

საქართველოს ახალგაზრდა იურისტთა ასოციაცია GEORGIAN YOUNG LAWYERS' ASSOCIATION



The Petition on Local Self-government Election System

As it is known in January 2014, the Parliamentary Inter-fractional Group started to work on the reform of election legislation, which should serve as the bases for conduct of the 2014 elections.

We consider that amendment of the election system is a priority for local self-government elections. The applicable election system has been criticized long ago by NGOs and political parties. Along with the national organizations, Venice Commission and OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE/ODIHR)

recommended that the electoral system for both parliamentary and local self-government elections be reviewed in order to ensure the equality of suffrage. (EUROPEAN COMMISSION FOR DEMOCRACY THROUGH LAW (VENICE COMMISSION) AND OSCE OFFICE FOR DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS AND HUMAN RIGHTS (OSCE/ODIHR) JOINT OPINION ON THE DRAFT ELECTION CODE OF GEORGIA, 2011, Page 8.para 22) Nevertheless, no political decision was made on alteration of the system so far, which in the remained limited period inhibits implementation of key amendments for improvement of election system.

The applicable system:

- Fails to ensure proportional reflection of the voters' will in the mandate;
- Fails to observe the principle of equality of suffrage;
- Grants unduly great privileges to the ruling party;
- Cannot avoid the great number of lost votes.

Accordingly, we offer the state authorities to:

1.Consider the winner in Mayor's and Gamgebeli's elections the candidate who receives 50% +1 votes. Moreover, it is decisive to elect all Mayors and Gamgebelis on the basis of the same principle.

2.Annul the applicable single-mandate electoral districts' system. It would be appropriate to substitute it with multi-mandate majoritarian electoral districts by the 2014 local elections

The government shall make political decision on the issue within restricted terms and shall establish the election system which will promote conduct of fair elections and reflect Georgian citizens' will in a better way. Furthermore, the decision taken in terms of election system should be the outcome of the wide-scale public consensus.

Implementation of the amendment is crucially important for conduct of elections in a fair and competitive environment. Moreover, introduction of the amendments within the left period until local self-government elections is possible.

The petition is open for signature for all NGOs and political unions. Support of the petition does not necessarily mean that the signatory organization has no other

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recommendations for improvement of the election system.

Organizations:

Georgian Young Lawyers' Association (GYLA)

Transparency International Georgia (TI)

International Society for Fair Elections and Democracy (ISFED)

Open Society Georgia Foundation (OSGF)

Association Tolerant

Georgian Regional Broadcasters' Association

Public Defender's Office

The Fund of Women Entrepreneurs

Economic Policy Research Center

Cultural Relationships Center – Caucasian House

Energy Effectiveness Foundation

“Independent Experts’ Club”

Political Unions:

“Free Georgia”

Women's Party

“The New Rights”