

## **Georgian Parliamentary Elections 2020 - Program Documents of Political Parties**

### **Abstract**

Nowadays, the study of the problematic issue of political parties and their systems is relevant, since parties are the main instrument of politics and the formation of democracy.

Due to recent political processes in Georgia, the parties have started to become more active in changing and improving the electoral process. Particularly, they are constantly involved in the discussion on several issues.

Accordingly, the presented work represents a detailed study of party election programs, conducting a comparative study, explaining the influence of political processes on the program documents, presenting the dynamics of political parties' attitudes to the existing in Georgia problems, and explaining this dynamic causing factors. The work aims to determine whether there is a connection between party programs and the possibility of the party winning elections, and in case if there is, to realize its strength.

The methodology of the work considers the sectoral division (environmental protection, education, women's involvement in politics, health care, foreign policy) and allows the interpretation of the obtained data.

**Key words: Georgia, Parliament, elections, parties, program documents.**

### **Introduction**

Nowadays, in Georgian reality, studying the problematic issue of the party system and its institutionalization is quite relevant. Since parties are the main axis of modern politics and a vital tool for the establishment of democracy and represent a necessary link between the state and civil society. Immediately after the declaration of state independence in Georgia, parties began to be activated to take turns in the political process, to improve the electoral process. The legislation of Georgia defines their role and function in the formation and implementation of the will of the people, and their activities are also defined, which are based on the principles of people's freedom, equality, transparency, and intra-party democracy (Parliament of Georgia, 1997).

Political parties are constantly involved in the country's current political processes and in many actual issues, which are reflected in their program documents and applications. Accordingly, the interest of the entire Georgian political spectrum and also the public was

directed toward the last parliamentary elections on October 31, 2020, the parties were actively involved in informing the public with charming promises, trying to make their program documents as extensive and comprehensive as possible. Although in the Georgian reality, the pre-election program documents do not have the importance of Western loading, it is a fact that recently, due to certain public interest, the responsibility of the parties in the pre-election process has increased in this regard. Particularly, there has been an increase in the fixing of party positions according to public spheres, although unrealistic promises are also often made, when there is no research, without any basis, at the level of empty words, in an attempt to charm the public.

The purpose of the work is to study party election programs by applying the method of comparative research, to explain the influence of political processes in the country on the program documents, to present the dynamics of the attitude of political parties to the problems existing in Georgian reality and to explain the factors causing this dynamic. At the same time, the aim of the selection of the main subjects was their experience of being in power and, accordingly, their responsibility for fulfilling promises.

The work aims to determine whether there is a connection between party programs and the possibility of the party winning elections, and in case there is, to realize how strong it is.

The main question of the paper is related to finding out to what extent each party is oriented to cover different areas of public life or is limited and focuses only on individual elements. Also, the work is aimed at finding out to what extent a political unit offers specific mechanisms for solving public problems.

### **Reform of Electoral Legislation**

On the background of difficulties caused by the global pandemic, the 2020 parliamentary elections took place in a rather tense political environment, as is usually the case in Georgian realities. One of the main issues of judgment has always been the change/reform of the electoral system, active discussions were also underway and the reform of the electoral legislation was carried out before the 2020 parliamentary elections. Particularly, on March 8, an agreement was reached between the government and the opposition parties, according to which 120 members of the 150-member parliament were elected based on the proportional system, and 30 based on the majoritarian system. The electoral threshold for political parties participating independently in the elections was reduced to 1% (from 5%). The mentioned change, on different levels, was evaluated as a step forward toward pluralist democracy (ISFED, 2021).

The reform affected the procedure for staffing the election administration, the use of administrative resources, and the financing of political parties. Importantly, the gender quota has been a subject of constant discussion in recent years. It should be noted that for the 2020 parliamentary elections of Georgia, it has become mandatory to nominate at least one candidate

of a different gender in each of the top four of the party list. It is noteworthy that a consistent increase in the gender quota has been determined for the future parliamentary elections of 2024 and 2028. Ultimately, this should ensure at least 33% women's representation in the legislature. In addition, a 50% gender quota on the party list was established for all local government elections until 2028, and a party funding mechanism was specified to encourage increased gender representation. In case of nomination of one candidate of a different gender in the party list, the party will receive an additional 30% of the total funding (Parliament of Georgia, 2020).

It is worth highlighting that, in addition to the Constitution of Georgia, the state takes special measures to ensure the essential equality of men and women and to eliminate inequality. There are also international obligations, in particular the UN Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women called on Georgia in 2014 to adopt temporary special measures, including the introduction of a quota mechanism, to accelerate the achievement of substantive equality. It is noteworthy that the list of recommendations directly mentions that the average number of women in national parliaments of European and OSCE member states is 27.5%. World experience shows that there is a correlation between the percentage of female legislators and the adoption of legislation beneficial to women as a group and to society as a whole and that Georgia should establish mandatory quotas to ensure de facto equality of political participation. Also, the country has to implement significant reform in terms of proportional representation in electoral systems. As Georgia will switch to a proportional system in 2024 following the new constitution, it is extremely important to establish mandatory gender quotas, which aim to reduce gender inequality in the political decision-making process (USAID & EWMI, 2018).

Moreover, the 2017-2020 agenda for association with the European Union obliged Georgia to activate the inclusion of women's representation in the decision-making process (Access to European Union Law, 2017). However, we have to say that international experience shows that only the existence of electoral quotas is not enough. Three following characteristics are necessary for effectiveness: quota percentage, compliance with inclusion and substitution rules and strict sanctions, denial of registration, or high financial penalty.

### **Peculiarities of the 2020 Parliamentary Elections**

Soon after the declaration of state independence in Georgia, parties began to be activated to change the political process and improve the electoral process. Since 1990, the number of subjects participating in all types of elections has been increasing (1. 1990. Participants - 14, represented in the government - 6, of which proportionally - 2 (threshold - 4%); 2. 1992 participants - 36, represented in the government - 24 proportionally (2% threshold); 3. 1995 Participant - 53, represented in the government - 13; from here proportionally - 3 (5% threshold); 4. 1999 Participant - 45, represented in the government - 6, of which proportionally

- 3 (7% threshold); 5. The results of the 2003 elections were annulled; 6. 2004 Participant - 20, represented in the government - 8; from here proportionally - 2 (7% threshold); 7. 2008 Participant - 12, represented in the government - 5, of which proportionally - 4 (5% threshold); 8. 2012 Participant - 16, represented in the government - 2, of which proportionally - 2 (5% threshold); 9. 2016 Participants - 25, of which 6 blocks with 16 entities, represented in the government - 5; from here proportionally - 3 (5% threshold); 10. 2020 Participants - 50, of which 2 blocks with 7 subjects represented in the government (1% threshold).

We assume that it should be noted here that one of the remarkable moments of the 2020 parliamentary elections was the elections held under the majoritarian system, in which the ruling team won in all 30 single-mandate majoritarian districts. Georgian Dream candidates won in 13 constituencies in the first round of elections. In the second round, held in 17 constituencies (opposition parties boycotted and did not participate), the Georgian Dream candidates also won, and the Georgian Dream found itself in the new parliament with a total of 90 deputies. See table #1.

Entities Winning the 2020 Parliamentary Elections by Proportional System (Central Election Commission of Georgia, 2020).

Table #1.

#	Name of the Party (bloc).	The Number of Votes Obtained in Percentage	The Number of Obtained Mandates	Number of Women
2	"Bakradze, Ugulava, Bokeria - European Georgia - Movement for Freedom"	3.79%	5	1
5	Bloc "United National Movement-United Opposition "Strength is in Unity"	27.18%	36	9
8	"Davit Tarkhan-Mouravi, Irma Inashvili - Alliance of Georgian Patriots"	3.14%	4	1
10	"Shalva Natelashvili - Labor Party of Georgia"	1.00%	1	
24	"Aleko Elisashvili - Citizens"	1.33%	2	
27	Block "Giorgi Vashadze-Strategy Agmashenebeli"	3.15%	4	2

36	„Girchi“	2.89%	4	1 <sup>1</sup>
41	“Georgian Dream - Democratic Georgia”	48.22%	60	16 <sup>2</sup>
56	"Lelo - Mamuka Khazaradze"	3.15%	4	1

We have to highlight that the opposition parties, which passed the 1% threshold in the elections, did not recognize the results of the elections and at first refused to enter the parliament. They were demanding new elections, the resignation of CEC Chairman Tamar Zhvania, and the release of political prisoners. To ease the current political crisis, the ruling team came to a compromise and started a dialogue with the opposition. The US and EU ambassadors were invited as the mediators. In this case, it is necessary to mention such details of the negotiations as, for example, the new document of the negotiations between the ruling team and the opposition presented by the President of the European Council, Charles Michel, which included two important issues for the opposition - amnesty for "political prisoners" and a record of re-elections of "political prisoners". Particularly, the issue of the chairman of the United National Movement, Nika Melia, and one of the shareholders of the TV company "Mtavari Arkhi", Giorgi Rurua. Regarding the issue of holding new elections, which was one of the key issues for the opposition in the boycott regime, the document stated that "according to Georgian Dream's suggestion of April 16, 2021, early parliamentary elections will be scheduled in 2022 if the Georgian Dream party receives less than 43% of the proportional votes in the October 2021 local government elections." Here we have to highlight that the Georgian Dream received 48% of the votes in the proportional part of the October 31 parliamentary elections. After that, despite some processes and noise, the boycott was stopped in a short time (representatives of the National Movement also entered the parliament) (Civil Georgia, 2021).

It is worth noting that the parliamentary elections of 2020 were held in unusual conditions, the election administration managed to organize the elections in the conditions of the most difficult challenge, the pandemic, and created a safe environment for the voters' health. On election day, almost all conditions were met to ensure that citizens at the polling station had the opportunity to record their choices in a free environment. In addition, the CEC ensured participation in the voting of persons in inpatient medical institutions and isolation (quarantine, self-isolation) (Central Election Commission of Georgia, 2020).

We assume that it is important to note the adoption of the Code of Conduct for Political Parties for the 2020 Parliamentary Elections, in which the signatory political parties noted that they are aware of their high responsibility to the state of Georgia, its citizens, and their future,

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1 Number 4 of "Girchi" is a woman, although the party, which was against gender quotas, announced that female candidates would refuse the mandate.

2 Only one majoritarian.

and strive for the peaceful and democratic development of the country. Moreover, they recognized the international obligations undertaken by the state of Georgia, the supremacy of the law, the importance of conducting the election process following the law, and ethical principles; recognized the importance of upholding the principles of justice, democratic dialogue, and cooperation between parties; realized that these ethical principles do not have legal force and are a set of rules of behavior created based on the consensus of political parties; They placed the state interests above private and party interests; they affirmed that regardless of political differences, they would fulfill the presented code of conduct with goodwill and responsibility to contribute to the establishment of a multi-party, democratic public order, and conduct an ethical, fair and equal election process. Accordingly, in addition to general principles, they agreed that there would be decent and fair competition and respect for the rights of voters. Moreover, they have assured that, within the framework of the said obligation, they will take immediate measures to prevent the violations mentioned in this code of conduct (USAID & IRI, 2020).

#### **Program Documents of Political Parties Participating in the 2020 Parliamentary Elections in Georgia.**

In the current political processes in the country, parties are constantly involved in resolving many topical issues, which is reflected in their program documents and statements. Accordingly, in the very period, when the interest of the entire Georgian political spectrum, as well as the public, was directed toward the parliamentary elections on October 31, 2020, parties were actively involved in bringing tempting promises to the public. Moreover, they try to make their program documents as extensive and comprehensive as possible. As we have already mentioned, while selecting the main topics we were focused on the experience of being in power. However, depending on the situation in the country and in general in recent years, the views of other ruling parties on some issues are also interesting.

According to experts, due to its geography, Georgia will constantly be at risk of natural disasters. In this regard, the Racha region is especially outstanding. It is indeed impossible to stop the natural disaster, however, it is possible to maintain appropriate security systems to provide timely warning and evacuation of the population. It is not surprising that after the natural disaster that happened in August 2023 in Racha, Georgia, discussion on environmental issues has intensified in society. Moreover, in connection with the tragedy, some questions became the subject of political accusations and the responsibility of high officials, including the Prime Minister.

Therefore, it is not surprising that even in 2020, along with several current issues in the country, all parties that have overcome the barrier <sup>3</sup> supported and stated their position on environmental issues. After all, the parties correctly recognized the relevance of the release they published as part of the project funded by the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands "Materials" (Voters' Website, 2020), along with other materials, is an important aid for public information, comparison, and research observation.

"Georgian Dream - Democratic Georgia", which came to power with a majority, intends to carry out large-scale reforms in the direction of environmental protection in the next four years, based on the principles of sustainable development and green economy, to ensure a healthy living environment in the country. This concerns protected areas, effective utilization of forest waste, promotion of ecotourism development, introduction of European standards of environmental protection to minimize environmental pollution, correct urban development in cities, maintenance of greening and air quality, including through the implementation of correct transport policy. In addition, according to their promise, the Georgian legislation in the field of environmental protection will be qualitatively closer to the legislation of the European Union, including in terms of citizens' involvement. Management's nine-point environmental action plan covers almost every detail and is progressive.

The United National Movement, which took second place in terms of the number of votes, briefly formulated its following point of view on this issue: reduction of atmospheric air pollution, especially in urban centers; encouraging waste recycling; increasing the share of renewable energy in total consumption; construction of hydroelectric power plants in cases of extreme necessity and only based on international qualified opinion; expansion of recreational zones in urban centers; regulation of construction with transparent criteria, achieving compliance with the principles of environmental protection; encouraging a green economy.

The block "Giorgi Vashadze-Strategy Agmashenebeli" began by criticizing the existing situation, they claim that in recent years we have witnessed many cases of environmental pollution. They highlighted the use of asbestos-containing products in the municipalities of Bolnisi and Dmanisi, which pose a threat to human health. They consider it necessary to improve relevant legislation and implement effective enforcement mechanisms against companies that pollute the environment. The construction standards were discussed with the same approach when construction dust pollutes the environment and increases the risk of developing carcinogenic diseases. According to the EU Association Agreement, they planned to create a transparent system in the direction of energy and to switch to the production of renewable energies (solar, wind, water, geothermal), which would be completely focused on the

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<sup>3</sup> We have to note that the only party with an environmental profile - "Gachechiladze - Green Party" (#9) took part in the elections (the number of votes received was 0.07%, it did not get into the parliament).

safe use of green energy and the consumer. Another priority for them was the development of green cover, particularly, an urban green cover development strategy, including vertical and roof greening.

"European Georgia - Movement for Freedom" believed that responding to environmental challenges is an integral part of caring for the quality of life and the health of future generations, which in turn includes: the protection of Georgia's biodiversity and sustainability of ecosystems; protecting and maintaining a harmless (safe) environment for human health; promoting the introduction of international, first of all, environmental requirements and standards stipulated by the Association Agreement between the European Union and Georgia; expansion of the protected territories of Georgia; to continue working on the creation of a full-fledged sewage system in large cities, attracting the help of international donors and foreign partners in this process; to create a modern informational base about the nature of Georgia.

"Lelo for Georgia" began its discussion on the issues of environmental protection by criticizing the current situation, that in this area we have to harvest, save, and restore. They considered it necessary for the stability of ecological and physical systems: carrying out an environmental policy based on the principles of sustainable development by harmonizing the national legislation with the legislation of the European Union; subjecting the construction of large hydropower plants to the European standard of environmental impact, which would be published for consideration by universal, including international, environmental organizations before entering into force; they assume that in the legislative activity, as part of the regulatory impact analysis, the environmental impact analysis of each new draft law should become mandatory; the widespread use of renewable energies was promoted; reduction of atmospheric air pollution; improving water and waste management; establishing quotas for green plantings in cities; restoration of green cover and planting of new ones; to strengthen the system of protected areas; to create motivational systems for the private sector and others. While speaking about health issues, as well as they stressed the safety of the living environment; the creation of an effective system of predicting, preventing, and dealing with natural events, and informing and educating the population, which is lost in departmental labyrinths. In addition, they put the policy of animal protection on the agenda, they claim that due to the lack of policy, the number of homeless animals in Georgia is increasing, their condition is getting worse, the danger to the population is increasing and the public's perception of animals is getting ugly, therefore they discussed the solution of this issue at length and outlined the ways to fix it.

The new political center - "Girchi" believed that more freedom should be given to the private sector in the matter of environmental protection. Also, they assumed that it was necessary to abolish useless, pointless regulations and prohibitions that supposedly protected the environment, but in reality, they had the opposite effect. For example, they claimed that the entire forest park of the country was supposedly owned by the state, but in reality, it did not



belong to anyone and was cut down and destroyed by those who were in power at a given moment, with the permission of various officials.

"Aleko Elisashvili - Citizens" consider important for creating an ecologically healthier and safer living environment: they consider supporting renewable energy resources, maximal utilization and use of renewable (solar and wind) energy resources, and to encourage this - reduction of taxes and promotion of production; promoting the production of biologically clean agricultural products; they consider it important to retrain employees in the agricultural field and train new staff with appropriate educational programs; also the promotion of the above-mentioned production: by establishing tax benefits; by reducing the high rate of erosion and air pollution in urban spaces; by diversifying green cover, providing more greenery in urban spaces, planting trees and shrubs. As well as to weaken the erosion processes by planting appropriate trees and plants in the designated areas.

The "Labor Party" considered it necessary to define areas in Tbilisi and other big cities, where a temporary moratorium would be announced on the construction of residential buildings with a height of four floors. To achieve conformity of the air pollution index with the European Union standards, the quality of fuel would be controlled and appropriate norms of technical inspection of motor vehicles would be established. For the latter, a budgetary co-financing program supporting the population was being developed; modern norms limiting the generation of dust during construction works would be introduced and their implementation would be strictly controlled; for air, water and soil polluting enterprises, a strictly timed (no more than one parliamentary term) program would be developed to implement European standards in their activities; the boundaries of urban green areas would be established, trees would be subject to inventory and cutting of healthy trees would be completely prohibited; the construction companies, upon receiving the permit, would be obliged to green the surrounding area in accordance with European standards; the necessary work to increase the area of the green zone by at least 50% will be financed from the central budget; a national program supporting separate waste collection-disposal and recycling was being developed; a special landfill for hazardous waste of local origin would be created for the first time in Georgia; at the legislative level, the construction of large hydroelectric power stations and nuclear power plants would be prohibited. Moreover, in case of necessity small hydroelectric plants would be built only to meet the needs of the local population, with the consent of the population of the municipality, on the condition of organizing the relevant plebiscite, taking into account its results, and following European standards; would be developed large-scale programs promoting the introduction of energy-efficient technologies and the development of alternative (solar, wind, etc.) energy; among them, the purchase and installation of individual systems and materials would be supported using budgetary funds, by providing long-term interest-free loans to citizens.

The political association - "Davit Tarkhan-Mouravi, Irma Inashvili - Alliance of Georgian Patriots" did not post any information about its future activities on the portal. As we saw in their program documents, despite the extensive list, there is almost nothing specifically about environmental protection.

As we mentioned, the 2020 parliamentary elections were held in an unusual environment/conditions, the pandemic created special problems in terms of access and quality of education, especially where teachers and students do not have access to continuous Internet and computer equipment. Therefore, it was interesting to see the view of the leading political parties - plans to overcome the existing problems, if it becomes necessary to transfer the educational process to a distance mode again (Voters' Website, 2020).

The response of the ruling party - "Georgian Dream - Democratic Georgia" to the mentioned issue was more general and not specific - based on the current situation. Their attitude was expressed by plans, education policy in general, and improving the quality of primary, secondary, professional, and higher education in particular. To implement fundamental changes in the field of education and science, they planned to take effective steps in the next 4 years. Particularly, to significantly increase the remuneration of employees in kindergartens, as well as the budgetary financing of general education; increasing the wages of teachers and administrative staff; increasing the budgetary financing of professional education, financing of higher education and at the same time establishing a conceptually new model of financing; they thought that all components of this program would become available for Georgia, as an Erasmus+ program country; the number of state-funded scientific grant competitions would increase; academic and scientific staff working abroad would have more support for cooperation with the Georgian scientific space; Kutaisi International University and Hadronic Therapy Center would be established as a center of science and education with the highest international standard.

In their extensive pre-election program, it was also mentioned about the activities carried out in the direction of education since 2012. Also, the plans, because the development of the education system is one of the most important priorities of the "Georgian Dream" and they planned to create such an educational system that, following the goals of sustainable development, equips children, students, youth and adults with appropriate theoretical knowledge and develops practical and creative skills. All these would ensure the raising of their civic consciousness and a deep understanding of national and public values. They realized that the main prerequisite for the country's long-term economic and social progress is the development of human capital ("Georgian Dream-Democratic Georgia", 2020).

In the 2020 parliamentary elections, 5 subjects ("United National Movement", "Progress and Freedom", "State for the People", "Republican Party" and "European Democrats") were united in the opposition block "United National Movement - United Opposition "Strength is in

unity". However, only three party candidates ran in the majoritarian elections: from "National Movement" - 20; from the party "Progress and Freedom" - 4; and 1 candidate represented the "State for the People" party.

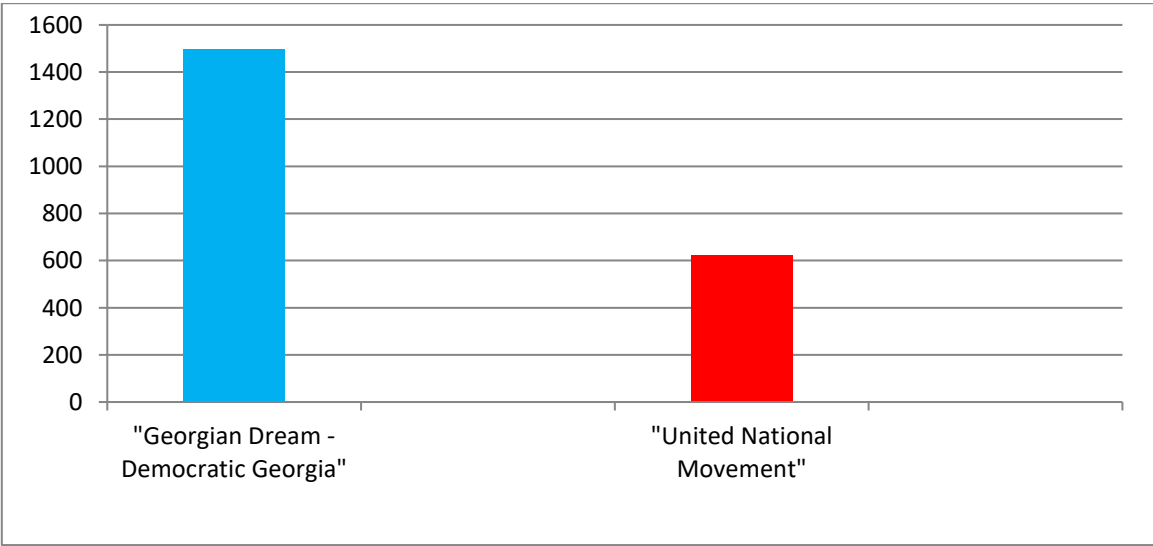
"United National Movement - United Opposition" pointed to the state's commitment to the issue of education. Particularly, they claimed that it was necessary to create opportunities for equal access to education. For this purpose, the first task was to solve the problem of Internet access in any city or village. In addition, with the availability of the Internet, the provision of a targeted Internet voucher to all students and teachers to prevent families from financial pressure. Based on the survey, it should be determined how many students and teachers did not have appropriate equipment, and the state should ensure their supply and temporary use. At the same time, it was necessary to train teachers to make online learning high-quality and interactive. Since distance learning in itself did not mean only online learning, they considered it important to mobilize financial, material, and educational resources, create educational portals, and use them when needed for distance learning.

It should be noted that "United National Movement - Strength is in Unity" in its program (extended version) perceives Georgia as a modern and technological educational center of Western education in the region. They discussed in detail all issues related to education and indicated the need to increase funding, in many cases, to double it in various directions ("United National Movement - Strength is in Unity", 2020).

We have to say that both the main subjects of the 2020 parliamentary elections "Georgian Dream - Democratic Georgia" and "United National Movement - United Opposition "Strength in Unity" have written in detail their attitude to the issue of education in quite large programs published separately. See table #2.

The Issue of Education in the 2020 Pre-election Program Documents

Table#2



At the modern stage, as we mentioned above, all political forces in Georgia already recognize that the high rate of women's involvement in politics is one of the important characteristics of democratic development. Based on this, the situation in Georgia is not entirely favorable, because women make up more than half of the population, 53.76%, however, currently, they are represented in the legislative body by 20.67%, which is thought-provoking in light of the country's historical experience (this data). See table #3.

### **Dynamics of Women's Representation in the Parliament of Georgia by Years**

Table #3.

Year	1992	1995	1999	2004	2008	2012	2016	2020
Women in Parliament	6.22%	6.64%	7.17%	9.33%	6.00%	12.00%	16.00%	20.67%

According to the data of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), Georgia ranks 144th among 191 countries in terms of the number of female deputies in the legislative body. Therefore, the programmatic proposals of "Georgian Dream-Democratic Georgia" and "United National Movement" are interesting in this regard.

According to the "Georgian Dream-Democratic Georgia" program: certain measures would be implemented to protect gender equality in all spheres of public life; quick and effective response to each case of gender inequality and gender-based violence would be ensured; for gender equality in the labor market, the following would be promoted: the increase of women's participation both through legislative initiatives and the implementation of various programs; implementation of effective mechanisms to fight against violence in the family and/or against women and crimes committed with the motive of intolerance on a discriminatory basis.

"United National Movement - United Opposition" considered it necessary to support the development of the "United National Movement" women's organization, which was established in March 2013, to encourage women's participation in politics and to fulfill their civil rights. This resulted in the formation of more than 50 district women's organizations and the mobilization of thousands of women activists, as well as the identification and involvement of many women leaders in local and national politics. They considered it necessary for the structural development of this organization and the effective implementation of its activities. "We will encourage women's participation not only in party activities and decision-making but also encourage the inclusion of as many women as possible as informed voters, activists, or leaders in the political life of the country," they said. noted (Voters' Website, 2020). Moreover, they planned to involve women living in rural areas in women's economic empowerment programs and develop women's empowerment programs at the decision-making level along with strengthening the mechanisms for preventing violence against women.

Due to the deteriorating situation, in the pre-election period, measures to increase access to health care and its quality were actively discussed.

"Georgian Dream - Democratic Georgia" defined the fundamental improvement of the primary health care system as the main priority of the health care sector, which would ensure the early detection of diseases, and this would improve the population's health index. One of the main priorities of the state would be the diagnosis and treatment of oncological diseases. According to the program: to achieve universal access to health care within the framework of government programs, all beneficiaries would receive the highest quality services, at a place convenient for them without delay. Moreover, the provision of essential medicines for effective management of chronic diseases would continue. The old-age pension would gradually increase to 300 GEL, and for different pension categories to 400 GEL.

The goal of the healthcare reform envisaged by the plan of the "United National Movement - United Opposition" was to create a national healthcare system focused on disease prevention and the healthy and long life of the population. Such a system should ensure the right of every citizen of Georgia to receive timely, quality, and affordable medical services. Prevention and quality-oriented medical services - safe, effective, and efficient, especially prevention of oncological diseases, and implementation of a modern quality management system - were considered a priority of the national healthcare system. According to their plan, 500 million GEL state investment should be determined in the health of citizens. Drug prices will be halved; a comprehensive preventive examination would be introduced at least once a year; the improved universal healthcare service would provide state-sponsored private premium insurance of 400 GEL for everyone who benefits from universal healthcare up to 50 thousand GEL, with full financing of emergency and planned operations; childbirth would be free; salaries of healthcare workers will be doubled. Furthermore, to strengthen the primary health care system, to improve its quality and accessibility, private medical practices would be introduced; the financing of state oncology programs would be increased and a regional oncology center would be opened - equipped with modern technologies and staffed by high-class specialists; 3 billion GEL would be transferred from medical tourism to the healthcare sector - the arrival of more patients for treatment in Georgia meant the emergence of more financial resources for clinics, which ensured the formation of a technological and modern healthcare system in the country and significantly increased salaries of employees in the healthcare sector. European integration is an important and special priority of modern foreign policy. Accordingly, we consider it important to discuss the opinions of the main political subjects concerning the above.

The "Georgian Dream-Democratic Georgia" program envisages: along with the maximum use of the existing tools and mechanisms of Georgia-EU cooperation, all efforts are made to create new opportunities to make the path to joining the European Union more tangible and bring practical results for the country and its name. For this it is necessary: to execution of

Association Agreement; find new opportunities for relations between Georgia and the European Union within the framework of "Eastern Partnership" and further develop cooperation; and physical integration in the European Union; work in the direction of integration into the European single market; preparation of the official application for membership in the European Union. Moreover, Georgia's NATO membership is considered one of the key foreign political priorities of the country; Georgia, as an aspirant country, should continue to use all the political and practical mechanisms at its disposal and opportunities for bilateral cooperation as efficiently as possible to increase the country's defense capability and bring the prospect of NATO membership even closer.

According to the "United National Movement - United Opposition" program: the western path of development is the historical choice of Georgia; the goal of the main plan is to: increase the international role of Georgia for de-occupation and European integration; strengthen the support of Western partners; restoration and strengthening of strategic partnership relations with the United States of America; acceleration of becoming a member of the European Union and NATO; attracting investments from all corners of the world, which directly affects the economic success of our country, the well-being and peace of citizens of Georgia; activation of the NATO-Georgia partnership format, Georgia's accession to NATO; by promoting the process of democratization, the relationship between Georgia and the European Union will be activated, and integration into the European Union, in the single economic space, will be accelerated.

From the reviewed program documents it is clear that political entities tried to give their promises a certain character.

### **Conclusion**

The work tries to present the reality that developed in Georgia during the 2020 parliamentary elections and discusses the legislative changes that are the result of a long discourse, as well as several features. Gradually, in detail, we compared party election programs in different directions, concerning the current problems in the country. Particularly, the impact of political processes in the country on program documents; and the dynamics of the attitude of political parties to problems in Georgian reality (environmental protection, education, women's involvement in politics, health care, foreign policy).

According to the presented programs, it is a fact that all political subjects considered the implementation of projects focused on large-scale development in different directions to be very important.

However, as it became obvious, political entities do not have any specific solution mechanisms to solve public problems.

From the materials presented and discussed in the work, it is clear that the political parties represented in the 2020 parliamentary elections correctly understood the role of international

agreements in the current situation and their key role in the policy formulation process. Therefore, although some issues are assessed differently, their common desire is to regulate the existing reality so that the legal framework complies with European standards and is implemented with the utmost precision. It is also important to raise the awareness of citizens on several issues and to activate the education agenda, considering their greater involvement.

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