

GEODEM2022

I Panel - Are Georgian Political Parties Ready for Coalition Partnership?

Welcoming Remarks:



H.E. Heidi Grau, joined the diplomatic service of the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs in 1997. She was assigned to the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation where she worked on transition in CIS countries. She was posted at the Embassy in Moscow from 1998 to 2002 and at the Political Division for Peace Policy and Human Security in Bern until 2006, before moving to Switzerland's Mission to the United Nations in New York where she was in charge of humanitarian and environmental questions. She later served as Deputy Permanent Representative before becoming Ambassador and Chef de Cabinet of the Head of the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs in December 2010. In May 2012 she was appointed head of the OSCE Chairmanship Task Force. Heidi Grau holds an MA in History and Russian Philology from the University of Zurich. She speaks German, French, English and Russian.



Kornely Kakachia is Professor of Political Science at Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University, Georgia, and Director of Tbilisi based think tank Georgian Institute of Politics. His current research focuses on Georgian domestic and foreign policy, security issues of the wider Black Sea area and comparative party politics. He was a recipient of IREX and OSI fellowships and was a visiting fellow at Harvard University's Black Sea Security program, (2009–2010) Harriman Institute, Columbia University (2011), and The Johns Hopkins University's School of Advanced International Studies. Prof. Kakachia is co-editor of the book titled *"Georgia's Foreign Policy in the 21st Century: Challenges for a Small State"* (London, New York: I.B. Tauris, 2021). In his capacity as an expert on Georgian Domestic and Foreign policy, Kakachia has appeared on the BBC, Deutsche Welle, Financial Times, Le Monde, Figaro, Time and Economist, on Georgian radio television stations to comment on Georgia's foreign policy, regional security and other issues.

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Moderator:



Prof. Davit Aphrasidze graduated from Ivane Javakhishvili State University Faculty of International Law and International Relations in 1998. Received his PhD degree in political science from the University of Hamburg in Germany in 2003. At different times, was Dean of School of Arts and Sciences and Dean of graduate and doctoral programmes. Has worked at Georgian Public Broadcaster, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Internal Affairs. Additionally, has experience of working in non-governmental organizations. He is a consultant to the regional office of the Konrad-Adenauer-Foundation. Was awarded a Fulbright scholarship to conduct research at Duke University, North Carolina, US in 2009-2010. Was a research fellow at the Institute for Peace Studies and Security Policy, Hamburg, Germany during 2000-2004. His research interests include: post-Soviet transformation, democratization, political institutions and foreign policy decision making.

Speakers:



Dr. Fernando Casal Bertoa is an Associate Professor in the School of Politics and International Relations at the University of Nottingham (United Kingdom). He is co-director of REPRESENT: Research Centre for the Study of Parties and Democracy as well as member of the OSCE/ODIHR “Core Group of Political Party Experts”, International IDEA collaborator and Venice Commission expert. His work has been published in Journal of Politics, European Journal of Political Research, Sociological Methods and Research, Journal of Democracy, Electoral Studies, West European Politics, Party Politics, European Political Science Review, Democratization, European Constitutional Law Review, Political Studies Review, Government and Opposition, International Political Science Review, Representation, European Politics and Society, South European Society and Politics, East European Politics and Societies or East European Politics. He was awarded the 2017 Gordon Smith and Vincent Wright Memorial Prize, the 2017 AECPA Prize for the Best Article and the 2018 Vice-Chancellor Medal of the University of Nottingham for “exceptional achievements”.



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Giorgi Tsagareishvili graduated from Tbilisi State University, Faculty of Law, majoring in Law in 1995; Postgraduate at the Faculty of Law of Tbilisi State University in 1999. 2004-2008 Member of Parliament of Georgia of the 6th convocation: Election bloc: "Right Opposition, Industrialists, New", 2008-2012. Member of Parliament of Georgia of the 7th convocation: Election bloc: "United Opposition (National Council, Rightists)", 2012-2016 Member of Parliament of Georgia of the 8th convocation: Election bloc: "Bidzina Ivanishvili - Georgian Dream", 2017-2018. Chief Adviser to the Minister of the Ministry of Environment and Natural Protection of Georgia; Advisor to the Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia in 2018; 2018-2022 Deputy Head of LEPL National Environment Agency; Member of Parliament of the 10th Convocation of Georgia, Election Bloc: "Georgian Dream - Democratic Georgia".



Salome Samadashvili graduated from Allegheny College, Central European University and the American University of Washington. 2005-2007 - Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Georgia to the Netherlands, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Georgia to the Kingdom of Belgium and the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and Head of the Mission of Georgia to the European Union. In 2013-2014 Salome was an Honorary Visiting Fellow at the Wilfred Martens Center for European Studies, and in 2015 was Director of the Libyan Governance Program at the US National Democratic Institute (Malta-Tripoli, Libya). Since 2016, she has been the Founder and CEO of the NGO Center for Strategic Communication and Democracy and the consulting firm Samadashvili International Consultants. Salome Samadashvili is a visiting lecturer at the University of Georgia and Ilia State University. Since May 5, 2016, she has been the Head of the Department of International Relations and Political Science at the University of Georgia. In 2016-2020 she was a member of the Parliament of Georgia of the 9th convocation by party list, election bloc: "United National Movement". From 2017 she held the position of Deputy Chairman of the Parliamentary Faction "National Movement". Since February 13, 2017, Salome has been the Deputy Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee of the Parliament of Georgia. Since 2020, she has been a Member of the Parliament of the 10th convocation of Georgia.



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Giorgi Vashadze holds Bachelor and Master degrees in Public Administration from Georgian Technical University and a degree in Law from Tbilisi State University. He studied at Harvard Business School in the Program for Leadership Development from between 2009 and 2010. After assuming office as a Deputy-Minister of Justice in 2010, Giorgi Vashadze was in charge of the establishment of Public Service Halls. He authored the reforms in the public sector that were aimed to modernize public services and transform bureaucratic state apparatus into citizen-oriented and business friendly platforms through innovative means – Public Service Hall. Giorgi Vashadze is the leader and the founder of the party “Strategy Agmashenebeli” and the member of the tenth convocation in the parliament.



Natia Mezvrishvili studied at the Faculty of Law of Tbilisi State University in 2002-2006. In 2006-2008 she studied for a master's degree at the Faculty of Law of Tbilisi State University. In 2007-2009 she was the Prosecutor of the Old Tbilisi District Prosecutor's Office. In 2009 Natia was the Prosecutor of the Department for Supervision of Prosecutorial Activities of the Chief Prosecutor's Office of Georgia. In 2009-2010 she was the Prosecutor of the Procedural Management Department of the Investigation at the Ministry of Finance of the Chief Prosecutor's Office of Georgia. In 2010-2012, Mezvrishvili was the Head of the Division for Supervision of Prosecutorial Activities in the Regional Territorial Bodies of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia. In 2012-2013 she was the Head of the Strategic Development Division of the Chief Prosecutor's Office of Georgia. In 2013 she was the head of the Legal Division of the Chief Prosecutor's Office of Georgia. 2010-2015 - Invited Lecturer at Ilia State University. Since 2012 she has been an invited lecturer at Tbilisi State University. Since 2014 she has been an Assistant Professor at Eastern European University. In 2016-2017, she studied for a master's degree at the University of Cincinnati School of Law. In 2017-2019 he was the Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs of Georgia. From October 2, 2019 to November 2020, she was the head of the government administration.

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II Panel - Internal Party Democracy. Why Don't We Have New Leaders?

Moderator:



Nino Gelashvili graduated from Tbilisi State University, Faculty of Journalism. She started her journalistic career as a student in 1992 in the newspaper "Droni". In 1995, she became a freelance correspondent for Radio Liberty. From 2003 to 2005 she worked at the headquarters of Radio Liberty in Prague. She returned to Tbilisi in 2005 and co-hosted Radio Liberty's morning program for ten years. Today she is the host of "Morning Talks".

Speakers:



Teona Zurabashvili is a junior Policy Analyst at GIP. As a Swedish Institute scholar, she studied a Master's program in Political Science at Gothenburg University from 2018 to 2020 and gained an MSc in Political Science. Besides, she has earned an MA degree in International Relations from Georgian Institute of Public Affairs and BA degree in History from Tbilisi State University. In 2019, she was a research associate at the Quality of Government Institute (Sweden), where she worked on corruption issues. Her main research interests include democracy, good governance, corruption, and political parties in transitional democracies.



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David Shervashidze - Program Manager - International Republican Institute (IRI). Since 2009 he has been leading the youth programs of the International Republican Institute. Has been involved in the Educational Debate Program since 2003. Is the author of several debate formats and the project manager of the Youth Political Debate, which has been going on for 10 years. Young representatives of political parties operating in Georgia are participating in the project. Participated in the FLEX program in 2005 and graduated from school in the United States. Is a member of the Advisory Board of the US Government Exchange Program Alumni Association of Georgia (EPAG).



Zaza Bibilashvili - For the last two decades, Zaza has been recognized as one of the leading international lawyers in Georgia, which is reflected in all international legal rankings that study the Caucasus region. During this period, Zaza was involved in almost every major transaction or ongoing process in Georgia, thus gaining unique experience in conducting multilateral, multicultural negotiations and management. In 2013, after the United National Movement lost the election, Zaza joined the former ruling party and became a member of its political council. In May 2018, he completely withdrew from party activities and completely switched to the development of the Chavchavadze Center, and on February 6, 2020, he officially resigned and left the party. Zaza Bibilashvili is an active publicist, his letters are published in leading Georgian print and online publications. Zaza is the founder of the Wagner Society of Georgia, which carries out publishing and educational activities related to this great composer. In 1995, Zaza was named Paul Harris Fellow, which is the highest award of international rotary clubs.

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Davit Berdzenishvili graduated from Tbilisi State University with a degree in history. In 1990-1992 he was an opposition member of the Supreme Council of Georgia from the Batumi constituency (faction "Democratic Center", People's Front, Republicans). In 1992-1995 he was a member of the Parliament of Georgia (faction "Republicans"), at the same time in 1991-96 he was a majoritarian MP of the Supreme Council of the Autonomous Republic of Adjara (faction "Adjara". Republicans, People's Front). In 2000-2005 he was the chairman of the Republican Party. 2002-2004 - Member of the Tbilisi City Council and Chairman of the Bloc Faction "National Movement - Democratic Front". 2004-2008 - Member of Parliament and co-chair of the Democratic Front, a faction formed along with the Conservatives. 2012-2016 - Chairman of the faction "Republicans" in the Parliament of Georgia. On December 24, 2017, at the XVII Congress of the Party, he was again elected a member of the National Committee of the Republican Party.



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III Panel - Development of Public Participation and Ways to Encourage It.

Moderator:



Felix Hett has been the director of the FES South Caucasus Office since January 2017. He has been with the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung since 2009, working first in the Moscow Office, and then - since 2011 - as desk officer for Belarus, Russia and Ukraine in the Berlin Head Office. Felix Hett studied Politics, Business and Economics in Leipzig, Vilnius and Minsk.

Introduction:



Shota Kakabadze is a Junior Policy Analyst at the Georgian Institute of Politics. He is a Doctor of Philosophy in Political Science from the University of Tartu (Estonia). Shota has obtained his Masters degree in the European Union – Russia Studies from the same university. During his doctoral studies he has been a Swedish Institute Research Fellow at Uppsala University Institute of Russia and Eurasian Studies, as well as a Junior Researcher of International Relations at the Johan Skytte Institute of Political Studies at the University of Tartu. His main research interest includes discourses on national identity, foreign policy, Eastern Partnership. He has published several academic articles and a book chapter on Georgian national identity/foreign policy relationship.



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Introduction:



Nino Samkharadze is a Junior Policy Analyst at GIP. At the same time, she is a PhD student at Tbilisi State University, Department of Political Science. She has obtained MA degree in Nationalism and Ethnicity Studies from TSU and BA degree in International Relations from International Black Sea University (IBSU). Being an invited lecturer at IBSU she delivers courses in Introduction to Political Science and Nationalism in International Relations. Nino's research interests include nationalism, identity politics and their influence on political processes in the post-Soviet region.

Speakers:



Goga Tchkadua was born in 1992 in Ochamchire, which is currently occupied by the Russian Federation. In 1993, due to the war, his family was forced to leave their home and move to Rustavi. In 2010 he graduated from Rustavi Public School #18 and continued studies at the Georgian Technical University, Faculty of Law. In 2011-2019 he worked in the largest car market in the Caucasus where he occupied various positions, including Deputy Director. He is a member of the "Girchi-More Freedom" party Rustavi branch.



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Elisabed Bregvadze graduated from Chiatura N2 public school. In 2016-2020 she studied at the Faculty of Archeology of Sokhumi State University. At the same time, she became very interested in politics during this period and decided to get involved in this activity. From 2017 to the present she is a member of the political party Strategy Aghmashenebeli. She has participated in many youth projects. In 2018, she was actively involved in the presidential election. 2020 she was one of the Chief of Staff of the Strategy Builder on election issues. 2021 she was a candidate for Chiatura City Council in the self-government elections. Eliso is studying at Tbilisi State University for a master's program in the field of the recent history of Europe and America.



Mikheil (Mika) Tsverava is a member of the youth organization board, the Tbilisi board, and the head of the Tbilisi analytics team at the political party "For Georgia". He has a bachelor's degree in philosophy (Tbilisi State University) and is currently a Master's student of philosophy at Ilia State University. He worked as a researcher at the Good Governance Institute (NGO), as an analyst at the Institute of Social Researches (NGO), and as a database specialist at ACT Research. His primary interests are culture, identity politics, youth politics, political narratives, and discourses.



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Tamuna Manvelishvili is a third-year bachelor student at International Black Sea University, studying International Relations. She is doing an internship at International Black Sea University Training Center and at the Global Governance Institute. She has participated in the Future Leaders Exchange Program (FLEX) in 2018-2019. She serves as a student delegate of the Faculty of Social Sciences, Education and Humanities at IBSU. She is the organizer of several grant projects, one within the GIP and Polis 180. She enjoys learning more about international relations, recent political events in Georgia and worldwide.



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