

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 12, 2013

Contact: Teona Kupunia, Tbilisi
+995577 719134, tkupunia@ndi.org;
Kathy Gest, Washington,
+202-728-5535, kgest@ndi.org

**NDI POLL: GEORGIANS SAY GOVERNMENT IS MAKING CHANGES
THAT MATTER TO THEM; ISSUE PRIORITIES REMAIN UNCHANGED**

TBILISI – A survey of public opinion in Georgia, released today by the National Democratic Institute (NDI), shows that by a 62 to 27 percent margin Georgians see the current government as making changes that matter to them. Jobs continue to be the highest priority issue with 61 percent ranking it as number one, while territorial integrity and affordable healthcare are the second and third priority issues at 34 and 30 percent respectively.

There was an improvement among the self-identified employment status of Georgians, at 32 percent, an increase of 4 percent since [a poll taken in March 2013](#). The number of people who think Georgia is headed in the right direction has declined from 58 percent in the March poll to 45 percent.

Asked whether Georgia is a democracy now, 38 percent of respondents said “yes,” compared to 46 percent who said “no”; however, 65 percent of Georgians still have a positive assessment of the direction in which Georgia’s democracy is developing.

As for some of the events widely discussed around the survey fieldwork period, fifty-one percent of Georgians believe that the arrest of former Prime Minister Vano Merabishvili is primarily the result of an impartial investigation; while 18 percent believe his arrest is primarily the result of political motivations.

Regarding the events of May 17, 52 percent approved of the counter demonstration organized against the rally supporting the right of sexual minorities, while at the same time 51 percent think that all people who committed actions against supporters of sexual minorities, including priests, should be held legally accountable.

“The issue priorities of Georgians have not changed and a majority believes the current government is making changes that matter to them,” said Luis Navarro, NDI’s country director in Georgia. “While the number who believe that Georgia is a democracy has declined since our last poll, most Georgians remain positive about the direction of the country’s democratic development. A majority of Georgians believe that Vano Merabishvili’s arrest is primarily the result of an impartial investigation and a majority also believes that people who committed actions against supporters of sexual minorities, including priests, on May 17 should be held legally accountable.”

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 June 12-26 in face-to-face interviews with a nationwide representative sample of Georgian speakers that included 2,338 completed interviews. The survey has an average margin of error of +/-2.9%.

NDI’s survey work is funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) and carried out by the Caucasus Research Resource Centers (CRRC).

455 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, 8th Floor
Washington, DC 20001
(202) 728-5500
fax: (888) 875-2887
mail: contactndi@ndi.org
www.ndi.org

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