



Political parties should take electoral system change more seriously

On June 1, the parliamentary committee for legal issues debated a bill for electoral system change and put it to vote during the first reading. The bill aims to replace the existing electoral system with a modified version of the so-called German model. The bill provides an opportunity to implement meaningful changes for improving the electoral system ahead of the 2016 elections.

The bill did not pass in the committee. Initiation of the bill was preceded by consultations between major political parties and civil society organizations working on election issues and an agreement that parliamentary opposition would support the so-called German model. Unlike other initiatives for the electoral system change, adoption of the model in question does not require any constitutional amendments.

საქართველოს ახალგაზრდა იურისტთა ასოციაცია GEORGIAN YOUNG LAWYERS' ASSOCIATION



Regrettably, the bill did not have enough supporters at the committee meeting. It was supported by the Republicans, the Free Democrats, the National Forum and an independent MP, while five members of the minority (the United National Movement – UNM) were absent from the meeting as they had boycotted the parliament and did not participate in voting. Two majority members voted against the bill. Because 13 members of the committee had registered to vote, adoption of the bill required at least 7 votes.

Regrettably, despite many statements made in support of the initiative, political parties were not able to mobilize sufficient votes. We urge political parties not to miss the historic chance to improve the electoral system; they should participate in parliamentary debates about the initiative and support the bill.