

A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF ELECTORAL PROCESSES IN ARMENIA AND GEORGIA

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Abstract

This article compares the majoritarian electoral systems in Armenia and Georgia. Since gaining independence, both countries experimented with different electoral systems, which has led to the ongoing debate over which is the best model. The majoritarian electoral model is oftentimes criticized in both countries. This paper discusses the major characteristics of this model and concludes that despite the existence of some obvious problems, political elites are often reluctant to change the system because it guarantees significant political gains in elections; changes can only take place in the context of a broad reform initiative, such as the constitutional reform in Armenia, or when elections are postponed for some unclear reasons, as seen in Georgia.

Introduction

Weak democratic institutions are an overwhelmingly evident problem in most post-Soviet countries. Hard to build and even more difficult to hold responsible, the pillars of democracy are essential components of successful state-building projects and indicators of political progress. Governments usually discuss successful reforms and steps forward, while public opinion serves as an objective indicator. Unfortunately, opinion polls often demonstrate that there is a serious gap between citizens and their representatives in high places.

In this article, two neighboring countries – Armenia and Georgia – will be explored. First, they share similarities in political culture and policy-making. Furthermore, Armenia and Georgia are both small, Christian, and young democracies surrounded by "difficult" neighbors and torn by economic hardships. Both are struggling to establish a political culture where governments will be obliged to report to the public and a strong civil society that will make the voices of ordinary citizens heard in the policy-making process. Parliaments play a crucial role in these processes.

For various reasons – one of which is the disappointment in the executive despite having strong presidents – both countries decided to become parliamentary republics. The legislative bodies will become a place where all political positions can be represented, and discussions will allow for the establishment of a more civilized political process. Furthermore, parliamentary systems will allow for street politics (in the worst sense of the notion) to diminish, as it has led to violence in both countries. Currently, citizens do not believe parliaments will be able to bear the weight of a highly dynamic process of a search for political consensus: change must occur.

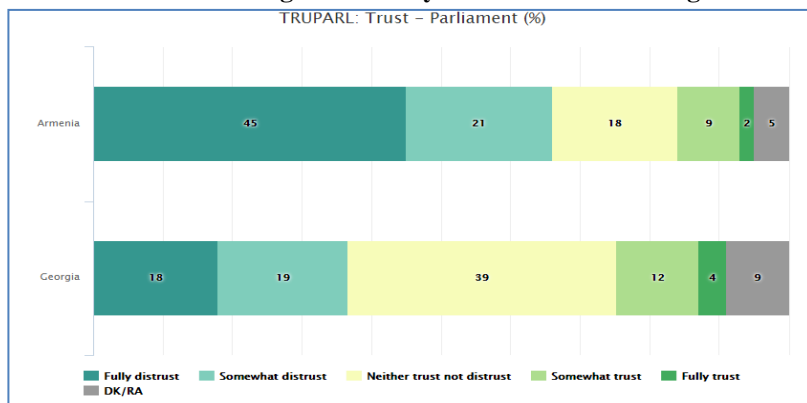
Reforms, constitutional changes, and amendments to laws are frequent in developing countries. Armenian and Georgian citizens are also accustomed to it: new governments usually stipulate new rules of the game, often contradicting to those established by the previous government. Through the changes set forth by the few in power, the citizens understand their political interests and don't expect much improvement for the rest of the country. However, an electoral system and particularly, the way Parliaments are elected, might be an exception: most agree that this is the case where everybody can benefit if the system changes.

In the following chapters, this paper will first demonstrate what opinion polls show about current popular attitudes toward Parliaments in Armenia and Georgia; second, it will offer a historical overview of parliamentary elections and legislative changes in both countries; finally, based on conducted expert interviews and online resources, this paper will discuss the current reform processes and expected consequences.

Problem statement: Parliaments as Millionaires clubs?

In both countries, a significant number of citizens have a rather skeptical attitude toward the state's legislative body (see chart below, CRRC Cross-country barometer, 2015.) Parliaments are not trusted for various reasons: low qualification of most MPs, public appearances – or the lack thereof public appearances and absence from political life at all, – brawls, insults and other forms of unethical behavior which are commonplace in the Georgian parliament, unwillingness to work closely with citizens, and so on. As the chart below demonstrates, the trust of the Armenian citizens in the Parliament is low: 45 % of respondents fully distrust the legislative body. Citizens in Georgia are a slightly more positive with only 18% choosing to describe their attitude as "fully distrust" and 19 % with "somewhat distrust." However, considering that Georgia is a semi-parliamentary republic with 39% of respondents answering that they "neither trust nor distrust" the legislative body, it is observed that there is a low level of trust in Georgia as well. Noteworthy, only 2% in Armenia and 4% in Georgia say that they "fully trust the Parliaments;" 9% of Armenian citizens and 12% of Georgian citizens say they "somewhat trust the Parliament."

Chart 1: Trust in the Legislative body in Armenia and Georgia



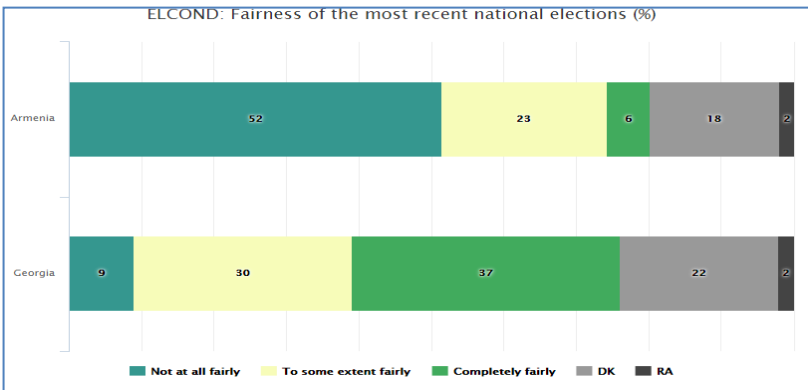
(Source: CRRC, 2015)

Low trust in the Parliament is just one of the indicators that the democratization process is in deep crisis in both countries. The state-building

process was hampered by wars and following economic hardships in both countries, and is still slow with fragile achievements. The basic requirement of a democracy – fair and transparent elections – is still a "goal to be achieved" rather than reality. Elections are often manipulated: voters are bribed and threatened, violence erupts on election days, and politicians disregard all ethical standards and legal rules in the most notorious Machiavellian way.¹ The chart below shows the extent of the problem: a significant number of respondents (especially in Armenia) doubt the fairness of the latest national elections. This means they know that at least, a certain number of the elected officials do not belong to the National Assemblies and managed to get seats due to corruption, unfairness in the election process, etc.

This problem has become blatantly obvious in the recent years; even ruling parties could not suppress discussions about the necessity to reform the electoral codes and to create a basis for a system that will guarantee a fair representation of political powers in the Parliaments. Ruling parties usually successfully manage to link reform agendas in their favor, and both countries end up with "new electoral codes" that still benefit those in power. However, the debates about a better electoral code are constantly happening. Currently, in Armenia and Georgia, the future of the majoritarian system of elections is in question.

Chart 2: Attitudes on the fairness of elections in Armenia and Georgia



(Source: CRRC, 2015)

¹ See f.e. reports of the OSCE election observation missions: <http://www.osce.org/odihr/elections> (accessed 29.07.2017)

Why has the majoritarian system become an issue for discussion? Certain problems connected with the ineffectiveness of most of the majoritarian MPs have grown so obvious that it cannot be concealed by the smartest PR actions and propaganda tools. Here are some of the most striking problems often described in the press or in local and international NGO reports.

First, rich people/businessmen seek Parliamentary immunity in order to protect their businesses.² A seat in the legislative body is attractive not as a source of financial income in the form of a salary – of which usually amounts to ridiculous sums for these people – but as a means to protect and expand the business. That is why a lot of MPs who come from business into politics do not bother to attend plenary sessions.

Second, a seat in the Parliament can guarantee sources of income and personal wealth. What MPs are often linked to in both countries is called becoming "Krysha," which means protector (from the Russian word "Krysha" which means "roof", "shelter") for businesses. This is a widespread form of corruption in the post-Soviet republics and is linked to the low level of transparency. For example, in Georgia, all MPs are obliged to present a declaration of assets collected by the Civil Service Bureau early in their career. However, false data is often written in the declaration. Thus, MPs "forget" to declare some assets and "recall" only if journalists or NGOs make the information public.

Thirdly, majoritarian MPs that are independent of political parties become victims and become subject to political bargaining: as the parliamentary majority seeks additional votes for a legislature, or the parliamentary minority tries to gain votes to oppose the ruling party, they try to convince the majoritarian members to join them. Instead of addressing their constituents concerns, majoritarian MPs spend more time engaging in this bargaining process and add to the negative reputation of the legislative body – a blatantly obvious phenomenon in the Georgian case.

² A list of Georgian millionaire MPs can be found under: <https://bpn.ge/finansebi/31634-37-deklarirebuli-milioneri-umravlesobashi.html?lang=ka-GE> (accessed 29.07.2017)

The most convincing argument against the majoritarian system is most likely the fact that MPs fail to represent their voters. The legislation is typically in place in both countries and defines how the MP should stay in touch and be responsive to the electorate, but the implementation of the legislative principles in this regard is usually extremely weak. Most voters have never met their MP or do not even know who he/she is.³

Thus, it is logical that in both countries, citizens and civil society organizations have called for a reform of the system and abolishment of the majoritarian system as a potential solution to address the problem of weak political representation.

However, in the past, both countries experienced “seat-selling” in the party lists: parties put rich people on their lists – sometimes even among the top 10 members – in exchange for financial contributions. For some critics, this is not much better than the traditional voter bribing by majoritarian candidates prior to the elections. At the very least, party membership puts the MPs under some party discipline.

Some theoretical observations about the electoral systems

Elections are expected to ensure fair representation of the population in the state legislature. This is especially important in parliamentary republics where governments are formed by the parties or coalitions with the most votes. Therefore, the question of developing the best electoral system for a particular society is widely discussed in transitional countries. Both the proportional system and the majoritarian system have their positives and negatives. A mixed system is often preferred since it allows for the application of positive features to both systems, but it also proves to be far from being perfect; Armenia and Georgia are fitting examples of this.

Probing all possible systems is a logical way to find the ultimate model. However, this process takes time and seriously undermines citizens' trust in democracy. Disappointment with the election process and results leads people to believe that democracy is just another myth that elites use to

³ See NDI report, 13 April, 2016 on trust in the Parliament in Georgia, https://www.ndi.org/sites/default/files/NDI%20Georgia_March%202016%20poll_press%20release_POLITICAL_GEO_vf.pdf

control the masses, and that power always remains in the hands of the rich "fat cats."

The majoritarian or "plurality" system is also possible and takes different forms such as "first past the vote" or "two round system;" it allows citizens to cast their votes for individual politicians, given party-affiliated persons or independent candidates. Typically, this type of a decision requires a higher level of political literacy among citizens. On the other hand, it strengthens connections and ties between citizens and parties or in the case of independent candidates, between citizens and the representatives' bodies. Therefore, the choice of a mixed model election system is rational in the case of countries that have weak party systems and a mostly confrontational political environment (Georgia is probably an extreme case with more than two hundred registered political parties.)

Election fairness and efforts taken to implement necessary measures to ensure transparency and responsiveness of MPs' activities determine if a particular electoral system "works" or not. Skepticism about the majoritarian electoral system in both countries is connected with two aspects: a) elections are often accompanied with different forms of wrongdoings, such as "buying votes." Majoritarian candidates are frequently involved in this because they engage in personal meetings with constituents. They also often manage to gain leverage, allowing them to influence local political elites and ensure success on elections; there are cases when governments change but certain majoritarian candidates are reelected in certain regions several times. b) When elected, majoritarian MPs don't bother to keep in contact with their voters and sometimes, completely ignore them. c) Unfair representation of votes is commonplace: in Georgia, where the system allows one to win a district by a majority of votes, the argument for changing the system is also this "classical" disadvantage of the majoritarian system where an unfairly big number of votes gets lost.⁴ Armenia has already changed the election law:⁵ the parliament was elected in 2017 only by a proportional vote. A

⁴ <http://www.isfed.ge/main/783/geo/> (accessed 29.07.2017)

⁵ <https://massispost.com/2016/05/armenian-parliament-adopts-new-election-law/> (accessed 29.07.2017)

constitutional referendum was held to change this and other features of the overall political system, resulting in Armenia becoming a parliamentary republic. The abolishment of the majoritarian system was just one aspect of the greater reform agenda and thus became the new reality despite much differences in opinion. In Georgia, the planned changes in the electoral system became a hot topic for political speculations: despite the promise to change the majoritarian system as soon as they came into power after winning the elections, "The Georgian Dream" coalition started discussing the necessity to postpone this decision until the next elections in 2020. As the results of the 2016 parliamentary elections demonstrated, the government had fair reasons to postpone the abolishment of the majoritarian districts: their candidates won an absolute majority.

Historical overview of the electoral processes in Armenia and Georgia since 1991

Since independence, **Armenia** has held six Presidential (1991, 1996, 1998, 2003, 2008, 2013) and six Parliamentary elections (1995, 1999, 2003, 2007, 2012, 2017.) The president is elected for a five-year term. After the **constitutional referendum** held on December 6, 2015, the proposed amendments to the constitution from a semi-presidential system was replaced by a parliamentary republic; these changes planned to be enforced during the 2017–18 electoral cycle.

The **National Assembly** (*Azgayin Zhoghov*) had 131 members who were elected for a four-year term: 41 members in single-seat constituencies and 90 members by proportional representation. The seats envisaged for the National Assembly by proportional representation are distributed among those party lists, which have received at least 5% of the total of the number of votes. Armenia has a multi-party system with numerous parties in which often none of them have a chance of gaining power alone, so parties must collaborate in order to form coalition governments.⁶

Georgia has held 6 Presidential (1991, 1995, 2000, 2004, 2008, 2013) and 7 Parliamentary (1992, 1995, 1999, 2003, 2004, 2008, 2012) and 3 referendums (1991, 2003, 2008) since the country's declaration of

⁶ <http://www.elections.am/> (accessed 29.07.2017)

independence from the Soviet Union in 1991. The President is elected for a five-year term and the Parliament of Georgia for a four-year term.

Since 2012, the country has changed from having a presidential system to being a semi-presidential system with a strong executive government and prime minister. The latest parliamentary elections took place on October 8, 2016.⁷

The 150 members of the unicameral parliament are elected through a mixed system: 73 by a two-round system in single-member constituencies with majority rule, and 77 by proportional representation in a single nationwide constituency with an electoral threshold of 5 %.

Historical background of elections in Armenia

In 1990 right before Armenia gained independence, the Supreme Council of Armenia of the first convocation was formed only by the majoritarian electoral system (260 MPs). Later, 40 out of the 190 seats of the first convocation of NA were elected by the Proportional Voting system for the first time. Parliamentary elections⁸ to the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia of the **first** convocation were held on July 5, 1995, with the second round on July 29, 1995. Thus, the Republican Bloc (an alliance of the Pan-Armenian National Movement, Democratic Liberal Party, Christian Democratic Union, and the Republican Party) won 20 seats (27.82%), Shamiram – 8 seats (11%), Communist Party of Armenia – 6 seats (7.89%), Armenian Democratic Union – 3 seats (4.9%), National Self-Determination Union - 3 seats (3.63%)⁹. The voter turnout was 55.6 %. The second round of voting was held on July 29, 1995, in 23 constituencies. Overall, the Republican Bloc won the election with 119 seats.

⁷ See also: <http://cesko.ge/eng> (accessed 29.07.2017)

⁸ <http://www.parliament.am/parliament.php?id=parliament&lang=eng> (accessed 29.07.2017)

⁹ Elections today: News from the International Foundation for Election System. VOL 5. NO. 3, page 29

<i>Political Group</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Proportional</i>	<i>Majority</i>
Republican Bloc	119	20	99
Shamiram Women's Party	8	8	0
Communist Party	7	6	1
National Democratic Union	5	3	2
National Self-Determination Union	3	3	0
Armenian Liberal - Democratic Party (Ramkavar)	1	0	1
Scientific-Industrial and Civil Union	1	0	1
Armenian Revolutionary Party (Dashnaktsutyun)	1	0	1
Independents	45	0	45

On May 30, 1999, the elections (131 Parliament Members: 75 majoritarian and 56 proportional electoral system) of the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia of the **second** convocation were held. The result was a victory for the Unity Bloc, which won 62 of the 131 seats. Overall voter turnout was 51.7%.

The Unity Bloc was an alliance of the People's Party and the Republican Party of Armenia. According to the results of the elections, six parties and an alliance overcame the barrier of the 5 % minimum vote requirement rule, as defined by the law. From the 129 Parliament Members, 76 were partisan and 53 were nonpartisan (not belonging to any party).

After the crime of October 27, 1999,¹⁰ by the decree of the President of the Republic of Armenia at the extraordinary sitting of the National Assembly convened on November 2, 1999, a new governing body of the National Assembly was elected. Mr. Armen Khachatryan was elected as the President of the National Assembly, and Mr. Tigran Torosyan and Mr. Gagik Aslanyan were elected as Vice Presidents of the National Assembly.

¹⁰ On October 27, 1999 a group of seven terrorists rushed into the sitting hall of Armenian national Assembly and opened fire with Kalashnikov machine guns killing Prime Minister Vazgen Sarkisyan, Speaker Karen Demirchyan, Vice-Speakers Ruben Miroyan and Yuri Bakhshyan, Minister of Operational Matters Leonard Petrosyan, and three MPs: Mikael Kotanyan, Armenak Armenakyan and Genrikh Abramyan.

In the elections of the **third** convocation of the National Assembly held on May 30, 2003, there were 56 constituency seats and 75 elected seats on a national basis using proportional representation. (131 Parliament Members: 75 proportional and 56 majoritarian electoral system.) However, the elections were strongly criticized by international election monitors, who cited widespread fraud and noted that they fell short of democratic standards.

Elections of the **fourth** convocation held in Armenia on May 12, 2007, contained 131 Parliament Members: 90 proportional and 41 majoritarian electoral system. 1,364 candidates ran for the 131 seats, 41 of which were constituency seats with the remaining 90 to be filled by a proportional party-list system. Five parliamentary factions were established in the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia of the fourth convocation: "Republican Party of Armenia" (64), "Prosperous Armenia" (25), "Armenian Revolutionary Federation" (16), "Rule of Law" (8), and "Heritage" (7). These factions were established on June 7, 2007. Eleven Parliament Members were not included in those factions. On August 26, 2007, and on August 24, 2008, additional elections were held by the majoritarian electoral system.

The last parliamentary elections of the **fifth** convocation were held on May 6, 2012 (131 Parliament Members: 90 proportional and 41 majoritarian electoral system). President Serzh Sargsyan's ruling Republican Party gained even more of a majority of the parliament seats. Six parliamentary factions were established in the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia of the fifth convocation: "Republican Party of Armenia" faction (69), "Prosperous Armenia" faction (37), "Armenian National Congress" faction (7), "Rule of Law" faction (6), "Armenian Revolutionary Federation" faction (5), and "Heritage" faction (5). Two deputies were not included in those factions. By the decree of the President of the Republic of Armenia, on April 13, 2014, Mr. Hovik Abrahamyan was appointed as the Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia. Mr. Galust Sahakyan was appointed as the President of the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia on April 29, 2014.

Year	Number of Seats		
	Proportional	Majoritarian	Total
2012	90	41	131
2007	90	41	131
2003	75	56	131
1999	75	56	131
1995	150	40	190

A **constitutional referendum** was held in Armenia on December 6, 2015. The proposed amendments to the constitution would change the country from having a semi-presidential system to being a parliamentary republic, with the changes intended to take effect during the 2017–18 electoral cycle. The referendum passed with 66.2% of voters supporting it. Voter turnout was 50.8%, passing the 33% threshold to validate the results.¹¹

The constitution of RA was adopted in July 1995 and revised in November 2005 and 2015. Constitutional reforms to change the system of government from a semi-presidential to a parliamentary system were approved in a referendum in December 2015 and are set to be enforced at the end of the President’s term in 2018.¹²

Under the amendments, The Armenian National Assembly is going to consist of at least 101 deputies¹³ instead of 131 deputies, of whom 41 were formerly elected from single-member districts, and 90 were elected by party lists. The next legislative election took place on April 2, 2017.¹⁴ The president is the head of state, embodying national unity and ensuring the observance of the Constitution. S/he cannot be a member of a political party. Under the proposed changes, the president is to appoint a candidate

¹¹ See also: <http://www.lragir.am/index/eng/0/politics/view/35046> (accessed 29.07.2017)

¹² [http://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/default.aspx?pdffile=CDL-REF\(2015\)034-e](http://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/default.aspx?pdffile=CDL-REF(2015)034-e) (accessed 29.07.2017)

¹³ Article 89. National Assembly Composition and Election Procedure: DRAFT AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION OF ARMENIA;

[http://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/default.aspx?pdffile=CDL-REF\(2015\)034-e](http://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/default.aspx?pdffile=CDL-REF(2015)034-e)
¹⁴ <http://www.elections.am/announcement/id-167/> (accessed 29.07.2017)

for prime minister from the winning (of the parliamentary elections) party's bloc. If parliamentary forces are unable to agree on a candidate to be the head of government, the parliament is to be dissolved. A vote of no-confidence in the prime minister can be passed no sooner than a year following the appointment. Moreover, according to the electoral law, seats for ethnic minorities will be allocated.

The NA shall be elected for a five-year term only in proportional elections, and the President will be elected by the National Assembly for a single seven-year term. The Electoral Code shall guarantee the formation of a stable parliamentary majority. If during the first round, a clear majority for a political party and a stable parliamentary majority is not formed as a result of the election or by building a political coalition, then a second round of the election may be held. In the event a second round is held, it shall be allowed to form new alliances. Only two parties, which would receive the most votes in the first round, would then take part in the runoff. The parties which participate in the second round of the voting are obliged to propose a candidate for Prime Minister and fundamentals for government programs. Furthermore, under the amendments, the NA may adopt a law on amnesty by a majority vote of the total number of parliamentarians.¹⁵

The constitutional reform stipulates a fundamental change of the government system based on a transition to a parliamentary model with strong majoritarian institutions and weak power-sharing arrangements. The suggested system will effectively promote government stability and may give stronger impetus for the consolidation of political parties, but at the same time, will evidently weaken the promise of consensual governance, and will result in further concentration of power and erosion of inter-institutional (horizontal) accountability and will weaken checks and balances between the government agencies. The majority of experts feared the emergence of unrestrained majoritarian candidacy as an outcome, while a considerable number of domestic experts believed that legitimization of a

¹⁵ Constitution of the Republic of Armenia, page 18
<http://www.ombuds.am/resources/ombudsman/uploads/files/legislation/0f30a8196c4c214a6e22b03e753d8cde.pdf> (accessed 29.07.2017)

revived Soviet-style “partocratic” governance would be among the most expected macro-political effects of these reforms.

Ultimately, the proposed change in government form will have intentional and unintended effects on the consolidation of democratic institutions. The majoritarian democratic institutions may undermine the prospect for political dialogue between different parties and social groups while strengthening the prospects for consolidation of a one-party dominated majoritarian rule. The extension of the legislation list – which is now to be adopted in the National Assembly by 3/5 of the votes including the so-called “organic laws” – is a significant improvement giving the parliamentary minority groups a chance to veto a limited number of decisions that are now passed by simple majorities, but it does not compensate for the principally ceremonial role granted to the political opposition under the proposed government model.¹⁶

The next **parliamentary elections** will be held in Armenia on April 2, 2017.¹⁷ They will be the first elections after the constitutional referendum that approved reforms for Armenia to become a parliamentary republic.

Historical overview of elections in Georgia

The **first Georgian parliamentary elections**¹⁸ took place on October 11, 1992, at the same time as the presidential elections. There were a lot of political, social, and economic circumstances which had a negative effect on the elections. Instability in the Abkhazian region was the main reason for postponing the elections in other voting districts. The society was chaotic as there were a lot of refugees from the Abkhazian war zone without accommodation for organizing the voting process for those who had been temporarily relocated from their cities, which made the situation even worse. The head of state and the legitimate president of Georgia was in exile after being expelled in a coup in January. Independent Eduard

¹⁶ <http://www.civilnet.am/news/2015/12/01/apella-institute-new-constitution-armenia-further-societal-polarization/282505> (accessed 29.07.2017)

¹⁷ <https://news.am/eng/news/315206.html> (accessed 29.07.2017)

¹⁸ <http://www.parliament.ge/en/search/index/?s=elections> (accessed 29.07.2017)

Shevardnadze was the only presidential candidate, and at the same time, the Peace Bloc won the most seats in Parliament with a voter turnout 74.2 %.

These elections took place within a mixed electoral system. 75 delegates were elected on the basis of the majoritarian system (from single mandate districts) and 150 delegates were elected based on the proportional system (multi-mandate districts.)

The **next** elections took place on November 5, 1995, with the second round on November 19, 1995. The “Union of Citizens of Georgia” won the elections and obtained 108 of the 235 seats. Meanwhile, the elections weren’t held in Abkhazia, resulting in the 12 MPs elected in 1992 holding their seats. 150 delegates were elected by the proportional system and 85 by the majoritarian. In general, 53 parties participated in the Elections. 2,127,946 voters participated in the elections out of 3,121,075 total eligible voters. The voter turnout was 66.6 %.

The results of the **third** parliamentary elections were quite predictable and took place on October 31, 1999, with second voting rounds in some districts on November 7th and 14th, 1999. 45 parties participated in these elections. The result was another victory for the “Union of Citizens of Georgia,” which won 131 of the 235 seats with a 67.9 % voter turnout. Still, due to its breakaway status, the election did not take place in Abkhazia and 12 MPs elected in 1992 held their seats again. 150 delegates were elected by the proportional system and 85 by the majoritarian from the Union of Georgian Citizens Party. 22 MPs were elected through the majoritarian system as a result of the second round held on November 7th and 14th, 1999. 2,133,878 voters participated in the elections out of 3,143,851 total eligible voters.

The **fourth** parliamentary election was the most intriguing one. It was held on November 2, 2003, with a constitutional referendum. The Georgian Election Commission presented the statistics, in which a combination of parties supporting President Eduard Shevardnadze won the elections. Nevertheless, the results of the elections were canceled by the Georgian Supreme Court after the Rose Revolution on November 25th. In addition, a lot of cases of election fraud were detected and claimed, which aggravated the situation leading to increasingly violent public protests and to the

resignation of Shevardnadze. New elections (the **fifth** one) took place on March 28, 2004, after the elections of President Mikhail Saakashvili in January 2004. The result of these elections was a victory by the National Movement-Democrats (NMD) party supporting President Mikhail Saakashvili. The party won 67 % of the vote. The other parties did not win more than 7.6 %. The NMD obtained most of the 130 seats by a proportional system. 17 parties participated in these elections, but the 7% threshold was passed only by two of them: NMD 66.24 % (135 mandates,) and the Right Opposition bloc 7.56 % (15 mandates.) These elections are considered to be the most democratic ones since Georgian independence from the Soviet Union.

The **sixth** parliamentary elections took place earlier than planned. After the 2007 Georgian demonstrations, President Mikhail Saakashvili pushed them from October to April by holding a referendum. Voters were mostly in favor of having the upcoming elections in the spring. The elections were held on May 21, 2008. After new amendments, 75 MPs could be elected through the proportional system and 75 MPs through the majoritarian system from 75 single mandate districts. The election threshold decreased from 7% to 5% for the proportional system. Meanwhile, the candidate must obtain at least 30% of the votes in order to win the majoritarian elections. According to the final results: The United National Movement (UNM) obtained 59.9% (48 mandates,) United Opposition 17.7% (15 mandates,) Labour Party of Georgia 7.4% (6 mandates,) and Christian Democrats 8.66 % (6 mandates.) Accordingly, three parties won the elections through the majoritarian system: UNM (71 mandates,) United Opposition (2 mandates,) Republican Party (2 mandates.)

The **seventh** parliamentary elections in Georgia were held on October 1, 2012. 16 parties participated in these elections. The opposition Georgian Dream coalition led by businessman Bidzina Ivanishvili gained the majority of seats and won the elections with a 54.9% of votes (44 mandates.) The United National Movement was supported by 40.3 % of votes. The party led by President Mikhail Saakashvili lost the elections. The parliament had 150 members and was elected for a four-year term,

from which 77 members were elected via the proportional system and 73 members in single-mandate districts by the majoritarian system (independent candidates also competed in this system.)

The latest parliamentary elections took place in 2016. The first round was held on October 8, 2016, and the second one was held on October 30, 2016. During the first round, three parties formed the parliament: the ruling Georgian Dream Party (44 seats,) the United National Movement (7 seats,) and the Alliance of Patriots (6 seats.)

The second round of voting took place in 50 out of 73 single-mandate electoral districts, where the candidates did not manage to get 50% of the votes after the first round. The ruling Georgian Dream Party expected to win a constitutional majority: over three-quarters of the seats in the new parliament. The opposition party United National Movement (UNM) gained only 27 seats against the ruling Party's 115 seats.

Currently, the Georgian unicameral Parliament consists of 150 members, of which are elected by two methods. 77 members are elected by proportional representation with a 5% threshold, and 73 members by a two-round system in a single-member constituency with majority rule. Additionally, according to the CEC, voter turnout was low with just over 51% of eligible casting ballots.

Measuring the effectiveness of majoritarian MPs: Absenteeism

While it is difficult to measure the output of particular MPs work, it is possible to analyze certain indicators that reflect their motivation and involvement in the legislative process. Attendance at plenary sessions is weak in both countries' parliaments: empty seats are hard to hide, and MPs are frequently caught red-handed while using colleagues voting equipment.

Armenia

The first person on the majoritarian party list with the highest number of absences is Gagik Tsarukyan, who was elected by the majoritarian electoral system. In second place is another majoritarian MP: Ashot Aghababyan from the Republican Party of Armenia (259 absences for the last year.) The following ones are Vardan Oskanyan (Prosperous Armenia)

with 255 absences, Hayk Khachatryan (184 absences,) and Abraham Manukyan (171 absences) from Prosperous Armenia: all of these MPs were elected via the Proportional electoral system.

Most Frequent Absent Majoritarian MPs in 2016

First name/ Last name	Party	Times of absences	
		From 2012-2016	2016
Tsarukyan K. Gagik	"Prosperous Armenia"	798	259
Aghababayan Ashot	"Republican Party of Armenia"	487	259
Gevorgyan Arthur	"Republican Party of Armenia"	248	170
Petoyan Mushegh	"Prosperous Armenia"	266	128
Guloyan A. Murad	"Prosperous Armenia"	258	85

See also Appendix Table 2

Unfortunately, there are no formal mechanisms to prevent and determine the absences in the Parliament. The head of parliament decides whether the absences are reasonable or not. According to the declared data, the wealthiest parliamentarians are elected by the majoritarian system. The first one is Gagik Tsarukyan from Prosperous Armenia; he was elected by the majoritarian system whose estimated wealth is ~\$34 million dollars. The next richest MP is an Armenian businessman Samvel Alexanyan with an estimated wealth of ~\$8.8 million dollars, followed by Grigori Margaryan (\$5.1 million dollars.) The next two richest MPs are Hakob R. Hakobyan (Republican party of Armenia, \$5 million,) and non-party candidate Arayik Grigoryan (\$4.9 million), both of whom were elected by the majoritarian system.

Parliamentary factions of the fifth convocation	MPs	Majoritarians	Times of Absences	
"Republican Party of Armenia"	69	30	816	7.95%
"Prosperous Armenia"	36	8	117 5	21.97%
"Armenian National Congress"	7	0	275	26.54%
"Rule of Law"	5	1	136	18.53%
"Armenian Revolutionary Federation"	5	0	234	31.66%
"Heritage"	4		157	26.70%
non-Party	4	2	149	25.08%

In addition, some MPs' assets have increased since 2012. Majoritarian candidates hold leading positions. For example, Ashot Arsenyan had a significant increase according to his declared assets (\$2.7 million dollars.) Another majoritarian from the ruling party, Mher Sedrakyan, increased his assets by more than \$800 thousand dollars.

Georgia

In the 2013, 2014, and 2015 MPs lists, the following members did make speeches at plenary sessions, and are mostly elected through the Majoritarian electoral system: Valeri Gelashvili, Zaza Kedelashvili, Gogi Liparteliani, Enzel Mkoyan, Koba Nakopia, Ramaz Nikolaishvili, Giorgi Peikrishvili, Levan Kardava, Nikoloz Kipshidze, Revaz Shavlokhshvili, Teimuraz Chkaidze, Tengiz Khubuluri, Ali Mamedov, and Tamaz Kacheishvili.¹⁹

In the 2015 plenary session, the Georgian parliament experienced 2199 cases of absence with reasonable excuses. Though it was 272 more than in 2014, there no salary deduction cases where the MP's salary would

¹⁹ Assessment of Performance of the Georgian Parliament 2015; Transparency International Georgia, Tbilisi 2016, p. 50 (http://www.transparency.ge/sites/default/files/post_attachments/parliamentary-work-report-2015-eng.pdf) (accessed 19.02.2017)

decrease by 10% for missing more than one session with unreasonable excuses. As stated in the Rules of Procedure of the Parliament, the MPs salary is not deducted when missing a special session.

2012 - 2016 (The 8th Parliament)	
MPs	Times Absent
Nikolaishvili Ramaz	1479
Lezhava Paata	1478
Akhalaia Roland	1477
Kipshidze Nikolozi	1477
Qardava Levan	1465
Japaridze Zurab	1465
Bobokhidze Akaki	1462
Tsiskarishvili Petre	1459
Vashadze Giorgi	1456
Meladze Giorgi	1455

See also Appendix Table 1

In 2015, Zurab Japaridze (10 absences), Nikolozi Kipshidze (10 absences), and Koba Davitashvili (9 absences) had the most absences from plenary sessions with unreasonable excuses.

In 2015, the number of missed (2199) sessions according to the different reasonable excuses is as follows:

Excuses	Times Absent	
Illness	118	reduced by 64 cases comparing 2014
Family circumstances	1442	increased by 65 cases comparing to 2014
Official business trip	337	reduced by 31 cases comparing to 2014
Political opinions	302	-

Furthermore, the parliament did not manage to amend the Rules of Procedure of the Parliament, by which family circumstances would no longer be a reasonable excuse.²⁰

Discussion and expert opinions

The 2017 parliamentary elections in Armenia were important for handling the challenges of a new electoral system. It was the first elections in a new political reality. It provides an opportunity for the Armenian government to resolve the country's internal conflicts. There is widespread concern about pending improvements of the electoral institutions. For Armenia, it is crucial to address this concern in order to see the new face of the Armenian political reality. The disadvantages of it entail the potential to remain under the same leadership. The oligarchs can pass through these elections, which actually limit the effectiveness of a new parliament.

“Although the authorities were eager to make changes in the electoral code and replaced the majoritarian system to proportional, but it has still hidden majoritarian construction. In other countries, this system might be ideal, but given into consideration the traditions and behavioral models of our country, we cannot insist on the fact that it's a proportional system. On the other hand, the majoritarian system that is functional for another country cannot be applied successfully to us. The reasons are obvious: *we have an oligarchic system leading us to the depth*. The name of this electoral system, call them majoritarian, proportional or ranked voting system, won't change the reality of the electoral fraud. The main concern of the people is that the majoritarian system allows authorities to expand electoral fraud through bribe, networks, and patronage. But this electoral system allows the community authorities form the parliament as easily, as it was before. The second problem is the construction of constituency parties, which will bring about new clans in separate districts. The following issue is that the small parties can't conquer in the elections, because they don't have as many resources, as ruling parties. It's a fact that the constitutional

²⁰ Assessment of Performance of the Georgian Parliament 2015; Transparency International Georgia, Tbilisi 2016, p. 58 (http://www.transparency.ge/sites/default/files/post_attachments/parliamentary-work-report-2015-eng.pdf) (accessed 19.02.2017)

reforms in Armenia passed basically due to administrative resources and electoral fraud.”

Prior to the election, expert opinions were still rather pessimistic and skeptical. Election fraud and use of administrative recourses is still common: buying votes is a widespread problem and gives business people who want to buy seats in the parliament free space to invest money into their future political careers.

“Seemingly, the ruling party, “Hanrapetakan,” will take part in the elections under another name taking into consideration the negative attitudes toward the party. The main problem still remains the starting point. The second problem is that the lists included a lot of **artificial people**. But these patterns are not unique only for Armenia. Indeed, Armenia is much smaller, that’s why the standards are much higher. The second mechanism is that the voters vote in other’s names. There is also pressure on the civil services workers, hospitals, schools etc. For example, they might be forced to vote for a certain party. Here, we can also emphasize administrative recourses. I’d say that there are a lot of advantages for whoever is sitting on the top using networks and patronage over the acceptable stage. Unfortunately, the vote buying and bribes are common in Armenia as well. The main reason and misguided perception is that ‘One vote can’t change anything.’ The second is peer pressure, what we observe in the villages and regions. Occasionally, it becomes more dangerous when the voters can’t refuse it, because it’s given by the village head. No one in the villages can contradict in such situations.”

As a result, due to low trust in the Parliament and elections, citizens prefer to stay at home and let the rich and active share the power without bothering to let the public participate or intervene.

“...Therefore, in order to figure out the features of elections in Armenia, we should also examine them in the historical background. If we look at Armenian political history, we can observe a sudden and spontaneous behavior of voters in certain key areas. Unfortunately, our parliamentary elections are based on the personalities, and in terms of power-sharing, it is a very difficult concept in Armenia. In this situation, there are some challenges because whoever is elected, in terms of

problems, expectations, and promises, this would be a very difficult task for a new parliament to face all these problems and figure out the ways of solving them. People are tired of the ruling party “Hanrapetakan” and I think their 16-year political experience approved their position. That’s the main reason we have a great amount of absenteeism during the elections.”

A compelling summary of expert opinions shows that even though there are a lot of disadvantages, there are some improvements to be observed and there is hope for new positive changes. The reason might also be due to the trust in the new prime-minister:

“...The current political situation in Armenia is somehow complicated as there is no **show-up political process** toward the elections. The main concern in these elections still remains as the *absence of real political alternatives*. There is no conflict among political parties and actually, the oppositional parties don’t have opportunities to win the elections at all according to the new electoral code. This is because the oppositional parties in Armenia couldn’t pass the defined barrier. There is also a lack of public trust in the electoral processes. Consequently, the new electoral code of Armenia should solve the problem of the trust crisis among the people.”

What is interesting is that the parliamentary elections that took place in Georgia in 2016 might be typical for the elections in Armenia. Some experts argue that after parliamentary elections, Georgia seemingly might change the political direction and tend to have closer relations with Russia.

Both countries decided to change their electoral code taking into account the disadvantages of their current political systems. An average voter in Armenia and Georgia has similar historical memories from the communist party of the Soviet Union. In both countries, there is a weak party cadre, there is a dominant party, while politics, in general, is strongly individualized.

Party politics – especially in Armenia – need a balance; there is a competition of forces as in every democratic country, but the ruling party has governed Armenia for over 16 years. Individual parties in Armenia and Georgia have mostly failed to create a tradition of professional, regular, and diverse party politics.

Despite the fact that elections in Georgia are seemingly more democratic than in Armenia, the ruling party was accused of fraud after its victory in the latest Georgian elections. The opposition party members announced that the votes had been stolen from them.²¹ For the 2017 elections in Armenia, most of the experts expected to see a similar situation. As predicted, the authorities should assert their positions in the parliament following the elections, with an exception that there will not be a second round of the election, since in Armenia it usually brings to a pre-revolutionary situation and the government will do its best to obstruct it. In comparison to Georgian elections, more electoral fraud was expected, but the state would ensure that Armenian elections are quiet and peaceful.

“... The need of changes in the electoral code was a must even a decade ago. But this format of changes can't create fresh political environment and fair relations. Moreover, it helps the political parties to assert their positions. *The parliamentary elections in Armenia usually had less importance, than the presidential elections.* After each presidential election, we saw mass violence. In this point of view, the authorities of our country decided to avoid this post-electoral mess with a hope that in this case, they can not only keep the power, but also can avoid internal conflicts.”

For a long time, the overhaul of the electoral system is a serious topic in **Georgia**. As previously stated, this was one of the promises of the "Georgian Dream" in 2012. However, before the 2016 elections, the ruling party announced that it was too early to make such drastic changes: "Drastic changes are not desirable when elections are already at the doorstep," said David Usupashvili, Chairman of the Parliament.²² Some even argued that it was not guaranteed to abolish the majoritarian system. The President had to remind them that it was a pre-election promise.²³ The President opposes the mixed system and doubted that the postponement

²¹ <http://vnews.mv/71428> (accessed 29.07.2017)

²² <http://georgiatoday.ge/news/227/Georgia%E2%80%99s-Electoral-System-to-Face-Overhaul> (accessed 29.07.2017)

²³ <http://factcheck.ge/en/article/it-was-a-pre-election-promise-of-the-georgian-dream-coalition-to-change-the-majoritarian-electoral-system/> (accessed 29.07.2017)

was necessary for 2015.²⁴ This was just one (but not the only issue of) disagreement between President Margvelashvili and the ruling party. The local NGOs also expressed their doubt about the impossibility to make changes due to the lack of time and issued a joint statement on this matter.²⁵ Furthermore, the Constitutional Court of Georgia ordered the overhaul of the majoritarian system since it undermined the equality of vote.²⁶ Nevertheless, the government announced that the mixed system will be changed before the 2020 elections.

The local NGOs have dedicated a tremendous amount of time and effort in highlighting the weaknesses of the mixed system and the majoritarian system in particular: the risk of losing votes, voting inequality, lack of communication of voters and majoritarian MPs, and the unfair influence of the MPs on local authorities.²⁷ An analysis of the proposed changes and ongoing discussion was also an important contribution by the non-governmental organizations, since it allows the general public to gain a deeper understanding of the electoral process, *and* become aware of the fact that the current mixed system doesn't manage to guarantee a fair distribution of interests in the legislation.²⁸

The question "to change the system, or not to change it?" is still a matter of discussion in Georgia. The constitutional commission working on the constitutional amendment is far from reaching an agreement. The representatives of the ruling party are cautious and fear a potential crisis if there is faulty decision-making; the opposition parties discuss the necessity to create a fair electoral system.²⁹ In addition, the current commission has several other issues to debate. One of the odd questions to be answered is an initiative of the ruling country: whether or not to prohibit the formation

²⁴24 <http://dfwatch.net/georgias-ruling-coalition-postpones-removal-of-majoritarian-system-36319> (accessed 29.07.2017)

²⁵25 <https://gyla.ge/en/post/ngos-statement-about-position-of-the-ruling-coalition-on-reforming-election-system-497859> (accessed 29.07.2017)

²⁶26 <http://humanrights.ge/blue/index.php?a=text&pid=18300&lang=eng> (accessed 29.07.2017)

²⁷27 <http://www.isfed.ge/main/783/eng/> (accessed 29.07.2017)

²⁸28 <http://www.transparency.ge/en/node/1189>. See also, <https://jam-news.net/?p=3990>, or http://www.geowel.org/index.php?article_id=79&clang=0. (accessed 29.07.2017)

²⁹29 <http://www.tabula.ge/ge/node/116825> (accessed 29.07.2017)

of electoral alliances. This strange initiative, coming from the political power that won elections as a coalition of several parties, seems like an effort to eliminate potential rivals in future elections.³⁰ Similar initiatives make the public fearful that even if the majoritarian system is abolished, the government will make other changes that will allow the ruling party to distribute seats in the parliament according to their preferences.

The experts were selected according to their field of expertise. The selected experts were scientific representatives, political candidates actively involved in the electoral processes, NGO representatives, and members of civil society. A total of six experts were interviewed, which allowed for the collection of sufficient first-hand data. For the expert-interviews, a questionnaire with non-structured questions related to the current political situation with descriptive distinctions and considerations about the electoral processes of Armenia and Georgia was distributed.

Conclusions

The majoritarian model crisis has become obvious in Armenia and Georgia in the last few years. Majoritarian MPs fail to represent their constituents and spend their terms protecting and expanding their own businesses. Thus, both countries decided to change the electoral system by abolishing the majoritarian system in order to ensure a rise in popular representation in the legislature. Armenia held its 2017 elections only using the proportional system. Georgian political elites could not keep their 2012 promise and postponed the majoritarian abolishment for the 2020 elections. Citizens of both countries are optimistic about gaining responsive and responsible Parliaments. However, trust in the legislative body is still low. Skeptics argue that it is not the rule by which the MPs are elected, but effective mechanisms of checks and balances and strong civil society that must hold the Parliaments transparent.

Since independence, both countries have changed their electoral systems several times. Democratization is present in both cases, but challenges are still obvious. Elections are often accompanied by violence with the popular attitude that MPs do not represent their people but their

³⁰ More on this: <http://www.eurasianet.org/node/83171> (accessed 29.07.2017)

own interests. The current reforms can become significant steps toward more democratic legislative processes but can serve as a tool for future electoral fraud in the hands of cunning politicians.

Interviews

Styopa Safaryan – political scientist, the parliamentary candidate of the “Free Democrats” party

Armen Vardanyan – AIISA expert (The Armenian Institute of International and Security Affairs)

Hrant Mikaelian – researcher at <<Caucasus Institute>>

Alen Poghosyan - Alen Simonyan, lawyer, editor-in-chief of Ararat Media Group LTD; ; the parliamentary candidate of the Yelq bloc

Gevorg Petrosyan - Candidate of Law, Associate Professor of the Faculty of Law, Chair of Civic Procedure, Yerevan State University; the parliamentary candidate of the Tsarukyan Alliance

Artur Sakunts - Chairman of Helsinki Citizens' Assembly Vanadzor

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Annex 1

Table 1: Georgia

Statistics of attendance of Majoritarian MPs on the 8 th convocation ³¹				
Election District Name	First Name and Last Name	Nominator	Times Absent	Percentage of absence
Vani	Paata Lezhava	"United National Movement-More Benefit to People" ³²	1354	99,4%
Zugdidi	Roland Akhalaia	UNM-MBP	1353	99,3%
Tskaltubo	Akaki Bobokhidze	UNM-MBP	1340	98,4%
Dedoplistskaro	Zaza Kedelashvili	UNM-MBP	1308	96,6%
Chkhorotsku	Vakhtang Lemonjava	UNM-MBP	1303	95,7%
Marneuli	Azer Suleimanov	UNM-MBP	1300	95,4%
Adigeni	Zurab Chilingarashvili	UNM-MBP	1294	95,7%
Aspindza	Tariel Londaridze	UNM-MBP	1139	84,9%
Shuakhevi	Omar Megreliidze	UNM-MBP	1082	80,5%
Lentekhi	Gogi Liparteliani	UNM-MBP	1063	79,2%
Akhaltzikhe	Vazha Chitashvili	UNM-MBP	1031	77,2%
Khobi	Goderdzi Bukia	UNM-MBP	839	63,1%
Kvareli	Marika Verulashvili	UNM-MBP	660	50%

³¹ <http://myparliament.ge/en> (accessed 29.07.2017)

³² Hereinafter referred as UNM-MBP

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Samgori	Zurab Abashidze	“Bidzina Ivanishvili-Georgian Dream” ³³	637	48,1%
Batumi	Murman Dumbadze	BI-GD	611	46,2%
Vake	Shalva Shavgulidze	BI-GD	549	41,7%
Khashuri	Valeri Gelashvili	BI-GD	374	28,7%
Gldani	Ioseb Jachvliani	BI-GD	340	26%
Telavi	Gela Samkharauli	BI-GD	321	24,6%
Kutaisi	Gubaz Sanikidze	BI-GD	274	21,1%
Tsageri	Sergo Khabuliani	UNM-MBP	236	18,2%
Ozurgeti	Zviad Kvachantiradze	BI-GD	221	17%
Tkibuli	Eliso Chapidze	BI-GD	218	16,9%
Chokhatauri	Teimuraz Chkuaseli	BI-GD	215	16,6%
Kareli	Leri Khabelov	BI-GD	212	16,4%
Senaki	Guram Misabishvili	UNM-MBP	182	14%
Tsalka	Revaz Shavlokhshvili	UNM-MBP	168	12,9%
Keda	Iasha Shervashidze	UNM-MBP	162	12,5%
Oni	Tamaz Japaridze	BI-GD	155	11,9%
Chiatura	Malkhaz Tsereteli	BI-GD	153	11,8%
Khelvachauri	Rostom Khalvashi	BI-GD	150	11,5%

³³ Hereinafter referred as BI-GD

Poti	Eka Beselia	BI-GD	145	11,2%
Sachkhere	Manana Kobakhidze	BI-GD	143	11%
Mtatsmida	Zaza Papuashvili	BI-GD	136	10,5%
Krtsanisi	Shota Khabareli	BI-GD	126	9,7%
Lagodekhi	Giorgi Gozalishvili	UNM-MBP	114	8,8%
Gori	Malkhaz Vakhtangashvili	BI-GD	110	8,5%
Dusheti	Erekle Tripolski	BI-GD	104	8%
Mtskheta	Dimitri Khundadze	BI-GD	91	7%
Lanchkhuti	Teimuraz Chkhaidze	BI-GD	77	6%
Signagi	Gela Gelashvili	BI-GD	65	5%
Khazbegi	Mirian Tsiklauri	BI-GD	65	5%
Didube	Vakhtang Khmaladze	BI-GD	57	4,4%
Kharagauli	Nodar Ebanoidze	BI-GD	56	4,3%
Kobuleti	Pati Khalvashi	BI-GD	47	3,6%
Isani	Alexandre Kantaria	BI-GD		
Khulo	Anzor Bolkvadze	UNM-MBP		
Baghdati	Archil Kbilashvili	BI-GD		
Tetritskaro	David Bezhuashvili	UNM-MBP		
Khoni	David Chavchanidze	UNM-MBP		
Abasha	David	UNM-MBP		

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	Dartsmelidze			
Kaspi	David Onoprishvili	BI-GD		
Saburtalo	David Usupashvili	BI-GD		
Ninotsminda	Enzel Mkoyan	UNM-MBP		
Borjomi	Gedevan Popkhadze	BI-GD		
Gurjaani	Giorgi Gviniashvili	UNM-MBP		
Zestaphoni	Giorgi Kavtaradze	BI-GD		
Gardabani	Girogi Peikrishvili	UNM-MBP		
Ambrolauri	Gocha Enukidze	UNM-MBP		
Terjola	Kakha Butskhidze	UNM-MBP		
Samtredia	Kakha Kaladze	BI-GD		
Dmanisi	Kakhaber Okriashvili	UNM-MBP		
Bolnisi	Koba Nakophia	UNM-MBP		
Tsalenjikha	Levan Kardava	UNM-MBP		
Martvili	Nauli Janashia	UNM-MBP		
Akhalkalaki	Samvel Petrosyan	UNM-MBP		
Nadzaladevi	Tea Tsulukiani	BI-GD		
Sagarejo	Tinatin Khidasheli	BI-GD		
Chughureti	Viktor Dolidze	BI-GD		
Mestia	Viktor Japaridze	BI-GD		
Tianeti	Zakaria Kutsnashvili	BI-GD		
Akhmeta	Zurab	BI-GD		

	Zviadauri			
Rustavi	Zviad Dzidziguri	BI-GD		

Annex 2

Table 2: Armenia

Statistics of attendance of Majoritarian MPs on the 5th convocation (2012-2017)³⁴		
First Name and Last Name	Nominator	Times Absent
Ruben Hayrapetyan	Republican Party of Armenia ³⁵	-
Tsarukyan Gagik	"Prosperous Armenia" Party ³⁶	798
Aghababayan Ashot	RPA	487
Petoyan Mushegh	RPA	266
Guloyan Murad	RPA	258
Gevorgyan Arthur	RPA	248
Marabyan Marine	non-Party	243
Karapetyan Karen	RPA	241
Aleksanyan Samvel	RPA	212
Grigoryan Martun	RPA	195
Sadoyan Ruben	RPA	181
Grigoryan Arayik	non-Party	173
Maruqyan Edmon	non-Party	155
Farmanyan Samvel	RPA	154
Qocharyan David	RPA	116
Hambartsumyan S. Arkadi	non-Party	114

³⁴ Parliament Monitoring (Last visited 19.02.2017). Retrieved from <http://www.parliamentmonitoring.am>

³⁵ Hereinafter referred as RPA.

³⁶ Hereinafter referred as PAP.

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Nahapetyan Koryun	RPA	111
Manukyan Melik	RPA	98
Badeyan Manvel	RPA	91
Botoyan Karen	non-Party	72
Saroyan Sedrak	non-Party	65
Margaryan Grigori	non-Party	55
Hakobyan G. Hakob	RPA	50
Khachatryan Lyova	RPA	49
Sedrakyan Mher	RPA	49
Saribekyan B. Karen	RPA	45
Markosyan Vrej	RPA	36
Poghosyan Karine	RPA	35
Grigoryan Hayk	RPA	35
Hakobyan R. Hakob	RPA	35
Nushikyan Garegin	non-Party	33
Sargsyan Artak	RPA	30
Arsenyan Ashot	RPA	25
Mnatsakanyan Mnatsakan	RPA	22
Stepanyan Artur	RPA	11
Muradyan Murad	RPA	8
Hovsepyan Ruben	RPA	7
Grigoryan Hrant	RPA	2
Petrosyan Aleqsan	RPA	1
Balasanyan Samvel	RPA	-
Hakobyan Vahe	RPA	-

**ՀԱՅԱՍՏԱՆԻ ԵՎ ՎՐԱՍՏԱՆԻ ԸՆՏՐԱԿԱՆ
ԳՈՐԾԸՆԹԱՑՆԵՐԻ ՀԱՄԵՄԱՏԱԿԱՆ ՎԵՐԼՈՒԾՈՒԹՅՈՒՆ
Ամփոփագիր**

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Հոդվածում հեղինակները համեմատում են Հայաստանում և Վրաստանում մեծամասնական ընտրական համակարգերը: Անկախության ձեռքբերումից հետո երկու երկրներն էլ փորձարկել են տարբեր ընտրական համակարգեր, ինչն էլ տարել է շարունակական բանավեճի, այն հարցի շուրջ, թե որն է ամենալավ մոդելը: Մեծամասնական ընտրական մոդելը հաճախ քննադատվում է երկու երկրներում էլ: Այս ուսումնասիրությունում քննարկվում են այս մոդելի հիմնական բնորոշիչները և եզրակացություն է արվում, որ, չնայած որոշ ակնհայտ խնդիրների գոյության, քաղաքական էլիտաները հաճախ դժմակորեն են մոտենում համակարգը փոխելուն, քանի որ այն ապահովում է նրանց համար նշանակալի քաղաքական ձեռքբերումներ ընտրությունների ժամանակ: Փոփոխությունները կարող են տեղի ունենալ առավել լայն բարեփոխումների նախաձեռնության համատեքստում, ինչպիսիք են սահմանդրական փոփոխությունները Հայաստանում, կամ երբ ընտրությունները հետաձգվում են որոշակի անհստակ պատճառներով, ինչպես Վրաստանում: