



U.S. GOVERNMENT EXCHANGE PROGRAM  
ALUMNI ASSOCIATION OF GEORGIA

ANNUAL REPORT  
2020

ACTIVITY OF EPAG IS SUPPORTED AND FUNDED  
BY THE PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE OF THE U.S. EMBASSY TBILISI

U.S. Government Exchange Program Alumni Association of Georgia (EPAG) is an independent, non-for-profit association with the purpose of strengthening lifelong intellectual, professional, and personal connections among its members.

EPAG's goal is to provide a venue where the U.S. Government Exchange Program alumni can exchange ideas and knowledge which EPAG can later share with the wider community. EPAG is focused on creating ways for alumni networking, starting or renewing friendship through various thematic events, charity initiatives and regional activities.

EPAG's core values are human diversity, integrity, and the commitment to lifelong learning and development for serving our community.

EPAG was established in 2004 as the "Muskie Association" by the Georgian alumni of the Edmund S. Muskie Graduate Fellowship Program. In 2015 the Association became EPAG and opened its membership to all alumni of the U.S. Government Exchange Programs in Georgia. Currently, EPAG has more than 1000 members. And this number is constantly growing.

EPAG encourages the U.S. Government Exchange Program alumni engagement in the life of EPAG through its Management and Advisory Boards, with members elected from alumni of all programs. The Boards are committed to strategizing, planning, and implementing various educational, cultural, and social projects throughout Georgia.

EPAG welcomes and encourages involvement of each member in its activities. It is not necessary to be a member of a board to be involved in EPAG's life.

Activity of EPAG is supported and funded by the Public Affairs Office of the U.S. Embassy Tbilisi.

Find us on Facebook @USGEPAG

## EPAG Strategic Planning Meeting

On January 18, 2019, EPAG Strategic Planning Meeting was held at Tbilisi Marriott Hotel, where the Board planned activities for 2020. Tea Kuchukhidze and Irakli Malania (U.S. Embassy Tbilisi) also attended the event and shared information regarding the U.S. Embassy grant opportunities



Members of the Board are active and cheerful despite early morning



## EPAG Thursdays - ongoing

Starting from April 2019, EPAG members gather on the first Thursday of each month. Everyone is welcome to join and invite friends. On February 7, 2020, EPAG members met at Tone (Fabrika), Tbilisi, Georgia and filled up almost the entire place



## Hidden Treasures Project - Marneuli

On February 15, 2020, EPAG organized a workshop in Marneuli for schoolchildren and students. Tea Mikadze (Future Leaders Exchange Program) presented information regarding the U.S. Government exchange programs to workshop participants



Archil Todua (Open World Program) discussed participation of citizens in the local self-government

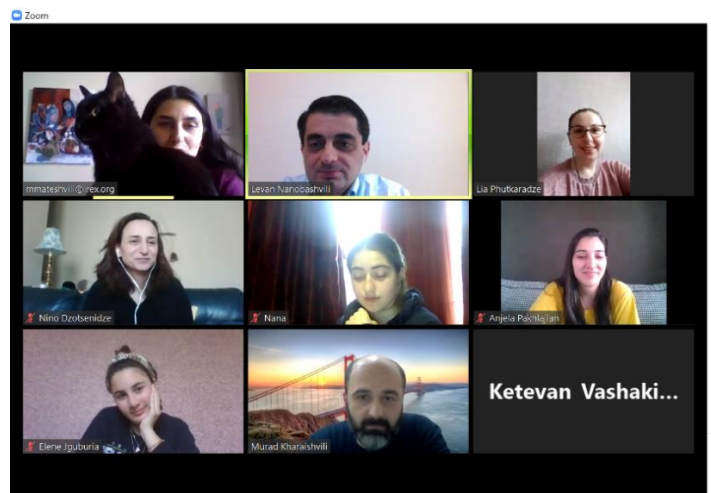


Levan Nanobashvili (Edmund S. Muskie Graduate Fellowship Program) discussed digital footprints of people on the Internet and social networks



## EPAG Zoom Thursdays

Due to COVID-19 pandemic, starting from April 2020, EPAG organized traditional Thursdays using the Zoom software program. Members of EPAG and their pets attended the Zoom Thursdays. On this image the cat B.O. actively listens to the conversation of online meeting participants





## EPAG COVID Talks

EPAG organized several “COVID Talks” on issues related to COVID-19 and its impact on everybody’s life.

Names of the speakers and discussed topics are provided below

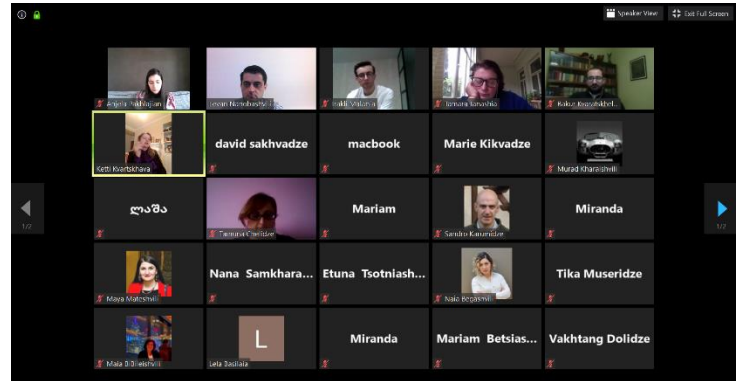
### Eva Bochorishvili

(Edmund S. Muskie Graduate Fellowship Program)  
Head of the Research Unit of “Galt & Taggart”,  
Georgia. On April 14, 2020, Eva discussed the  
impact of COVID-19 pandemic on the economy of  
Georgia



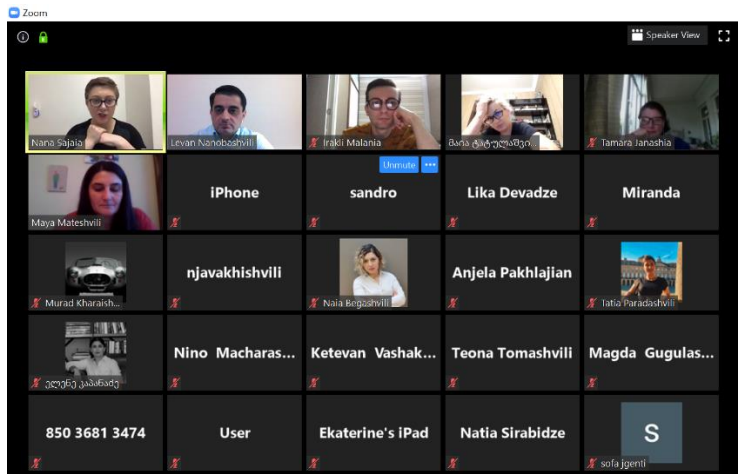
### Ketti Kvartskhava

(Edmund S. Muskie Graduate Fellowship Program)  
Partner at BLC Law firm. On April 23, 2020, Ketti  
discussed the state of emergency in Georgia and  
related legal issues



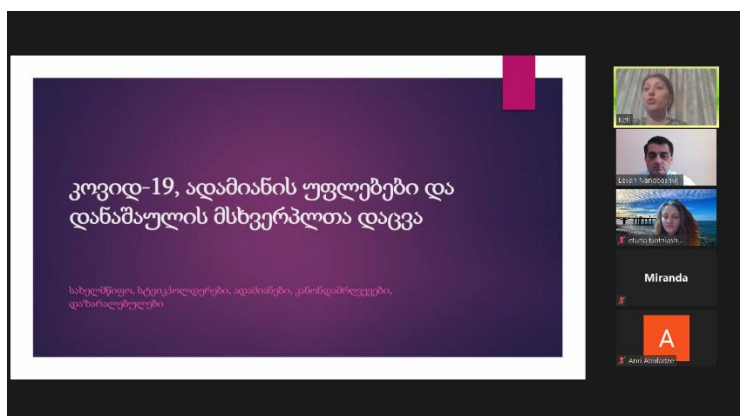
### Nana Sajaia

(Edmund S. Muskie Graduate Fellowship Program)  
Producer of Political and News Program, Fox  
News, Washington DC Office. On April 28, 2020,  
Nana discussed the impact of COVID-19 pandemic  
on media



### Ketevan Vashakidze

(Fulbright Graduate Student Program)  
Prosecutor at the Prosecutor General's Office. On  
May 14, 2020, Ketevan discussed the impact of  
COVID-19 pandemic on the human rights situation



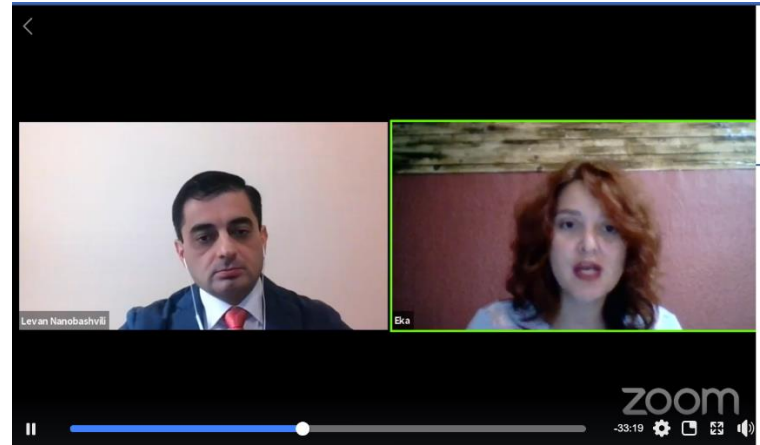
**Esma Gumberidze and Maia Shishniashvili**

(Future Leaders Exchange Program and Edmund S. Muskie Graduate Fellowship Program, respectively). Esma works at Youth Agency and Maia is a founder of Handinhand NGO. On May 21, 2020, Esma and Maia discussed problems faced by people with disabilities during the COVID-19 pandemic



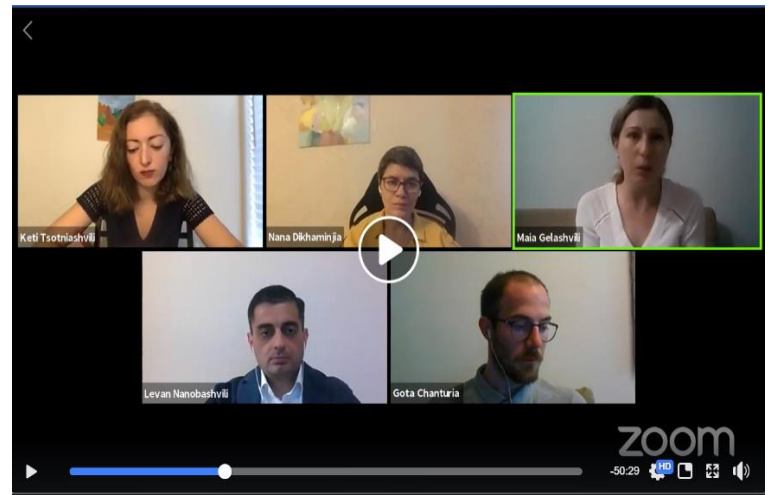
**Ekaterina Khutsishvili**

(The Hubert H. Humphrey Fellowship Program) Project Coordinator at Democracy Index, Georgia. On May 28, 2020, Ekaterina discussed the role of national parliaments during pandemics



**Keti Tsozniashvili, Maia Gelashvili, Nana Dikhaminjia, Gota Tchanturia**

Keti Tsozniashvili - Edmund S. Muskie Graduate Fellowship Program, a PhD student at Arizona State University; Maia Gelashvili - Fulbright Graduate Student Program, a PhD student at Boston College; Nana is a vice-rector at Ilia State University (Georgia); and Gota Tchanturia works at the Education Coalition, Georgia). On June 12, 2020, Speakers discussed the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on education. Live stream was viewed by more than 2600 people



**Mariam Turmanidze, Ana Khurtsidze, Sophi Tkemaladze, and Irakli Kandashvili**

Mariam Turmanidze – SUSI Program, Ana Khurtsidze – Dean of the Law School of the University of Georgia, Sophi Tkemaladze – Chairman of the Georgian Association of Arbitrators, Irakli Kandashvili – Chairman of the Georgian Association of Mediators). On June 30, 2020, Speakers discussed the impact of COVID-19 on mediation. Live stream was viewed by more than 3000 people





### Resumed “EPAG Thursdays”

In June 2020, EPAG resumed “EPAG Thursdays” which were previously suspended due to COVID-19 pandemic. EPAG members met at Tbilisi Sio (Wine Factory Garden), Tbilisi, Georgia. EPAG suspended such gatherings again from September 2020



### Hidden Treasures Project – Tsalka

On September 05, 2020, in cooperation with CENN, EPAG organized a workshop in Tsalka for schoolchildren and students. David Shervashidze (Future Leaders Exchange Program) talked about the importance of elections for democracy.

Information regarding this event was published by [marketer.ge](http://marketer.ge)



Mariam Turmanidze (SUSI Program) talked about the emotional intelligence and its importance

Levan Nanobashvili (Edmund S. Muskie Graduate Fellowship Program) talked about the risks related to sharing of personal information online

Anjela Pakhlajian (Future Leaders Exchange Program) talked about the FLEX program



### Charity

EPAG continues to support a small family type orphanage in Telavi. With generous contributions from EPAG members, EPAG signed a contract with a teacher who gave English language lessons to several kids living in this family. We strongly hope that the kids will continue classes and apply for FLEX and other educational programs in the future. In February 2020 EPAG invited kids to the cinema, McDonald's, and an entertainment center.



### EPAG Board Members (2020)

Nino Beradze  
Shalva Chonishvili  
Tamar Janashia  
Murad Kharaishvili  
Mariam Kikvadze  
Irakli Macharashvili  
Miranda Mekrviladze  
Tea Mikadze  
Levan Nanobashvili  
Tatia Paradashvili  
David Shervashidze  
Miranda Tkabladze  
Archil Todua  
Mariam Turmanidze  
Ketevan Vashakidze

### EPAG Advisory Board Members (2019-2020)

David Darsavelidze  
Tamar Kvaratskhelia  
Natalia Mumlauri  
Sophie Panjikidze  
David Shervashidze

### EPAG Coordinator

Anjela Pakhlajian