



GRASS Disinfo Brief

MONITORING PERIOD:

November 13 – 20

GRASS
REFORMANDA



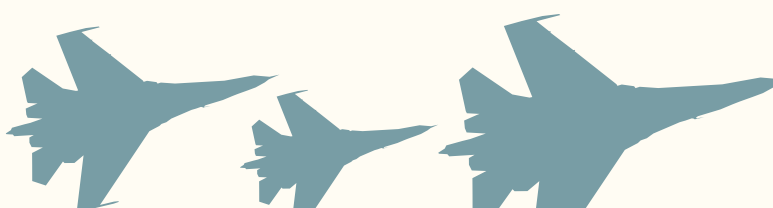


- Georgian Dream says they are here to stay, says the opposition undermines Georgia's European integration
- Salome Zourabichvili's interview with "Le Monde" elicits more attacks from the ruling party
- Anti-EU narratives claim Georgia will lose its identity, sovereignty, and security because of EU integration, a conspiracy about the West wanting a second front in Georgia continues
- Pro-Russian sources excuse Russian aggression, call for "neighbourly relations" with Moscow
- Propaganda targets US Ambassador Robin Dunnigan after an interview with Radio Liberty

Georgian Dream says they are here to stay, says the opposition undermines Georgia's European integration

Two different public opinion polls were promulgated last week, with Imedi TV commissioned [GORBI](#) releasing their findings on November 14th, while [IRI](#) released its poll results on November 15th. The discrepancy between the opinion polls is noticeable.

On the question, "If parliamentary elections were held today, which party would you vote for?" results were as follows:



International Republican Institute (IRI)	GORBI
Georgian Dream – 25%	Georgian Dream – 55%
United National Movement – 13%	United National Movement/Strategy Builder – 20%
For Georgia – 4%	Droa/Girchi – More Freedom – 4%
Strategy Aghmashenebeli – 3%	Lelo – 4%
Spoiled ballot – 11%	European Georgia – 3%
I would not vote – 6%	For Georgia – 3%
Don't know – 18%	Alliance of Patriots – 2%
Refused – 8%	Others – 9%

- Chair of the Georgian Dream, Irakli Kobakhidze, referred to the GORBI public opinion poll results and [stated](#) that they correctly portray the current situation. The opposition is getting weaker, and only the United National Movement can cross the 5% threshold and enter the Parliament in 2024; other parties are merely political clubs rather than actual political parties. Kobakhidze also noted that the GORBI polls were conducted before the European Commission issued a recommendation to grant Georgia EU membership candidate status; thus, he suspects that the ruling party's popularity has since increased while the opposition's support decreased. The opposition placed their bets on Georgia failing to achieve candidate status, and attempted to incite a revolution. The Georgian people want peace and stability, not UNM, "the war party." According to Kobakhidze, Georgian Dream will increase its number of Parliament seats and might even be able to reach 100 mandates in 2024.
- Kobakhidze also [accused](#) IRI of mistakes when discussing its public opinion polls. According to the Chairperson of the ruling party, IRI has been making mistakes for the past twelve years; therefore, it's not surprising that they made a mistake again. Since there is a discrepancy between IRI and NDI's public opinion polls and official election results, Kobakhidze argues that their poll results are false. "Look at the past election results and remember who lied to the Georgian society in the past. These organizations

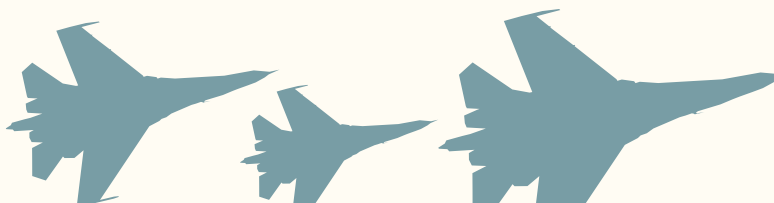


have made so many wrong predictions they don't even trust themselves anymore”, stated Kobakhidze.

- Secretary General of the Georgian Dream and Tbilisi Mayor Kakha Kaladze [stated](#) that there will be no coalition government in 2024. Commenting on recent public opinion polls, Kaladze claimed that no matter what the enemy does, including releasing fake polls and manipulating public opinion, the Georgian Dream will reach a Constitutional majority in 2024. “Mark my words!” said the mayor. Additionally, the Tbilisi Mayor justified the ruling party’s decision not to decrease the Parliamentary threshold from 5% to 2% despite pledging to do so in the past. In Kaladze’s opinion, if a political party cannot garner 5% of votes in the elections, they should not be in politics.
- Referring to the GORBI public opinion polls, Georgian Dream MP Irakli Zarkua [argued](#) that the opposition became decapitated and bankrupt after Georgia received EU membership candidate status. According to him, the ruling party had 55% support even before the European Commission’s recommendation, and if a new poll were conducted today, the Georgian Dream’s popularity would probably be 60%. “We will have a big majority after the 2024 elections; there will be no coalition, but the people will decide it”, Zarkua claimed.

Campaign asserting that the political opposition in Georgia was obstructing the process of granting a candidacy status continues

- Irakli Kobakhidze [stated](#) that any action the opposition takes to allegedly help Georgia on its path to European integration is fake. The opposition did everything to [prevent](#) Georgia from getting candidate status. The issue of candidate status, which should have unified the country, was actually used by the opposition for polarisation, which conducted disinformation campaigns and attempted to incite a revolution in June 2022. Opposition plans to start a coup in November-December were also in place, but the European Commission’s recommendation to the European Council prevented that. According to Kobakhidze, in order to manipulate the public, the opposition lied as if



candidate status automatically meant that Georgia would receive billions in funding from the EU, but since the Commission's recommendation, they have been downplaying the importance of the status.

- While [stating](#) that the Georgian Dream will do everything to bring Georgia even closer to Europe, Kakha Kaladze added that Georgia has no bigger enemies than its internal enemies, meaning the opposition. When asked by the journalist whether the opposition is a bigger enemy than Russia, Kaladze said that they are. According to him, you can take on an external enemy and do everything to restore your territorial integrity, but when your own citizens attempt to hinder the country, its future, and the youth on its path toward European integration, there is nothing worse than that.

Salome Zourabichvili's interview with "Le Monde" elicits more attacks from the ruling party

On November 15th, the French daily afternoon newspaper "Le Monde" released an interview with President Zourabichvili. In the interview, Zourabichvili refers to the founder of the Georgian Dream party, Bidzina Ivanishvili, as an oligarch: "What is clear is that he has a dominant influence on the leaders in power. In Georgian politics today, there is no other oligarch than Ivanishvili". When asked if Ivanishvili played a positive role in Georgia's European integration, Zourabichvili [replied](#) that he had a very important role in nominating her, as a pro-European Presidential candidate. Still, he ultimately played a negative role, as given his influence over the ruling party probably he was the one who inspired the Georgian Dream leaders to make bad decisions, for example, about her impeachment.

Asked whether she plans to pardon former President Mikheil Saakashvili, President Zourabichvili [replied](#) that Saakashvili is better and is in a health clinic. Zourabichvili underlined that Saakashvili is planning to engage in the election campaign rather than wanting to go abroad. "I have no other comment," said the President.

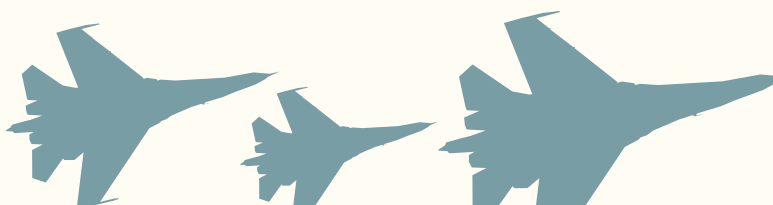
On November 20th, Saakashvili positively [assessed](#) Zourabichvili's interview with "Le Monde" during his court hearing and stated that she could return his children's father to them with one signature and, most importantly, restore the political balance in Georgia.

Another issue that Salome Zourabichvili talked about during the interview is the 2008 war. The journalist recalled that in her book published in 2009, Zourabichvili emphasises the "dual



responsibility of Moscow and Tbilisi" for the breakout of the 2008 war and wrote that "the version according to which Georgia only responded to Russian aggression... cannot withstand the facts." When asked whether she still has the same opinion, the President of Georgia says that "she never said that", adding that it was always Russia that has been invading, and annexing Georgia throughout centuries.

- Referring to Saakashvili's statement, the Chairperson of the Georgian Dream, Irakli Kobakhidze, [stated](#) that many fathers could not return to their children thanks to Saakashvili. According to him, you cannot talk about morals when you talk about Mikheil Saakashvili. As for Salome Zourabichvili, Kobakhidze argued that she could make that decision if she wants to share responsibilities for Saakashvili's immoralities. Additionally, Kobakhidze claimed that the Rose Revolution brought massive human rights violations, torture, business racketing, hijacking of TV networks, election rigging, and loss of 20% of territories to Russia.
- Secretary General of the Georgian Dream and Tbilisi Mayor Kakha Kaladze [argued](#) that for nine years, Mikheil Saakashvili and his government were repressing the Georgian people and inflicting damage to the whole country. He went on to claim that Saakashvili and the UNM have not changed and apologised for their crimes; instead, they are continuing to spread hate speech, bullying, polarisation, and terror to return to power. According to Kaladze, Zourabichvili will become complicit in these actions if she decides to pardon Saakashvili.
- Chairperson of the Legal Issues Committee in the Parliament, Anri Okhanashvili, [stated](#) that the UNM was calling Salome Zourabichvili a traitor and an agent but has now become their leader. The Georgian Dream MP does not exclude the possibility that Zourabichvili might become a formal Chairperson of the UNM party.
- Executive Secretary of the Georgian Dream, Mamuka Mdinaradze, noting that Bidzina Ivanishvili played a decisive part in Zourabichvili's presidency, [assessed](#) that Salome Zourabichvili has joined the UNM's malign message box about Ivanishvili being an



oligarch. Mdinardze also suspected that if there were no ongoing cases against Saakashvili, Salome Zourabichvili might have already pardoned him. It is impossible to know what she might do, but if she does decide to pardon him, Zourabichvili will share the responsibility for UNM's past crimes, such as killing young people in the streets, rape, torture, violation of human rights, hijacking TV networks, racketeering businesses, etc.

- Georgian Dream MP Irakli Zarkua [stated](#) that if Salome Zourabichvili is calling Bidzina Ivanishvili an oligarch, she should resign because it is thanks to him and his team that she became President. According to Zarkua, Ivanishvili put her up for candidacy, and then the Georgian Dream party elected and supported her while appearing on billboards instead of her. “And after all that, Ivanishvili has become an oligarch now?” stated Zarkua.
- A [statement](#) released by the People’s Power movement states that no matter what Salome Zourabichvili does, she cannot become an electorally valuable political figure. Therefore, her continued unconstitutional foreign voyages only had one purpose – her foreign patrons wanted to remind the Georgian people that they do not recognise Georgia’s statehood and its Constitution. According to the statement, the April 19th agreement, mediated by the President of the European Council, was one of the clearest examples of disrespecting Georgia’s statehood and Constitution as it demanded a snap election if the Georgian Dream were to get less than 43% of votes during the 2021 local elections; demanded that the electoral barrier be lowered to 2% to help the UNM return to power; demanded the release of criminals from prison. The statement also claims that Zourabichvili was forced by her “owners” to make a bad statement about Chinese President Xi Jinping to damage Georgia’s strategic interests of deepening relations with China.

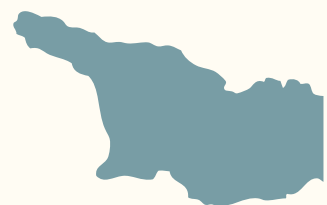
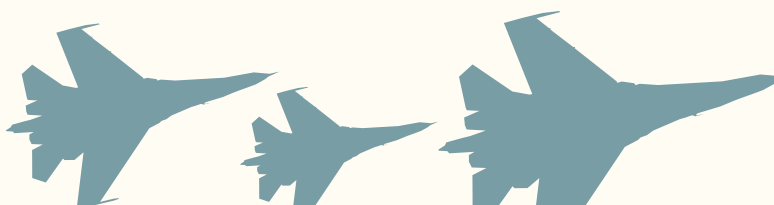
Anti-EU narratives claim Georgia will lose its identity, sovereignty, and security because of EU integration, a conspiracy about the West wanting a second front in Georgia continues

- A propagandist on Alt Info [referred](#) to the priorities set out by the EU, which stipulates that Georgia should fight against anti-EU disinformation, foreign information manipulation, and interference against EU values as well as launch impartial, effective,



and timely investigations, bringing organisers and perpetrators of violence to justice. According to the propagandist, the EU demands the punishment of any opinion that contradicts it, including anti-LGBTQI+ rhetoric, which is an assault on Georgian identity.

- Sezoni TV anchor and pro-Russian propagandist Nikoloz Mzhavanadze also [argued](#) that the EU priorities envisage a punishment of hate speech, which means that people will be prohibited from criticising homosexuality in any way.
- A recurring guest on Sezoni TV, Dito Chubinidze, [assessed](#) that Georgia is a colonial state without any sovereignty. According to him, in terms of international law, Georgia, as an independent entity, does not have any more rights than it had under the USSR and the Russian Empire. The propagandist also [claimed](#) that Georgia will join the EU only if it holds a LGBTQI+ Pride parade, which is a threat to the Georgian church, independence, identity, and traditions.
- Another propagandist on Alt Info [claimed](#) that the European Commission issued a recommendation to grant Georgia candidate status because their plans to stage a Maidan-like revolution in Georgia became too risky after the “anti-Maidan” movement started mobilising people. The propagandist continues to assert that the EU’s plans to start a revolution and open a second front in Georgia did not change. Rather than accomplishing that through a Maidan revolution, the EU will attempt to seize control of Georgia through the 2024 Parliamentary elections.
- The same propagandist [asserted](#) that although Western countries announce that they support Georgia’s territorial integrity and sovereignty when it comes to real-life situations Western countries suggest that Georgia should give up its occupied territories to integrate with the West.
- A different propagandist on Alt Info [argued](#) that the “anti-Maidan” movement prevented the Maidan revolution and the subsequent war with Russia. The propagandist [noted](#) that Europe wants to weaken Russia to increase its influence in the East, which is why it



ordered Ukrainians to go on a suicide mission and engage in a war with Russia. According to him, Europe is attempting to do the same in Georgia.

- A propaganda source [claimed](#) that the EU does not want Georgian society and economy to develop because as long as Georgia is weak, it is easier to control it.

Pro-Russian sources excuse Russian aggression, call for “neighbourly relations” with Moscow

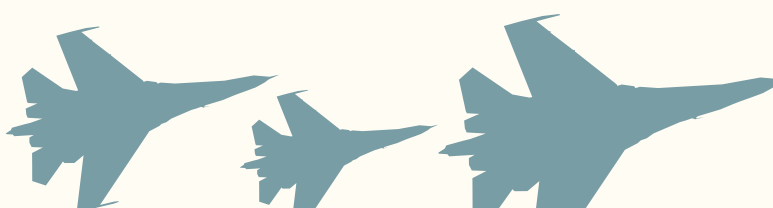
- Nikoloz Mzhavanadze once again [called](#) for the establishment of negotiations with Russia to regulate relations between Georgia and Russia. While the propagandist acknowledges the issue of occupation, illegally putting up fences and obstructions by occupying forces is a problem, but it can only be solved through negotiations. According to the Sezoni TV anchor, if negotiations with Russia fail, which is unlikely because Russia wishes to have good neighbourly relations, even pro-Russian might become anti-Russian.
- In a different statement, Mzhavanadze [besmirched](#) the West and praised Russia, claiming that the streets of Moscow and Saint Petersburg are much cleaner than those of New York and Paris, which are filled with trash and illegal immigrants. Through this narrative, the propagandist suggested that Russia is a much more secure, prosperous country than the Western states.
- Dito Chubinidze also [acknowledged](#) that Russia is an enemy of Georgia’s statehood, although he uses this fact to propagate that direct talks and diplomatic negotiations are needed to end animosity and start the de-occupation of Georgia. According to him, the Western agents and the “Georgian colonial government” are unable to do what needs to be done.
- A prominent Stalinist and pro-Russian propagandist, Grisha Oniani, completely [overlooked](#) Russia’s occupation of sovereign Georgian territories and stated that Russia has never taken anything from Georgia; it only brought benefits for which the Georgians have not even been grateful.
- A pro-Putinist social media account [posted](#) that the US and Europe deliberately weakened Russia in the 1990s. When the whole world thought that Russia would never return to its glory, Vladimir Putin pulled it out of the swamp and turned it into a



prosperous state. Putin is hated in the West because he destroyed the liberal's 75-year plan of establishing a single world government.

Propaganda targets US Ambassador Robin Dunnigan after an interview with Radio Liberty

- Pro-Russian propagandist and frequent guest on Alt Info [posted](#) on social media that US Ambassador Robin Dunnigan is a direct supporter of same-sex marriage, hates the Patriarch of Georgia, Orthodoxy Georgian traditions, and conservative people, which according to the propagandist is 70% of the Georgian population. The propagandist adds that the US Ambassador is terrorising the Georgian Dream and pressuring it to arrest Alt Info's leaders, legalise same-sex marriage and hold an LGBTQI+ Pride march.
- A propagandist on Alt Info [stated](#) that contrary to what the ruling party is saying, as if the new Ambassador is different from former Ambassador Kelly Degnan, newly appointed Robin Dunnigan is also a threat. According to the propagandist, it does not matter who the Ambassador is because the US, its policies, and interests will always be a problem for Georgia.
- A different propaganda source [recalled](#) a statement made by both the former and the current Ambassador when they underlined the financial, economic, and humanitarian aid that the US has provided for Georgia over the years. The propagandist argued that US funds have only served Washington's interests and have never benefited the Georgian people whatsoever. Moreover, it harmed it through propagating drugs, perversion, and funding traitors of Georgia, meaning CSOs and opposition parties. The narrative goes that the US wishes to drag Georgia into a war with Russia.
- One of the leaders of Alt Info/Conservative Movement, Giorgi Kardava, [claimed](#) that the relations between Georgia and the West are one-sided because the West is using Georgia to advance its interests. Namely, this is demonstrated by the fact that Georgian soldiers fought in Iraq and Afghanistan and the 2008 August war, which, according to the narrative, was encouraged by the West to weaken Russia.



- Another propaganda narrative [claims](#) that the US is not interested in Georgian culture, traditions, enlightenment, and history. Even more, the US is a far greater enemy than those that Georgia has faced before because they deliberately caused the conflict between Georgia and Russia to maintain influence.
- Another argument was [heard](#) on the Alt Infos broadcast, claiming that the US wants to financially weaken Europe so that it becomes completely dependent on Washington. Thus, Georgia should not pursue the path of European integration.