



NGOs welcome adoption of Tbilisi budget

On March 7, Tbilisi local council approved the city budget of GEL 780 million with 41 votes. For the past three months the process of revision of the budget was accompanied with political controversy between the City Council and Tbilisi City Hall.

NGOs called on several times the City Council and Tbilisi City Hall to reach a consensus until March 11, since in case of failure to adopt the budget, their authority would have been terminated before expiration of the tenure and the mechanism of direct governance should have been introduced during three months prior to municipal elections that would have affected adversely pre-election environment.

In view of this, we consider approval of the city budget a positive step, though observes of our organizations have determined some procedural violations at the trial. Namely, neither City Council nor Tbilisi City Hall implemented detailed revision of amendments introduced to the final draft project. Moreover, only one individual possessed final version of the budget during the voting and no reaction followed in response to the demand to postpone the process for a day, in order to enable each member of the City Council to study the final version of the budget.

Georgian Young Lawyers' Association, International Society for Fair Elections and Democracy and Transparency International Georgia welcome approval of the Tbilisi budget, though remain hopeful that in future City Council and Tbilisi City Hall will feel more responsibility to the issue and will be able to avoid such procedural violations.