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The parliamentary elections in Georgia – new challenges for stability and democracy.

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Bullet points for discussion

- The Russian topic has been extensively instrumentalized during the election campaign. Political parties have frequently referred to different aspects of Russian-Georgian relations or Georgian politicians' alleged connection to the Russian government in order to discredit and delegitimize their opponents.
- Despite mutual accusations over foreign policy issues, there is a consensus about Georgia's European integration which major political parties consider as a top priority.
- Parties perceive Europeanness as an indispensable element of their legitimacy. They frame their election programs as a roadmap towards building a European-style democracy in Georgia.
- The election campaign is sensitive to statements coming from the West (at the level of states or international organizations) and concerning the Georgian politics. Opposition parties actively use these statements to criticize and delegitimize the ruling party.
- Together with traditional foreign policy issues, this election campaign is affected by unexpected developments in Georgia's foreign policy and security environment. The reactivation of the Davit Gareji issue - a monastery complex disputed between Georgia and Azerbaijan - and the war in Nagorno Karabakh have provided parties with yet another 'battleground' for defending or criticizing Georgia's behavior in external affairs.