
GEORGIA EXPANDS GOVERNMENT OVERSIGHT OF FOREIGN FUNDING FOR MEDIA AND NGOS

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Georgias parliament has adopted legislative amendments that significantly expand government oversight of foreign funding for local media and civil society organisations. The amendments also criminalise the questioning of the governments legitimacy.

The changes, introduced earlier this year and adopted on Wednesday, 4 March, in their third and final reading, were supported by 78 MPs, with nine voting against. The amendments were initiated by the ruling Georgian Dream party amid increasing pressure on critics of the government.

Under the new rules, most foreign grants to Georgian citizens, residents, and legal entities will require prior approval from the government. The legislation also broadens the definition of a grant to include funds or in-kind contributions from foreign actors that authorities believe could influence the Georgian government, public opinion, or the countrys domestic or foreign policy.

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