

საქართველოს ახალგაზრდა იურისტთა ასოციაცია
GEORGIAN YOUNG LAWYERS' ASSOCIATION



GYLA's Georgian Media Legal Defense Center Responds to Cancelling of Public Broadcaster's TV Programs

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GYLA Georgian Media Legal Defense Center (GMLDC) responds to reports about closing of the shows Vakho Sanaia Report and the European Choice, both hosted by Vakho Sanaia, and sacking of journalists. Journalists believe that [the reason for](#)

[cancelling these shows stems from changes in the Public Broadcaster content](#)
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[switching from public content to public and political, as well as the fact that the show](#)

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[host joined students](#) [rally outside the Public Broadcaster](#) [office](#) Further, there are reports of cancelling Eka Khoperia's TV show Audience

Article 16 of the Law of Georgia on Broadcasting stipulates that Public Broadcaster must ensure editorial independence, the fairness and impartiality of programs and guarantee that the latter are free from state, political, religious or commercial influence; ensure impartiality of news, public and political, educational and analytical, cultural and sports programs according to public interest; ensure informing audience in a timely and comprehensive manner about important events taking place in Georgia, throughout its regions and worldwide.

Purpose of the Public Broadcaster is to provide public with diverse programs free from political and commercial influence, in consideration of public interests. Position of the Public Broadcaster [Director General](#) is in conflict with the September 12, 2012, resolution of the legal entity of public law Public Broadcaster [Board of Trustees](#) N235. The resolution recommends that [investigative journalism](#) and political talk shows and projects should be carried out on a daily basis, desirably in a fixed airtime. [A special project of investigative journalism should be created, with at least 24 shows a year.](#) It is noteworthy that currently the Public Broadcaster cannot provide public with debate talk shows on a daily basis. There are almost no programs that offer diverse positions, oppositions and debates. Political talk-shows and investigating reports are lacking, meaning that the Board of Trustees [resolution](#) is poorly fulfilled. In this light, it is only logical for the Public Broadcaster [management](#) to focus on increasing the number and intensity of debate programs, rather than on cancelling the existing ones.

The TV show Vakho Sanaia [Report](#) covered interesting developments and processes in Georgia and throughout the world. It hosted debates and discussions on various issues, thus serving public interests. The TV show European Choice focused on relations between Georgia and EU, and how it affects citizens of Georgia. Vakho Sanaia [shows](#) are the only ones that offered debates between opposing sides and versatile discussions on issues of public importance. The TV show Audience covered issues of social importance.

In this light, it is important to keep the foregoing TV shows on air. We believe that cancelling of shows with social and political content will have an adverse impact on keeping public informed in a timely and comprehensive manner on developments in Georgia and throughout the world. We also believe that it will further distance the

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Public Broadcaster away from fulfilling its obligations.