



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **NDI POLL: EU membership support increases - indicating Georgians' unwavering support for European integration; citizen concerns are dominated by worries over rising prices**

TBILISI – Poll results released today by the National Democratic Institute (NDI or the Institute) and CRRC Georgia show that EU support has grown to 81 percent, indicating Georgian citizens' unwavering support for European integration. However, the aspirations of the Georgian people come into contrast with a perception that the government is either not doing enough or is doing nothing to ensure EU membership. There are similar trends vis a vis NATO - the majority of Georgians remain supportive of NATO membership (73 percent).

Amid current economic challenges, the Georgian public views rising prices/inflation, unemployment, poverty and wages as the top problems facing their country – and no other concern comes close. A plurality (48 percent) say Georgia's economy is in bad shape, while the majority (51 percent) doubt the government's ability to solve economic problems. One in five Georgians is thinking of emigrating in the next 12 months to seek working opportunities elsewhere. This number is even higher among the population under 50 - almost every third citizen under 50 is thinking about leaving Georgia.

“It's clear the settled will of the Georgian public is Euro Atlantic integration as support for EU membership comes in extremely high alongside NATO membership. Policy makers and political parties should note carefully that rising prices and inflation are stretching the finances of most Georgian families,” - said NDI Georgia country director, Alan Gillam.

Despite an increase in the government's overall job approval (from 41 percent to 51 percent), public disillusionment with both ruling and opposition parties is growing. 61 percent of Georgians are saying none of the parties represent their interests, which constitutes an increase from 56 percent since summer 2022. Further, a breakdown by partisanship shows that even a third of GD supporters and half of opposition supporters say none of the parties represent their interests.

“The growing disconnect between the political elite and the public is concerning for democratic development. All political actors should seek to actively reconnect with the public on their issues of top concern rather than their own narrow agendas to restore public trust in their elected

representatives. Support for more women in elected office should be noted as a desire for change in political discourse and agendas.” - said Alan Gillam.

NDI surveys public opinion to help Georgian stakeholders diagnose and address issues of public concern by providing accurate, unbiased and statistically sound data. This poll aims to capture the most relevant information to foster the development of responsive policies and governance. The new report looks at a nationwide survey conducted between December 3 - December 20, through face-to-face interviews with a nationwide representative sample of Georgia’s adult population, excluding occupied territories. The December poll included 2,519 completed interviews. The average margin of error is +/- 1.6 percent.

NDI’s survey work is funded by UK aid from the British people.

This poll was carried out by CRRC Georgia.

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*NDI is a non-profit, non-partisan, non-governmental organization that works in partnership around the world to strengthen and safeguard democratic institutions, processes, norms and values to secure a better quality of life for all. NDI envisions a world where democracy and freedom prevail, with dignity for all.*

*CRRC-Georgia is a non-governmental, non-profit research organization with a mission to promote evidence-based debates on policy issues by providing reliable, up-to-date and accessible data and analysis. More information is available at <http://www.crrc.ge>*