

BY LIZA MCHEDLIDZE

Bundestag Submits Motion Supporting Georgia's Path to the EU

The Bundestag is set to debate a motion tabled by the SPD, Alliance 90/The Greens, and FDP parliamentary groups. The motion calls for decisive action to preserve Georgia's democratic trajectory amidst growing concerns about the country's "authoritarian" drift under the ruling Georgian Dream party.

The motion acknowledges Georgia's progress since the 2003 Rose Revolution, crediting its vibrant civil society for advancing democratic values and drawing closer to the EU. However, it warns that the current government's authoritarian tendencies threaten to derail these achievements, putting the country's EU candidacy at risk.

One of the key issues raised is the recent adoption of the controversial "Foreign Agents Law," which critics argue is modeled on Russia's foreign agents legislation. The law imposes strict transparency requirements on civil society and media organizations receiving foreign funding, stoking fears of censorship and repression. The Bundestag motion asserts that as long as this law remains in force, Georgia's progress toward EU integration will be effectively frozen. It also emphasizes that the law contradicts two key reform priorities agreed with the EU—ensuring civil society's independence and countering disinformation.

The Bundestag highlights that EU integration is enshrined in Georgia's Constitution, specifically in Article 78, and that the Georgian people have consistently demonstrated their commitment to a European future. However, the motion expresses deep concern that the Georgian



government's actions are undermining this goal. It notes the overwhelming public protests against the "Foreign Agents Law" and affirms solidarity with the peaceful demonstrators.

The Bundestag also stresses the importance of free and fair elections in Georgia, particularly in light of the upcoming parliamentary elections in October 2024. It raises concerns about recent changes to the electoral system that may favor the ruling party and the government's intimidation of civil society and opposition figures.

The motion calls on the German Federal Government to take a series of actions to safeguard Georgia's democratic future and uphold its EU accession process:

EU Accession Freeze: Advocate at the European level to halt further progress in Georgia's EU accession until the "Foreign Agents Law" is repealed.

Support for Free Elections: Ensure that international election observers, including those from the OSCE and Council of Europe, are supported

in monitoring Georgia's parliamentary elections.

Protect Civil Society: Urge Georgia to stop the intimidation and persecution of civil society, journalists, LGBTQIA+ communities, and opposition politicians.

LGBTQIA+ Rights: Make the repeal of discriminatory laws against LGBTQIA+ people a condition for further EU accession discussions.

Sanctions and Human Rights: Intensify scrutiny of Georgia's adherence to democratic norms and consider targeted sanctions if violations continue.

Russia's Influence: Reaffirm Germany's support for Georgia's territorial integrity and condemn Russia's ongoing occupation of Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

The motion concludes by reaffirming that Georgia's European future is still within reach, but it is up to the country's leaders to align their policies with the democratic aspirations of the Georgian people. The Bundestag emphasizes that the upcoming parliamentary elections will be a crucial moment for determining Georgia's future direction.

Weimar Triangle Foreign Ministers Call for Support of Georgia's European Aspirations

France Diplomacy

THE MINISTRY FOREIGN POLICY COUNTRY FILES COMING TO FRANCE

Joint Statement of the Foreign Ministers of the Weimar Triangle on Georgia (10 October 2024)

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We, the Foreign Ministers of the Weimar Triangle, reaffirm our support for the democratic and European aspirations of the overwhelming majority of the Georgian people.

We deplore the actions of the Georgian Government that have led to a de facto halt of Georgia's accession process to the European Union, as declared by the European Council on 27 June representing the Heads of State or Government of the 27 EU Member States.

The negative trend has only worsened since then, with worrying threats of repression, the entry into force of the so-called "Transparency law", which stigmatises NGOs receiving more than 20% of funding from abroad and labels them as pursuing the interest of a foreign power, the recently adopted legislative amendments that restrict the rights of LGBTI people, as well as attacks against civil-society organisations and independent journalists.

In addition, we note with growing concern the increase in aggressive rhetoric towards the EU and its Member States. The EU will not tolerate the spreading of false narratives about European positions and policies by Georgia's authorities.

We reiterate our call on Georgia's Government to reverse its current course of action. The scope and depth of EU-Georgia relations and cooperation are at stake.

We expect the Georgian authorities to ensure that the upcoming elections in Georgia are free and fair and follow the OSCE ODIHR recommendations, including the ability to conduct a free and safe electoral campaign.

We hope that Georgia's Government will re-commit to implement the reform priorities defined by the country's EU candidate status. We stand ready to continue supporting Georgian society on its path towards a European future. Our hands remain outstretched.

We remain committed to strengthening and supporting Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders.

Georgia

France and Georgia News

- Joint Statement of the Foreign Ministers of the Weimar Triangle on Georgia (10 Oct. 2024)
- Georgia - France reaffirms its commitment to the country's sovereignty and territorial integrity (7 Aug. 2024)
- Georgia - France deeply regrets the adoption of the Law on Transparency of Foreign Influence (28 May 2024)
- Georgia - "Transparency of Foreign Influence" bill (April 18, 2024) (18.04.24)
- Georgia (28 Dec. 2023)
- Georgia - France condemns the murder of a Georgian citizen by Russian forces near the village of Kirballi (Nov. 8, 2023)
- Georgia - Impeachment proceedings against Georgian President Salome Zourabichvili (17.10.23)
- Georgia - France reaffirms its commitment to Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity (08.08.23)
- Georgia - Conversation between Catherine Colonna and Salome Zourabichvili, President of Georgia (13.03.23)
- Georgia - Law on foreign agents (08.03.23)

BY LIZA MCHEDLIDZE

The Foreign Ministers of the Weimar Triangle—Germany, France, and Poland—issued a joint statement reaffirming their commitment to the democratic and European aspirations of the Georgian people. They expressed deep concern over the actions taken by the Georgian government, which they believe have effectively stalled the country's EU accession process, as recognized by the European Council on June 27.

The statement highlighted several troubling developments, including the implementation of the controversial "Transparency

Law," which stigmatizes non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that receive over 20% of their funding from abroad, branding them as foreign agents. Additionally, they condemned recent legislative amendments that restrict the rights of LGBTI individuals and noted attacks against civil society organizations and independent journalists.

The Foreign Ministers condemned the escalating aggressive rhetoric directed at the EU and its member states, emphasizing that the EU will not accept the dissemination of misleading narratives regarding its

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Exchange Rates: US Dollar - 2.7255; Euro - 2.9803; GBP - 3.5636; 100 Russian Ruble - 2.7990; Swiss Franc - 3.1729

Weimar Triangle Foreign Ministers Call for Support of Georgia's European Aspirations

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policies by Georgian authorities. They urged the Georgian government to change its course, warning that the future of EU-

Georgia relations is at stake. As Georgia approaches its parliamentary elections, the Weimar Triangle ministers called for free and fair elections that adhere to the recommenda-

tions from the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), ensuring a safe environment for electoral campaigning. The ministers expressed hope

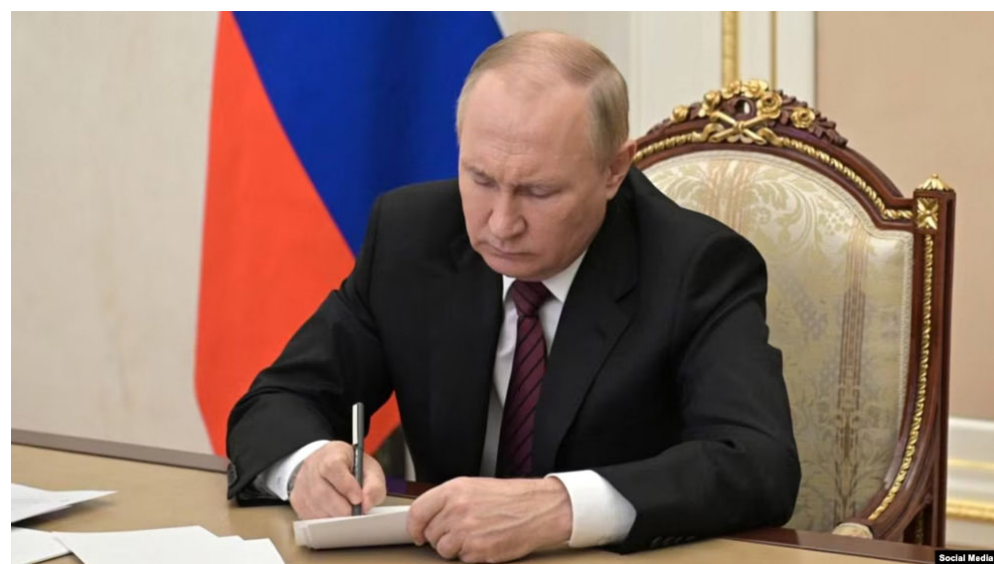
that the Georgian government will recommit to implementing the reform priorities associated with its EU candidate status. They reiterated their readiness to support Georgian society in its

pursuit of a European future, while also affirming their commitment to upholding Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders.

The News in Brief

PREPARED BY MESSENGER STAFF

Putin Extends Visa-Free Entry for Georgian Citizens Seeking Work or Education in Russia



On October 10, Russian President Vladimir Putin announced an amendment to the order issued on May 10, 2023, regarding entry procedures for Georgian citizens traveling to Russia. The new regulation extends the visa-free entry regime to Georgians who wish to enter Russia for work or for temporary stays exceeding 90 days, including for educational purposes.

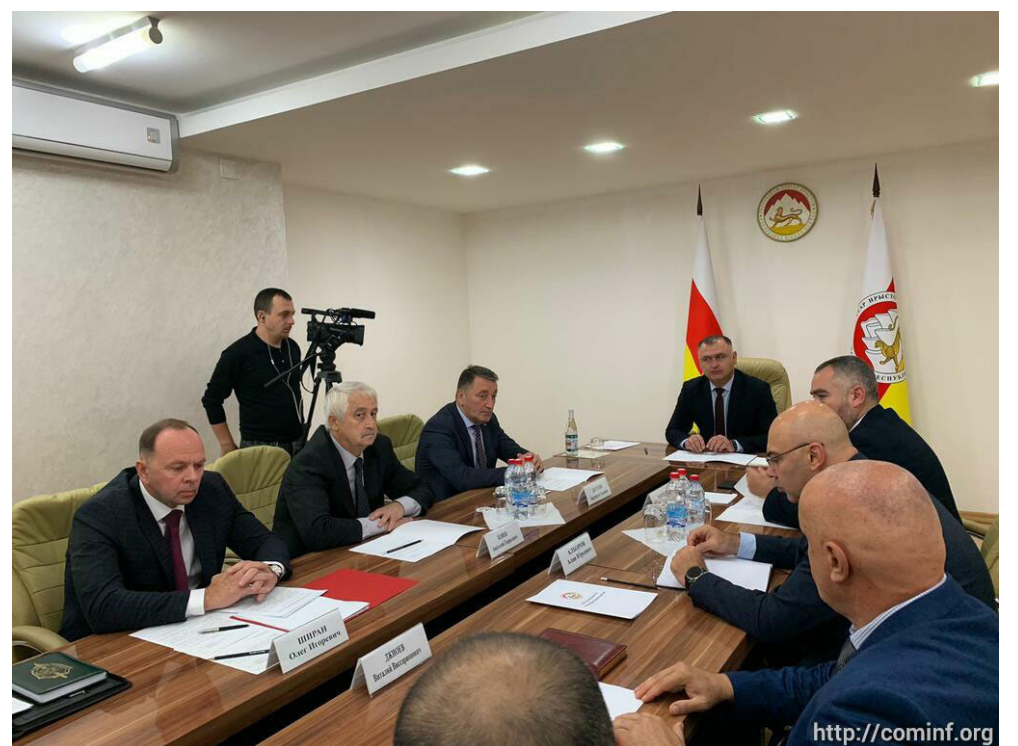
Under the previous guidelines, Georgian citizens in these categories were required to obtain a visa to enter Russia. With the amendment now effective upon publication, eligible Georgians can enter

Russia using valid identity documents. This includes a Georgian citizen's identity card, diplomatic passport, service passport, seafarer's certificate, or a certificate of return to Georgia.

Tskhinvali Region to Restrict Movement During Georgia's Parliamentary Elections

On October 10, the de-facto security

council of the occupied Tskhinvali region (South Ossetia) announced that it would restrict movement across the occupation line during Georgia's upcoming parliamentary elections.



The self-proclaimed authorities stated that the measure aims to ensure the safety of the region's population and prevent potential "provocations" from what they described as pro-Western and nation-

alist radical groups in Georgia. As a result, simplified border crossing points will be temporarily closed.

Alan Gagloev, the de-facto president of South Ossetia, emphasized that this de-

cision was influenced by the region's assessment of the growing complexities in Georgia's political landscape, citing both internal sources and publicly available information.

EU agrees on up to Euro35 billion in macro-financial assistance to Ukraine and new loan mechanism implementing G7 commitment

On 9 October, the Council of the European Union reached an agreement on a financial assistance package to Ukraine, including an exceptional macro-financial assistance (MFA) loan of up to Euro35 billion and a

loan cooperation mechanism that will support Ukraine in repaying loans for up to Euro45 billion provided by the EU and

G7 partners. The financial assistance aims to provide immediate relief to Ukraine's urgent financing

needs that have increased due to Russia's intensified aggression towards Ukraine.

The repayment of the exceptional MFA loan and eligible bilateral loans from G7 partners under the 'Extraordinary Revenue Acceleration Loans for Ukraine' (ERA) initiative, will be ensured by funds coming from future flows of extraordinary revenues stemming from the immobilisation of Russian sovereign assets.

The Ukraine loan mechanism will disburse these funds – as well as possible amounts received as voluntary contributions from member states and third countries or

other sources – in the form of financial support to Ukraine, to assist it in servicing and repaying the loans.

The up to Euro35 billion MFA loan is the EU's contribution to the G7 loan of up to Euro45 billion.

In view of a speedy adoption and ensuring that the macro-financial assistance reaches Ukraine as soon as possible, member states agreed today that if the European Parliament adopts the Commission's proposal without changes, the Council will also proceed to adopt the text without modifications. The aim is to make the MFA loan available in 2024, with disbursement in 2025, to be repaid over a maximum period of 45 years.

(euneighbourseast.eu)



Weather

Friday, October 11

Day Mostly Cloudy
High: 20°C

Night Mostly Cloudy
Low: 14°C

Saturday, October 12

Day Mostly Cloudy
High: 24°C

Night Partly Cloudy
Low: 16°C

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43, Chovelidze st., Tbilisi, 0108, Georgia
Founded by Prof.

Zaza Gachechiladze

Tamar Gachechiladze
Publisher

Mob.: +995 599 565621; +995 577 760000
E-mail: messenger@messenger.com.ge
http://www.messenger.com.ge/

Nino Metreveli
Commercial Director

Mariam Mchedlidze
Editor-in-Chief

Khatuna Gogichaishvili
Layout Designer, Photographer

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The Renovated State Silk Museum opens its doors to Visitors

By NINO GVALIA

After four years of the full restoration, the State Silk Museum was officially opened on October 9. The date was symbolic, because the foundation of the mu-

seum building happened exactly 135 years ago, on October 9, 1889.

The project was implemented under the framework memorandum signed between the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport of Georgia, Tbilisi Municipality City Hall, Tbilisi Development Fund, International Association of Mayors of Partially or Entirely Francophone Cities, and LEPL Silk State Museum.

As one of the oldest museums of the Caucasus, it is a unique space, preserv-

ing and developing the accumulated knowledge about silk production in Georgia. The State Silk Museum preserves the historical and cultural heritage of sericulture and develops it with a modern interpretation.



