



GRASS Disinfo Brief

MONITORING PERIOD:

May 28th – June 3rd

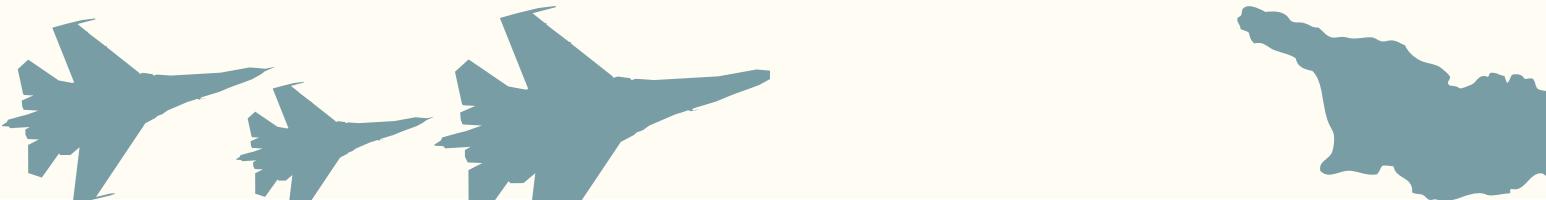


- The Georgian Dream overrides the President's veto, the PM says the law helps Georgia become an EU member
- The ruling party's radical wing calls for persecuting those opposing the law with the espionage article
- Georgian Dream attacks the US, Germany, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, and Iceland
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The Georgian Dream overrides the President's veto, the PM says the law helps Georgia become an EU member

On May 28th, 84 Georgian Dream MPs voted to [override](#) President Zourabichvili's veto on the Russian-style "Law on Transparency of Foreign Influence," which will require NGOs and independent media receiving more than 20% of their annual income from abroad to register as "pursuers of a foreign power's interests" (agent). The law authorizes the Ministry of Justice to initiate surveillance of an organization anytime they deem necessary. The law allows the Ministry of Justice to demand that organizations disclose any type of information, including confidential and personal information of the workers in the organizations. Failure to comply with the law will result in financial penalties amounting to at least 245,000 GEL (88,000 USD) annually. The President refused to sign the bill into law, but it was done so by the Chairperson of the Parliament, Shalva Papuashvili, on June 3rd.

- "You are standing on the side of foreign influence rather than the Georgian people's side", Shalva Papuashvili [addressed](#) the opposition during the Parliament's plenary session, arguing that the opposition's politics are determined by foreign politicians' statements. He also [stated](#) that the Georgian people want friends, not owners [the West]; independence, not obedience; Georgian, not foreign influence.
- According to a Facebook [post](#) of the leader of the Parliamentary majority, Mamuka Mdinaradze, no one would have thought that, despite massive pressure, Georgia would make such an independent decision. Every friend should know that Georgia is ready for a dignified and true friendship and that the Georgian people cannot be deceived and controlled by an agent network.
- General Secretary of the Georgian Dream and Mayor of Tbilisi, Kakha Kaladze [congratulated](#) the adoption of the law to all "for whom it is important that Georgia decide its own future". He added that the government can only be changed through peaceful elections, not by foreign influence, which aim to destabilize the country. As he sees it,



in recent months, Georgia underwent an incredible amount of pressure, threats, blackmail and abuse simply because it dared to defend itself against a scenario that unfortunately took place in Ukraine [the Maidan revolution and the full-scale Russian invasion].

- Georgian Dream MP, Irakli Kadagishvili [claimed](#) that the President and her Parliamentary Secretary were not able to provide a single argument against the law during the hearing of the Legal Issues Committee. Many bad things were said about the law, but no one could argue why transparency is bad, Kadagishvili continued, and in the absence of legal arguments, only blackmailing and threats about sanctions remain. The MP also argued that the law is not against US-Georgia relations, and thus, talks about sanctions are counterproductive to these relations.
- Georgian Dream MPs Rima [Beridze](#) and Irma [Zavradashvili](#) defiantly backed overriding the presidential veto on the "foreign agents" law. Beradze said the party was united on this and she'd have no problem facing U.S. sanctions if required for Georgia's interests. Zavradashvili dismissed the President's arguments as "stupidity." Regarding potential sanctions, she argued Georgians have sacrificed more for their country, so sanctions aren't an issue. She found it amusing that simply passing a law to strengthen sovereignty could lead to sanctions.
- Dimitri Khundadze of "People's Power" [claimed](#) law opponents called Molotov cocktail-throwers heroes, had foreigners at protests (portrayed as foreign interference), had foreign ministers encourage a "Maidan revolution", and used bullying/threats. However, he said the ruling party adopted the law anyway to ensure Georgia's security and sovereignty.

After MPs adopted the law, PM Kobakhidze repeated conspiracy theories and propaganda narratives in a press conference, as he'd done in recent weeks.

- Kobakhidze [argued](#) Parliament, elected by Georgians, is accountable only to them. He claimed, [without sources](#), that 80% support transparency and 60% back the "transparency" law, presenting it as enacting the people's will.
- Kobakhidze [stated](#) "powers" wanting a revolution in Georgia are upset, as the "transparency" law won't allow their scenario. He ridiculously claimed **the law fulfills one of the 9 steps set out by the EU** – depolarization, thus creating better conditions for Georgia's EU accession, making it better prepared than other candidates by 2030 to join "with dignity."
- Kobakhidze [reiterated](#) the conspiracy that foreign powers tried to start revolutions two separate times in the last four years through NGOs and media. Georgia does not need

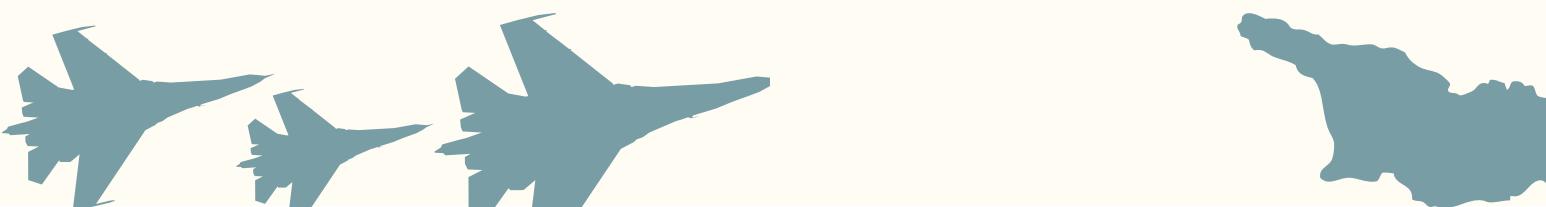


radicalization and constant attempts to organize a revolution, but peace and stability, and the law adopted by the Parliament serves this very important purpose, he said.

- He claimed without "transparency," Georgia faces constant revolution attempts and can never join the EU. "We also saw the German Chancellor's statement about how Ukraine will not become a NATO member for another 30-years, we do not want Ukrainianization", Kobakhidze said, referring to Olaf Scholz's out-of-context quote spread by pro-governmental propaganda.
- Kobakhidze claimed the government is ready to sit down with the "political minority" and publicly discuss the law. "If they prove that the law has any problematic aspects, we will listen," the Prime Minister highlighted while asserting that **Ambassadors of the US, the EU, and the UK refused to hold a public discussion** with the Prime Minister while continuing to make statements regarding Georgia's internal affairs "**because, in reality, they did not have any arguments against the law.**"
- **The ruling party has a very low opinion of the Venice Commission's professionalism.** Therefore, in recent years, it decided not to send draft laws for revision. There are lawyers, doctors of law, and professors who have much higher qualifications than the Venice Commission's experts, the Prime Minister argued.
- According to Kobakhidze, there are **serious problems in the EU's bureaucracy and structures, which is why threats of physical violence were issued towards him** and further threats of sanctions are even more unserious. Furthermore, Kobakhidze stated that despite the problems in the EU's bureaucracy, Georgia still managed to progress on its European integration path.

The ruling party's radical wing calls for persecuting those opposing the law with the espionage article

- Guram Matcharashvili of the Georgian Dream's radical "People's Power" wing said the "transparency" law exposed "foreign agents." With protests calming, only the "agent network" opposes on orders with "dark money" from countries against the law. Matcharashvili said those still opposing must face **legal persecution for espionage**, presenting in court who they served, payments, and tasks. He concluded "there is no alternative" to publicly **televising such trials** after parliamentary elections.



- When asked about Matcharashvili's statement calling for public televised trials of law opponents for espionage, the Prime Minister [said](#): "Justice must follow proper procedures. It's hard to comment. If someone commits a crime, they should be tried. That's my general answer."
- Kakha Kaladze [stated](#) that if organizations do not comply with the law, they will be financially sanctioned, their accounts will be frozen and ultimately, **they will not able to function**. According to him, if organizations do not have evil intentions they should not have a problem with filling out financial declarations. However, he reiterated the narrative about foreign funds being used for revolutionary scenarios.
- "We adopted the law, Saakashvili is in prison, we will initiate constitutional amendments against LGBT propaganda, and everything will be fine", Georgian Dream MP, Irakli Zarkua [asserted](#). As for "**the homeland-less opponents of the law**," **they will have no funds to start the Maidan revolution and open a second front in Georgia**.

Georgian Dream attacks the US, Germany, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, and Iceland

- Prime Minister Kobakhidze [stated](#) that US-Georgia relations **require revision** as the recent protests are the third attempt to start a revolution in Georgia. Kobakhidze blamed the former US Ambassador to Georgia, Kelly Degnan, for inciting revolution attempts.
- Kobakhidze [attacked](#) the German Ambassador for saying Georgia deviated from the European path. He claimed the Ambassador campaigned for opposition party Lelo in Bolnisi, arguing "In light of such frivolous actions, I cannot **attach much importance to this man's statements**." Kobakhidze said responsible Germany shouldn't send people like Peter Fischer, who **makes "anti-Georgian statements**," as Ambassador.
- Lithuania was Kobakhidze's next target, with the Prime Minister [assessing](#) the Lithuanian government's decision to summon the Georgian Ambassador as "**arrogance and nothing more**." According to Kobakhidze, his Lithuanian colleague should have reprimanded his foreign affairs minister for attending an anti-governmental protest in Georgia.
- Mayor of Tbilisi, Kakha Kaladze, also [criticized](#) the foreign affairs ministers of Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, and Iceland for the same reason. Attending the protests, according to Kaladze, illustrated disrespect towards Georgia.
- Moreover, Kaladze argued that **these countries position themselves as if they are friends and care about Georgia but could not hide their intentions to start the Maidan revolution**

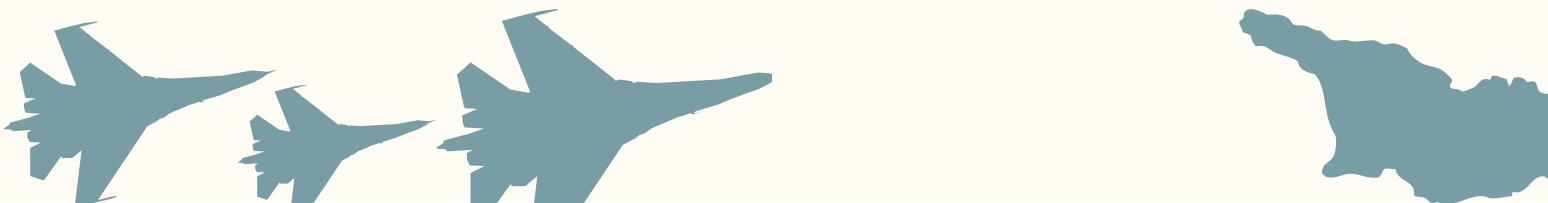


in Georgia. “We all saw see today what Maidan caused for Ukraine,” concluded the Mayor.

- Parliament Chair Shalva Papuashvili [stated](#) that sanctioning Georgian Dream MPs would overstep democratic relations, common sense, and Western values. According to him, such threats can only be expected from regimes who aim to dominate foreign countries, not from the democratic world. “**This is a Russian style.** This is what Russia is doing to Ukraine when it says that the Ukrainian government does not represent the interests of its people,” Papuashvili [argued](#).
- **Papuashvili** also [stated](#) that for the last two months, there were threats, blackmailing attempts, stigmatization of the law, foreign ministers present at protests, mentions of Maidan from foreign actors, and impersonation of it from protesters. All of this is anti-European and Soviet in its nature. In another [statement](#), Papuashvili underlined that “**if we [Georgians] do not believe in ourselves, we will be oppressed by both Russians and Europeans.**”
- Papuashvili also [argued](#) that not a single Western embassy or donor organization has condemned the violence from the protesters even though NGOs funded by them called on the people to picket the Parliament building and attack police officers.
- The Chairperson of the Parliament also [spread](#) false information about “Jam-News”, a media outlet funded by the EU, and accused them in displaying Abkhazia and South Ossetia as separate countries on its website. “**Did the EU recognize the dissolution of our territories and occupation?**” asked Papuashvili. [In reality](#), the section “Geography” on “Jam-News” shows different geographical units in the Caucasus, where the publication has local journalists and from where it covers information.

Georgian Dream grants Anaklia port to Chinese-led consortium

A day after the ruling party overrode the President’s veto on the foreign agents law, the Minister of Economy and Sustainable Development, Levan Davitashvili, [announced](#) that a Chinese consortium - China Communications Construction Company Ltd (CCCC), together with China Harbor Investment - will be announced as the winner of the strategically important Anaklia deep water port project in the coming days. US State Department Spokesperson [stated](#) that the company that was awarded the project, CCCC, has been identified by the US Government for its involvement in sanctionable military and intelligence research activities.”



One of this builder's previous projects – which, like the Anaklia project, began as a public-private partnership - led to China securing a 99-year lease on a port Hambantota, Sri Lanka, infamous for unfair and unbalanced benefits it provided to China rather than the host nation.

- The Minister of Economy and Sustainable Development, Levan Davitashvili stated that CCCC is listed among the world's Fortune 500 companies and has been involved in many important strategic infrastructure projects. As for sanctionable actions, the Minister claimed that the company had certain restrictions imposed by the US - in the case of supplying specific strategic products or services to this company, American companies must receive approval from the US Department of Commerce, which, according to Davitashvili, cannot be regarded as sanctions. The CCCC is found on the US Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control sanctions list.
- Kobakhidze dismissed criticism of the Chinese consortium for the Anaklia port project as "speculation," stating the Chinese companies have great experience guaranteeing the highest standards. He accused NGOs and politicians of spreading rumors and conducting "**an anti-Chinese campaign**" because they receive funding from "**dubious foreign sources**."
- Ruling party chair Irakli Gharibashvili said everyone should welcome China's interest in the strategic Anaklia port, as Chinese participation is crucial for developing the Middle Corridor. He noted no Western companies showed interest despite outreach. With the U.S. and Europe having economic ties with China and leader exchanges, Gharibashvili argued Chinese involvement in Anaklia should be seen as an opportunity, not an issue.
- The "People's Power" movement used the Anaklia port situation to push its "Global War Party" narrative. It claimed this party deployed "agents" against the Chinese consortium, accusing Georgia's government of harming US interests. Despite being open to US investment, no American company showed interest during the year-long tender, their statement argued. It alleged the US deliberately avoided participating to weaken the Georgian and European economies, which it has "successfully" done by engulfing Europe in wars like The 2008 Russia-Georgia, 2014 Russia-Ukraine and the current Russia-Ukraine wars. The movement claimed the US wants a revolution to bring "its agents" to power pursuing American interests, not an economically strong Georgia.

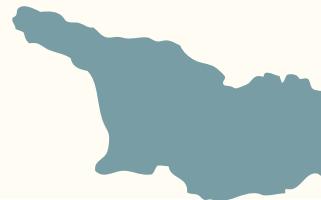
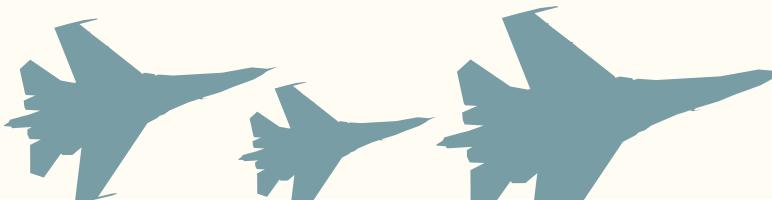
Pro-Kremlin groups vouch for the adoption of the foreign agents law

- The host of pro-Russian Sezoni TV, Nikoloz Mzhavanadze welcomed the adoption of the foreign agents law, which, according to him, **will stop the arrogant free-roaming of Western agents**. He added that the ruling party **should make the law even stricter** because many European countries have much more rigid foreign agents laws. Moreover,



he stated that Russia, Turkey, and Azerbaijan will not let an anti-Russian, anti-Georgian parties to come to power and wave US and NATO flags.

- One of the hosts of Alt Info's broadcasts, Giorgi Dzvelaia, reiterated the Prime Minister's narrative about the German Ambassador being involved in the political party "Lelo's" pre-election campaign and **assessed the Ambassador's statement about Georgia deviating from the European path as "undiplomatic and a threat."**
- **The government's rhetoric towards the West has changed dramatically, which can only be welcomed**, a guest on Alt Info assessed, adding that Georgia is slowly starting to free itself from the 30-year Western colonization.
- A member of Alt Info assessed the recent developments as **direct attempts of "Maidanization" of Georgia supported by the West**. Another propagandist on Alt Info stated that the ruling party's actions protect Georgia's national interests and constitutional order from violent coup attempts.
- The head of Russia's MFA's Gorchakov's fund's Georgia office, Dimitri Lortkipanidze, similar to the ruling party, argued that **the US FARA regulates NGOs that operate in the US and receive foreign funding** and that all the organizations that meet this criteria are declared as agents. According to him, 40 other countries have similar laws, and as such, the law adopted in Georgia is unfairly criticized.
- Pro-Russian propagandist Hamlet Tchipashvili also appeared on Sezoni TV and propagated that President Zourabichvili and the opposition are foreign agents, which is why they labelled the law as Russian. He also claimed that **Russia, the US, and other European countries have much stricter laws and that the law adopted in Georgia is irrationally opposed.**
- A host on Alt Info also argued that President Zourabichvili is an agent and much more loyal to the interests of France rather than Georgia. According to the propagandist, **Georgia is of secondary importance to the President and only cares about her patrons in the West.**
- A guest on Sezoni TV claimed that "**very serious Western powers**" are backing Georgian NGOs and paying the Georgian youth to attend protests, which, according to him, do not understand what they are fighting. As he continued, this fight will ultimately cause war and destabilization in Georgia.



- According to another guest on Alt Info, **the EU is only wanted by foreign agents** because they are conduits of European interests. In contrast, those who oppose Georgia's EU membership want to strengthen Georgia and want it to be free, independent, and sovereign.

Other anti-Western narratives of the pro-Kremlin groups in Georgia

- Alexander Palavandishvili, a propagandist and co-host of Alt Info, claimed that **the West does not support Georgia at all**, including in terms of security, economy, and territorial integrity.
- According to a propagandist on pro-Russian Sezoni TV, relations with the EU caused the Georgian population to be halved, which can legitimately be assessed as “genocide of the Georgian people” and as such, Georgia should not continue its path of European integration.
- Mikheil Zghenti, the General Secretary of another pro-Russian party, “Solidarity for Peace”, claimed that the **1992-1993 Russia-Georgia war in Abkhazia was caused by the West** to strain relations between Russia and Georgia. However, according to him, Georgian MPs at the time took a bold step and supported Georgia's **CIS membership, which, despite corruption and inflation, resulted in Georgia's economic development**. As soon as the West saw that Georgia was developing, it organized the 2003 Rose Revolution.
- According to Temur Pipia, the Secretary of the pro-Russian “Solidarity for Peace” party, rallies held in Georgia that anti-state and leaders are calling on the students and young people to start a violent coup. He added that **the Georgian youth have had their minds poisoned against the interests of Georgia by the West** for several decades.
- The host of Sezoni TV, Nikoloz Mzhavanadze, claimed that **in Europe, university dormitory buildings are separated on the grounds of sexuality**. According to him, transgendered persons occupy the first floor, gay persons occupy the second, lesbian persons - the third, and only the fourth floor is given to heterosexuals. “Is this where you are sending your children?” he exclaimed.
- According to a propagandist on Alt Info, the West is financing and attempting to organize a coup in Georgia, and in order to prevent the Maidan-like revolution in Georgia, **the government needs to take radical steps against the West**.

- Another propagandist [argued](#) that Georgia cannot trust the US **because it has been using Georgia for its malicious plans for 35 years.** The US has been promising heaven in Georgia but only offers hell, he argued.
- When the Russian invasion of Ukraine ends, Europe will no longer be what it is today, and the EU will disintegrate, a propagandist [claimed](#). According to him, due to high taxes and economic problems, many EU members will leave the union. Moreover, according to him, **the Baltic countries are making every effort to avoid a war with Russia, which is why they are attempting to open a second front in Georgia.**