

A portrait of a woman with dark hair, wearing a light blue button-down shirt, looking slightly to the left. The background is blurred, showing what appears to be an office or indoor setting with windows.

**MONITORING MEDIA FREEDOM
VIOLATIONS IN GEORGIA –
JANUARY 2024 – JUNE 2025**

2025

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Cover photo: Zura Tsertsvadze / Netgazeti

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INTRODUCTION

The Center for Media, Information and Social Research (CMIS) monitors violations of media freedom in Georgia. This report covers the full calendar year of 2024 and the first half of 2025, through the end of June. During this period, CMIS documented 222 media freedom violation alerts, encompassing 459 individual cases; several media representatives and outlets were impacted more than once. The report provides an overview of the state of media freedom in Georgia, highlights key issues and emerging trends, and offers analysis of the types of media freedom violations recorded, and their perpetrators

According to CMIS's documented data, mostly independent media professionals were subjected to a wide range of violations, including an increasing number of physical violence, verbal attacks, such as threats, discreditation and intimidation attempts, and the use of legal and bureaucratic mechanisms to target their activities. The legal actions included fining journalists, detentions, arrests, and imprisonment - Mzia Amaglobeli, founder and director of the online publications *Batumelebi* and *Netgazeti*, was arrested and sentenced to two years in prison. Additionally, journalists frequently faced interference with their work in the form of being denied entry into public spaces or events, or being forcibly removed from such venues.

CMIS also observed incidents involving damage to journalists' equipment and violations of employment rights, among others. CMIS' monitoring results demonstrate that public protests in 2024 and 2025, and the 2024 parliamentary elections were characterized by the highest concentration and variety of incident types.

Among the identified perpetrators, law-enforcement officers emerged as the primary actors, responsible for the majority of documented violations, followed by administrative bodies and the courts. The document includes a chapter presenting general statistics. The subsequent chapter is dedicated to themes of particular importance during the monitoring period when the incidents occurred.

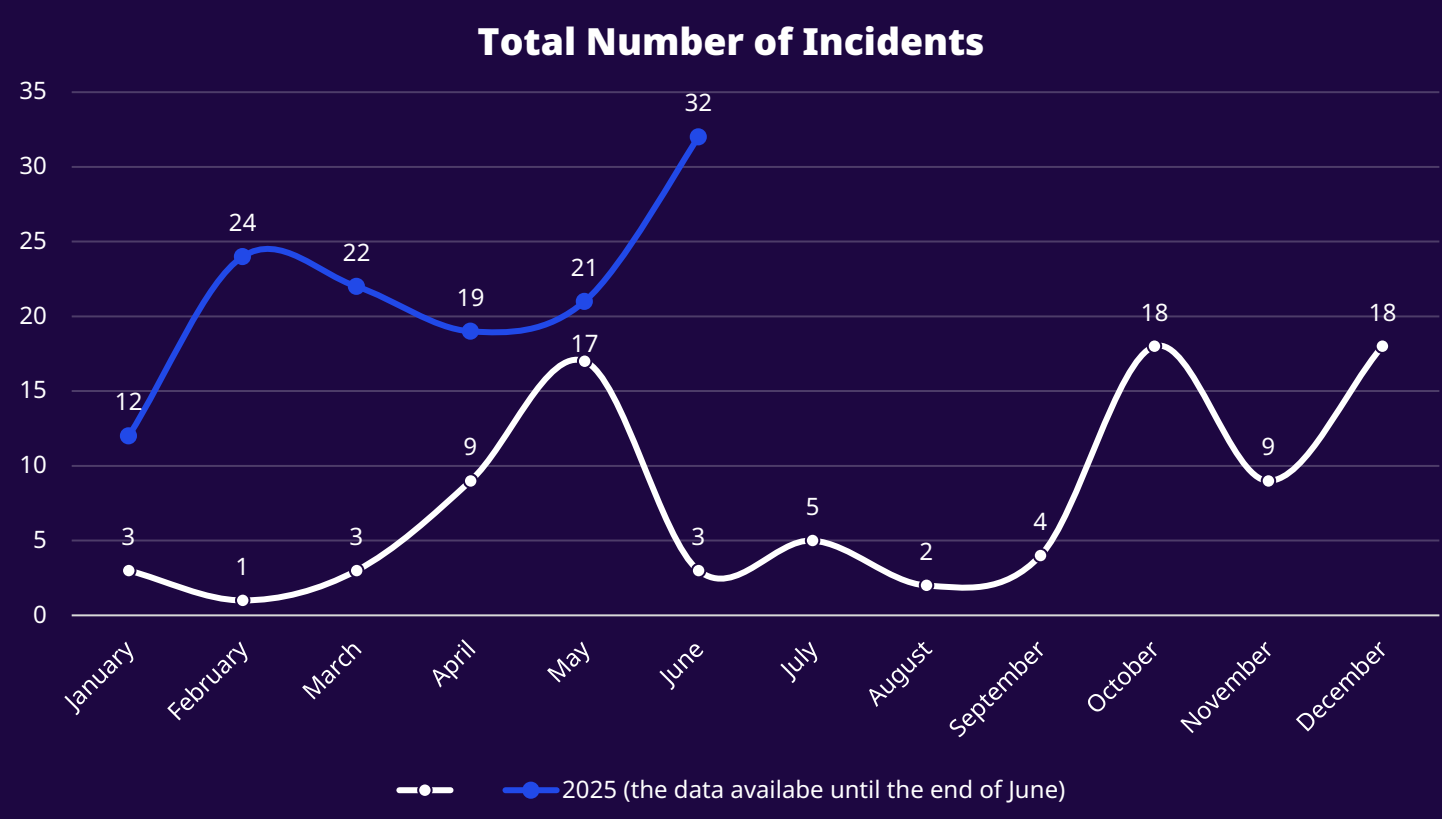


These include developments surrounding mass public protests; the adoption of repressive legislation by the Georgian Dream-led Parliament; violations observed on the 2024 parliamentary election day; violations of journalists' right to information during court hearings; harassment and intimidation of media workers; and any other contexts in which physical assault, injury, interference or other incidents limited media workers capacity to perform their duties.

This report has been prepared by the Center for Media, Information and Social Research (CMIS), as part of its project dedicated to monitoring and documenting violations of media freedom in Georgia. The alerts forming the basis of this report can be accessed through the alerts webpage - <https://cmis.ge/en/incident/>.

GENERAL STATISTICS

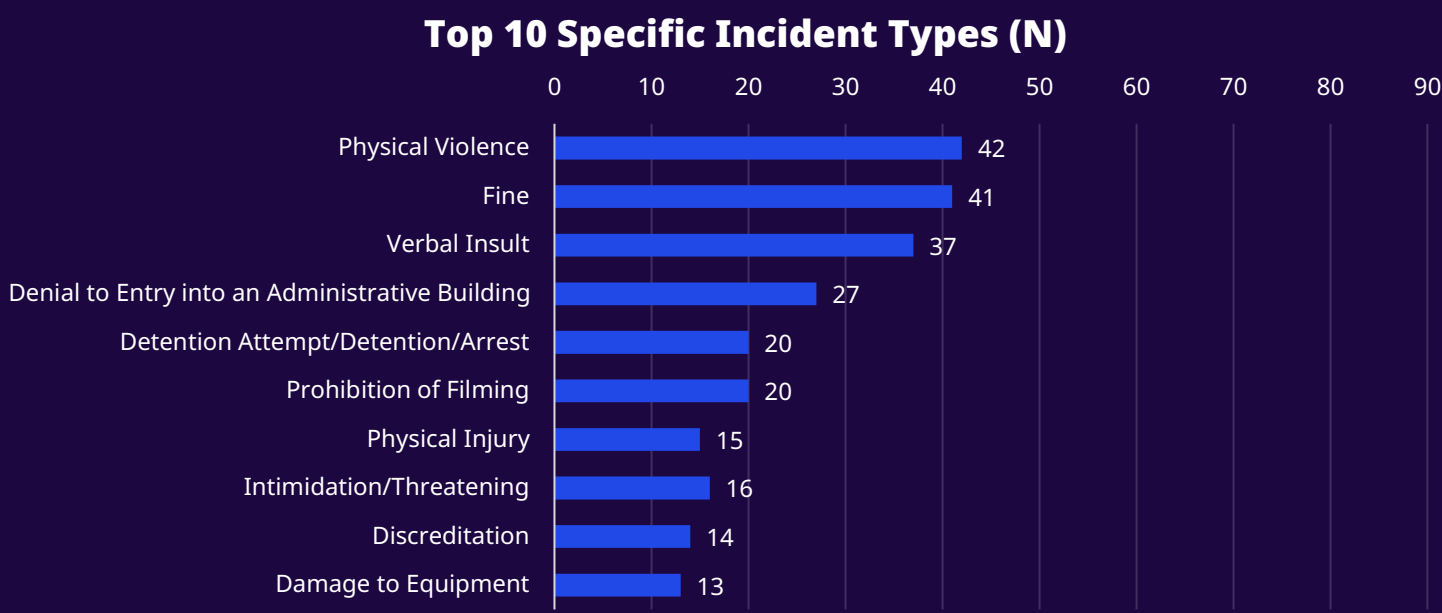
CMIS documented a total of 222 incident alerts, affecting 459 media representatives or media organizations; several media representatives and outlets were targeted more than once. In 2024, 92 incidents were recorded over a 12-month period, impacting 279 media representatives and media outlets. During the first half of 2025, 130 incidents were documented, affecting 180 media representatives and media organizations.



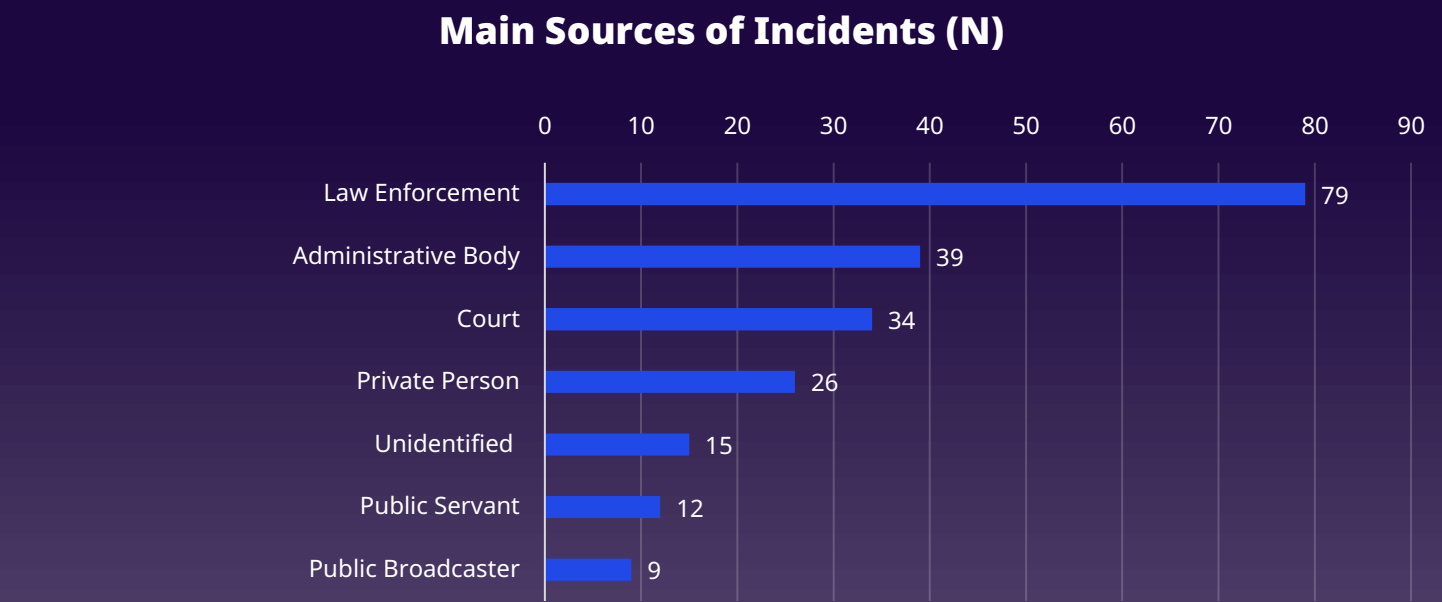
Legal incidents were most common (84), followed by interference (61) and verbal attacks (54). Physical violence (42), attacks on property (20), and physical injury (15) were less frequently reported in open sources.

MAIN INCIDENT TYPES (JANUARY 2024- JUNE 2025)	N
Legal Incidents	84
Interference	61
Verbal Attack	54
Physical Violence	42
Attack on Property	20
Physical Injury	15

Physical violence (42) and fines (41) were most frequent, followed by verbal insult (37) and denial of entry into administrative buildings (27). Detention/arrest and prohibition of filming (20 each) were also common; other reported types were intimidation/threats (16), physical injury (15), discrediting (14), and damage to equipment (13).



Law enforcement (79), administrative body (39) and court (34) were the most frequently identified or mentioned as perpetrators, followed by private individuals (26), unidentified individuals (15), public servants (12) and the Public Broadcaster (9).



MAJOR ISSUES RELATED TO MEDIA FREEDOM VIOLATIONS

Violations of media freedom during the monitoring period - January 2024 - June 2025 - primarily occurred in the following areas: the adoption of laws or legal amendments that undermined media freedom and facilitated legal attacks on journalists and media outlets; various incidents targeting media representatives while covering protests, elections, court hearings, and parliamentary sessions; and labor rights violations within the Georgian Public Broadcaster, which dismissed journalists and other staff members critical of the channel's editorial policy.

LAWS RESTRICTING MEDIA FREEDOM

Between 2024 and mid-2025, Georgia underwent a sweeping transformation of its legal and institutional landscape, resulting in the dramatic erosion of fundamental rights, particularly freedom of expression, press freedom, and civil society independence. Spearheaded by the ruling Georgian Dream party, a series of repressive legislative measures have effectively placed independent journalism, political pluralism, and civic activism under threat. Altogether, at least [7 laws and legal amendments](#) were introduced restricting media media freedom and many more affecting freedom of expression.

Foreign Agents Law

The legislative campaign began with the reintroduction and [passage](#) of the controversial *Transparency of Foreign Influence Law*, also referred to by civil society and public as the “Russian Law,” in May 2024. Initially withdrawn in 2023 after mass public protests, the law was reintroduced in 2024 and passed despite fierce local and international criticism. It [mandates](#) the registration of any civil society or media organization registered in Georgia receiving more than 20% of its funding from foreign donor organizations as entities “carrying out the interests of a foreign power.” Noncompliance with the law can result in fines in the amount of up to 25, 000 GEL (approximately €8500).

Anti LGBTQ+ law

Another legislative [amendment](#) targeted expressions of gender diversity. In December 2024, the *Law on the Protection of Family Values and Minors*, known as the anti-LGBTQ+ law, came into effect. It banned gender reassignment surgery, legal gender recognition, and prohibited media or academic content that was seen as “popularizing” LGBTQ+ identities. The law was accompanied by a package of 18 additional statutes that banned public demonstrations in support of queer rights, gender-affirming healthcare, and LGBTQ+ content in education and media. Specifically, broadcasters are [prohibited](#) from airing content that promotes identification with a different biological sex, same-sex relationships, or incest. This includes scenes depicting intimacy or incest between individuals of the same biological sex. However, broadcasters are not held liable if they had no actual control over the content’s dissemination. The law was [criticized](#) for its discriminatory nature towards LGBTQ+ people, limiting freedom of expression and gender expression.

Foreign Agent Registration Act (FARA)

This legal framework enabling independent media was further confounded in 2025 with the [adoption](#) of the *Foreign Agents Registration Act (FARA)* in April 2025. Claimed by the government to be a “literal translation” of the U.S. FAR, an assertion debunked by experts, Georgia’s FARA encompasses an even broader definition of a “foreign agent”, including not only organizations, but also individuals acting “in the interest of a foreign power.” The law introduces the term “agent of a foreign principal”, which can be anyone starting from an employee of a civil society or media organization or any other entity who “acts in Georgia for the benefit of a foreign principal or in their interests.” The law introduced prison sentences of up to five years and monetary fines of up to GEL 10,000 (approx. €3,500). Various local and international organizations criticized the Georgian Dream government for adopting the law, emphasizing that it threatens [civil society](#) and [human rights](#).

Amendments to the Broadcasting Law

Simultaneously, the *Law of Georgia on Broadcasting* was [amended](#). The law now bars broadcasters from receiving any foreign funding, with narrow exceptions for commercial advertising. “The blanket prohibition on foreign funding for media broadcasters, according to international human rights law, is unequivocally an unjustifiable restriction on freedom of association and expression,” reads the [analysis](#) of the Social Justice Center. Besides, the amendment also introduces detailed regulations regarding standards for television and radio broadcasting, due accuracy of facts and the right to reply. It also adds regulations on fairness and impartiality of facts, inviolability of private life, obtaining and transmitting information using covert methods, reporting on armed conflict, accidents and other emergencies, and certain issues related to the protection of minors. Furthermore, the law extends the authority of the Georgian National Communications Commission to regulate not just technical compliance but also content accuracy, impartiality, and privacy, enabling the state to penalize or revoke licenses of non-compliant outlets. According to the [analysis](#) of *Transparency International*, the vagueness of these amendments grants broad discretion to the Communications Commission to penalize broadcasters.

Grants Law Amendments

On April 1 2025, the Georgian Parliament [passed](#) additional amendments to the *Law on Grants*, mandating that any foreign grant to a Georgian organization must first be approved by a designated governmental authority. Recipients of unapproved funds face penalties double the grant amount. Besides, the definition of a grant to include technical and expert assistance, knowledge sharing, and other similar types of contributions has been added. These amendments have been widely [condemned](#) as a direct tool of political repression designed to paralyze civil society by cutting off its main financial resources. According to the Joint [Statement](#) by High Representative/Vice-President Kaja Kallas and Commissioner Marta Kos, “Georgia’s Foreign Agents Registration Act marks a serious setback for the country’s democracy. Alongside recent laws on broadcasting and grants, it represents another aggressive action by the Georgian authorities to suppress dissent, restrict freedoms, and further shrink the space for activists, civil society, and independent media. These repressive measures threaten the very survival of Georgia’s democratic foundations and the future of its citizens in a free and open society.”

Amendments to the Organic Law on Common Courts

On June 18 2025, new amendments to the *Organic Law on Common Courts* drastically [restricted](#) media access to courtrooms and public access to judicial decisions. These changes, passed under an accelerated procedure, ban photo, video, or audio recording within court buildings unless specifically authorized by the High Council of Justice. Journalists are now required to obtain special permission to report on hearings, and decisions cannot be published until final adjudication and must be depersonalized. The law also allows the confiscation of personal devices within court premises and criminalizes expressions deemed disrespectful toward judges. “These changes will significantly restrict media activities and effectively undermine public oversight of the judicial system,” Media Advocacy Coalition [warned](#).

Law on Freedom of Speech and Expression

On June 18, Georgian Dream initiated [amendments](#) to the Law on Freedom of Speech and Expression, which were reviewed by Parliament under an accelerated procedure. The redefined defamation clause removes the need to prove harm, shifts the burden of proof to the defendant, and allows courts to impose damages even if a correction is issued. Key protections - such as source confidentiality, qualified privilege, and safeguards balancing privacy with free expression - are being eliminated. Public insults are now broadly punishable, and the law applies retroactively for 100 days. These changes severely weaken free speech protections, especially for journalists and civil society actors, and contradict constitutional and international human rights standards.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LAWS RESTRICTING MEDIA FREEDOM

Anti-Corruption Bureau Launches Inquiry into Fact-Checking Organizations

Two organizations that run fact-checking projects - Media Development Fund (MDF) and International Society for Fair Elections and Democracy (ISFED) were served with a court order initiated by the Anti-Corruption Bureau, requesting detailed information pertaining to their activities. The Bureau has requested extensive documentation, including personal data of beneficiaries and partner organizations. According to the court order, the information was requested on the basis of the Law Against Corruption, the Law on Political Associations of Citizens and the Law on Grants. The Law on Grants was recently amended, requiring a donor to seek for the government or an authorized official's approval for the issuance of a grant. On June 30, the court of appeals rejected the NGOs request to overturn the Anti-Corruption Bureau's court order, obligating the NGOs to transfer the requested data.

MDF and ISFED are also members of the Media Advocacy Coalition. The Anti-Corruption Bureau has taken action against some other members of the Media Advocacy Coalition, namely - Transparency International (TI) Georgia and Civil Society Foundation.

Georgian Dream Sues Broadcasters

On June 5, the Communications Commission accepted for consideration complaints filed by Georgian Dream against *TV Pirveli*, *Formula TV*, and *Mtavari Arkhi*. The broadcasters are accused of violating provisions of the Law on Broadcasting, adopted by the ruling party parliament on April 1, 2025. According to information disseminated by the broadcasters, the complaints relate to the use of such expressions during live broadcasts as: "regime prisoners," "regime court," "illegitimate parliament," "so-called parliament," and similar expressions.

The Media Advocacy Coalition responded to the situation with a statement: "The repressive legislation recently initiated and adopted by Georgian Dream deliberately restricts freedom of expression and the public's access to alternative opinions and information," the statement reads.

On July 3, the Communications Commission ruled that *TV Pirveli*, *TV Formula*, and *Mtavari's* website violated the Broadcasting Law by using the mentioned terms ("regime," "oligarch regime," and "illegitimate government"), which questioned the Georgian Dream government's legitimacy.

However, it imposed no sanctions or written warnings in response to the complaint filed by Georgian Dream.

First Consequence of the Amendments to the Law on Grants

The online publication Tabula.ge won't [receive](#) a £50,000 grant from the UK embassy, which it had secured through a competitive procedure. The funding was intended to support public information efforts regarding the progress of the local elections in Georgia. According to the publication's statement, the British government, in compliance with the newly adopted Law on Grants, [requested](#) formal permission from the Georgian Dream government to proceed with the disbursement. In response, the government stated that the resolution on the "Grant approval procedure" has not yet been finalized. As a result, there are currently no established mechanisms or timelines for decision-making under the "Grant approval procedure."



INCIDENTS DURING DEMONSTRATIONS

Police violence against journalists at demonstrations has been a persistent [issue](#); however during the 2024 and 2025 protest actions, the number and variety of incident types reached unprecedented levels, affecting about 195 media representatives and media organizations. Several journalists were targeted multiple times and faced more than one type of incident. The most widespread incident types recorded were: legal incidents affecting/ including detention/arrest - 55, physical violence - 52, physical injury 50, and interference/including prohibition of filming - 22, among others.

Protests Against Foreign Agent Law Adoption

On April 3, 2024, the ruling Georgian Dream (GD) party [revealed](#) that it planned to reintroduce the [Law on Transparency of Foreign Influence](#), which was dubbed as “Russian Law” by civil society groups and activists. This marked the GD party’s second attempt to pass the bill, after being forced to [withdraw](#) it in 2023 following widespread public protests.

The discussion of the draft law in 2024 took place against the backdrop of large-scale protests. Coverage of the demonstrations was marked by numerous violations of the rights of independent media representatives.



According to monitoring by the *Center for Media, Information and Social Research*, the most common types of incidents were physical violence (10) and physical injury (12). For example, during the dispersal of a protest rally on the night of April 30 and May 1, 14 journalists were [targeted](#) by law enforcement officers. Police used pepper spray and tear gas excessively against media representatives covering the protest, and several were [subjected](#) to verbal and physical abuse.

There were also far more severe cases:

- On April 17, during a protest in front of the Parliament building in Tbilisi, special forces officers [assaulted](#) four journalists: Aleksandre Keshelashvili from the online media outlet *Publica*, Giorgi Baskhajauri from *Media April*, Giorgi Badridze from *Tabula*, and Nurlan Libre, an independent journalist from Azerbaijan.
- On April 30, a *TV Pirveli* camera crew journalists - Nanuka Kajaia and Davit Beradze - were forcibly [removed](#) from Chitadze Street near the parliament building. Cameraman Niko Kokaia was pepper-sprayed in the face. On the same day, the editor of online media outlet *Publika*, Lika Zakashvili, and journalist, Basti Mgaloblishvili, [were](#) pepper-sprayed allegedly by police forces.

- On May 14, a police officer physically assaulted Giorgi Zhamerashvili, a photo journalist for the news agency *Interpressnews*. On the same day, a police officer confiscated equipment from Saba Sordia, a journalist for the publication *Indigo*, and [prevented](#) him from working.

In a statement released on May 15, international media watchdog, Reporters Without Borders (RSF), [condemned](#) police violence against journalists: *"Deployed in large numbers on the streets of the capital, Tbilisi, the police have not hesitated to use violence to disperse those protesting against the law, which was submitted by the ruling Georgian Dream party and is heavily based on a Russian law designed to silence independent media outlets."*

Post- Election and Pro-European Protests

The second wave of large-scale protests began in the fall of 2024, affecting about 168 media representatives and media outlets. Several journalists were targeted multiple times and faced more than one type of incident.

- Journalists injured while working on post-election rallies:

The protests began after the official results of the parliamentary elections were announced on October 26. [According](#) to those results, the Georgian Dream party won a majority of seats in parliament. Opposition groups and civil society organizations alleged that the elections had been rigged and called for a vote recount and new elections. During this period, based on publicly available information, CMIS recorded seven cases involving media representatives who were subject to various incidents, including interference -3, physical violence - 3, legal incidents - 2, and attack on property - 2.

The first large-scale protest rally in Tbilisi was [announced](#) for November 4, with the first 24-hour demonstration [planned](#) for November 17, 2024. By that time, police had already begun arresting demonstrators, and journalists were facing obstacles in carrying out their work. Coverage of the post-election rallies saw numerous cases of interference, as well as verbal and physical attacks on media representatives. The rally on November 19 [proved](#) to be particularly intense:

- *OC Media* photographer Mariam Nikuradze had her phone [seized](#) while she was filming activists as they forcibly cleared the road.
- *Netgazeti.ge* correspondent Givi Avaliani was [stopped](#) by police from filming.
- Mindia Gabadze, a journalist from *Publika.ge*, was physically attacked.

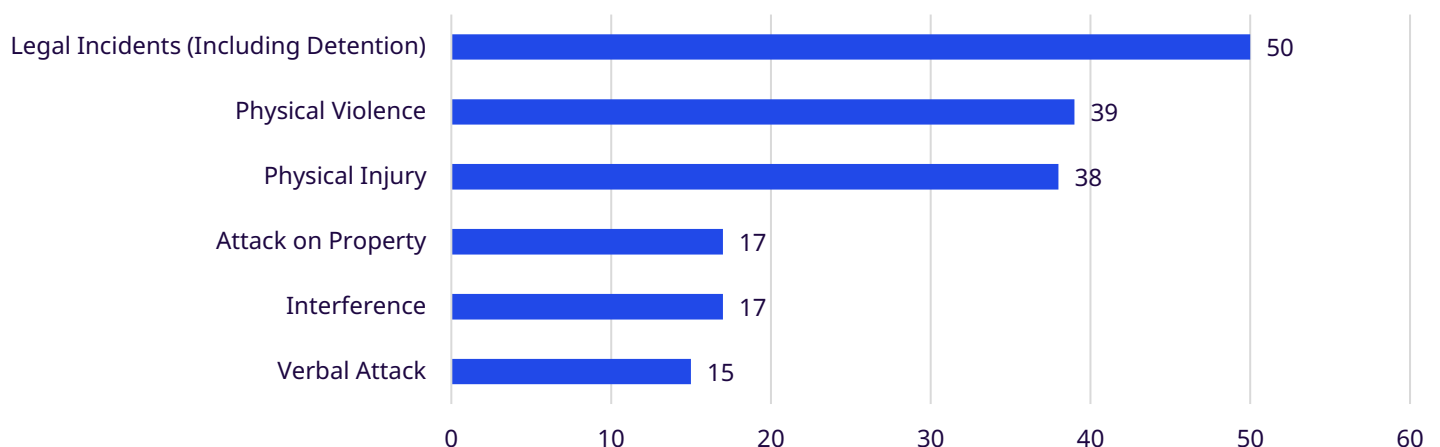
- Police [blocked](#) Formula TV journalist Giorgi Kvizhinadze and his cameraman from filming.

Reports of verbal and physical abuse against media representatives continued to surface after this. In one case, the [confrontation](#) did not come from law enforcement but from a public service employee. During the November 25 protest, the editor-in-chief of the online outlet *On.ge*, Vancent Khabeishvili, was verbally and physically attacked by a man wearing the uniform of the Tbilisi cleaning service, “Tbilservice Group.” The attacker’s aggression was reportedly [sparked](#) by a video Khabeishvili had filmed of a clergyman leaving the Kashveti Church and arguing with protest participants.

- Journalists injured while covering pro-European protests

On November 28, 2024, the Georgian Dream Prime Minister, Irakli Kobakhidze, [announced](#) that the party would not put the issue of opening negotiations with the European Union on the agenda until the end of 2028. From that day, the autumn protests entered a new phase, transforming into a broader, pro-European protest movement across the country. This stage of the protests impacted around 161 media representatives. During this phase, the most widespread incident types documented were legal incidents at 50, physical violence - 39, physical injury - 38, attacks on property - 17, interference - 17 and verbal attack - 15.

Pro-European Protests (November 28, 2024- June 1, 2025. N)



On November 28 alone, publicly available reports indicate that 40 journalists were [obstructed](#), attacked or injured. For example, while [covering](#) the November 28 protest:

- Guram Rogava, a journalist with the TV company *Formula*, was seriously [injured](#) while reporting live on air when he was suddenly struck from behind by a special forces officer. He sustained severe head and neck [injuries](#) and required extensive medical treatment, and long-term rehabilitation. An investigation into the incident is underway, but no arrests have been made.
- Aleksandre Keshelashvili, a journalist with the online outlet *Publika*, was [detained](#) by law enforcement while carrying out his professional duties. His camera was confiscated, and he was [beaten](#). He was later released on bail and taken to a medical facility, where he was found to have serious injuries that required surgery.
- During the early morning dispersal of the demonstration, a journalist with *Radio Tavisupleba*, Davit Tsagareli was [punched](#) in the abdomen by a riot police officer. After knocking him to the ground, the officer continued kicking him.
- Giorgi Shetsiruli, a cameraman for *TV Pirveli*, was physically [assaulted](#) by a special forces officer. According to a journalist working with him, the officer [approached](#) Shetsiruli from behind and struck him in the back.
- Special forces officers physically [assaulted](#) Giorgi Gogua, editor of *Project 64*, kicking him repeatedly.

The following incident merits particular attention: the physical attack on the *TV Pirveli* film crew, which [took place](#) on the evening of December 7, while journalist Maka Chikhladze and cameraman Giorgi Shetsiruli were broadcasting live. Video footage shows a masked man [approaching](#) Chikhladze from behind, striking her in the head, and knocking her to the ground. At the same time, several individuals [attack](#) and beat the cameraman after he falls. Both members of the crew required medical attention.

While covering the protests, journalists were [targeted](#) by police using water cannons, pepper spray, and tear gas canisters. As a result, several media representatives were injured, most of whom required medical attention:

- On December 4, 2024, *TV Formula* [reported](#) that special forces officers twice targeted their journalist, Luka Tkebuchava, with gas canisters.
- On December 2, 2024, a police officer [shoved](#) *OC Media* editor, Mariam Nikuradze, against a wall, damaging her camera.

- On November 30, 2024, the Georgian Public Broadcaster Channel One photographer, Mirian Meladze, was allegedly [injured](#) by a rubber bullet at the protest site on Rustaveli Avenue.

The Public Defender's Parliamentary [Report](#) condemned the violence against journalists in 2024, citing "the threatening environment for media representatives in the country, which became particularly acute during protest demonstrations." The report also expressed concern over "cases of persecution and violence against civil activists, journalists, and public figures by unknown individuals, as well as organized telephone threats and other forms of violent intolerance."

Independent Journalists Fined for "Artificially Blocking the Road" while Performing their Professional Duties

Since autumn 2024, during the period of ongoing pro-European protests, numerous cases have emerged of media representatives being sanctioned while carrying out their professional duties. Among these were fines issued to journalists covering protests, on the alleged grounds of "artificially blocking the road."

The first publicly known case of a journalist being fined occurred shortly after the elections. Specifically, *Radio Liberty* journalist, Salome Chaduneli, [received](#) the police order on November 10, 2024. The police contacted her and informed her that she had "blocked the road".

According to publicly available information, a total of 37 cases were [recorded](#) in which media representatives were fined for "artificially blocking the road," with several journalists being fined multiple times:

- The Ministry of Internal Affairs has [fined](#) Mariam Nikuradze, founder and photographer of *OC Media*, four times for "artificially blocking the road," totaling GEL 20,000. Nikuradze has appealed all the fines. In one case, her request to abolish the fine was rejected, the others are still under review. In all incidents, she was performing her professional duties, wearing a press badge, and carrying a camera.
- *TV Pirveli* photojournalist, Giorgi Mosiashvili, was [fined](#) twice by the Ministry of Internal Affairs, with a total of 10,000 GEL. The police accused him of "artificially blocking the road" on Rustaveli Avenue on February 21 and March 11. However, at both times, Rustaveli Avenue was already [blocked](#) by protestors, and Mosiashvili says he was only covering the event.

- Anamaria Gelitashvili, a journalist for *TV Formula*, was [fined](#) twice - a total of GEL 10,000 - for “artificially blocking the road” on Rustaveli Avenue while she was reporting there. She is accused of blocking the road during protests on March 27 and May 6. Gelitashvili maintains that she was carrying out her journalistic duties in both cases, and video evidence supports her claim.
- Irakli Datunashvili, a journalist for the online outlet *JamNews*, was [fined](#) twice while covering protest rallies - first on February 28 and again on March 6.

According to the Georgia’s Administrative Offenses Code “Artificially blocking the road” is [considered](#) a violation under Article 174 1 on assemblies and demonstrations. Notably, amid the pro-European protests that began on November 28, the Georgian Dream party-led Parliament [increased](#) the fines for this offense. According to the amendments, the penalty for blocking a traffic lane was increased tenfold - from GEL 500 to GEL 5,000.

According to the [statement](#) by the Georgian Young Lawyers’ Association (GYLA), “in cases under this article, the police rely heavily on facial recognition cameras. In most instances, the primary evidence presented is photos from these cameras, which are often submitted to the court without proper context but are still treated as sufficient proof to find individuals guilty of violating the law.”

Journalists charged with “artificially blocking the road” were doing their jobs at the protests. As demonstrators moved onto Rustaveli Avenue and blocked the traffic lane, journalists were on site - reporting live, conducting interviews, and taking photos and videos.

DETAINING AND ARRESTING JOURNALISTS

Since January 2024, detentions and arrests of journalists have reached unprecedented levels, mostly while they were covering protest rallies. Over the course of a year and a half, a total of 16 separate cases were documented. Of these, 15 took place during the coverage related to the so-called “Russian law,” post-election protests, and post-European protests. Mzia Amaglobeli, founder and director of the publications *Batumelebi* and *Netgazeti*, was arrested twice; the court sentenced her to both administrative and criminal penalties, which includes imprisonment and fines.

1. On April 6, 2025, Saba Sordia, a journalist for *Indigo*, was [arrested](#). At the time, he was not engaged in journalistic work. Sordia spent 48 hours in a pre-trial detention center and was charged with disobeying a police officer (Article 173 of the Code of Administrative Offenses). He was later released and fined GEL 2,000.
2. In the early morning hours of February 19, 2025, police officers used force to detain *TV Pirveli* cameraman Lasha Jioshvili. He was accused of disobeying a police officer (Article 173 of the Administrative Offenses Code). On February 20, the court found Jioshvili guilty of the administrative offense and fined him GEL 2,500.
3. On the night of January 12, 2025, during a [protest](#) near the Police Department in Batumi, police arrested Mzia Amaglobeli, founder and director of *Batumelebi* and *Netgazeti*, following an altercation in which she slapped the police chief. She was sentenced to 2 years in prison on August 6, under the Criminal Code (See below for more on Mzia Amaglobeli's case).
4. Late on the evening of January 11, 2025, during a protest in front of the Police Department in Batumi, police [detained](#) Mzia Amaglobeli, founder and director of *Batumelebi* and *Netgazeti*, for an administrative offense. She was detained for affixing a protest sticker to a wall and was released later that night after signing a written statement.
5. On January 12, 2025, during a protest in front of the Constitutional Court in Batumi, police [arrested](#) Guram Murvanidze, a cameraman and photographer for *Batumelebi*, while he was covering the event. He was sentenced to eight days of administrative detention.
6. Photographer Luka Ghviniashvili was [arrested](#) on December 12, 2024, and [sentenced](#) by the court to seven days of administrative detention.
7. On the night of December 7, 2024, Beslan Kmuzov, a journalist for *Kavkazky Uzel*, was [detained](#) after taking a photo of riot police officers on Rustaveli Avenue. The court [fined](#) him 2,000 GEL, and he was [released](#) on December 9.
8. On December 7, 2024, Beka Korshia, a journalist and anchor for *Mtavari Arkhi*, was [arrested](#) during a protest. According to the TV company, Korshia was physically assaulted during his arrest. He was [released](#) on December 9 and [fined](#) 2,200 GEL by the court.
9. On the night of December 1, 2024, during the violent dispersal of a protest at the Rustaveli metro station, police [arrested](#) Giorgi Chagelishvili, a journalist for the online outlet

Mautskebeli. Video footage [shows](#) Chagelishvili identifying himself as a journalist to the police, but they still detained him.

10. According to the online publication *On.ge*, [photographer](#) Nikoloz Tabukashvili was [arrested](#) at a protest rally on November 30, 2024.
11. On November 30, 2024, special forces officers [arrested](#) and beat a producer at *Radio Tavisupleba* - Beka Beradze. He was taken to the Sagarejo temporary detention center. Beradze told his lawyer that he identified himself as a journalist to law enforcement, but they [arrested](#) him regardless.
12. On November 19, 2024, police physically assaulted Sergi Baramidze, a cameraman for *Mtavari Arkhi*, [prevented](#) him from doing his job, and arrested him. His television equipment was also [damaged](#).
13. In the early hours of May 3, 2024, during a protest against the so-called “Russian law” on Rustaveli Avenue, police [arrested](#) Giorgi Badridze, editor of the online publication *Tabula*. He was [released](#) after signing a written statement a few hours later.
14. On April 30, 2024, photographer Luka Gviniashvili was covering a protest when he was physically [assaulted](#) by special forces officers and then arrested. He spent two days in a pre-trial detention center.
15. Also on April 30, 2024, police officers forcibly [pulled](#) Robi Zaridze, a journalist from *I Fact*, into a cordon where he was physically assaulted by special forces officers before being arrested. He was released once it became clear that he was a journalist carrying out his professional duties.
16. On January 23, 2024, while the National Enforcement Bureau was evicting a family from a residential building, Gela Mtivlishvili, founder and editor-in-chief of the online outlet *Mtis Ambebi*, was covering the event when police [detained](#) him for alleged disobedience. He was later released following a court decision and [fined](#) 2,000 GEL. On the day of his arrest, Mtivlishvili filed a complaint with the Special Investigation Service, accusing authorities of illegal detention, interference with journalistic work, and physical violence. Five months following the investigation, the Prosecutor General’s Office officially [recognized](#) him as a victim.



The Case of Mzia Amaglobeli

Journalist Mzia Amaglobeli, founder and director of the two independent publications *Batumelebi* and *Netgazeti*, known for their critical stance toward the government, is the first female journalist to become a political prisoner in Georgia since the collapse of the Soviet Union. On August 6, 2025, Judge Nino Sakhelashvili sentenced her to 2 years in prison.

Mzia Amaglobeli was [arrested](#) twice during a protest in Batumi on the night of January 11-12, 2025. She was first detained for affixing a protest sticker on the wall of the Batumi Police Department that read “Georgia Goes on Strike.” The police removed the sticker shortly after it was posted. A few hours later, Amaglobeli was released after signing a written statement, but she was soon arrested again - this time accused of slapping Batumi Police Chief - Irakli Dgebuadze. An investigation was opened against her under [Article 353 1 of the Criminal Code](#), which covers [assaulting](#) a police officer, a special penitentiary officer, or another government official. Amaglobeli has been placed in pretrial detention as a preventive measure and faced four to seven years in prison if convicted. Over the course of eight months, during the review of the preventive measure, the court did not consider any arguments and kept the journalist in pretrial detention. While in prison, Amaglobeli’s health sharply [deteriorated](#), which could have been an

additional reason to change her preventive measure; however, Judge Sakhelashvili ignored the requests of the lawyers and local and international human rights defenders.

The video footage released shows that Mzia Amaglobeli's second arrest was preceded by a scuffle near the police department building. According to Eter Turadze, editor-in-chief of *Batumelebi*, after her release from the first arrest, Amaglobeli was standing with the relatives and supporters, away from the police station gates. The situation was calm, and the crowd was beginning to adjourn, when the Batumi Police Chief, Irakli Dgebuadze, approached and confronted those gathered. At that moment, police [arrested](#) one of Amaglobeli's relatives. The video from that evening shows Amaglobeli falling during the stampede that erupted following the arrest. It was after this incident that the slapping took place.

The Georgian Ministry of Internal Affairs has opened three cases against Mzia Amaglobeli - two under the Code of Administrative Offenses and one under the Criminal Code. Both administrative cases stem from the incident of posting the protest sticker. In the first case, Amaglobeli was charged with "disobeying a lawful police order." On March 18, 2025, Judge Salikh Shainidze of the Batumi City Court ruled her guilty and [fined](#) her GEL 2,000. The second case [accused](#) Amaglobeli of damaging the appearance of the building by affixing the sticker. On June 18, 2025, Judge Marina Fomaeva of the Batumi City Court also found her guilty in this case and [imposed](#) a fine of GEL 1,000.

Transparency International thoroughly examined Mzia Amaglobeli's arrest and imprisonment. In its report, the organization [states](#): "It is clear that she is being punished not for any serious offense, but for exposing the regime's corruption and other unlawful actions over the years. Therefore, it can be concluded that Mzia Amaglobeli is a political prisoner according to the definition established by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe."

Mzia Amaglobeli's case has [attracted](#) significant attention both nationally and internationally. Local and international human rights organizations and politicians have consistently described her as a political prisoner. According to the Georgian Young Lawyers Association, her case highlights how the courts fail to fulfill their role and instead issue politically motivated decisions.

On June 19, 2025, the European Parliament adopted a [resolution](#) on media freedom in Georgia, including the case of Mzia Amaglobeli, by a vote of 324 to 25. The resolution condemns her politically motivated arrest and prosecution, calls for her immediate and unconditional release,

and demands that all charges against her be dropped. It states that Amaglobeli is being punished for exposing corruption and reporting on electoral fraud during the 2024 elections, and that her detention lacks a clear legal basis.

The Clooney Foundation–TrialWatch, founded by human rights activist Amal Clooney and actor George Clooney, is closely monitoring the case of Mzia Amaglobeli. The foundation specifically notes its ongoing attention to the situation [involving](#) the director of *Batumelebi* and *Netgazeti*.

On August 6, the judge [reclassified](#) the charges to Article 353 Part One of the Criminal Code. The article refers to resisting a police officer, a special penitentiary service employee or another government official with the aim of obstructing the maintenance of public order, interrupting or changing his activities. The article envisions a fine or house arrest for a term of up to two years or imprisonment for a term of 2 to 6 years.

Amaglobeli's sentencing was condemned by local and international officials and organizations. 24 diplomatic missions released a [joint statement](#) on the sentencing of journalist Mzia Amaglobeli: "The case of Mzia Amaglobeli and the pressure on *Batumelebi* and *Netgazeti* exemplify the escalating intimidation of journalists in Georgia, including unpunished violence and legal persecution, in clear violation of the country's international obligations to protect media freedom and freedom of expression, We repeat the message of the Media Freedom Coalition statement of 20 December 2024, condemning all intimidation and violence against journalists and media workers. We express our solidarity with Mzia Amaglobeli and call for her immediate release,"- the statement reads.

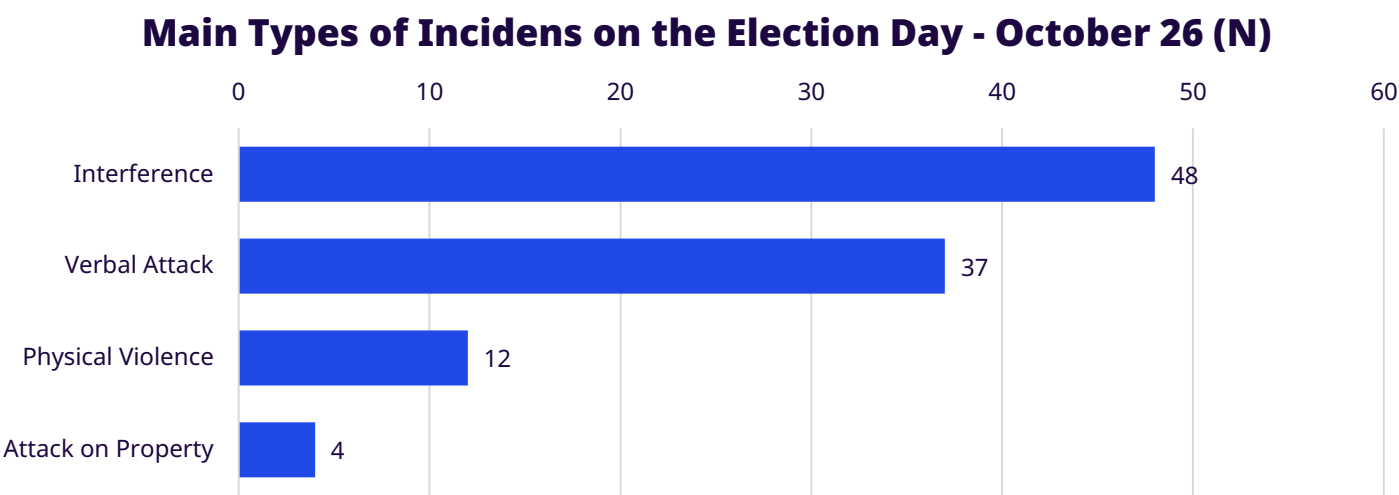
The publications *Batumelebi* and *Netgazeti*, [founded](#) by Mzia Amaglobeli, are known for their critical editorial stance and high-quality journalism. *Batumelebi* received the European Press Award in 2009, followed by *Netgazeti* in 2015.

THE 2024 PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS

The October 2024 parliamentary elections were plagued by breaches of vote secrecy, vote buying, intimidation, and violence at polling stations, among other issues. International observer missions — including the [OSCE/ODIHR](#) and a [preliminary](#) report by the National Democratic Institute (NDI) — reported serious obstruction of democratic processes and procedural violations both in the lead-up to and on election day.

During the coverage of the parliamentary elections, journalists across Georgia faced a hostile and challenging working environment. This was despite clear legal protections in [the Constitution of Georgia, the Organic Law - Election Code, the Law on Broadcasting](#), and regulations on media participation in the electoral processes. These laws and regulations guarantee both the public’s right to receive comprehensive, impartial, and objective information about the pre-election campaign, the conduct of the vote, and the media’s right to report freely, fairly, and in accordance with established normative procedures.

Despite these legal protections, monitoring by the CMIS on election day documented numerous violations. Journalists were barred from filming, subjected to intimidation, threats, and verbal abuse, had their equipment damaged or confiscated, were expelled from polling stations, and in some cases suffered physical violence and injury.



According to publicly available information compiled by CMIS, approximately 75 media representatives were obstructed in their work on election day, with documented incidents including 48 reports of interference - including prohibition on filming and expelling from polling stations, 37 reports of verbal abuse, 12 reports of physical assaults, and 4 reports of equipment damage.

These are some of the cases:

- Mindia Gabaidze, a reporter for the online outlet *Publika*, was verbally [abused](#) by unidentified individuals near the polling station No. 59 in Tbilisi's Gldani district. The [video](#) footage published by *Publika* shows a group gathered outside the station hurling insults and making offensive gestures at the journalist as he is filming them and asking them why they were there. One of the individuals identified himself as a [supporter](#) of the Georgian Dream party.
- Another such incident [occurred](#) near Precinct No.16 in the village of Kvemo Khodasheni, Telavi District, where a *TV Pirveli* crew was reportedly [attacked](#) by individuals believed to be affiliated with the Georgian Dream party. The attack followed the cameraman's filming of what appeared to be voter intimidation and bribery. The publicly available [footage](#) shows unidentified individuals stationed near the polling station, sitting in vehicles with voter lists and allegedly distributing money. During the assault, the cameraman was [beaten](#), and the equipment was fully destroyed.
- The journalists - Keta Tsitskishvili of *Mtavari Arkhi* and Mariam Gaprindashvili of *TV Pirveli* were [expelled](#) from polling station No.38 in Tbilisi. Later, while questioning individuals gathered near the station, they were verbally abused by one person, who also attempted to [touch](#) them physically.

RESTRICTIONS ON MEDIA ACTIVITIES IN COURTS

During the ongoing pro-European protests, more than 70 activists and protesters were arrested and charged with various criminal offenses, some of whom have already been [sentenced](#). Human rights advocates [argue](#) that these cases are politically motivated. They also view the arrests of opposition party leaders - accused of failing to appear before a Special Parliamentary Investigative Commission set up by the Georgian Dream - as acts of political persecution.

While covering these high-profile trials in courts, journalists work not only inside the courtrooms but also in areas where [tensions](#) often run high, such as corridors and courtyards. During the monitoring period, there were frequent [incidents](#) in which court bailiffs physically mistreated those present, including members of the media. Between May 22 and June 30, 2025, eight such cases were recorded at Tbilisi City Court (on May [22](#), [23](#), [29](#), and [30](#), and June [10](#), [11](#), [19](#), and [21](#)),

in which reporters with photo or video equipment were barred from entering the building, expelled from courtrooms, or threatened with being denied entry in the future.

- On May 30, 2025, journalists were [barred](#) from entering and working inside the Tbilisi City Court building. Those without prior permission to cover the proceedings from inside the courtroom were denied entry to the building, even though, under the law at the time, no such permission was required for journalistic activities outside the courtroom.
- On June 10, 2025, the court hearing was completely [closed](#) to the media - including those with permission to film - without any explanation. Judge Nino Galustashvili shut the session for 11 individuals arrested during the pro-European protests and dismissed all media representatives from the courtroom without justification, even those authorized to record.
- On June 11, 2025, Tbilisi City Court Judge Mikheil Jinjolia unexpectedly closed the hearing in the trial of [Giorgi Akhobadze](#), who was arrested during the protests. Journalists - including those [authorized](#) to film - were once again excluded from the proceedings without any explanation.

According to the legislation in force since 2013, which was approved by the Georgian Dream party, the Public Broadcaster had the prerogative to unlimitedly film and distribute the recording of an open court trial, and it was obliged to share the recordings with other broadcasters. In the event that the Public Broadcaster did not cover a trial - another general broadcaster was entitled to filming, based on a substantiated request submitted to the court. In addition, filming was allowed in court corridors and yards. On June 26, 2025, the Georgian Dream parliament, in an accelerated manner, [adopted](#) amendments to the Organic Law on General Courts in the third reading. According to these new norms, the media are prohibited from taking photos, videotaping, and broadcasting during court sessions. Video and audio recording of a court session shall be permitted only by a motivated decision adopted by the High Council of Justice, based on a previously submitted reasoned petition. The provision that granted a general broadcaster the right to film, in the event the Public Broadcaster did not attend the proceedings, was abolished. Accordingly, coverage of the proceedings may be permitted only in connection with each specific court session, based on a decision adopted by the High Council of Justice of Georgia. In addition, the amendments prohibited media recording in court buildings, corridors, and yards. On July 1, an additional amendment was [introduced](#) banning audio recording of court proceedings.

On June 30, 2025, the first results of the new regulations were observed - at the Tbilisi City Court, where the trial of the “prisoners of conscience” was underway, media representatives were not allowed into the court building at all. Before the session, journalists [applied](#) to the High Council of Justice for permission to cover the session, but did not receive any response from them.

As of July 2, 2025, the High Council of Justice was still not responding to written requests from media representatives. Against this background, the lawyers of the “prisoners of conscience” [petitioned](#) the court to allow journalists to attend the hearing in order to ensure the publicity of the proceedings. Nevertheless, the judge stated that the decision-making is the Council’s prerogative. At this stage, the Council refuses to communicate with the media - it will not give a negative or positive answer.

The closure of court hearings to the media has been criticized by Georgian non-governmental organizations. “The ban on media access to court proceedings is not only a violation of the rights of journalists, but also an infringement on the right of the entire society to be informed,” Transparency International Georgia [stated](#).

THE GEORGIAN PUBLIC BROADCASTER SANCTIONS AND DISMISSES CRITICAL JOURNALISTS

In parallel with the ongoing pro-European demonstrations in Georgia, the activities of the Public Broadcaster have become the subject of [criticism](#) from [local](#) and [international](#) organizations. The activities and editorial policy of the Public Broadcaster were [criticized](#) by the broadcaster's own [journalists](#) and employees, as well as by three members of the Public Broadcaster's Board of Trustees.

The GPB management has taken actions against journalists and employees who publicly [criticized](#) the channel’s editorial stance: during the monitoring period, 2 employees were dismissed, and disciplinary sanctions were imposed on 8.

- Dismissed from their positions: [Vasil Ivanov-Chikovani](#), anchor of the news program; [Nino Zautashvili](#), host and author of the program *Real Space*; [Ani Metreveli](#), producer of the programs *Midday Peak* and *Evening Peak*;
- Prior to this, [Vasil Ivanov-Chikovani](#) and morning show host, [Ani Jobava](#), were removed from the air;

- Disciplinary sanctions were imposed on: Tukha Kvinikadze, editor of the program [Real Space](#); Tamar Chincharauli, executive producer of the *Weekend Show*; Ana Abakelia, correspondent of the *Weekend Show*; Tamar Mshvenieradze, journalist of *Real Space*; Ioseb Katsitadze, host of [Real Space](#); Kakha Melikidze, director of control room and, concurrently, director of the sports channel; Irma Chubinidze, director of the branding and promotion team, and Giga Kitia, editor and operator at the GPB.

Earlier, on March 21, 2025, during a board meeting, members of the Public Broadcaster's Board of Trustees asked the Prosecutor's Office to investigate the activities of the employees critical of the channel's editorial policy - Vasil Ivanov-Chikovani, Nino Zautashvili, and Kakha Melikidze; the board members were [requesting](#) the Prosecutor's Office to investigate the facts of these employees' "groundless accusations" of the broadcaster.

On May 30, 2025, at the meeting of the Board of Trustees, [amendments](#) were made to the Board's [regulations](#). According to these amendments, attendance of public meetings of the Board is [possible](#) only online. A person wishing to attend must apply by e-mail at least 2 days before the meeting, after the meeting agenda of the Board of Trustees is published. The same amendments determined the rules for attendance and participation in the meeting process. The amendments entered into force on June 1, 2025. These amendments made the work of the Public Broadcaster even more opaque.

RESTRICTIONS ON MEDIA'S ACCESS AND REPORTING IN THE PARLIAMENT

Against a backdrop of marked deterioration in the legislative framework, administrative bodies have imposed additional barriers that constrain media freedom. In 2023, the Parliament of Georgia enacted two administrative regulations: "On the Rules for Accreditation of Mass Media Representatives in the Parliament of Georgia" and "On Approval of the Rules for Security Protection in the Palace of the Parliament of Georgia."

On September 4, 2023, Resolution N1/259/23 established security rules that periodically limit media's access and operations within the Parliament building, ostensibly for security reasons. These restrictions often coincide with parliamentary debates on matters of high public interest. Since 2024, such limitations have been imposed [8](#) times, barring entry not only to non-accredited

media but also restricting accredited television outlets - limiting them to 3 camera crews per outlet inside the building.

As noted, these measures have typically been enforced during discussions of high-profile issues or hearings involving senior political officials.

From 2024 to date, several events have been designated at a “yellow” security level, further restricting media freedom:

- June 27, 2025 - [Hearing](#) of the annual report of the Prime Minister of the Georgian Dream - Irakli Kobakhidze;
- May 14, 2025 - [Hearing](#) of the annual report of the Chairman of the Parliament of the Georgian Dream, Shalva Papuashvili;
- February 4, 2025 - [Hearing](#) the annual report of the President of the Georgian Dream, Mikheil Kavelashvili;
- November 25, 2024 - The first [meeting](#) of the new, 11th convocation of the Georgian Dream Parliament;
- June 28, 2024 - [Statement](#) by the Prime Minister of the Georgian Dream - Irakli Kobakhidze;
- May 28, 2024 - [Discussion](#) of the issue of the veto of the President of Georgia regarding the so-called "Russian law";
- May 13, 2024 - [Discussion](#) of the so-called "Russian law" at the plenary session;
- April 14, 2024 - Committee [discussion](#) of the so-called "Russian law".

The “Rules for Accreditation of Mass Media Representatives in the Parliament of Georgia” were [established](#) by the order of the Chairman of the Parliament, Shalva Papuashvili, on February 6, 2023. The document defines the rules and conditions for the accreditation of media representatives. A study of the practice by the Charter of the Journalistic Ethics of Georgia [revealed](#) that “the accreditation rule has become a punitive lever for the parliamentary majority against critical media. Changes to the accreditation rule may also be harmful to ordinary citizens, since Georgian society has the right to familiarize itself with political discussions taking place in the legislative body and the opinions of elected representatives on issues of fundamental importance.” During the CMIS monitoring period, it was revealed that the most frequently used norm (Article 15) for suspending accreditation for journalists implies the obligation of an accredited journalist to “terminate the interview if a member of the Parliament of Georgia, an

employee of the staff or a person visiting the Parliament refuses to record the interview”. During the monitoring period, CMIS recorded 4 incidents of suspension of accreditation for journalists for asking critical questions, which affected [7 journalists](#) in total. Below are some of these cases:

- On April 30, 2025, journalists from the TV company *Formula* Eliso Jariashvili and Tata Porakishvili [received](#) notices of suspension of their accreditation by the Parliament of Georgia for one month. In both cases, the journalists [attempted](#) to obtain answers to critical questions from Georgian Dream Members of the Parliament (MP), conduct which the administration of the legislative body [considered](#) a violation of the “Rules for Accreditation of Mass Media Representatives in the Parliament of Georgia.” Tata Porakishvili’s accreditation was suspended at the request of the Georgian Dream MP Nino Tsilosani, and Eliso Jariashvili’s at the request of the Georgian Dream MP Archil Gorduladze.
- On June 3, 2024, the Georgian Parliament [suspended](#) the accreditation of a journalist from *TV Pirveli*, Nata Kajaia for one month. The accreditation was [suspended](#) based on an appeal by Sozar Subari, an MP from the People’s Power Party, an ally of the Georgian Dream. The journalist was asking him a question regarding the so-called “Russian law”.
- On May 21, 2024, the parliamentary accreditation of the *TV Pirveli* journalist - Maka Chikhladze - was suspended for one month at the [request](#) of Guram Macharashvili, an MP of the People’s Power party. The [video](#) footage published by the TV company shows the journalist talking to him about sanctions. The MP initially answers her question, but then interrupts the conversation and threatens to terminate her media accreditation.

VERBAL ATTACKS ON MEDIA OUTLETS AND JOURNALISTS

During the monitoring period, CMIS documented 68 instances of verbal insult, 23 instances of threats, and 12 attempts to discredit media representatives, affecting a total of 95 journalists and media outlets. These incidents occurred across various contexts in the course of journalistic work and affected one and the same journalist more than once, or more than one type of verbal attack was inflicted on an individual. Specifically, 16 media representatives were subjected to insults, threats, or attempts to discredit them while covering public protests; 37 journalists recorded verbal attack on the Election Day (October 26, 2024); and 42 cases took place in other settings, among them, while journalists were working on the streets, or within private or administrative premises, and on social media.

CMIS has also documented attempts by high-ranking officials to verbally attack and discredit independent media and individual journalists. For example, CMIS documented [5 such incidents](#), by the Speaker of the Georgian Dream Parliament - Shalva Papuashvili:

- On June 11, 2025, Shalva Papuashvili [labeled](#) the online outlet *Tabula* an “extremist publication” and a “party wall newspaper.” His remarks followed a statement from the British Embassy, which, citing the delay in grant-related procedures by the Georgian Dream party, announced cancellation of funding intended for election monitoring. *Tabula* was one of the competition’s winners and was slated to [receive](#) GBP 50,000 to cover pre-election period;
- On February 1, 2025, the Chair of the Georgian Dream Parliament accused the online *Publika* of “advertising a call to commit a criminal offense” after it [posted](#) an announcement about planned protest actions;
- On February 20, 2024, Shalva Papuashvili publicly [demanded](#) an explanation from the European Union Delegation to Georgia as to why Gela Mtvlishvili, editor of the outlet *Mtis Ambebi*, was among the finalists of the “EU Prize” journalism competition. He labeled *Mtis Ambebi* a “disseminator of disinformation”.

Between January 2024 and June 2025, independent media and journalists have become targets of verbal attacks by members of the Georgian Dream and/or individuals close to the ruling party. Such incidents have often occurred when reporters have attempted to obtain answers to critical questions. Below are a few such cases:

- On June 7, 2025, a relative of a businessman aligned with the Georgian Dream, who is also employed by a state-owned company, publicly [threatened](#) *TV Pirveli* journalists Tamta Dolenjashvili and Nodar Meladze in a social media post: “Nodar Meladze, I will tear your head off (in the full sense of the word) and I will do the same to Tamta Dolenjashvili”;
- On February 27, 2025, Akhaltsikhe City Mayor, Irakli Lazarishvili, called *TOK TV* journalist Misho Darbaidze “pest” for [asking](#) critical questions;
- On December 8, 2024, at a press conference held at the government administration, Georgian Dream Prime Minister Irakli Kobakhidze addressed BMG editor Telara Gelantia with offensive language and [threatened](#) to expel her from the press conference - “Now I’ll throw you out, stop chattering right now. I mean it - stop chattering, or I’ll throw you out if you keep going”;

- On October 16, 2024, Kharagauli Mayor verbally [assaulted](#) Laura Gogoladze, the founder and editor of the newspaper *Chemi Kharagauli*, and journalist Nino Kapanadze, and prevented them from attending an election meeting of the Georgian Dream party, calling the journalists “bought and hired by various parties” and “known for provocation”;
- On August 22, 2024, Tbilisi Mayor, Kakha Kaladze, verbally [abused](#) a journalist from the TV company *Mtavari Arkhi* in response to a question about his expensive car. “For those idiots, for idiots like you, such a car could cost 500,000,” Kaladze told a journalist.

CRITICAL OPINIONS AGAINST GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS ON SOCIAL MEDIA BECOME PUNISHABLE

On June 12 2025, 6 journalists - Eka Mishveladze, Vika Bukia, Misha Mshvildadze, Dea Mamiseishvili, Vakho Sanaia, and Nanuka Zhorzholiani - were [summoned](#) to Tbilisi City Court for expressing critical opinions about the Georgian Dream government officials on social media. All journalists were found guilty and were fined. The complaints are based on Article 173 of the Code of Administrative Offenses, which penalizes verbal insults, profanity, or other offensive actions against public officials in connection with their official duties. The prescribed penalty is a fine of GEL1,500–4,000 or up to 45 days of administrative detention.

According to the Georgian Young Lawyers Association, posts published on social media, unless they contain a threat of real risk and are directed at politicians who have a high duty of tolerance, are protected by freedom of expression. “Any judicial interpretation made contrary to this standard would be a precedent for mass censorship,” the organization’s statement [reads](#).

RESTRICTIONS ON THE FOREIGN JOURNALISTS’ ENTRY TO AND EXIT FROM GEORGIA

In 2024 and 2025, based on publicly available information, the Center for Media, Information and Social Studies recorded [9 cases](#) in which foreign journalists and photographers were denied entry into Georgia and [1 case](#) in which a foreign journalist was prevented from leaving the country. In none of the cases did law enforcement officers specify the reason for the denial of entry into the country. In the document they handed over to the journalist, the reason was stated as “other circumstances stipulated by Georgian legislation.”

According to publicly available information, the journalists denied entry were known for their criticism of the Georgian Dream and Russia's President, Vladimir Putin. These journalists come from several European countries; some of them had previously visited Georgia, and some had experience covering the ongoing protests in the country. Among them are also the editor of a Georgian-Armenian publication and a Belarusian journalist.

Examples of Entry Denial to Georgia:

- On June 11, 2025, French photographer [Marylise Vigneau](#) was denied entry to Georgia. The photographer visited Georgia twice in 2024 and has also photographed ongoing demonstrations in the country. Her photographs have been published in *The Eye of Photography* and *Hot Mirror*, and exhibited at the Tbilisi Photo Festival - Umbrella;
- On May 20, 2025, British journalist Will Neal, who had lived in Georgia since 2022, [was denied](#) entry to the country; earlier on March 31, Neal published an investigative report on the UK-based companies owned by the Russian oligarch, Roman Abramovich, and also on Bidzina Ivanishvili, the founder of the Georgian Dream party in Georgia.
- IFJ Global journalist Stefan Goss was [denied](#) entry to Georgia on October 26, 2024. The Swiss journalist was traveling to Georgia to cover the parliamentary elections;
- On October 22, 2024, Czech/British journalist Ray Baisley was [denied](#) entry to Georgia. Baisley was [detained](#) at the Tbilisi International Airport for 34 hours;
- On September 17, 2024, Arsen Kharatyan, founder and editor-in-chief of the Georgian-Armenian publication Aliq Media, was [deported](#) from Tbilisi airport to Istanbul;
- On September 16, 2024, Belarusian journalist and activist Andrei Myaleshka, who has been living in Georgia with his family for the past three years, was [denied](#) entry to Georgia;

Restrictions on the Right to Leave the Country:

- On July 17, 2024, Georgian law enforcement officials did [not allow](#) Afgan Sadikov, the editor-in-chief of the Azerbaijani media outlet *Azel.tv*, to leave Georgia. On August 3, Sadikov was arrested and on August 4, the Tbilisi City Court sentenced him to pre-arrest detention. On April 16, 2025, after the Tbilisi City Court granted the prosecutor's motion and replaced the pre-arrest detention applied to Sadikov with bail, he was released from custody.

MEDIA OUTLETS CLOSED OR AT RISK OF CLOSURE



Mtavari Arkhi

On May 1, 2025, 5 years and 8 months after its establishment, the pro-opposition TV company *Mtavari Arkhi* [ceased](#) broadcasting. According to the TV company's statement, one of the channel's founders, out of personal goals and revenge, [led](#) the broadcaster to its closure.

The first public statement about the ongoing crisis at the station was made by the channel's General Director, Giorgi Gabunia, on December 12, 2024. According to him, one of the channel's founders and co-owners, Zaza Okuashvili, was exerting pressure over the channel's management. Gabunia [linked](#) this pressure to his attempt to resolve a dispute with the founder of the Georgian Dream party, Bidzina Ivanishvili.



Literary magazine Arili

On May 8, 2024 - thirty years after its founding, the Ministry of Culture, by decision of Minister Tea Tsulukiani, [terminated](#) public funding for the literary magazine *Arili*.

In a public [statement](#), *Arili's* editors described the decision as politically motivated, linking it to the magazine's solidarity with protests against the so-called "Russian law" and to its refusal to submit to ministerial censorship or moderate its critical editorial stance. They argued the funding cut was tied to ongoing political developments: The termination of funding for *Ariel* is clearly connected with the ongoing political processes in the country and is a logical continuation of the anti-Western propaganda launched by the government," the statement [stated](#).

The statement also appealed to readers for support. *Arili* continues to operate with financial contributions from its audience.



TV Borjomi

At the end of 2024, the regional broadcaster with a 27-year history, *TV Borjomi*, ceased broadcasting. The station broadcasted in the Samtskhe-Javakheti region and mainly covered current events. The station did not specify the details of why the broadcast was stopped: "2024 was the most difficult year, full of crisis and moral challenges. We are forced to temporarily suspend broadcasting starting from today," the TV company's statement released on December 31 on social media [reads](#).



TV 25

On January 20, 2025, TV 25 - the only commercial media outlet in the Ajara region, on air for 32 years - announced that, starting from January 1, it had suspended its news programs and political talk shows. On April 16, 2025, the station [announced](#) it was for sale. Director Murtaz Frangulashvili [told](#) *BM.ge* the decision was made by shareholders. Until December 2024, 51% of the company was owned by Jemal Verdzadze (who died in 2024) and 49% by Giorgi Surmanidze; according to the Register of Entrepreneurs and Legal Entities, as of July 1, 2025, the 51% stake was held by Nariko Jijavadze, the late owner's widow.

On April 17, the Georgian Charter of Journalistic Ethics issued a [statement](#) stressing that due to the drastic deterioration of media freedom, regional media outlets are no longer able to function; the statement also mentioned the case of TV 25.



Radio Holding Hereti

On June 25, 2025, it became known that the Revenue Service [imposed](#) a collection order on the bank accounts of the *Radio Holding Hereti*. The company's director, Ramaz Samkharadze, [wrote](#) about this on social networks and asked for help. The *Radio Holding Hereti* unites three radio stations: in Tbilisi - *Radio Tbilisi*, in Kakheti - *Radio Hereti*, and in Batumi - *Radio Citrus*. As Ramaz Samkharadze writes, the collection order was imposed when *Radio Tbilisi* was preparing to extend its license and had already paid the fee. "Nothing is accidental. When you hear the voice of independent media and it speaks loudly, the response is quick - interference in the account, financial pressure, leverage and oppression. Everything is connected," Samkharadze states.



TV Trialeti

On June 30, 2025, *TV Trialeti*, a Shida Kartli-based broadcaster, [issued](#) a statement announcing that the Revenue Service had placed a collection order on its accounts for debts, dating back 10 - 15 years. The statement warned that could force the company to suspend broadcasting: "Already facing a financial crisis, the TV company will be unable to cover costs for electricity, internet, and signal distribution, nor will it be able to pay salaries, which may result in the suspension of television and radio services."

CONCLUSION

The report covering 2024 and the first half of 2025 has analysed violations of media freedom in Georgia. In total, 222 incidents were recorded, during which 459 media representatives and/or outlets were affected. For this report, CMIS identified several major topics developed in the chapters above: legislative measures that constrain media freedom; the 2024 elections; protests and related developments that impeded journalistic work; the imprisonment of Mzia Amaglobeli, founder and director of *Batumelebi* and *Netgazeti*, who received a two-year sentence under the Criminal Code - an emblematic case highlighting the persecution of a journalist via criminal law; the issues surrounding the Georgian Public Broadcaster and many others. In light of these events, the data show a higher frequency of violations in the first half of 2025, following the post-election period and the pro-European protests. CMIS continues to track incidents and monitors the state of media freedom in Georgia.

