

THE TWELVE PRIORITIES

IN ITS [OPINION ON GEORGIA'S APPLICATION](#), THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION RECOMMENDED THAT GEORGIA BE GRANTED CANDIDATE STATUS, ONCE IT HAS ADDRESSED A NUMBER OF KEY PRIORITIES.

THESE INCLUDE:

-  01 Address the issue of political polarisation, ensuring cooperation across political parties in the spirit of the April 19 agreement.
-  02 Guarantee the full functioning of all state institutions, strengthening their independent and effective accountability as well as their democratic oversight functions, and further improve the electoral framework.
-  03 Implement a transparent and effective judicial reform strategy and action plan based on a broad, inclusive and cross-party consultation process, ensuring a judiciary that is fully independent, accountable and impartial, and safeguarding the separation of powers.
-  04 Strengthen the independence of the Anti-Corruption Agency, in particular to address high-level corruption cases; equip the new Special Investigative Service and Personal Data Protection Service with resources commensurate to their mandates and ensure their independence.
-  05 Implement the commitment to “de-oligarchisation” by eliminating the excessive influence of vested interests in economic, political, and public life.
-  06 Strengthen the fight against organised crime, notably by ensuring rigorous investigations, prosecutions and a credible track record of prosecutions and convictions; guarantee accountability and oversight of law enforcement agencies.
-  07 Undertake stronger efforts to guarantee a free, professional, pluralistic and independent media environment, notably by ensuring that criminal procedures brought against media owners fulfil the highest legal standards, and by launching impartial, effective and timely investigations in cases of threats against the safety of journalists.
-  08 Move swiftly to strengthen the protection of human rights of vulnerable groups, including by bringing perpetrators and instigators of violence to justice more effectively.
-  09 Consolidate efforts to enhance gender equality and fight violence against women.
-  10 Ensure the involvement of civil society in decision-making processes at all levels.
-  11 Adopt legislation so that Georgian courts proactively take into account European Court of Human Rights judgments in their deliberations.
-  12 Ensure that an independent person is given preference in the process of nominating a new Public Defender (Ombudsperson) and that this process is conducted in a transparent manner; ensure the Office’s effective institutional independence.