



GEORGIAN
YOUNG
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GYLA'S ASSESSMENT
OF THE ABOLITION
OF THE ANTI-CORRUPTION
BUREAU AND
THE TRANSFER
OF ITS COMPETENCE
TO THE STATE
AUDIT SERVICE
OF GEORGIA

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1. INTRODUCTION

Anti-corruption policy is one of the main directions of state governance. State bodies must respond effectively to corruption-related facts; however, the most important component of an anti-corruption policy is the prevention and proactive mitigation of corruption. Corruption and corruption-related crimes still remain a serious challenge in Georgia, which has been clearly demonstrated by recent corruption cases involving former high-ranking government officials.¹

Against this background, the Parliament of Georgia abolished the preventive body responsible for combating corruption, the Anti-Corruption Bureau, and transferred its powers to the State Audit Office. Although the effectiveness and true independence of the Anti-Corruption Bureau had been questioned since its establishment, it was nonetheless, at least normatively, a formally and legally independent institution accountable to Parliament and entrusted with the responsibility of implementing anti-corruption policy in the country.

The purpose of this paper is to analyze Georgia's anti-corruption policy in recent years, assess its compliance with the Constitution and international recommendations, and evaluate the activities and performance of the Anti-Corruption Bureau.

2. ANTI-CORRUPTION POLICY IN GEORGIA AND INTERNATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

The fight against corruption has consistently been a priority in the recommendations issued by Georgia's international partners. The Association Agreement signed between Georgia and the European Union states that Georgia and the EU must cooperate to eliminate corruption in both the private and public sectors.² Through this agreement, Georgia undertook to continue combating corruption in all its forms and to strengthen its prevention mechanisms.³ Strengthening the anti-corruption institutional framework and ensuring the independence of the Anti-Corruption Bureau were among the key requirements set by the European Union as part of the conditions for granting Georgia candidate country status.⁴

According to the recommendations envisaged under the Association Agreement agenda, Georgia must cooperate with various international anti-corruption organizations and implement their recommendations.⁵ International partners have consistently called on the country to create an independent state body responsible for conducting anti-corruption policy. The Council of Europe's Group of States against Corruption (GRECO) repeatedly urged Georgia to reinforce its institutional framework and establish a stronger, more independent body.⁶ Similarly, the Anti-Corruption Network of the OECD emphasized in multiple reports that Georgia required a more effective and independent anti-corruption institution.⁷

It was on the basis of these recommendations from international organizations that the Anti-Corruption Bureau was established as an independent body—although, judging by its short-lived existence, it ultimately failed to achieve its intended purpose. On November 30, 2022, Parliament adopted amendments to the Law of Georgia “On Conflict of Interest and Corruption in Public service” (renamed through the same amendments as the Law of Georgia “On Combating Corruption”) and created the Anti-Corruption Bureau, whose mandate was defined as facilitating the fight against corruption within the scope of its powers.⁸

The head of the Anti-Corruption Bureau was appointed by the Prime Minister, which immediately became the subject of criticism.⁹ It is also noteworthy that, since the Bureau itself was accountable to Parliament, it would have been more logical¹⁰ for the appointment of its head to be based on parliamentary legitimacy.

¹ „2025 - „Dream” against former loyal high-ranking officials”, information portal „Radio Liberty”, December 31, 2025, available at: <https://www.radiotavisupleba.ge/a/%E1%83%9D%E1%83%AA%E1%83%9C%E1%83%94%E1%83%91%E1%83%90-%E1%83%A7%E1%83%9D%E1%83%A4%E1%83%98%E1%83%9A%E1%83%98-%E1%83%94%E1%83%A0%E1%83%97%E1%83%92%E1%83%A3%E1%83%9A%E1%83%98-%E1%83%9B%E1%83%90%E1%83%A6%E1%83%90%E1%83%9A%E1%83%A9%E1%83%98%E1%83%9C%E1%83%9D%E1%83%A1%E1%83%9C%E1%83%94%E1%83%91%E1%83%98%E1%83%A1-%E1%83%AC%E1%83%98%E1%83%9C%E1%83%90%E1%83%90%E1%83%A6%E1%83%9B%E1%83%93%E1%83%94%E1%83%92-/33637370.html>, updated: 18.03.2026.

² Article 17 of the Association Agreement between the European Union and the European Atomic Energy Community and their Member States, of the one part, and Georgia, of the other part, is available at: <https://mfa.gov.ge/european-union/377295-asotsirebis-shesakheb-shetankhmeba>.

³ EU-Georgia Association Agenda 2021-2027, p. 12.

⁴ The European Commission's opinion of 17 June 2022 on Georgia's application for membership of the European Union is available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX%3A52022DC0405>, last updated: 06.03.2026.

⁵ Ibid., p. 26.

⁶ GRECO Fourth Evaluation Round Report, Corruption prevention in respect of members of parliament, judges and prosecutors; Compliance Report Georgia, 2 July 2019, available at: <https://rm.coe.int/fourth-evaluation-round-corruption-prevention-in-respect-of-members-of/168095529a>, last accessed: 06.03.2026.

⁷ OECD (2022), Anti-Corruption Reforms in Georgia: Pilot 5th Round of Monitoring Under the OECD Istanbul Anti-Corruption Action Plan, 30 May 2022, available at: <https://doi.org/10.1787/d709c349-en>, last updated: 06.03.2026.

⁸ Law of Georgia “On Amendments to the Law of Georgia “On Conflict of Interest and Corruption in Public service”, November 30, 2022, Article 1, Paragraph 12, available at: <https://info.parliament.ge/#law-drafting/24960>, updated: 08.03.2026.

⁹ Article 2016 of the Law of Georgia “On Combating Corruption”, as amended on November 30, 2022.

¹⁰ Ibid., Article 20¹²

3. POWERS OF THE ANTI-CORRUPTION BUREAU, INCREASED MANDATE AND CIVIL SOCIETY CONTROL FUNCTION

Since its establishment, the Anti-Corruption Bureau was responsible for the prevention of corruption and the implementation of anti-corruption policy. Its mandate included developing proposals related to defining the country's general anti-corruption policy, which it would submit to Parliament, as well as preparing Georgia's National Anti-Corruption Strategy and Action Plan.¹¹ The Bureau was also tasked with monitoring and evaluating the implementation of public policy documents on combating corruption.¹² In addition, its powers encompassed issuing proposals and recommendations on the prevention, detection, and suppression of conflicts of interest in public institutions,¹³ as well as receiving, storing, and monitoring officials' asset declarations. The Bureau was further responsible for ensuring the functioning of the whistleblower protection mechanism and issuing recommendations concerning whistleblower protection.¹⁴ Alongside awareness-raising on corruption issues, it conducted financial monitoring of political parties.¹⁵ Within the scope of its powers, it was authorized to request necessary information from relevant entities and to cooperate with various state and international bodies.¹⁶

However, from the moment of its creation, the mandate of the Anti-Corruption Bureau significantly exceeded its stated purpose, and its primary focus became not combating corruption but exercising oversight and imposing restrictions on civil society. It is noteworthy that the Bureau largely failed to ensure the implementation of anti-corruption policy.¹⁷ For example, a national anti-corruption strategy has still not been adopted. Moreover, the transparency of asset declarations and public access to the results of their monitoring deteriorated sharply. From December 2024 to June 2025, officials' declarations were unavailable to the public, which the Bureau attributed to a "technical glitch."¹⁸ Additionally, in its monitoring activities, the Bureau failed to identify inconsistencies in the declarations of certain high-ranking officials, despite the fact that criminal cases were later launched against them on corruption charges.¹⁹

All of the above was also reflected in the deterioration of international partnerships. Georgia was excluded from the monitoring process of the OECD Anti-Corruption Network.²⁰ In addition, the Open Government Partnership temporarily suspended Georgia's membership in October 2024 and finally on April 13, 2026.²¹ As a result, Georgia was excluded from one of the most prestigious international platforms.²² According to the Corruption Perceptions Index, the country has dropped by six points since 2022.²³ And if Georgia was in 41st place in the same ranking in 2022, in 2025 it fell to 56th place, out of a total of 182 countries.²⁴

Despite this, the powers of the Anti-Corruption Bureau have increased significantly after the 2024 parliamentary elections. Initially, in April 2025, a note was added to the Law on Combating Corruption, which left the list of the Bureau's powers open and assigned it functions envisaged by the legislation that were not explicitly spelled out in this law.²⁵

In 2024-25, as a result of the adoption of recent violent legislation, the powers of the Anti-Corruption Bureau in the direction of controlling civil organizations and activists significantly increased.²⁶ Within the framework of the "Foreign Agents Registration Act" (the Georgian analogue of the so-called American FARA), the Bureau monitored any person or organization, and if the head of the Bureau considered him to be a representative of the interests of a foreign entity, he would oblige him to register as a foreign agent.²⁷ In addition, the Anti-Corruption Bureau was granted special powers in the process of financial monitoring of political parties and entities with declared electoral objectives. It could itself define

¹¹ Ibid., Article 20¹⁵

¹² Ibid

¹³ Ibid

¹⁴ Ibid

¹⁵ Ibid

¹⁶ Ibid

¹⁷ Ibid

¹⁸ Ibid

¹⁹ Ibid

²⁰ „Georgia Refused to Participate in OECD/ACN Anti-Corruption Environment Assessment - NGO”, Information Portal “Radio Liberty”, June 27, 2023, available at: <https://www.radiotavisupleba.ge/a/32477822.html>, updated: 07.03.2026.

²¹ „Georgia Temporarily Suspended from the Open Government Partnership”, October 16, 2024, Open Government Partnership (OGP), available at: <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/news/georgia-temporarily-suspended-from-the-open-government-partnership/>, updated: 08.03.2026

²² “Georgia Excluded from the Open Governance Partnership”, GYLA website, April 22, 2026, available at: https://gyla.ge/post/ertoblivi-gancxadeba-OGP?fbclid=IwY2xjawRWtd5leHRuA2FlbQlxMABicmlkETFrM2Z0dU5CdVJUcFN5VUUVuc3JOYwZhcHBfaWQQMjlyMDM5MTc4ODlwMDg5MgABHlex15WdA9OfSb9-64iJGpu7W4-e-qrAkqgdykYUj-LbmbU2_Dp1CbaErgzK4_aem_36GuAvq6WulO8bhfAGszOg, updated: 23.04.2026.

²³ Corruption Perceptions Index, 2024, Transparency International - Georgia, available at: <https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi/2025/index/geo>, updated: 08.03.2026.

²⁴ Ibid

²⁵ Law of Georgia on Amendments to the Law of Georgia “On Combating Corruption”, April 16, 2025, Legislative Herald of Georgia, available at: <https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/6474447?publication=0>, updated: 08.03.2026.

²⁶ For details, see Violent Lawmaking in Georgia, Georgian Young Lawyers Association, 2025.

²⁷ Article 8 of the Foreign Agents Registration act, available at: <https://matsne.gov.ge/document/view/6461578?publication=0>.

entities with declared electoral objectives and extend to them all the restrictions imposed on political parties.²⁸ An example of the abuse of this power was the granting of the status of entities with declared electoral objectives to civil society organizations in the period preceding the 2024 parliamentary elections, which unlawfully restricted the activities of these organizations.²⁹ The low level of independence of the Anti-Corruption Bureau is also indicated by the fact that the Bureau revoked this decision as a result of a verbal appeal from the Prime Minister.³⁰

The degree of civil society involvement in the selection process for the head of the Anti-Corruption Bureau has deteriorated significantly. According to the legislative package adopted in April 2025, Parliament prohibited the participation of non-governmental organizations in the activities of virtually all state and local self-government institutions.³¹ This also affected the participation of civil society representatives in the competition commission responsible for selecting the head of the Anti-Corruption Bureau. Under the previous version of the law, one of the seven commission members had to be a representative of civil society; however, this requirement was removed under the new draft law.³² Civil society involvement had also been reflected in participation in the independent commission tasked with selecting officials responsible for monitoring asset declarations.³³ Together with representatives of academia, civil society organizations were able to take part in selecting officials for declaration monitoring.³⁴ However, following the April 2025 amendments, the commission no longer includes any quota for civil society participation.³⁵

The influence of repressive legislation and the unjustified expansion of the Anti-Corruption Bureau's powers were also reflected in the amendments to the Law on Grants, approved by Parliament in April 2025. These amendments changed the procedure for issuing grants, making it possible only with the prior consent of the Government of Georgia.³⁶ Under the new procedure, donors must submit a draft grant agreement to the Government and provide any additional information upon request.³⁷ The Anti-Corruption Bureau was once again designated as the body responsible for monitoring the receipt of grants issued without prior consent. It was authorized to request financial reports from any person for monitoring purposes, interview individuals, request necessary information from both public and private institutions or individuals, and exercise other powers provided by law.³⁸ According to the conclusion of the European Commission for Democracy through Law (the "Venice Commission"), the Bureau's powers in the area of questioning individuals are vague and may, in practice, take on a coercive character.³⁹ Taken together, the expansion of the Bureau's mandate and the weakening of its original purpose have effectively transformed it into an oversight body targeting civil society rather than an institution dedicated to combating corruption.⁴⁰

4. ABOLITION OF THE ANTI-CORRUPTION BUREAU AND TRANSFER OF ITS POWERS

Increased authority of the State Audit Office

At a briefing on November 17, 2025, the Chairman of the Parliament of Georgia announced the abolition of the Anti-Corruption Bureau and the transfer of its powers to the State Audit Service.⁴¹ According to the authors of the reform, the purpose of this institutional change was to consolidate the governance system within the constitutional framework and to optimize state resources.⁴² They also argued that the multiplicity of state bodies responsible for anti-corruption policy and its repressive or preventive control created fragmentation, while the monitoring function of the Anti-Corruption

²⁸ Paragraph 2¹ of Article 34¹ of the Organic Law of Georgia «On Political Unions of Citizens».

²⁹ For more information, see "Third Interim Report of the Long-Term Observation Mission to the 2024 Parliamentary Elections", Georgian Young Lawyers Association, October 18, 2024, available at: <https://www.gyla.ge/post/SAARCHEVNO-SHUALDEURI-ANGARISHI-3>, updated: 19.03.2026.

³⁰ Briefing by the Head of the Anti-Corruption Bureau, Razhden Kuprashvili, official Facebook page of the Anti-Corruption Bureau, October 2, 2024, available at: <https://www.facebook.com/reel/3859307714285208>, updated: 25.03.2026.

³¹ Legislative Package N07-3/32/11, February 19, 2025, available at: <https://info.parliament.ge/v1/law-drafting/package/21885>, updated: 19.03.2026.

³² Article 1 of the Law of Georgia on Amendments to the Law of Georgia «On Combating Corruption», April 2, 2025, available at: <https://info.parliament.ge/v1/law-drafting/bill/30348>, updated: 19.03.2026.

³³ Paragraph 3 of Article 18¹ of the Law of Georgia «On Combating Corruption».

³⁴ Resolution of the Government of Georgia No. 81 "On Approval of the Instructions for Monitoring the Asset Declaration of an Official Subject to Verification", Article 8, February 14, 2017, available at: <https://matsne.gov.ge/document/view/3578912?publication=3>, as of July 24, 2023.

³⁵ Resolution of the Government of Georgia No. 81 "On Approval of the Instructions for Monitoring the Asset Declaration of an Official Subject to Verification", Article 8, February 14, 2017, available at: <https://matsne.gov.ge/document/view/3578912?publication=3>, as amended.

³⁶ Paragraph 1 of Article 5¹ of the Law of Georgia «On Grants».

³⁷ *Ibid.*, paragraph 2.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, article 6¹.

³⁹ Opinion on the Law on the Registration of Foreign Agents, the Amendments to the Law on Grants and Other Laws Relation to „Foreign Influence“, N. CDL-AD(2025)034, European Commission For Democracy Through Law of The Council of Europe (Venice Commission). October, 2025, available at: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/venice-commission/-/cdl-ad-2025-034-e>, §95.

⁴⁰ For details, see Functional Overreach of the Anti-Corruption Bureau, Georgian Young Lawyers Association, May 27, 2025, available at: https://gyla.ge/media/blogs/198?fbclid=IwY2xjawN4Y9leHRuA2FlbQlxMABicmlkETFIZGRBWUpjRDRpZW0xbThWc3JOYwZhcHBfaWQQMjlyMDM5MTc4ODIwMDg5MgABHpgxS_eUeLIgEjEiReX4mkAc81P1f-C8IE7ckSBqGhy4Be8nOdNio4ZbH_aem_L7On4OPEbgnUYa5YOoXlow, updated: 06.03.2026.

⁴¹ „Shalva Papuashvili's Briefing“, November 17, 2025, available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sMjMdTvR0gw&t=313s>, updated: 08.03.2026.

⁴² *Ibid*

Bureau was better suited to the State Audit Service, viewed as a higher-ranking and independent constitutional body.⁴³ In addition, members of the ruling party described the Anti-Corruption Bureau as a “somewhat independent, supposedly created body” that had been “imposed from the outside” from the very beginning.⁴⁴ Thus, government officials themselves acknowledged, on the one hand, the Bureau’s low degree of independence, and on the other, their belief that its continued operation was unnecessary.

According to the draft law adopted by Parliament in the third reading on December 17, the powers of the Anti-Corruption Bureau were almost entirely transferred to the State Audit Service.⁴⁵ It is noteworthy that the policy development component—covering the creation of public policy documents on the fight against corruption, as well as their implementation, monitoring, and evaluation—was transferred not to the State Audit Service, but to the Government.⁴⁶ At the same time, the Audit Service will now be authorized to collect, store, and control property declarations of public servants, protect whistleblowers, and monitor the finances of political parties.⁴⁷ The functions of the Audit Service have also been expanded to include the enforcement of restrictive legislation on civil society organizations and political parties previously assigned to the Anti-Corruption Bureau under repressive and coercive laws, including the Georgian version of the so-called FARA and the Law on Grants.⁴⁸ Additionally, for a comprehensive assessment, it should be noted that the Personal Data Protection Service has also been incorporated into the Audit Service.

Ultimately, the State Audit Service of Georgia has been granted the authority not only of state audit, but also of preventive anti-corruption policy and personal data protection, as well as oversight over civil society. Accordingly, it is debatable how rational it is to consolidate such a wide range of significant functions within a single institutional structure.

Activities of the State Audit Office and international standards

The State Audit Office is a constitutional body that oversees the use and expenditure of budgetary funds and other public resources to promote the efficiency and accountability of public administration.⁴⁹ It ensures parliamentary control over the management of public funds. Accordingly, its main function is to audit state and local self-government bodies, determining how correctly and rationally the state budget was spent.⁵⁰

Effective budgetary oversight, in which the role of the audit service is indispensable, is one of the public governance principles of the EU-OECD Joint Programme “Support for the Improvement of Governance and Management” (SIGMA).⁵¹ According to these principles, the mandate of the Supreme Audit Institution, which fully covers public funds and policies, concerns the implementation of compliance, financial and performance audits in all public administration bodies.⁵² Accordingly, it should enjoy a high standard of independence.⁵³

The importance and independence of the Supreme Audit Institution is emphasized by the Lima Declaration on Audit Procedures. In particular, public finance control institutions are inseparable from public finances.⁵⁴ Financial control is an indispensable component of the regulatory system, the purpose of which is to detect in a timely manner violations of the principles of legality, efficiency, expediency and economy of management, so that in individual cases it is possible to take corrective measures, hold the relevant authorities accountable, obtain compensation or take the necessary measures to prevent such violations in the future.⁵⁵ The activities of the Government, administrative bodies subordinate to it and other dependent bodies fall within the scope of supervision of the Supreme Audit Office.⁵⁶ The Mexican Declaration on the Independence of Supreme Audit Institutions draws attention to the high degree of internal autonomy of the audit office and guarantees of independence.⁵⁷ The audit service should operate separately from other public institutions and should have an absolutely sovereign scope of action, both legally and de facto.⁵⁸

⁴³ Ibid

⁴⁴ “Kakha Kaladze on the Abolition of the Anti-Corruption Bureau - It Was an Externally Imposed, Somewhat Independent, Pretended Body”, Information Portal “Interpressnews”, November 17, 2025, Available at: <https://www.interpressnews.ge/ka/article/854776-kaxa-kalaze-antikorupciuli-biuros-gaukmebaze-es-iqo-garedan-tavsmoxveuli-ragac-damoukidebeli-vitom-shekmnili-organo/>, Updated: 19.03.2026.

⁴⁵ Paragraph 3 of Article 1 of the Organic Law of Georgia on Amendments to the Organic Law of Georgia «On the State Audit Service».

⁴⁶ Article 6¹ of the current version of the Law of Georgia «On Combating Corruption».

⁴⁷ Article 6 of the Organic Law of Georgia «On the State Audit Service».

⁴⁸ Ibid

⁴⁹ Article 69 of the Constitution of Georgia.

⁵⁰ Ibid

⁵¹ Principles of Public Administration, Principle 16, SIGMA, November 2023, available at: https://www.sigmaweb.org/ka/publications/2023/11/the-principles-of-public-administration_5e68f805.html, updated: 08.03.2026.

⁵² Ibid

⁵³ Ibid

⁵⁴ The Lima Declaration of Guidelines on Auditing Precepts, The International Organisation of Supreme Audit Institutions (INTOSAI), §1.

⁵⁵ Ibid

⁵⁶ Ibid §9.

⁵⁷ Mexico Declaration on SAI Independence, The International Organisation of Supreme Audit Institutions (INTOSAI), Principle 2.

⁵⁸ Ibid

The principle of autonomy of the audit service, along with internal institutional independence, also implies that its mandate should not be overburdened. For the audit service to be effective, its mandate should include only financial control and have as little interaction as possible with other public institutions, and not have additional powers that would hinder its supervisory activities.

In addition to the specifics of the audit service's activities, the institutional model adopted by the amendments also does not comply with the general principles of public governance. First of all, according to the SIGMA public governance principles, public governance should be organized organizationally according to a clear and consistent typology, based on the functions of the bodies.⁵⁹ Accordingly, every body should have its own exclusive function, and, conversely, a specific public function should be assigned to one specific body. In addition, the creation, merger and liquidation of any body should be carried out on the basis of a reasonable preliminary analysis of the impact.⁶⁰

The internal organizational structure of public governance bodies, which should facilitate the effective performance of functions, is also important from the SIGMA principles.⁶¹ It is debatable how accurately and effectively the functionally overloaded State Audit Service of Georgia will implement not only the acquired, but also its exclusive functions, even in a purely organizational manner.

GYLA's assessment of the proposed institutional model

The explanatory note to the legislative package did not contain any justification as to what led to the abolition of the Anti-Corruption Bureau or what consequences this would have for the effective performance of anti-corruption functions. The initiators of the bill cited the goal of optimizing governance.

Although the authors of the bill referred to the optimization of state resources, it is unacceptable to pursue such optimization to the extent that a specific state function can no longer be effectively performed. In other words, saving resources should not endanger the fulfilment of state responsibilities. In this case, it is unclear, first, what kind and scale of resource optimization is being discussed, and second, whether the State Audit Office will be able to effectively perform the powers of the Anti-Corruption Bureau.

The proposed institutional solution is unjustified because the State Audit Office, as the body supervising public finances, is already overloaded, which will negatively impact its effectiveness. The mandate of the Audit Office, concise and clear as it is, is so necessary and important that it should not be burdened with additional functions.

In addition to the functional overload of the Audit Office, it is evident that, with the adopted changes, anti-corruption policy is no longer even formally a priority for the country. The body responsible for preventive control (or at least expected to perform it) has been abolished, and its powers divided between the Audit Office and the government.

Ultimately, the authority to determine policy has been vested in the Government Administration, while the functions of actual monitoring have been assigned to the Audit Office. The Government Administration, as the highest executive body, naturally plays a crucial role in policy development; however, assigning this function to it alone is dangerous, as it increases the likelihood that anti-corruption policy will no longer receive due attention. At the same time, it would be optimal for preventive control to be carried out by the body involved in policy development. Clearly, granting the Audit Office the authority to develop policy would be entirely inappropriate, as it would contradict its purpose and objectives. And if a body is excluded from the process at the stage of policy planning, its involvement in and supervision of the implementation of that policy becomes questionable. This division once again demonstrates the misguided directions and illogical solutions embodied in the reform.

It should also be noted that neither the explanatory memorandum to the amendments, nor the statements of the initiators, nor a systematic analysis of the broader context indicate any real need for such institutional reform. Corruption remains a serious problem in public administration, as evidenced by recent corruption cases involving former senior officials of Georgian Dream.

⁵⁹ Principles of Public Administration, Principle 13, SIGMA, November 2023, available at: https://www.sigmaxweb.org/ka/publications/2023/11/the-principles-of-public-administration_5e68f805.html, updated: 08.03.2026.

⁶⁰ Ibid

⁶¹ Ibid

5. CONCLUSION

The purpose of this analysis was to review Georgia's anti-corruption policy in recent years and, more specifically, to examine the reasons behind and potential consequences of the latest institutional changes. Although anti-corruption policy has never been a genuine priority for the Georgian government, the establishment of the Anti-Corruption Bureau was at least a formal step toward complying with international recommendations that contributed, to some extent, to Georgia obtaining European Union candidate status. From the outset, the Bureau had certain structural and legislative shortcomings—most notably, the lack of any repressive enforcement powers—yet it was, at least officially, the sole body mandated to implement anti-corruption policy. In practice, however, its work was marked by significant challenges. The development of national anti-corruption policy remained particularly weak: in the three years of its existence, the Bureau failed to adopt a national anti-corruption strategy. Moreover, its independence was limited; the influence of the executive branch, and in particular the ruling party, over its activities was evident. Following the adoption of recent repressive legislative amendments, the Bureau shifted away from overseeing the public sector and effectively became a supervisory body for civil society, as it was assigned responsibility for implementing the Georgian version of the American FARA—the so-called Law on Grants.

Although the Bureau's activities were already ineffective, its abolition and the transfer of its powers to the State Audit Office created a new set of problems. The Audit Office, as the institution responsible for supervising public finances, should remain independent and must not be burdened with additional, unrelated functions—especially those involving oversight of private or political actors, which fall outside its mandate. The added responsibilities derived from the dissolved Bureau will inevitably overload the Audit Office and diminish its ability to perform its core public functions effectively. As a result, the reform not only fails to improve anti-corruption governance but actively undermines the institutional capacity necessary for meaningful preventive and monitoring mechanisms within the state.