



**MONITORING OF THE ACTIVITIES OF  
ULTRA-NATIONALIST GROUPS ON THE FACEBOOK  
AHEAD OF GEORGIAN MARCH**

## **Monitoring of the activities of ultra-nationalist groups on the Facebook ahead of Georgian March**

### **Introduction**

The leader of movement Nationals (Erovnulebi) announced the Georgian March on the Aghmashenebeli Avenue on 14 July, to voice their protest against illegal foreigners. Under illegal foreigners, the organizers of the march meant representatives of concrete nationalities – Iranians, Arabs, Africans and others and called on them to leave the territory of Georgia. Organizers of the march also demanded the toughening of immigration law. They tried to mobilize public via social media.

The Media Development Foundation (MDF) monitored Facebook pages of nine ultra-national groups over the period from between 14 June and 11 July 2017. The monitoring focused on the activities of these pages, their reach of audience, most frequently used information sources, most popular posts, frequently and rarely used words as well as calls for the march and messages containing hate speech.

This monitoring was conducted by the Media Development Foundation (MDF) in partnership with the UN Association of Georgia (UNAG) within the framework of “Promoting Integration, Tolerance and Awareness Program” of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

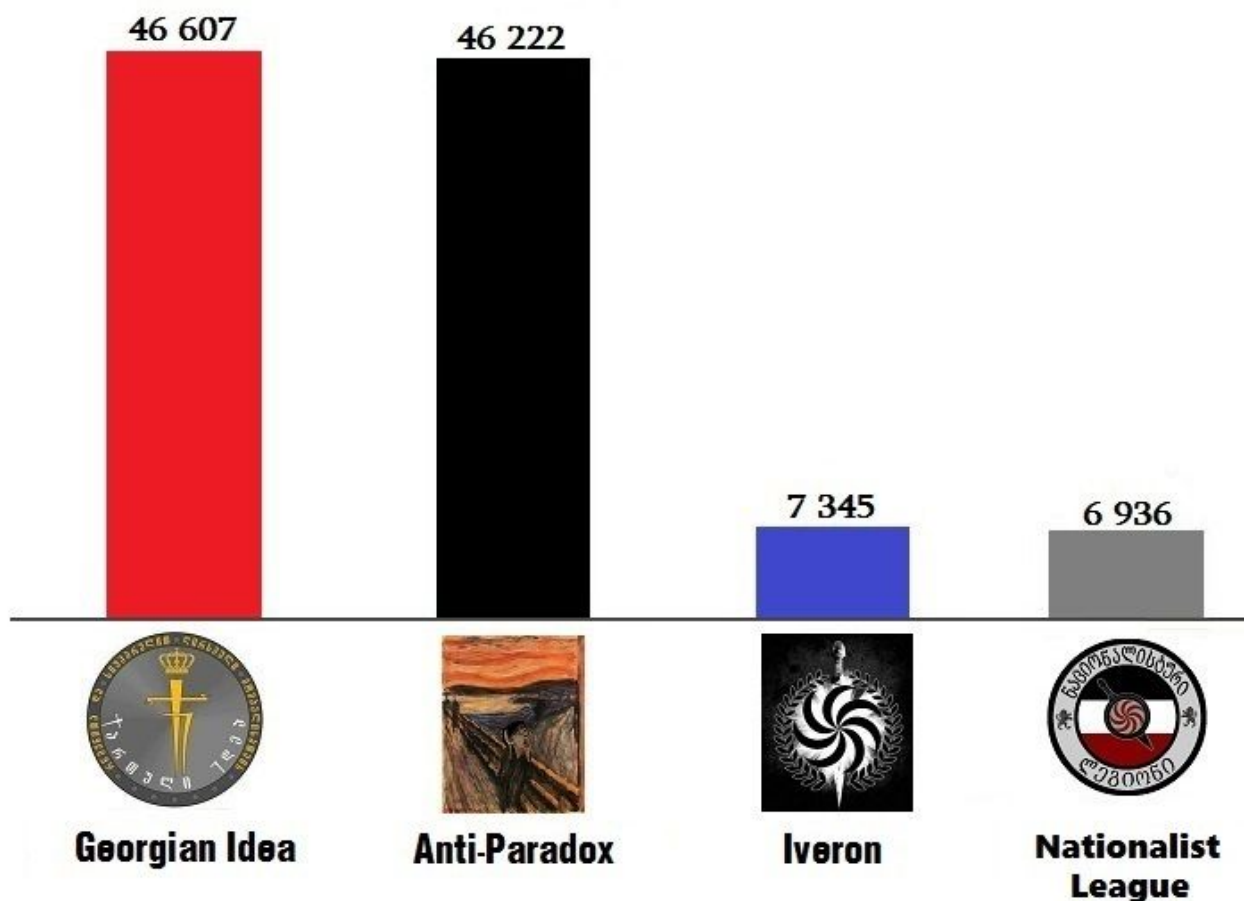
### **Subjects of monitoring**

Subjects of monitoring were Facebook pages of those ultra-nationalist groups which actively promoted the Georgian March via social media. The figure below shows the audience of these pages by the amount of likes.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Last accessed on 11 July 2017.

Figure 1. The audience of nine Facebook pages by the amount of likes.



### Media sources

Except for the Facebook page of Resistance for Future (Tsinaagmddegobis Modzraoba), all other pages were active in sharing materials of various editions. The figure below shows the online media outlets the monitoring subjects cited most frequently as their sources of information. It is worth to note that on one occasion Georgian Idea (Kartuli Idea) shared the material published by Russia Today, a propaganda media outlet established by the Russian government. Alongside several traditional media outlets (imedi.ge, resonancedaily.com, ambebi.ge) the sources of information included media outlets notorious for the use of hate speech (alia.ge, marshalpress.ge) as well as the media outlets which in addition to promoting hate speech are also known for their pro-Russian ties (geworld.ge, patrioti-tv, tb24.ge).

The diagram illustrates a network of connections between various Georgian media entities and organizations. The central nodes are represented by colored circles, each labeled with a group name in red text:

- GEORGIAN IDEA** (Red circle)
- ANTI-PARADOX** (Black circle)
- NATIONALIST LEAGUE** (Yellow circle)
- IVERON** (Blue circle)
- EDDELWEISS** (Green circle)
- GEORGIAN NATIONALIST CULTURE** (Purple circle)

Connections are shown by lines linking these central nodes to various media entities and organizations, represented by logos and text:

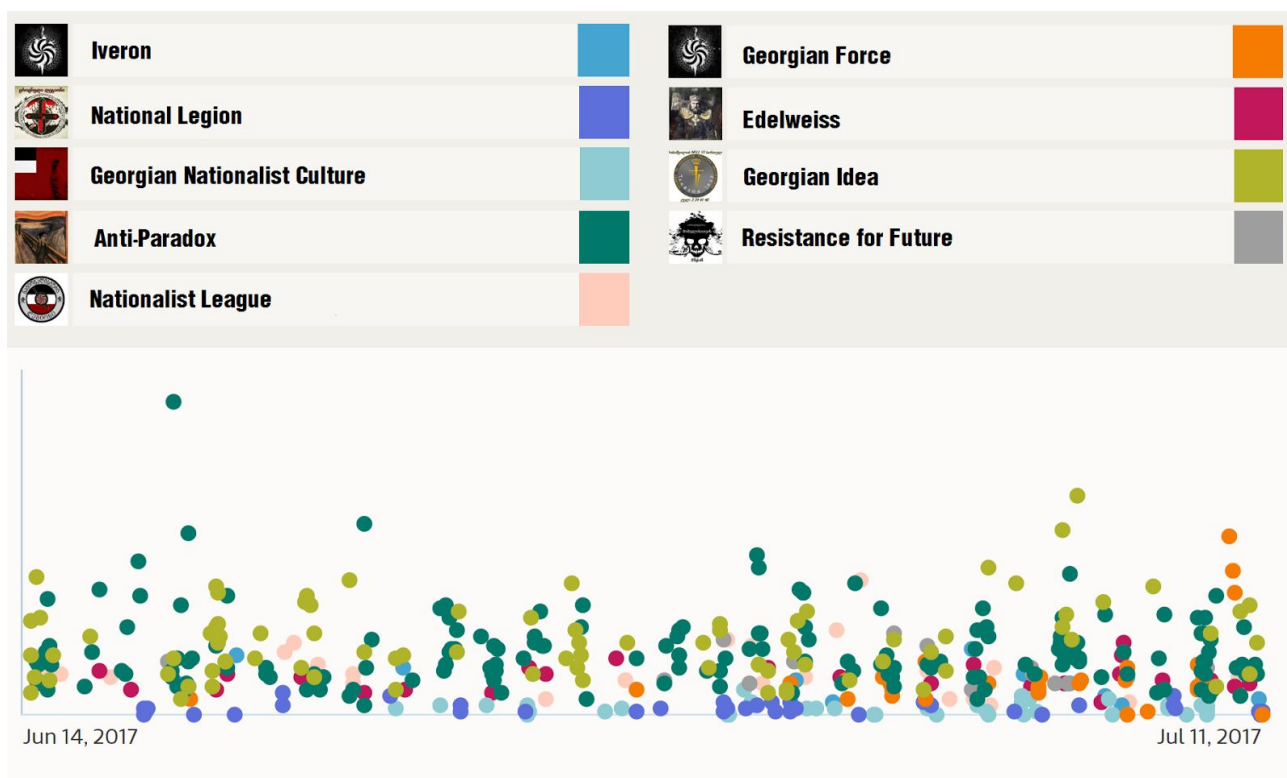
- RT** (Russia Today)
- IVERU.COM**
- JAMBA.GE**
- MediaMall.ge**
- NEWS TV**
- World Daily Report**
- TOP NEWS**
- Sazogadoeba.ge**
- ალბ-ინფო**
- GIPHY**
- მხარე**
- მარშალპრესი**
- 1 NEWS**
- პირველი TV**
- ZIVAVA**

The diagram shows a dense web of relationships, with many lines connecting the central nodes to the media entities, indicating a highly interconnected network.

## Activity dynamics

The figure below reflects the dynamic of activities of monitoring subjects during the reporting period. As the data shows, the most active in this period were AntiParadox (Anti-paradoksi) and Georgian Idea while Georgian Force (Kartuli Dzala) stepped up its activity towards the final days before the march.

Figure 3. Activities of nine Facebook pages (14 June – 11 July 2017).









These Facebook pages mainly shared video materials, fragments from various TV programs as well as publications of various online editions. These pages frequently posted xenophobic, racist statements and calls for “cleansing” Georgia from non-Georgians which, according to them, was the obligation of every patriot. Below, we have singled out four Facebook pages with the highest number of users and the highest level of activity in social networks. These are the Facebook pages of Georgian Idea, AntiParadox, Iveron, and Nationalist League (Nacionalisturi Liga).

## Popular posts


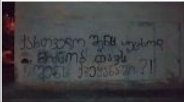


Among six most popular posts of **Georgian Idea**, the top one was about a prophecy that Ilia II would become the Catholicos-Patriarch of All Georgia; this was followed by the posts related to the march on 17 May to mark the Day of Family Purity with the following title: *Nothing Can Defeat the*



*Nation that is United in Christ!!!*; the restoration of monarchy; the restriction on the sale of land to foreign citizens; also containing homophobic evaluations.

Picture	Post	Likes	Comments	Shares
	"When our future patriarch was still young and a student of seminary, Saint Kuksha foretold that he would become the Patriarch of Georgia and he would be one of the most revered Patriarchs; those who follow him would survive but those who oppose him would suffer."	785	34	381
	"Nothing can defeat the nation that is united in Christ!!!"	505	22	369
	"The restoration of monarchy is the firmest guarantee of territorial integrity... The land of Abkhazia was and is a legitimate territory of the Bagrationi dynasty."	286	32	153
	"Although I am a citizen of Iran too... the land belongs to the nation! For centuries, this land has been defended by Georgian blood. This land cannot be sold!" – Said Mulian, an ethnic Georgian from Fereydan, Iran, speaking about the issue of sale of land in "Panorama" program.	238	31	229
	"A march of Georgian Idea to protest against the situation existing on the Aghmashenebeli Avenue..." 17 May 2017	222	29	318
	"Tell LGBT-tolerant tyrants, that homosexual mafia, those homo-fascists and rainbow radicals that you will not accept their antireligious and anticivilization propaganda in your country!" – A quote of a priest from San Francisco as cited in a speech made in the philharmonic hall.	179	14	101






The most popular posts of the **AntiParadox** were: the allegation that Georgian soldiers join the Georgian March; a photo bearing a caption "Do you also feel like a stranger in Georgia?"; a poem "About Aliens" shared in relation to the Georgian March; the allegation that "an Iranian citizen was beaten up for urinating on the cross in Zestaponi."

Picture	Post	Likes	Comments	Shares
	Georgian soldiers join the Georgian March <3	199	14	11
	"Do you also feel like a stranger in Georgia?"	195	2	29
	Poem "About Aliens"	154	6	73
	An Iranian citizen was beaten up for urinating on the cross in Zestaponi	85	18	37

The most popular post of **Iverion** was a photo of rebels against Bolshevism, featuring Kaikhosro Cholokashvili, Spiridon Chichinadze, Leo Chikovani, Elizbar Vachnadze, Rapael Eristavi and Aleksandre Sulkhaniashvili. Among popular posts also were a material about dialects of the Georgian language; a material against Iago Khvichia, a member of political party Girchi; a material of AntiParadox containing hate speech "Break up of LGBT rally in Turkey – share it if you want the same to happen in Georgia;" a material against feminism.

Picture	Post	Likes	Comments	Shares
	A photo of rebels against Bolshevism	75	2	19
	'Ugly' dialects of the Georgian language. Modern Georgian language. Foreign languages.	25	1	15
	Reaction of Iago Khvichia, a member of political party Girchi, about his own country and nation	19	16	72
	Anti-Paradox – Break up of LGBT rally in Turkey ^_^ share it if you want the same to happen in Georgia <3	18	0	0
	Feminism. Baia Patariaia. Magda Anikashvili's logic	17	0	9

The most popular posts of **Nationalist Legion** were about a tattoo of a Georgian footballer, commemoration of those who died in Abkhazia war, the Georgian March and an inevitable failure of Liberalism.

Picture	Post	Likes	Comments	Shares
	The tattoo of a Georgian footballer Giorgi Arbidze!	304	14	124
	July the 2 <sup>nd</sup> is the day of commemoration of heroes who died in the Abkhazia war... Eternal glory to Georgian heroes!	107	1	69
	"All illegal foreigners must leave the territory of Georgia!" – The Georgian March will be held on the Aghmashenebeli Avenue	94	10	41
	In the 20 <sup>th</sup> century, the world defeated fascism, defeated communism; it is 21 <sup>st</sup> century now and the time have come to defeat liberalism! I do not know what kind of weapon will be used in the third world war but it is crystal clear that the weapon in the fourth world war will only be sticks and stones.	94	2	31
	This happens in Georgia! What do you think?! Should we stay inactive?! Come to Aghmashenebeli Avenue on 14 July!	45	21	42

## Frequency of word usage

The tables below show the words that were most frequently and rarely used on the four Facebook pages.

### The most frequently used words

Georgian Idea	AntiParadox	Iveron	Nationalist Legion
Kingdom, state, monarchy, king, saint, Georgia, constitution	Horus <sup>2</sup> , film	Reaction, transgender, feminist-liberast, Russia, nation, Russian rebellion, pederast, country, Georgian	Liberalism, war, Georgia, Aghmashenebeli, July, war, hero

<sup>2</sup> ancient Egyptian deities



## The most rarely used words

Georgian Idea	AntiParadox	Iveron	Nationalist Legion
Georgian, nation, dignified, people, god	Anti-liberal, Christ, information, Facebook, Jesus, alt-info.	Baia Patariaia, Germany, Mada Anikashvili	Country, we, Georgians, Gamsakhurdia

## Calls for the Georgian March

The monitored Facebook pages used neo-fascist, racists and xenophobic calls to mobilize public for participation in the Georgian March. By their content, these calls incited aggression and hatred. The Georgian March was portrayed as the fight to save the nation from “illegals” in Georgia and to prevent the mixing of Georgian blood with that of foreigners.

**AntiParadox/Resistance for Future:**<sup>3</sup> “In the war fighters put their life at risk... In today’s cultural war, if you stand by your homeland, you put at risk your reputation which will be trampled upon by those who are misled by media and their lies. Those who are not afraid to sacrifice their lives for the homeland will not be afraid either to lose their reputation among idiots and if possible, they will join the Georgian March!”

**Resistance for Future:**<sup>4</sup> “The ultimatum is that all illegal foreigners (Iranians, Arabs, Africans, et cetera) shall leave the territory of Georgia before 14 July!!! This is our response to the rape of Georgian children (boys) by a 51-year-old Iranian!!! We will cleanse our streets from foreign criminals!!!! Georgian for Georgia!!!”

**Nationalist Legion:**<sup>5</sup> “The time has come! The time has come for an incredible victory; it’s high time all understood who Georgians are, who those Georgians are that have kept silent for years; it’s time to resurrect and show our enemy what Georgia is! Who Georgians are!”

**Nationalist Legion:**<sup>6</sup> “Let’s prove to everyone that we are the country of [King] David [the Builder], the country of [Queen] Tamar, we are the country of Mazniashvili, Kvinitadze, Ambrosi Khelaia and Zviad Gamsakhurdia! We are Georgians and Georgian blood flows in our veins!”

**Iveron:**<sup>7</sup> “Those who arrive [in Georgia] are representatives of third category countries, not Europeans and not Serbs, Albanians, Greeks; those who arrive are representatives of absolutely different race and mixing our blood with theirs is absolutely catastrophic; but

<sup>3</sup> AntiParadox. 7 July 2017. <https://www.facebook.com/AntiParadox/> Last accessed on 13 July 2017.

<sup>4</sup> Resistance for Future, 30 June 2017. <https://www.facebook.com/ResistanceForFuture/>

<sup>5</sup> Nationalist Legion, 11 July 2017. <https://www.facebook.com/307580206299884/posts/545949279129641> Last accessed on 13 July 2017.

<sup>6</sup> Nationalist Legion, 11 July 2017. <https://www.facebook.com/307580206299884/posts/545857239138845>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/iveroncorp/>

Georgian women, Georgian liberast [a pejorative term made up of two words “liberal” and “pederast”] men are unable to understand that... **приходите все на Грузински марш и устроим тотальны адски пиздец!** [Join the Georgian March and let us organize a total hell for them].”

**Edelweiss:**<sup>8</sup> “Do not wait for a miracle. Feel the power in your arms, take a deep breath and look at your native places. You are a strong young person. Blood of your ancestors flows in your body. It is exactly this that is the utter miracle; realize what the love to nation means; **kindle aggression inside yourself and get prepared for the fight!**”

**Edelweiss:**<sup>9</sup> “I ask you, the nation of Zviad [Gamsakhurdia] and Merab [Kostava]! Whom does Georgia belong to?! Who defended this land with their blood?! Were they Arabs?... Or perhaps, Turks?... This land, this country belongs to Georgians and do not allow foreign nations to dominate over us! On 14 July, on the Aghmashenebeli Avenue, they will hear our shout as a battle cry; Tetri Giorgi [Saint George] will help us!”

### Statements containing hate speech

In addition to calls for the participation in the march, the mentioned Facebook pages carried neo-fascist statements containing hate speech as well as video materials of similar content. These materials were mainly Turkophobic and xenophobic.

Separate examples:

**Mamuka Areshidze, expert, AntiParadox:**<sup>10</sup> Title: *Batumi on sale. Price: negotiable*. “What is happening now in the Kutaisi Street in Batumi is absolutely unacceptable for me. This street has actually become isolated from the rest of the city; there is nothing Georgian left there... One cannot see clearly from Tbilisi what happens in Batumi, but one can clearly see what happens on the Aghmashenebeli Avenue. It is unacceptable for this street to gradually become a district of visitors. I am aware of such districts in Brussels, Paris, Berlin where neither law enforcement officers nor local population are able to enter. This is what I mean under uncontrollability.”

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<sup>8</sup> Edelweiss, 5 July 2017.

<https://www.facebook.com/IBERIANAwakening/photos/a.1416823115045615.1073741828.1416778275050099/1486748058053120/?type=3&theater>

<sup>9</sup> Edelweiss, 2 July 2017.

<https://www.facebook.com/IBERIANAwakening/photos/a.1416823115045615.1073741828.1416778275050099/1483771211684138/?type=3>

<sup>10</sup> AntiParadox, 11 July 2017. [https://www.facebook.com/AntiParadox/posts/453136635050996:0?hc\\_location=ufi](https://www.facebook.com/AntiParadox/posts/453136635050996:0?hc_location=ufi)

**Georgian Idea:**<sup>11</sup> “Be strong in your faith against the LGBT revolution. Do not succumb. Otherwise your city will become like San Francisco where the number of dogs exceeds the number of children by 80 000. Tell LGBT-tolerant tyrants, this homosexual mafia, these rainbow radicals that you will not accept that, you will not accept their antireligious and anticivilization propaganda in your country and let god protect your countries from that!”

### About the Georgian Idea

According to the Public Registry data, the public movement Georgian Idea was registered as a non-commercial legal entity on 21 February 2014, on the basis of the application from Levan Chachua. The list of persons authorized to run the entity includes Levan Chachua as the chairman of the movement and Guram Palavandishvili, a representative of “Georgian Demographic Society 21” as a member of management committee. On 31 March 2014, the entity was deregistered by the Public Registry on the basis of application from Levan Chachua.

On 16 December 2014, at a news conference held in the international press center of RIA Novosti in Tbilisi, the establishment of a new political party, Georgian Idea, was announced by the chairman of the party Levan Chachua. The political party ran for the 2016 parliamentary elections. The party list submitted to the Central Electoral Committee was led by Levan Chachua who was followed by Aleksandre Bregadze as a candidate for the sixth majoritarian election precinct of Saburtalo. Levan Chachua was a member of Orthodox Parents’ Union and was arrested in 2010 for extremist behavior in Kavkasia TV company when he, alongside other members of Orthodox Parents’ Union, burst into the studio during the live television broadcast and engaged in physical altercations. The Tbilisi City Court sentenced him to 4.5 years in prison for the violation of Paragraph 2 of Article 154 (Unlawful interference with the journalist's professional activities) and Paragraph 2 of Article 239 (Hooliganism) of Criminal Code of Georgia. The newly elected parliament in 2012, released Levan Chachua with the status of political prisoner. In 2013, he stood in the presidential elections. At present, Levan Chachua is the chairman of Georgian Idea and a co-host of the program “From Origin to Death” on the Quality Channel.

The section “About Us” of the Facebook page of Georgian Idea names the launch of direct negotiations with Russia for de-occupation of the country as one of the aims of the political union Georgian Idea. The movement often conducts various actions and is distinguished for its homophobic and xenophobic statements. The Facebook page of Georgian Idea frequently releases video addresses of Davit Kartoziya, a Georgian immigrant living in the USA. The Georgian immigrant in the USA, Davit Kartoziya, established a lobbyist firm “American Strategic Partners.” He also participates in live link-ups with Levan Chachua’s program “From Origin to Death” on the Quality Channel.

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<sup>11</sup> Georgian Idea, 1 July 2017.

<https://www.facebook.com/1442080826006745/photos/a.1442345615980266.1073741828.1442080826006745/1919213754960114/?type=3&theater>

### **About AntiParadox**

The Facebook page of AntiParadox often shares xenophobic, homophobic and racist content as well as photo and video manipulations which are part of anti-Western propaganda. The activities organized by the Facebook page include Action in Support of Anti-Liberal Policy of Prime Minister of Hungary, which was held in parallel with the action staged outside the Courtyard Marriot Hotel in Tbilisi to voice protest against Viktor Orban's policy.

### **About Iverion and Nationalist League**

The Facebook page of Iverion exists since 2012. The Facebook page of Nationalist League mainly shares materials of xenophobic content. One of the videos on the page says that the National League comprises Georgian nationalists who do not tolerate "the waving of the flag Russia and the Soviet Union."

### **The Russian March**

The Russian March is an action organized by nationalist organizations and their supporters; it is held annually since 2005, on 4 November each year, in various cities of the Russian Federation and often ends up in violence.

According to official website of the Russian March, a political essence of the Russian March is in that the Russians are unhappy about not having their own national government, their interests are disregarded, the existence and rights of Russian people are questioned and the migration policy remains unchanged. Their events are dominated by neo-fascist statements and calls for "cleansing the country from illegal migrants."