

Managed democracy - the foundation of the People's Power political movement

In a managed democracy, formal political forces actually serve to strengthen the ruling force and their agenda.

Expansion of People's Power - from its foundation to the present day

Former Georgian Dream members, Sozar Subari, Dimitri Khundadze and Mikheil Kavelashvili, left the Georgian Dream party and their parliamentary positions on June 29, 2022. In a statement issued by the MPs on the same day, it was indicated that the distanced MPs would remain supporters of Georgian Dream and that their assessments and those of the leaders and members of Georgian Dream were "completely" similar. Considering the above, a question logically arose about the reasons for leaving the party. According to the statement, the only reason for leaving the majority was the need to provide the public with much more information about the events taking place behind the scenes of Georgian politics; And since, according to the MPs, talking publicly about topics such as the EU candidate status, in which the government was "tricked into", **would create inconvenience for the ruling team**, it became necessary to leave the party. In addition, the statement referred to the formality of the candidate status, the inadmissibility of imposing sanctions on Russia, the conspiracy theory about Georgia's involvement in the war, the so-called Bakuriani gathering, etc.

After leaving Georgian Dream, on August 2, 2022, Dimitri Khundadze, Mikheil Kavelashvili and Sozar Subari founded the People's Power movement. To date, People's Power has not been registered as a political party, nor does it exist in any other organizational-legal form. Therefore, it does not receive donations. However, as the leaders state, People's Power may be transformed into a political party in the future.

On October 4, 2022, the movement was joined by Eka Sepashvili, Viktor Japaridze, Davit Kacharava, Dachi Beraia and Zaal Mikeladze from the parliamentary majority. Basically, the expansion of the union took place only at the expense of former members and supporters of Georgian Dream. On October 24, 2022, about 200 new members were added to People's Power, mainly members of the city councils of various municipalities and officials from Georgian Dream.

The leaders of People's Power announced on October 24, 2022 that their main goal was to bring the truth to the society in the regions, taking into account the national interests of the country. The Democracy Research Institute searched for information about the movement's regional activities. After studying information spread in the media and on the Facebook page of the movement, it is clear that **the leaders of People's Power have not yet started visits or any activities in the regions.**

In the recent period, there has been no information about any new members either. The observation shows that at this stage the activity of People's Power is mainly limited to participation in the programmes of official media outlets.

Similar rhetorics of Georgian Dream and People's Power

The leaders of the People's Power political movement and Georgian Dream have made a number of statements regarding the fact that their positions and forms of expression were radically different from each other. Nevertheless, the members of People's Power remain in the parliamentary majority. It is not hidden that People's Power, unlike other parliamentary factions and political groups, receives benefits and support from the ruling team. This is also evidenced by the fact that the **political group of People's Power, despite being newly created, is represented in all parliamentary delegations together with Georgian Dream.**

It should also be noted that Georgian Dream registered the Russian draft law "On transparency of foreign influence" through the People's Power MPs. The draft law aimed to register civil society organizations and media outlets as "agents of foreign influence".

Recently, the ruling team has been distinguished by homophobic statements. The observations of the Democracy Research Institute show that the statements and message boxes of the People's Power political group and Georgian Dream are identical.

For example,

Guram Macharashvili, a member of the People's Power movement, said on Imedi TV that LGBT propaganda would have no future in Georgia and cited the results of a survey conducted in France.

"In France, if I'm not mistaken, the number of people who consider themselves to be representatives of the LGBT community has already risen to 22%. A person may not even be an LGBT person, but he represents this world, so they say. This is exactly the psychological pressure that we say is unacceptable for Georgia."

Prime Minister Irakli Gharibashvili also quoted the same survey. **According to him, 22% of young people in France consider themselves members of the LGBT community.**

"This survey was conducted in 30 countries, and of course the results of the survey in France were particularly noteworthy, where it was found that 22% of young people identify themselves as LGBT, which I think is an alarming trend."

Connections between People's Power and POSTV channel

POSTV channel is an active supporter of People's Power. On October 4, 2022, the TV company issued a statement, according to which POSTV became a media platform and supporter of the People's Power movement. On October 3, 2022, a change was made to the Public Registry documentation, and Viktor Japaridze, a member of People's Power, became the owner of **52% of the control package** of the TV company.

POSTV has been considered a pro-governmental television since its establishment. The executive director of the TV company was Lasha Natsvlshvili, Georgian Dream's chief consultant for public relations. Shalva Ramishvili, one of the shareholders of the channel, has always openly expressed his support to the ruling team.

Conclusion

It is obvious that People's Power has lost its relevance after the leaders of the ruling party successfully made a niche, which became the pretext for formally creating the movement. Today, the Georgian Dream leaders are voicing conspiracy theories about the issues that allegedly caused the leaders of People's Power to distance themselves from Georgian Dream.

People's Power is a formally created movement, the main goal of which is to strengthen the ruling team. Accordingly, its activation/deactivation depends on the needs of the ruling party in a specific period of time.