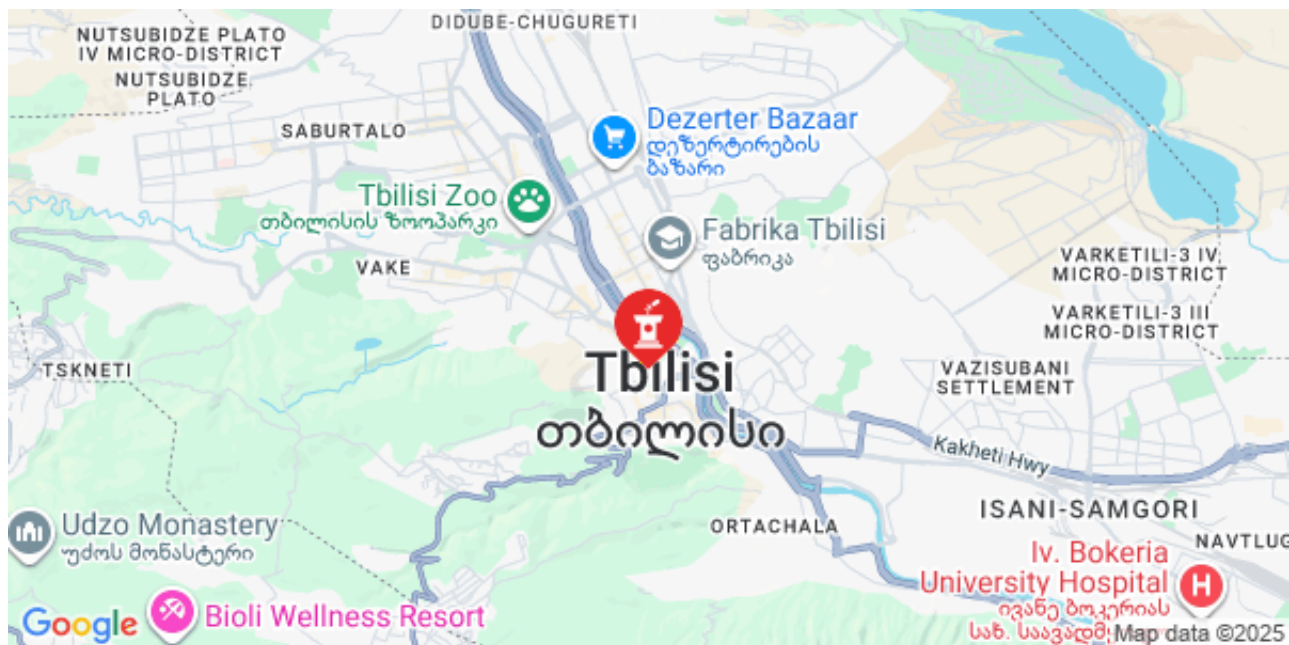


Politics



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OCT
6:42 UTC

Georgia Tactical: Local elections slated nationwide, including in Tbilisi, on October 4; avoid nonessential travel

Current Situation:

- Local municipal elections are scheduled to take place nationwide, including in Tbilisi, on October 4. At least 3.5 million eligible voters will select mayors and city council (Sakrebulo) representatives.
- The official polling hours on election day remain unannounced, as of writing.
- Voting will be electronic in most precincts. The process was allegedly denounced by opposition groups.
- Nine mainstream opposition parties, including the United National Movement (UNM), European Georgia - Movement for Liberty, and Strategy Aghmashenebeli, have announced a boycott of the elections, citing alleged repression, arrests of political leaders, and the risk of legitimizing the ruling Georgian Dream (GD) Party.
- At least 12 smaller parties are contesting, including Lelo for Georgia/Strong Georgia and For Georgia (Gakharia for Georgia), which are fielding joint mayoral candidates in key constituencies.
- Multiple protests are slated across Tbilisi by anti-government activists and opposition groups outside the Public Broadcaster Building and Parliament from 19:00 (local time) on October 3.
- A mass protest rally is also scheduled at Rustaveli Avenue in Tbilisi from 16:00 on October 4.
- Ruling GD party officials have warned of a strict response by the authorities should there be any attempts at "radicalism."
- The protests will mark the 310th consecutive day of demonstrations against the ruling GD party's

perceived anti-EU policies, the disputed 2024 parliamentary elections, the suspension of EU negotiations until 2028, and alleged police brutality against anti-government activists.



Source: [Civil.ge](https://civil.ge)

Assessments & Forecast:

1. The authorities are anticipated to significantly enhance security measures during the voting period, particularly in Tbilisi, to ensure smooth proceedings. The measures are likely to include additional police deployment and the placement of barricades, particularly around polling stations, which are typically situated in the vicinity of government buildings, schools, and other public gathering areas nationwide. Standard restrictions, including a ban on UAVs in proximity to key government and municipal facilities, are also expected.
2. The risk of clashes between demonstrators and the security forces remains elevated due to widespread anti-Georgian Dream (GD) sentiment and the authorities' low tolerance for anti-government protests. Should the protesters engage in unruly behaviors, such as breaching security perimeters or blocking major thoroughfares, the police will be liable to implement forcible dispersal measures, including administrative detentions. Traffic restrictions around protest locations are also expected, as authorities will likely prioritize clear access routes for voters and emergency services.
3. The likelihood of unrest is further increased if participants employ provocative tactics, including pyrotechnics, particularly in the event of a GD victory. This is considering that major opposition parties are boycotting the elections, and in Tbilisi, incumbent GD mayor Kakha Kaladze appears to be dominating the campaign. GD seemingly remains unopposed in at least 26 of 64 municipalities, reducing competitiveness nationwide, increasing chances of localized unrest post-election. In such a scenario, the authorities are likely to deploy water cannons and tear gas to control crowds. Significant disruptions to pedestrian and vehicular travel can be expected in the vicinity of the aforementioned protest locations and polling stations on October 3-4.

Recommendations:

Those operating or residing in Georgia, including Tbilisi are advised to avoid nonessential travel in the vicinity of the polling stations and government buildings due to the slated local elections and the slated high risk of associated unrest, while allotting for travel disruptions.