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**NDI POLL: IRAKLI ALASANIA IS THE MOST POPULAR GOVERNMENT LEADER; DAVIT NARMANIA CURRENTLY LEADS IN THE TBILISI MAYORAL RACE; UNM IS VIEWED AS THE STRONGEST OPPOSITION PARTY**

TBILISI – Minister of Defense Irakli Alasania is the most popular political figure in the country with a 67 percent approval rating. Prime Minister Irakli Garibashvili is the next most popular leader with an approval rating of 64 percent, followed by the Speaker of the Parliament David Usupashvili with an approval rating of 61 percent.

The most popular opposition leader is the Parliamentary Minority Leader David Bakradze, who is tied at 51 percent with former Prime Minister Bidzina Ivanishvili. The most popular female politicians are Georgian Dream Members of Parliament Eka Beselia and Tinatin Khidasheli, statistically tied at 47 percent and 46 percent respectively. President Giorgi Margvelashvili is rated at 46 percent favorability.

Eighty-five percent of respondents say it is important that there is a strong opposition party in the country. Fifty-one percent consider UNM as the strongest opposition party. However, most of UNM's strength appears to be outside the capital.

Sixty percent of respondents say they would participate in local government elections if held tomorrow, which represents a 10 point decrease from an August 2013 pre-election poll where 70 percent of respondents said they would participate in presidential elections if held tomorrow.

If local government elections were held tomorrow for Sakrebulo, among likely voters nationwide, Georgian Dream coalition leads with 48 percent, UNM at 12 percent, while Nino Burjanadze-United Opposition coalition and the Labor Party are tied at 4 percent each. Thirty percent of respondents did not express an opinion and 2 percent said they would vote for other electoral subject.

For Tbilisi Sakrebulo elections, Georgian Dream Coalition leads with 43 percent to UNM at 9 percent; followed by Nino Burjanadze-United Opposition coalition at 8 percent and Labor Party at 3 percent. Thirty-three percent of respondents did not express a preference, while 4 percent chose other electoral subjects.

When asked who would you choose the mayor of Tbilisi among likely voters, Georgian Dream Coalition's candidate Davit Narmania received 39 percent, UNM candidate Nikoloz Melia received 10 percent, followed by Nino Burjanadze-United Opposition coalition candidate at 9 percent and 2 percent for the Labor Party candidate. On the same question, 36 percent of respondents did not express a choice and 3 percent chose other electoral subjects.

Luis Navarro, NDI's country director in Georgia, said, "The Georgian Dream Coalition remains the dominant political force both in terms of electoral competitiveness and the popularity of its leaders. However, based on when this poll was conducted, there is great potential for run-off elections in Tbilisi, Kutaisi, Rustavi, Gori and Zugdidi mayoral races"

These findings were part of a broader survey that found that voters care most about jobs, territorial integrity and poverty. The survey looks at issues of public importance, perceptions of democracy and attitudes toward reforms, as well as various domestic and foreign policy issues. The results reflect data collected from March 26 through April 18 in face-to-face interviews with a nationwide representative sample of Georgian speakers that included 3,942 completed interviews. The survey has an average margin of error of +/-2.1%. NDI's survey work is funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) and carried out by CRRC-Georgia.

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