

## Georgia

### The Unfinished Adventure of Democratic Transition

#### *Mapping Georgia's Post-Communist Political Transition*

- Since its independence (following the disintegration of Soviet Union), Georgia experienced several waves of constitutional and political changes.
- 1995: Georgia adopts new constitution and presidential system is established.
- 2003: Rose Revolution: Consolidation of neoliberal forces – democracy threatened by the methods of neoliberal autocracy.
- 2010: Georgia approves constitutional amendments, moving gradually towards parliamentary system. The goal of change: to keep in power neoliberal president of Georgia Mikheil Saakashvili after his second presidential term (ended in 2013) by taking the position of Prime Minister.
- 2012: Ruling party United National Movement led by Mikheil Saakashvili loses parliamentary elections. Transferring power to new ruling party – Georgian Dream.
- 2012 – 2018: Georgian Dream strengthens political and constitutional reforms. Presidential system is replaced by parliamentary system. President keeps symbolic and ceremonial power.
- 2018: Georgia holds direct presidential elections last time. Next president to be elected with indirect method.
- 2019: Georgia takes next step for greater transformation of its political and electoral system.

#### *Attempts for Fundamental Transformation of Electoral System*

- 2019: Georgian Dream proposed to decrease electoral threshold with 0.67% for forthcoming parliamentary elections in October 2020. The goal of proposal: to enable larger political representation in parliament of Georgia.
- 2019: Georgian Dream also announced its willingness to abolish majoritarian system and to keep proportional representation as the only method.
- 2019: Parliament of Georgia fails to pass constitutional changes to hold 2020 legislative elections under proportional system. Members of Georgian Dream who supported this initiative from initial stage change their decision and play central role to vote against. Georgia Dream is accused in manipulation.
- 2020 Georgian Dream reinitiates constitutional changes (in compromise with political opposition) to introduce important changes in election system. Deliberative process for the public discussion around the changes is launched via media.
- Summer 2020: Parliament of Georgia approves constitutional changes. According to changes threshold for legislative elections 2020 will be 1%. Also, there will be 120 proportional mandates and so called 30 majoritarian mandates in parliament of Georgia.

#### *Ideological Crisis and Poverty of Georgian Party Democracy*

- Although proportional system contributes Georgia's democratic transition, its popular importance and political impact remains vague.
- Mainstream political parties in Georgia lack clear ideological identity and political values.
- There are no ideological discrepancies among the political parties on major political, economic, social and cultural issues.
- Imitative and tautological practice: all mainstream parties imitate same political and economic orientations exemplified in three socio-political concepts and strategies: liberalism, Europeanism and free market economy.
- Considering imitative practice of political orientations, there are no moral, political, cultural or philosophical debates among Georgian political parties.
- Moral problem of Georgian democracy: Its same as just everywhere – making liberal ideology higher ideal than the idea of democracy.