

Georgian Parliament's Experience in implementing the Open Government Partnership Goals



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- The Open Government Partnership (OGP) is a global initiative that was launched in September 2011 and lists more than 70 participating countries.
- OGP member states commit to ensuring citizen awareness and engagement in decision-making process as well as implementing high professional and ethical standards in state services, conducting governance reforms and improving public services by means of innovative technologies.
- Georgia was one of the first countries to join the OGP. In 2014, the OGP was expanded to cover the activities of national legislatures. As a result, the Parliaments of Chile, France, Georgia in 2015 and later other countries joined the global initiative.



In September 2017, Georgia was elected as a Chair of the OGP initiative for a one-year term and in July 2018 hosted the 5th OGP Global Summit. The first day of the 3-days event was an Open Parliament Day, involving parliamentary delegations from more than 25 countries.

- During the past one year, together with the OGP Secretariat, Georgia has done a great deal to advance the OGP's strategic goals at the international level, such as:
 - ✓ Enhancing citizen engagement;
 - ✓ Increasing transparency;
 - ✓ Fight against corruption;
 - ✓ Implementing innovations in the delivery of public services;
 - ✓ Establishing better partnerships.

- The Parliament of Georgia has implemented numerous reforms since our accession to the Declaration on Parliamentary Openness in 2015. Today we stand proud of our efforts and accomplishments in making the legislative body more transparent, more accessible to citizens, and more accountable to them. Nevertheless, challenges remain. Therefore, we are moving forward because the road to success and improvement is always a “work in progress”.

- In this context, the 2018-2019 Open Parliament Action Plan makes our goals even more ambitious. For example, the Georgian Parliament took the commitment to institutionalize a parliamentary self-assessment toolkit designed by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU). The toolkit invites parliaments to evaluate their performance against a set of criteria based on the core values.



- In order to successfully implement the initiative, together with the Permanent Parliamentary Council on Open Governance, its Consultative Group consisting of Civil Society and partner international organizations representatives, has been established. Civil Society Organizations were influential in increasing public debate on a wide range of issues related to transparency and good governance.
- Number of achievements of the Parliament of Georgia within the framework of the OGP activities, which can be split into the following blocks:

Block #1 - Citizen Engagement



- Amendments made to the Rules and Procedures of the Parliament of Georgia enable citizens to submit e-petitions to the Chairperson of the Parliament (at least 300 signatories);
- As a result of legislative changes, citizens are able to collect e-signatures for legislative initiatives (at least 25000 citizens);
- Reconstruction of the Tbilisi Palace of the Parliament of Georgia for adapting it to the needs of people with impaired mobility and vision (to be completed by the end of 2018);
- Citizens can now electronically comment on draft laws posted on the web-site of the Parliament. Moreover, the Parliamentary Committees have been mandated to review citizens' comments and opinions on the draft laws and if necessary, include them in the Committee conclusions.

Block #2 - Access to Information



- The web-site of the Georgian Parliament is under reconstruction to become customized for users with disabilities;
www.parliament.ge
- Amendments made to draft laws are displayed on the Parliament's web-site in a visible format (through using the track changes function).
- Audio protocols of plenary sessions of the Parliament are proactively disclosed.

Block #3 – Accountability



- Since 2018, Parliamentary Committees are mandated to elaborate and publish their action plans and annual reports;
- Civil Society Day has been institutionalized at the Parliament of Georgia. The first meeting with the civil society organizations, led by the Chairman of the Parliament, held in March 2018;
- In accordance with the new Rules and Procedures, the Parliament is obliged to develop and publish its annual activity reports.

Block #4 – Transparency



A Public Information Module was created. The Module collects and regularly updates parliamentary information that is of high public interest (for example: reports on the parliamentary budget execution, information on parliamentary wages, detailed contact information of MPs, etc.);

The list of Proactively Disclosed Information was significantly expanded and includes the following information:

- Statistical data on the quantity of legislative initiatives and adopted laws;
- Plenary and committee hearings of reports submitted by the Government and other bodies accountable to the Parliament;
- Establishment of temporary and investigation commission of the Parliament;
- Conclusions, proposals and opinions elaborated in relation to draft laws;
- Statistical data on questions sent by MPs, committees and factions;
- Budget execution report of the Parliament;
- Justified absence of the MPs during plenary and committee sessions;
- Statistical data on the amount of plenary and committee hearings were postponed due to lack of quorum;
- Business trip expenses and reimbursement of MPs.

Block #5 - Technologies and Innovations



In order to inform citizens about legislative activities, the Parliament's Mobile Application – GeoParliament – was developed. By using this application, the citizen can:

- Post a comment on draft laws;
- Track draft laws through all hearings;
- Check the Parliamentary Calendar;
- View the agenda of the Parliament Bureau.

The Georgian Parliament firmly believes that this is a strategic investment in a better future of our countries and societies.

The Open Government Partnership is a unique opportunity for us to revisit our efforts in making the public institutions more open, more accountable and more responsive to citizens. But more importantly, it is also an opportunity to look ahead in future and jointly address the remaining challenges in many areas of our citizens' interest.

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Thank you for Your Attention

Merci pour votre Attention