



Getting Georgia Right

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Georgia is unquestionably the most open polity of the South Caucasus, and its political development will be a bell-wether for the prospects of democratic development across Eurasia. This research paper analyses the achievements and shortcomings of the Rose Revolution era as well as the prospects for the country under the leadership of the Georgian Dream Coalition. Furthermore, it discusses the influence of Russia on Georgia's development on the path of European integration and democracy-building. In the past decade, Georgia has transformed from a failed state to a functioning one; President Saakashvili helped modernise Georgia's conception of itself and moved Georgia irrevocably toward integration with Euro-Atlantic institutions. Prime Minister Ivanishvili has continued Georgia's foreign policy priorities of EU and NATO integration, declaring these to be irreversible. Meanwhile, Russia is doubling down on its efforts at coercive integration of the post-Soviet space, with the explicit purpose of undermining the east–west corridor. Should Georgia's democratic progress be reversed, the very feasibility of democratic governance in post-Soviet countries as a whole would be called into question. Should it continue to progress towards European norms, the viability of the model of state–society relations that Vladimir Putin euphemistically terms 'sovereign democracy' would instead be challenged.



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