



UNANSWERED QUESTIONS AND REPLIES BY OTHERS IN PARLIAMENT

According to the Constitution of Georgia and the Rules of Procedure of the Parliament,

საქართველოს ახალგაზრდა იურისტთა ასოციაცია GEORGIAN YOUNG LAWYERS' ASSOCIATION



an MP is entitled to submit a written question to any state institution. The questions shall be posted on the parliament's website and a relevant note added in case of a delayed reply or no reply. However, the above appears to be insufficient to fully implement the mechanism of parliamentary control.

The tool is most frequently utilized by members of parliament. However, the number of questions is low if they are related to the defense and security sector. In total, from 6 December 2018 to 1 August 2019, lawmakers asked the government 175 questions. Of these, 12 questions were addressed to the Minister of Internal Affairs, 3 to the Special Penitentiary Service, and 1-1 question to Head of the State Security Service of Georgia and Special State Protection Service, respectively. No questions were asked by lawmakers to the Head of the Intelligence Service and the Head of Operational-Technical Agency.

In addition, it is important that the answer be accompanied by a signature of the addressee, but practice shows that in most cases this is not the case. Of 175 questions asked to ministers during the reporting period, only 52 were answered.

The legislation emphasizes the obligation to provide a timely and comprehensive answer to any queries that MPs might have. However, if the provisions are breached, it does not result in sanctions. This may also be due to the fact that the legislative measures are of an extreme nature (e.g. resignation, impeachment). Ignoring questions is deemed as a minor violation by lawmakers and they refrain from imposing sanctions.

For instance, the Minister of Internal Affairs left two questions unanswered (responded to one of them six days later). The questions concerned the communication campaign "More for Life" and the statistics of traffic accidents caused by alcohol abuse.

Finally, the Constitution and the Rules of Procedure (in the part of MP questions) were violated by Prime Minister (Mamuka Bakhtadze) 9 times, the Minister of Finance - 25 times, the Minister of Foreign Affairs - 12 times, the Minister of Education, Science, Culture and Sport - 39 times. 39 times, the Minister of Regional Development and Infrastructure - 15 times, the Minister of Internal Affairs (Giorgi Gakharia) - 13 times, the Minister of Justice - 14 times, the Minister of Environment and Agriculture - 13 times, Minister of Economy and Sustainable Development, Giorgi Kobulia - 14 times, his successor (Natia Turnava) - 13 times, the Minister of Defense (Levan Izoria) - 7

საქართველოს ახალგაზრდა იურისტთა ასოციაცია
GEORGIAN YOUNG LAWYERS' ASSOCIATION



times, the Minister of Refugees from the Occupied Territories of Georgia, Labor, Health and Social Affairs (David Sergeenko) - 6 times, his successor Ekaterina Tikaradze - 5 times, the State Minister for Reconciliation and Civic Equality - 5 times.

With the view to activating the MP questions mechanism more effectively, **the legislation should envisage another provision that will act as an interim tool between ignoring a violation of the Constitution by an official and imposing strict political and legal responsibility. Publicizing unanswered questions is an important but insufficient tool. Consequently, it must be diversified.**

The table below shows the statistics of the questions asked by Parliament Members and answers provided thereupon.

Persons Accountable to Parliament	Number of delayed questions	Number of Unanswered questions	Signed by the addressee	Answered by another person (%)	Number of questions asked
Prime Minister (Mamuka Bakhtadze)	3	1	0	100%	5
Minister of Finance	5	12	7	53.3%	27
Minister of Foreign Affairs	4	5	3	50%	11

საქართველოს ახალგაზრდა იურისტთა ასოციაცია
GEORGIAN YOUNG LAWYERS' ASSOCIATION



Minister of Education, Science, Culture and Sport	23	3	20	39.4%	36
Minister of Regional Development and Infrastructure	6	2	4	63.6%	13
Minister of Internal Affairs (Giorgi Gakharia)	1	2	0	100%	12
Minister of Justice	4	2	0	100%	8
Minister of Environment Protection and Agriculture	4	2	1	87.5%	10
Minister of Economy and Sustainable Development (Giorgi Kobulia)	3	2	0	100%	11
Minister of Economy and Sustainable Development (Natela Turnava)	3	1	0	100%	10

საქართველოს ახალგაზრდა იურისტთა ასოციაცია
GEORGIAN YOUNG LAWYERS' ASSOCIATION



Minister of Defense (Levan Izoria)	3	0	0	100%	4
Minister of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Labor, Health and Social Affairs of Georgia (David Sergeenko)	3	0	16	15.8%	19
Minister of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Labor, Health and Social Affairs of Georgia (Ekaterine Tikaradze)	0	0	0	100%	5
State Minister for Reconciliation and Civic Equality	2	0	1	75%	4
Total number	64	32	52	63.6%	175

Anna Jabauri

Invited project expert

საქართველოს ახალგაზრდა იურისტთა ასოციაცია
GEORGIAN YOUNG LAWYERS' ASSOCIATION



The blogpost has been developed in the framework of the project "Supporting Parliamentary Oversight of Secret Procurements in the Security Sector". The project is funded by the Embassy of the Netherlands in Georgia.