



International Foundation  
for Electoral Systems

# **Election FAQs: Georgia**

## *2024 Parliamentary Elections*

### *October 26, 2024*

Europe & Eurasia

International Foundation for Electoral Systems

2011 Crystal Drive | Floor 10 | Arlington, VA 22202 | USA | [www.IFES.org](http://www.IFES.org)

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**Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

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## Election Snapshot

- Election Day: **October 26, 2024**
- Registered voters: **3,508,294 registered voters**
- Polling stations: **3,111**
- Seats: **150 seats**
- Candidate lists: **18 political parties**
- Campaign expenditure and donation limits: **Expenditure Limit is 0.04% of the GDP for the previous year and equal to 32.08 million GEL (11.81 million USD), while the donation limits are 60 000 GEL (22,093.75 USD) per natural person**
- Domestic and international observers: **64 international organizations and 102 local organizations.**

## When is Election Day?

Georgia is scheduled to hold its parliamentary election on October 26, 2024. The 150 members of Parliament will be elected for four-year terms through a new system in which all members are elected proportionally via party lists. Voting will take place from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Election Day.

## Why are these elections important?

The October 26 parliamentary elections are taking place at a critical time, when Georgia has reached a crossroads in its democratic progression. The elections were preceded by a series of defining opportunities and challenges to Georgia's democracy in the past year. In December 2023, Georgia was granted conditional European Union member candidate status, a significant step toward the country's Euro-Atlantic integration. However, since then the Georgian Parliament has passed a series of contentious laws. Legislative efforts have included the repeal of the electoral gender quota and the passage of the Law on Family Values (which restricts LGBTQI+ rights and protections) and the Law on Foreign Influence, also referred to as the Foreign Agents' Law. The passage of the Foreign Agents' Law spurred mass protests in Georgia and was widely criticized as an attack on civil society due to its requirement that any media or non-governmental entity register as an agent of foreign influence if it receives more than 20 percent of its funding from international actors. Given these developments, the upcoming election is seen as a critical opportunity for Georgians to reinforce democratic values by casting votes and determining their country's direction.

Notwithstanding a contentious political environment, this election also introduces a fully proportional electoral system. It will be the first nationwide vote that uses electronic voter identification devices and optical ballot scanners at polling stations and transmits preliminary results from optical scan boxes to the Central Election Commission via special tablets at precinct election commissions. In this election, an estimated 90 percent of voters will cast their votes at polling stations with the new technologies.

## Who are citizens voting for on Election Day?

Georgian citizens will cast ballots for members of the Georgian Parliament, who will be seated for four-year terms. The last parliamentary elections took place on October 31, 2020, when members of the Georgian Dream party were elected to 90 of the 150 seats.

## What is the electoral system?

The 150 members of Parliament (MPs) are elected to four-year terms under a full proportional representation system. Under this system, political parties present a ranked list of candidates, and seats in Parliament are allocated to parties in proportion to the share of votes they receive.<sup>1</sup> This ensures that the number of seats that a party gain reflects its overall level of support among voters. Voters cast ballots for a party, and candidates are elected in the order in which they appear on party lists. The system emphasizes proportionality but does not link individual MPs directly to specific voters, as elections are based on party representation rather than individual accountability. The electoral threshold for parties to enter Parliament is set at 5 percent.

The 2024 election will be the first time that Georgia will use the fully proportional system. The previous election, in October 2020, took place under a mixed parallel system.

## What is the legal framework for conducting the elections?

Five documents provide the legal framework for the Georgian parliamentary elections:

- The Constitution of Georgia;
- The Election Code of Georgia;
- The Law on Political Unions of Citizens;
- Central Election Commission Regulations;
- The Code of Administrative Offenses of Georgia ; and
- The Criminal Code of Georgia.

## Who is eligible to run as a candidate?

Any Georgian citizen who is at least 25 years of age and has lived in Georgia for a minimum of 10 years is eligible to be elected as a Member of Parliament. Parties were required to submit party lists to the Central Election Commission by September 26. The number of signatures required for previously unregistered political parties to register official candidate lists is 25,000.

## Are there reserved seats for women? What is the gender balance within the candidate list?

In June 2024, the Georgian Parliament abolished mandatory gender quotas, which required one of every four places on party lists to be awarded to women. Given that they hold only 14 percent of seats in the current Parliament, the abolition of gender quotas may further decrease women's representation and participation in Parliament.

## What are the campaign timelines and expenditure and donation limits?

The official campaign period for the parliamentary elections began 60 days before Election Day.

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<sup>1</sup> Article 125 (5), [Election Code of Georgia](https://cesko.ge/res/docs/20200921181950068.pdf)<https://cesko.ge/res/docs/20200921181950068.pdf>

Georgian campaign finance is regulated by the Law on Political Unions of Citizens and the Election Code.<sup>2</sup> Oversight of political finance was transferred from the State Audit Office to the Anti-Corruption Bureau under the prime minister, which was established in 2023. The bureau's responsibilities include all aspects of campaign finance, including reviewing and verifying documents and addressing formal complaints. The laws allow for public and private contributions to campaigns; annual party spending was reduced to 0.05 percent of Georgia's gross domestic product in the previous year. Additionally, private contributions by individuals to one or more party candidates cannot exceed 60,000 GEL (\$18,700 USD). Legal entities are no longer permitted to donate money to election campaigns. Loans from individuals or private entities to one or more party candidates are permitted up to 1 million GEL (\$311,760 USD). Campaign donations from foreign, public-funded, and anonymous sources continue to be prohibited.<sup>3</sup>

## **What is the election management body? What are its powers?**

The Central Election Commission (CEC) is Georgia's supreme election management body. It ensures the preparation and conduct of presidential, parliamentary, and municipal elections, as well as referendums and plebiscites.<sup>4</sup> The CEC also manages and maintains voter lists, voter registration, campaign lists, campaign registration, and verification of relevant documentation and requirements, among other duties. For the 2024 parliamentary elections, the CEC will manage the upcoming elections in tandem with 73 district electoral commissions and 3,111 precinct electoral commissions.

The CEC is headquartered in Tbilisi. Its work is governed by the Constitution of Georgia and the Georgian Election Code. The CEC currently comprises 17 members, under the authority of Chairperson Giorgi Kalandarishvili. Parliament appoints eight members to five-year terms based on their professional backgrounds and experience. The remaining nine members are appointed by parties that were registered by the CEC chair, either independently or through an electoral bloc granted by the parliamentary elections.<sup>5</sup> The CEC chair is appointed through nomination by the speaker of Parliament, and CEC members elect the deputy chair. A complete guide to the structure of the CEC can be found on the CEC's website.

The October 2024 elections will take place following substantial reforms to Georgia's Election Code that were introduced earlier in the year. Parliament approved amendments to the Election Code that altered the procedure for selecting the CEC chair and members. The legislation removed the deputy chair position, previously intended for opposition representation. The new procedure mandates that the speaker of Parliament, rather than the president, nominates candidates to the CEC. Approval requires a three-fifths majority (90 votes) on the first vote. If that is unsuccessful, a simple majority (76 votes) can elect candidates on subsequent attempts, with a maximum of two tries before the president gains appointment authority.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> See the Georgia [Election Code](#).

<sup>3</sup> Article 26 (1), Law on Political Associations of Citizens of Georgia  
<https://matsne.gov.ge/en/document/view/1557168?publication=64>.

<sup>4</sup> See the [Election Code of Georgia](#).

<sup>5</sup> Article 13, [Election Code of Georgia](#)

<sup>6</sup> See the law and the rules of procedure of the Parliament of Georgia and the Election Code of Georgia

## **What is the election management body doing to strengthen its technology and procedures to resist vulnerabilities and counter foreign interference?**

Cyberthreats can be traced to the Russo-Georgian conflict of 2008, when cyberattacks were perpetrated against Georgian government and other websites. In Georgia, malign influence by external actors through cybersecurity attacks and other means pose ongoing, significant security threats to electoral operations and public confidence in politics and governance. Such acts in recent years include a massive cyberattack credited to malign foreign actors in March 2020 that leaked the personal details of 4.9 million registered Georgian voters.<sup>7</sup> Such attacks highlight the looming threat of outside interference with key election infrastructure, such as voter lists, campaign pages, and ballots.

Along with cyberattacks, Georgia grapples with widespread misinformation and disinformation campaigns, which intensify during election periods. The campaigns often aim to undermine public trust in electoral processes and weaken confidence in Georgia's democratic institutions. External actors, notably from Russia, exploit social and political divisions by amplifying polarizing narratives via social media, fringe websites, and, sporadically, mainstream outlets. These propaganda efforts spread false and misleading information to manipulate public opinion on a range of domestic issues including ethnic minorities, Georgia's NATO membership aspirations, and its relationship with the European Union.

Foreign interference is also evident in the traditional and social media landscape, where coordinated, inauthentic actions linked to foreign networks spread conspiracy theories and discredit pro-Western candidates. These efforts tilt public perceptions and, in some cases, influence voter behavior. In these ways, they pose significant threats to the integrity of elections. The scale and sophistication of foreign disinformation campaigns remain a serious concern for the upcoming elections, demanding vigilant efforts to protect public discourse and the electoral process.

## **Who can vote in these elections?**

All Georgian citizens over the age of 18 have the right to vote in the upcoming elections, with some exceptions. Voter eligibility is restricted for Georgian citizens who currently serve prison sentences of up to three years for crimes more severe than misdemeanors and who are placed at inpatient psychiatric facilities under the Law of Georgia on Psychiatric Assistance. A voter's registration status can be verified on the Central Election Commission website. Citizens must provide valid identification that shows official registry in the district in which they will vote.

## **How many registered voters are there?**

In Georgia, there are 3,508,294 registered voters as of October 18, 2024.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> <https://civil.ge/archives/344717>

<sup>8</sup> <https://cesko.ge/en/siakhleebi/pres-relizebi/singleview/11034769-26-oktombris-archevnebstvis-amomrchevelta-saerto-raodenoba-sheadgens-3-508-294-s>

## **What provisions are in place that support the equal rights of women, persons with disabilities, and other marginalized groups?**

The Central Election Commission (CEC) seeks to “promote [an] equal election environment” for all, which is reflected in steps taken in 2024 to support voting by persons with disabilities and marginalized groups.

The CEC increased its engagement of persons with disabilities by purchasing or producing items that support their ability to vote. These include braille ballot guides, wheelchair ramps, and easy-read guides for persons with psychosocial disabilities. The CEC is also enforcing legislation that protects the voting rights of persons with disabilities. According to the CEC’s website, there are 348 polling stations with “simple adaptation” and 916 with ramps. The CEC uses the “simple adaptation” when there is no ramp available. A wheelchair accessible booth is available at each polling station.<sup>9</sup>

Support for voters who are members of ethnic minorities include engaging minority actors and stakeholders through a technical working group; preparing video clips on the services provided for those voters; allowing ethnic minority populations to verify their data online in their native languages; developing voter information materials in Georgian and ethnic minority languages; and translating ballots and ballot guides into Georgian and local languages.<sup>10</sup>

## **Is out-of-country voting allowed?**

Georgia does not currently offer alternative methods of voting, such as mail-in ballots or internet voting. However Georgian citizens registered abroad will be able to vote at Georgian embassies in 42 countries. In order to vote abroad, citizens were required to register with the appropriate embassy by October 8. For this election, optical ballot scanners and internet transmission will not be introduced in Embassies. Standard paper ballot voting will be used.

Out-of-country voting is important to Georgia’s significant diaspora. The Central Election Commission publishes a complete list of international polling locations, registration deadlines and other information for voters abroad on its website.

## **Who can observe during Election Day? How can they get accreditation?**

The Electoral Code of Georgia guarantees the rights and presence of domestic and international observers during the election period. According to the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, observers in Georgia have the right to be present at a polling station at any time and may inspect ballot boxes before they are sealed and after they are opened.

As of October 1, the list of observer organizations had been confirmed. However, international observer organizations can submit applications seven days before Election Day, so the list may

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<sup>9</sup> See the voter map graphic [here](#).

<sup>10</sup> See the [Central Election Commission website](#).

change. As of October 15, 2024, 64 international organizations and 102 local organizations have registered to observe the election.

## **Who is managing security on Election Day?**

The Georgian Ministry of Internal Affairs will facilitate security measures for Election Day. The overall objective of the ministry is to “[protect] legal order and to ensure the elections are conducted in a free, democratic, and safe environment.”<sup>11</sup>

## **Where are vote counting and tabulation held?**

Georgia’s Election Code defines a strict set of processes to ensure ballot boxes and ballots are uncompromised on Election Day and during vote counting. For the parliamentary elections precinct election commissions (PECs), district election commissions (DECs), and the Central Election Commission (CEC) will share one summary protocol.<sup>12</sup>

PEC counting officers will conduct the final count by hand and verify the validity of each ballot cast on Election Day. PECs will immediately submit summary protocols to their respective DECs, which will summarize the voting results for submission to the CEC through summary protocols with the signatures of the DEC chairperson and secretary, endorsed with the DEC seal, no later than the fifteenth day after the election. The CEC will review the summary protocols and additional documents submitted by the DECs to produce its own summary protocol with the final election results.

## **When will official results be announced?**

The Central Election Commission (CEC) will share election results no later than November 21.

The CEC will publish the results of the election on its website and will submit the results to designated media outlets two days after it announces the elected Members of Parliament and summary of results.<sup>13</sup>

## **How will election disputes be adjudicated?**

The Election Code requires all complaints of electoral violations to be recorded in a logbook at each precinct election commission (PEC) on Election Day and delivered to the PEC chairperson, who should respond immediately to the complaint. If the PEC chairperson refuses to respond to a given complaint or does not do so to the satisfaction of the complainant, the complainant has the right to appeal to the relevant district election commission (DEC).<sup>14</sup> PECs should resolve registered polling complaints immediately, while complaints related to the vote counting process are to be forwarded to DECs within three days. The application or complaint must be addressed within four days of registration at the DEC level. DEC-level decisions may

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<sup>11</sup> See the Ministry of Internal Affairs website [here](#).

<sup>12</sup> See the [Central Election Commission website](#).

<sup>13</sup> See Articles 125 (19) of the [Election Code](#).

<sup>14</sup> See Article 75 of the [Election Code](#).



be appealed to the relevant court or to the CEC.<sup>15</sup> The court's decision may be appealed within one day of its delivery to the Court of Appeals. All decisions by the Court of Appeals are final.<sup>16</sup>

## Resources

- [Constitution of Georgia](#)
- [Election Code](#)
- [Central Election Commission Schedule of Electoral Activities](#)
- [Central Election Commission Action Plan](#)
- [Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe Needs Assessment Report](#)
- [Central Election Commission website](#)

## About IFES in Georgia

The International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) has operated in Georgia since 1995, conducting a range of assistance activities to support the development of democratic elections and political processes. IFES currently implements a five-year United States Agency for International Development–funded project, Georgia Elections and Political Processes Support, as a member of the Consortium for Elections and Political Process Strengthening (CEPPS). Under CEPPS, IFES has improved electoral legislation and election administration, propelled discussions on constitutional and election legislative reform, strengthened the capacity of civil society and the media, supported political finance reform and implementation of regulations, increased the participation and enfranchisement of marginalized groups, and introduced the Democracy and Citizenship civic education course. Under a one-year UK Foreign Commonwealth Development Office–funded project, IFES also implements the Building the Capacity of Civil Society to Mitigate Election Crises program, which seeks to strengthen the resilience of Georgia civil society against electoral crises.

## Disclosure

These FAQs reflect decisions made by the Georgian elections authorities as of October 16, 2024, to the best of our knowledge. This document does not represent any IFES policy or technical recommendations.

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<sup>15</sup> See Article 77 of the [Election Code](#).

<sup>16</sup> See Article 77 of the [Election Code](#).