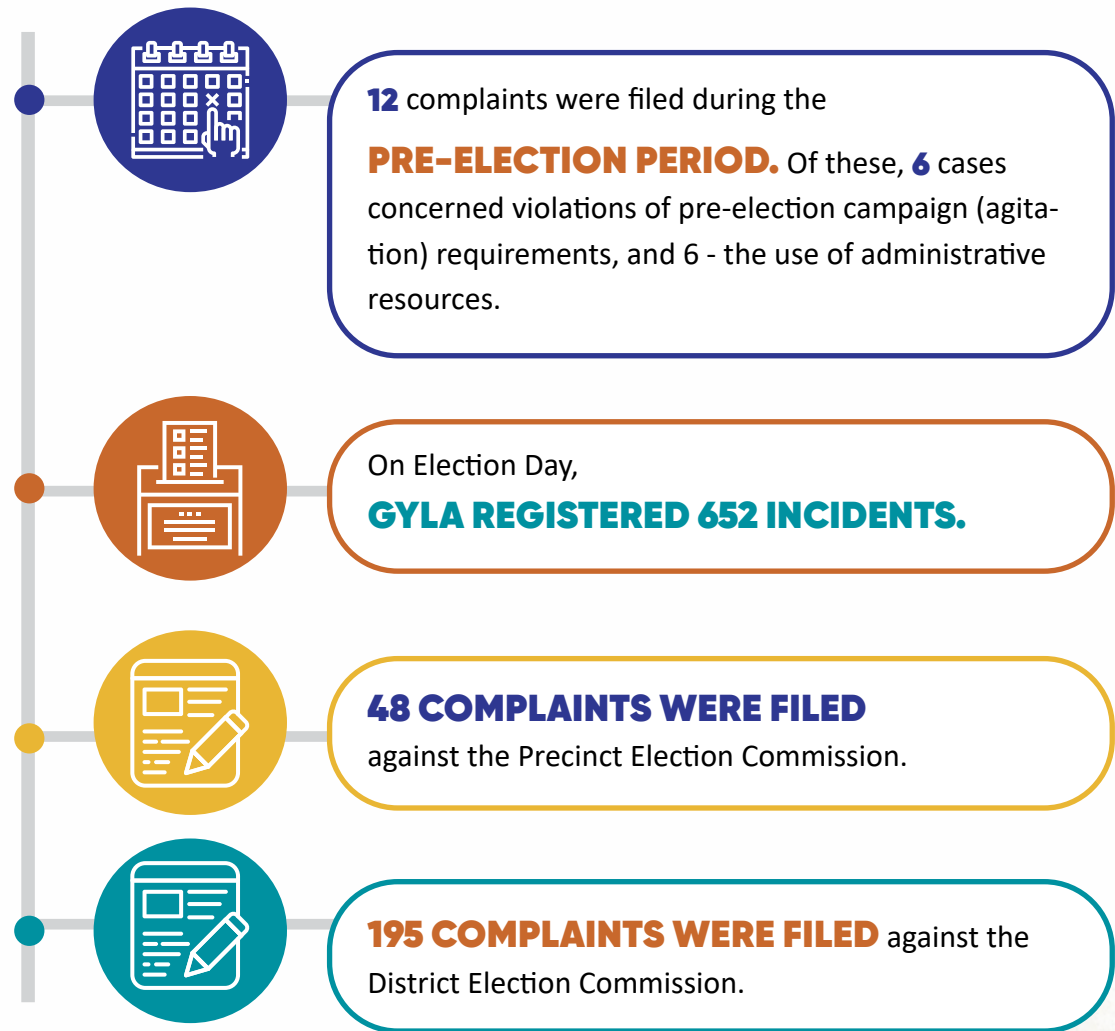
**2** BLOGS



**8** INFOGRAPHICS

During the reporting period, GYLA chaired the coalition “For an Independent and Transparent Judiciary”, within the framework of which a campaign related to justice issues was conducted - **8 videos and 4 posters were prepared.**

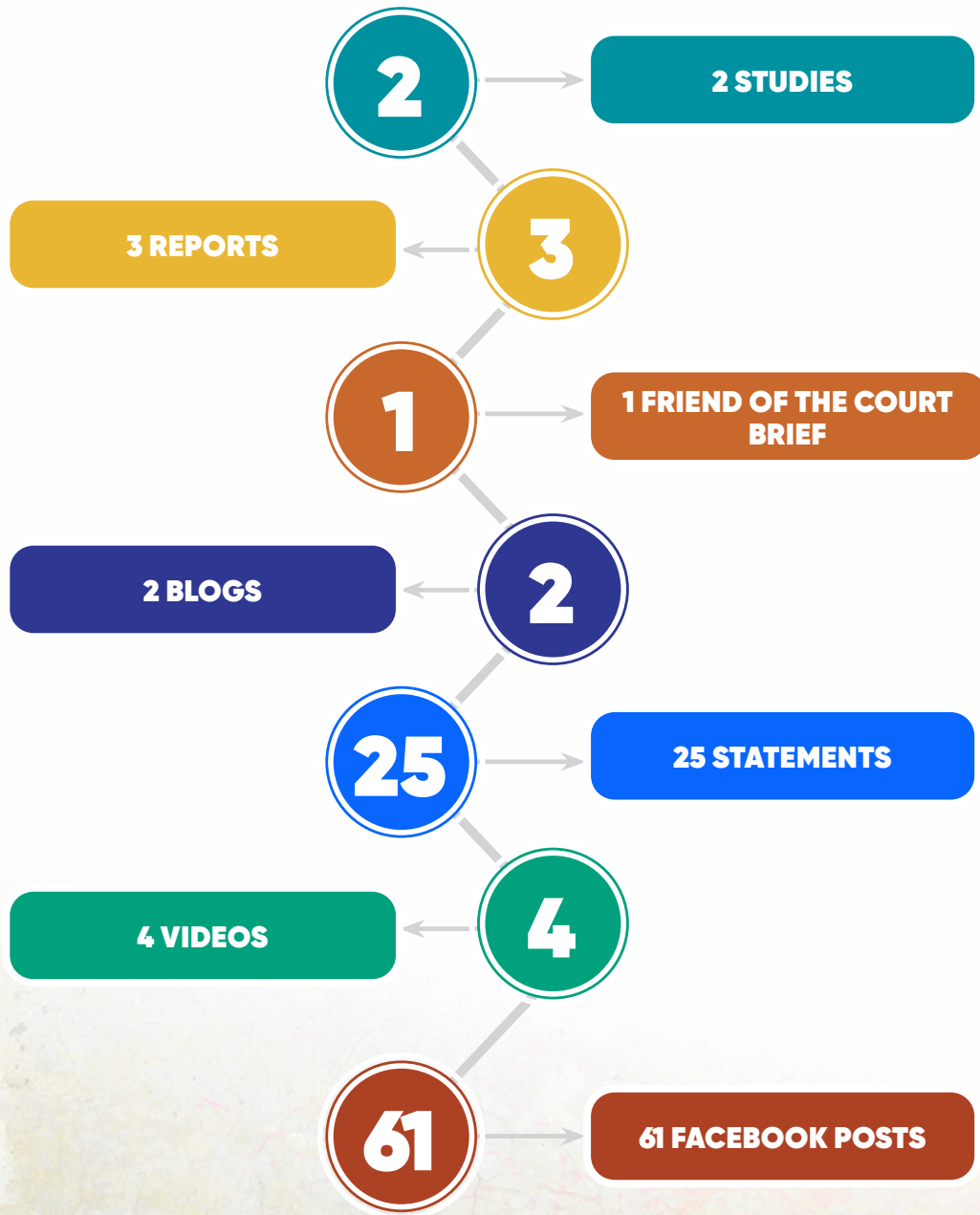
The organization monitored the **2024 PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS** during the reporting period.



**IN CONNECTION WITH THE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS OF OCTOBER 26, 2024, GYLA LAUNCHED A LARGE-SCALE DISPUTE REGARDING THE VIOLATION OF THE PRINCIPLE OF SECRECY OF THE VOTE.**

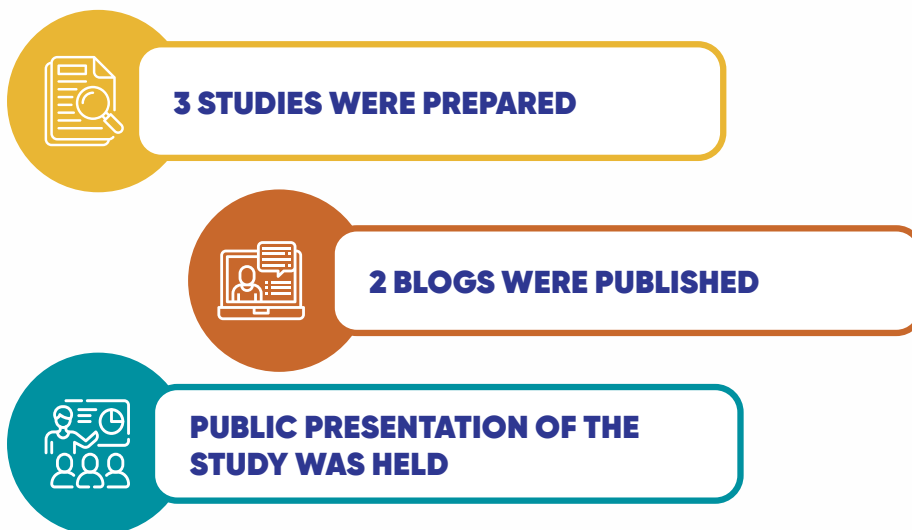


## IN ADDITION, THE ORGANIZATION PUBLISHED:



## WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF PROMOTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT

### IN THE DIRECTION OF PARLIAMENTARY CONTROL:



### THE ORGANIZATION HELD:



## THE ORGANIZATION PREPARED:



**1** GUIDE



**1** VIDEO GUIDE



**14** INFOGRAPHICS



**6** CONSOLIDATED REPORTS ON THE MONITORING OF THE SUPERVISORY ACTIVITIES OF THE MUNICIPAL COUNCILS, WHICH WILL BE PUBLISHED IN THE NEAR FUTURE



**21** COMMISSIONS OF THE **5** MUNICIPAL COUNCILS WERE ASSISTED BY THE ORGANIZATION IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN



## VISITS, MEETINGS, PRESENTATIONS



*February 28, US Ambassador Robin L. Dunnigan's visit to GYLA's office*



*October 26, Ambassadors' visit to the GYLA Election Mission Headquarters*



*June 19, visit of the EU Ambassador, Paweł Herczyński, to the GYLA office*



*November 20-21, conference organized by the European Implementation Network (EIN), in which the GYLA Program Director participated*



*US Ambassador Robin L. Dunnigan's visit to GYLA's Adjara branch*



*July 29-30, training for the civil sector "Oversight functions of municipal councils and opportunities for citizen participation"*





*October 24, GYLA election team presents final assessment of pre-election environment to the public*



*October 8, Presentation of the Monitoring Report on the Supervisory Activities of the Municipality Council*



*GYLA team meeting regarding planning the election mission*



*Meeting of the US Assistant Secretary of State for Civil Security, Democracy, and Human Rights, Uzra Zeya, with representatives of the civil sector*



*Saw off of GYLA Legal Aid Center assistants*



*GYLA team strategic meeting on the dispute related to the violation of the principle of secrecy of the vote in the elections*





*Summer School - UN Human Rights Mechanisms and Georgia*



*Presentation of the Monitoring Report on the Development and Implementation of the National Human Rights Strategy for 2022-2030*



*Winter School - Environmental Protection and Human Rights*



*Mock trial*



*Meeting with Caucasus University students*



*Meeting with regional civil society organizations regarding the "Russian law"*





*July 2, Kutaisi, discussion on problems in the justice system*



*“One Month as a Court Monitor” - Meeting with Students and Assistants*



*GYLA lawyers meet with persons with disabilities to discuss issues related to their rights*



*October 10, Presentation of Research on Parliamentary Oversight Issues*



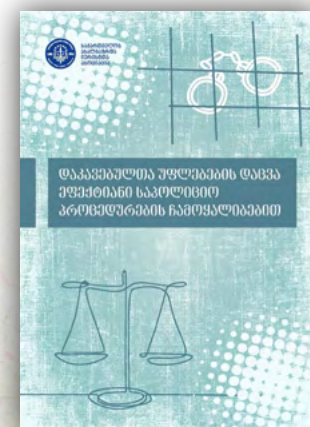
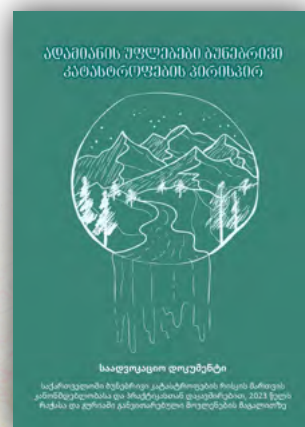
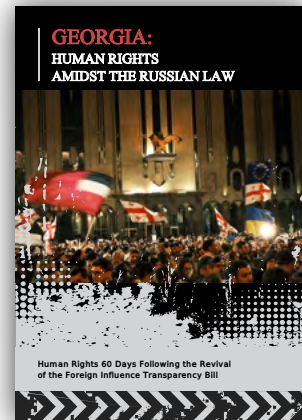
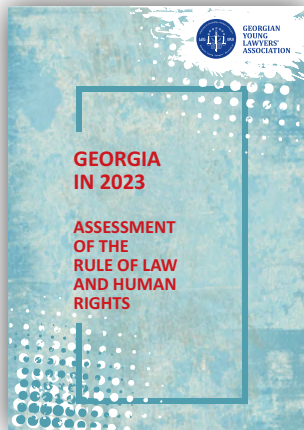
*Meeting of lawyers from the Adjara branch of GYLA with the population*



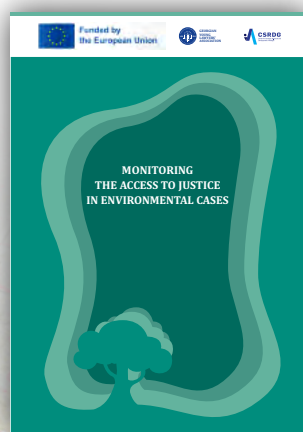
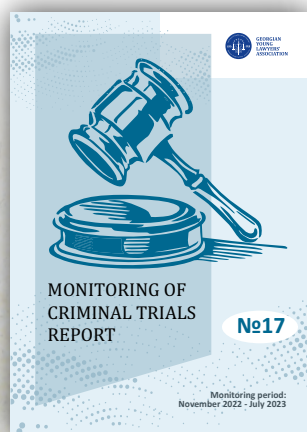
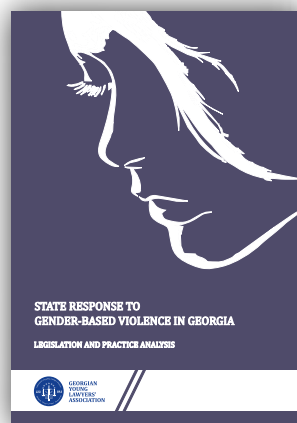
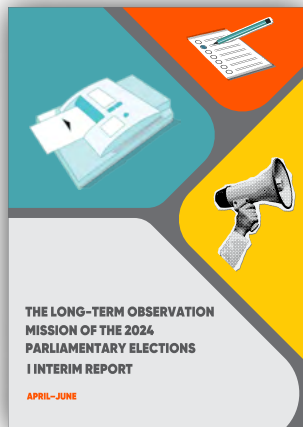
*Meeting of lawyers from GYLA's Kutaisi branch with the population*

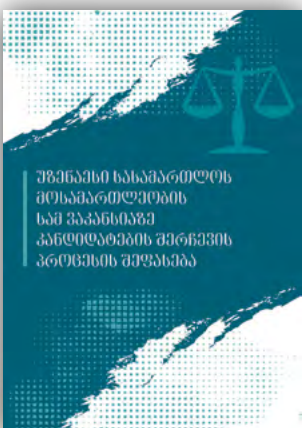
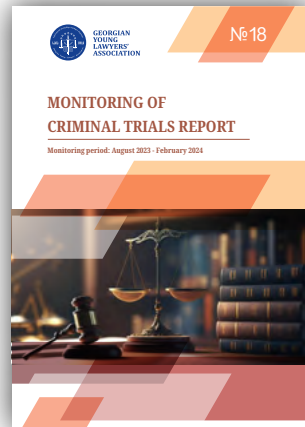
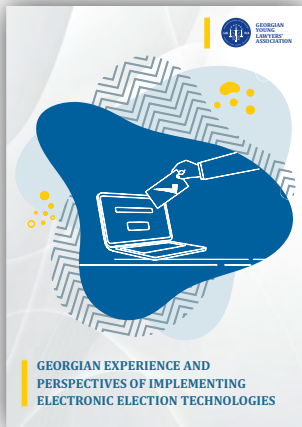


# PUBLICATIONS











# 4

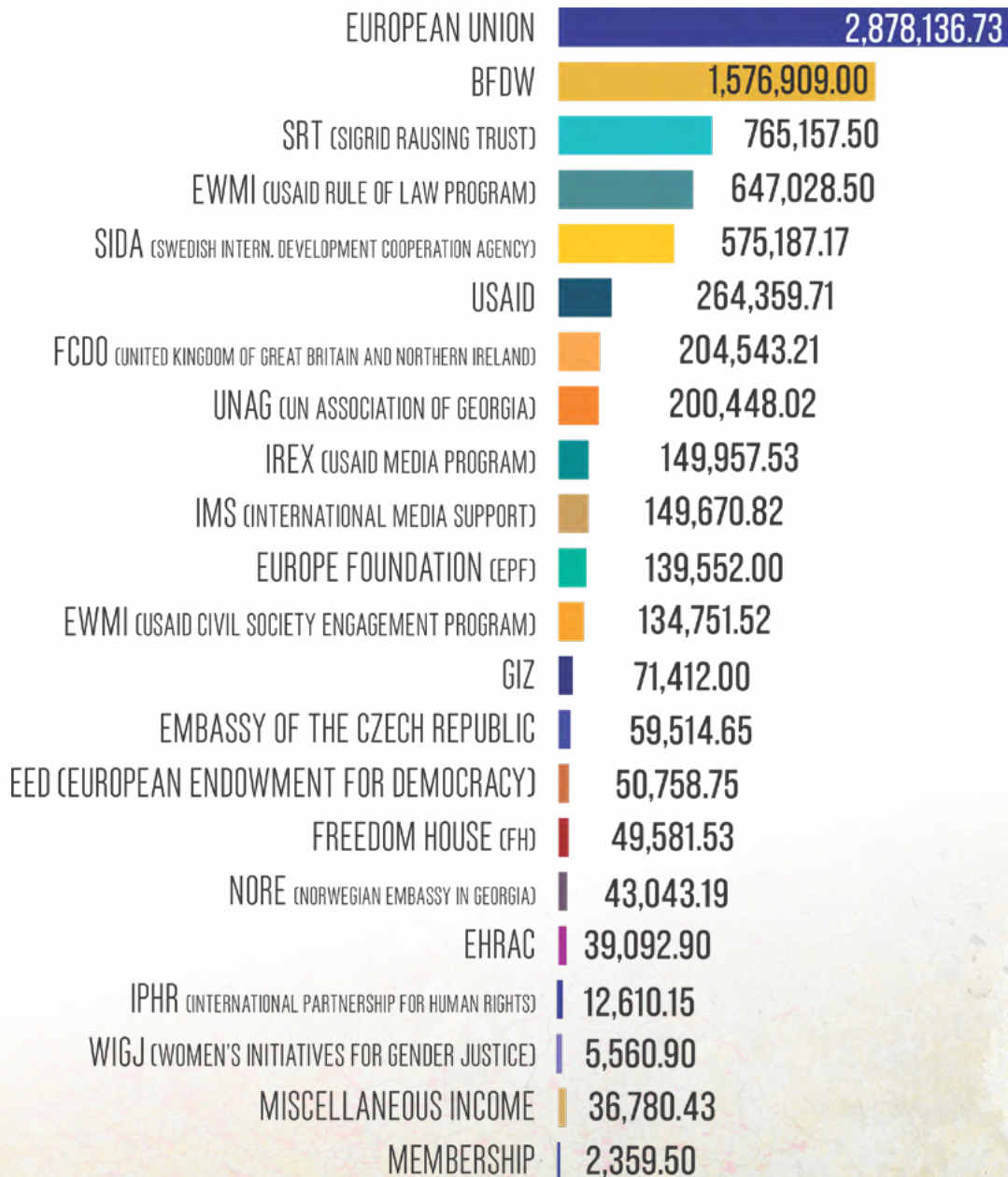
## FUNDRAISING AND FINANCIAL REPORTING





## FUNDRAISING AND FINANCIAL REPORTING

During the reporting period, GYLA received a total of 8,056,415.71 GEL in the form of grants (grant revenues from projects that the organization began implementing during the reporting period are given), donations, and membership fees. This amount, according to sources, looks as follows:



During the reporting period, 68 employees were employed by GYLA for multiple jobs, including 19 people in the regions. Their total compensation fund was 2,108,843.75 GEL. One-time service fees were paid to 243 individuals - a total of 434,317.63 GEL.

Income tax on service fees, salaries and honoraria of private individuals was 493,275.18 GEL.

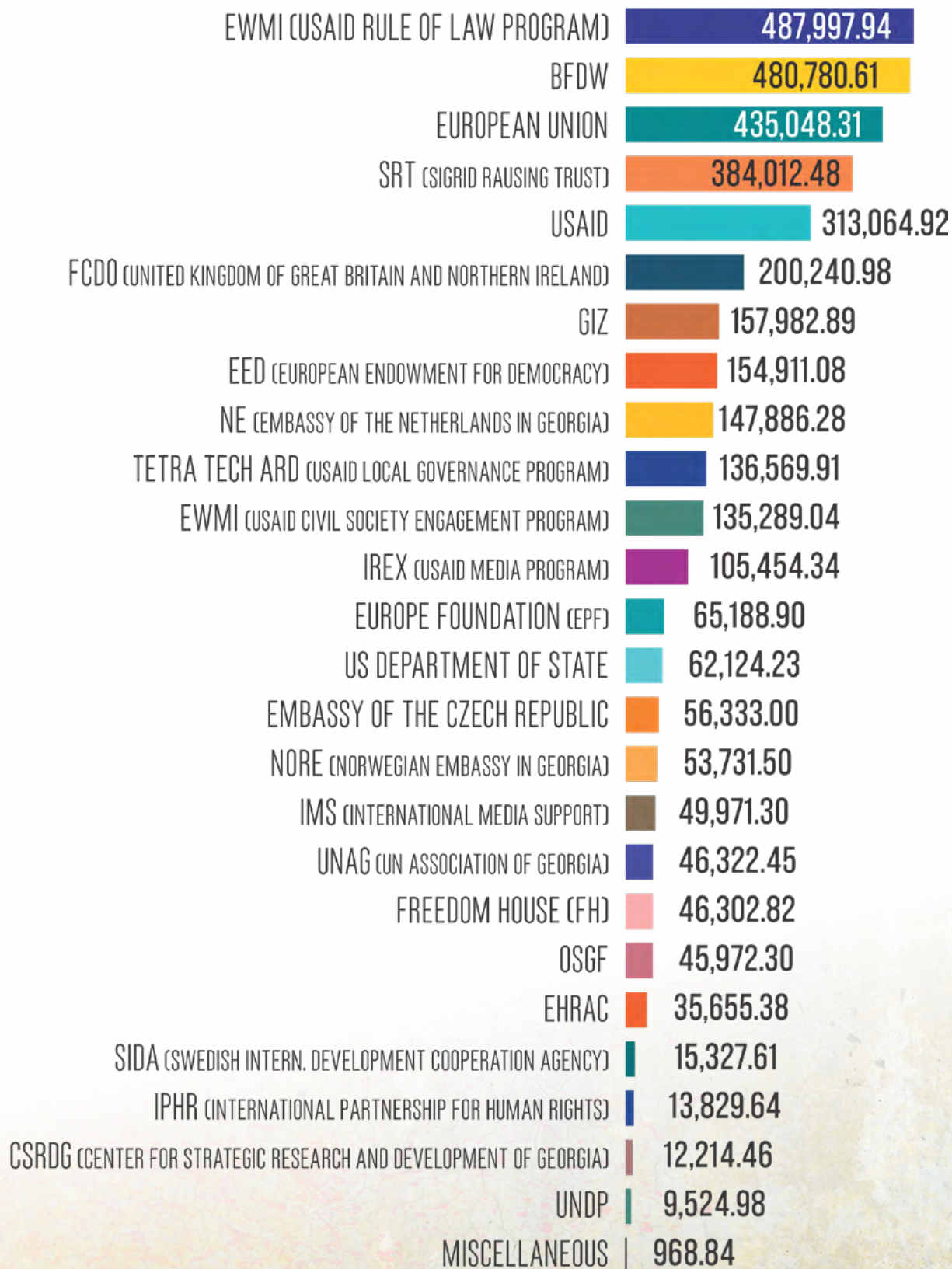
During the reporting period, GYLA purchased fixed assets worth 40,400.73 GEL. During the same period, various small office items worth 48,395.92 GEL were purchased.

190,191.89 GEL was spent on various seminars and meetings organized by GYLA, both in Tbilisi and in the regions.

Travel expenses for the organization's employees, members, and invited guests was 162,169.49 GEL, office rent - 63,656.44 GEL, and communication expenses - 30,725.74 GEL.

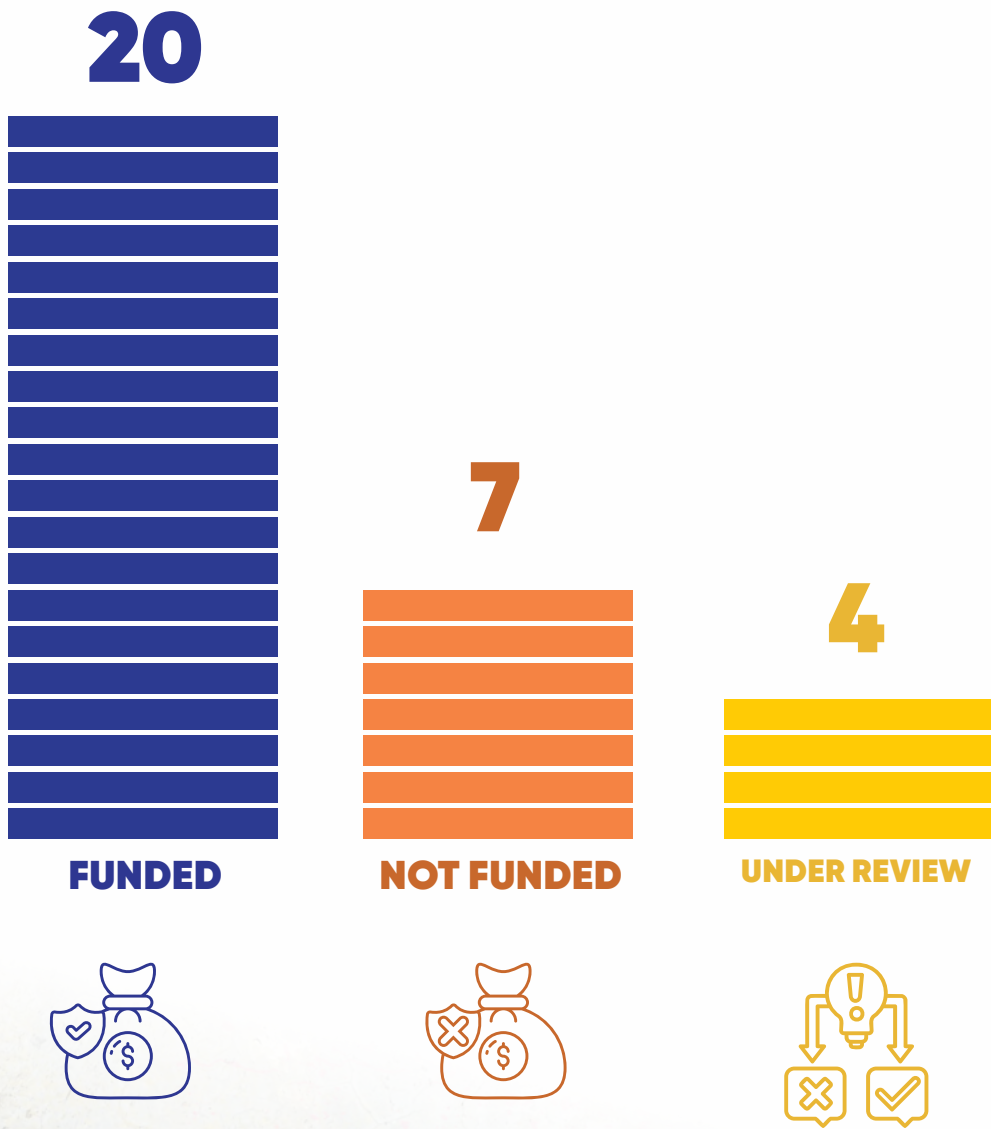
Sub-grants issued by GYLA to local NGOs made up 95,008.66 GEL.

During the reporting period, a total of 3,632,706.19 GEL was spent from the association's funds, which, according to sources, looks as follows:





During the reporting period, GYLA prepared 31 project applications for submission to various donor organizations. Of these:



As of October 31, 2024, GYLA is implementing 18 ongoing projects.

# GOVERNING BODIES OF THE GEORGIAN YOUNG LAWYERS' ASSOCIATION

As of November 1, 2024

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