

THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF ARMENIA



INTERACTION

BETWEEN MINISTRY OF DEFENSE AND PUBLIC:

COMPARATIVE STUDY OF ARMENIA AND GEORGIA

A Master's Essay submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of Political Science and
International Affairs for the fulfillment of the degree of Master of Arts

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Abstract

The research discusses civil-military relations in two post-Soviet countries, engaged in territorial disputes: Armenia and Georgia. The comparative analysis describes similarities and differences in the approaches of the Ministries of Defense in the establishment of civil-military relations and explains which ministry demonstrates a higher level of interaction with public. Analysis of the official websites of the Armenian and Georgian Ministries of Defense was used to measure the interaction – the information provision in particular. The findings show different priorities of the ministries: while Armenia is more focused on military ideology and patriotism, Georgia is more concerned with democratic issues. The analysis of the findings proves a higher level of interaction through information provision in Armenia, than in Georgia.

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INTRODUCTION

Since the collapse of Soviet Union the South Caucasus region has been the hotspot that seems to be ready to explode at any time. Two ethnic conflicts burst out almost simultaneously during the last years of Soviet rule and turned into full-scale wars later: the war in Nagorno Karabakh (ended by a cease-fire agreement which has been violated every year); and the war in Abkhazia (followed by its later secession together with South Ossetia). The conflict over the unrecognized Nagorno Karabakh Republic (NKR) is considered frozen; the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia is recognized by some states. It is hard to predict if the region will see a war again.

Societies that have experienced so many armed conflicts depend more than others on their military institutions, which are to ensure peace and security. However, civil-military relations are not developed well enough in the South Caucasus. Failure of the development of civil-military relations leads to the lack of public trust and support for armed forces, lack of management and, consequently, lower military potential. This topic is not widely studied in the region and the problem remains vivid.

The cases represented in this study are Armenia and Georgia, countries that share common Soviet history, war experience in disputed territories and cultural similarities. The study aims to understand the nature of civil-military relations in Armenia and Georgia, focusing on the interaction between their Ministries of Defense and public through the official websites. The first section discusses literature reviewed on e-government and civil-military relations, the second section introduces the cases of the research, the third one explains the methodology of the analysis, and the last two sections analyze the findings on the comparison of the websites.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This section provides theoretical grounds for two concepts, combined in the interaction between Ministry of Defense and public. First, the literature on e-government is reviewed, since the interaction is studied through the websites of the ministries. Second, the concept of civil-military relations is explained, interaction being part of it.

Use of Websites and E-government

In the age of Internet governmental websites play a crucial role in the information delivery and engagement with population. In the mid 1990s public administration institutions were striving for adopting ICT facilities for the better delivery of their services.¹ Soon in the late 1990s the use of internet and other communication systems by administrative institutions for engagement with public developed into the concept of e-government.² The increase of e-government popularity is probably conditioned by the widespread belief that e-government can change public attitude towards authorities which is often negative.³

There are several components of e-government that divide it into broad and narrow definitions. While e-government is usually associated with internet facilities, its broader definition involves delivery of information and services also by telephone, wireless devices,

¹ Irma Graafland-Essers and Emile Ettegui, *Benchmarking E-Government in Europe and the US* (Santa Monica, Calif: Rand, 2003), 12;

James Melitski, "The Relational Dynamics of E-Governance: An Analysis Based on Early Adopters of Internet Technologies in New Jersey," *Public Performance & Management Review* 26, no. 4 (2003): 377.

² Tony Carrizales, "Functions of E-Government: A Study of Municipal Practices," *State & Local Government Review*, 2008, 12;

Melitski, "The Relational Dynamics of E-Governance," 377.

³ The Working Group on E-Government in the Developing World, "Roadmap for E-Government in the Developing World: 10 Questions E-Government Leaders Should Ask Themselves" (Los Angeles, CA: Pacific Council on International Policy, 2002), 1.

community centers and other systems.⁴ In the broad sense, e-government implies the use of information communication technologies with the aim to increase efficiency, effectiveness, accountability of administrative institutions and accessibility to services, and to facilitate the information delivery to public.⁵ Moreover, it includes not only interaction with citizens, but also two other levels of e-government operations: e-government to business/ non-profit and e-government to government, which includes cross agencies interaction and services for the government employees.⁶

The narrow understanding of e-government covers only the electronic delivery of information and services to public⁷ that includes “acquiring and providing products and services; placing and receiving orders; providing and obtaining information; and completing financial transactions.”⁸ The Working Group on E-Government in the Developing World argues that it has to be citizen-centered.⁹

The modern understanding of e-government includes several functions. Carrizales and Moon distinguish four of them: e-organization (secure central and intranet database for the interaction between governmental agencies), e-partnering (e-commerce for contract and procurement and other transaction activities), e-services (online delivery of services), and e-

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.;

Patricia J. Pascual, “E-Government” (New York: Asia-Pacific Development Information Programme, United Nations Development Programme, 2003), 5.

⁶ Graafland-Essers and Ettegui, *Benchmarking E-Government in Europe and the US*, 5;

M. Jae Moon, “The Evolution of E-Government among Municipalities: Rhetoric or Reality?” *Public Administration Review* 62, no. 4 (2002): 425;

Pascual, “E-Government,” 5;

Zhiyuan Fang, “E-Government in Digital Era: Concept, Practice, and Development,” *International Journal of the Computer, the Internet and Management* 10, no. 2 (2002): 7–8.

⁷ Carrizales, “Functions of E-Government,” 12;

Pascual, “E-Government,” 5;

Moon, “The Evolution of E-Government among Municipalities,” 425.

⁸ Fang, “E-Government in Digital Era,” 3.

⁹ The Working Group on E-Government in the Developing World, “Roadmap for E-Government in the Developing World: 10 Questions E-Government Leaders Should Ask Themselves,” 2.

democracy (transparency and accountability).¹⁰ In general, it facilitates the process of information delivery and thus increases transparency of the institutions and, consequently, public trust in them.¹¹

E-government increases participation of public sector in the policy- and decision-making.¹² For instance, one of important implications of public participation is the opportunity to provide feedback which is available on many governmental websites. Users can leave their comments and opinion about policies and participate in decision-making; consequently the interaction between governmental institutions and public sector becomes stronger.¹³

Moon indicates five stages of interaction between government and public through ICT facilities: one-way communication (only information provision), two-way communication (feedback provision through requests), financial and service transactions, vertical and horizontal integration, and public participation (political).¹⁴ The first stage is the basic one and requires from governmental websites only posting information.¹⁵ The second stage represents an interactive model between governmental institutions and public with a request/response (usually via email) system.¹⁶ The third stage includes also “web-based self-service” for financial transactions and online service: for instance, by providing direct database links at interface

¹⁰ Carrizales, “Functions of E-Government,” 12;

Moon, “The Evolution of E-Government among Municipalities,” 425.

¹¹ The Working Group on E-Government in the Developing World, “Roadmap for E-Government in the Developing World: 10 Questions E-Government Leaders Should Ask Themselves,” 22.

¹² Maria J. D’agostino et al., “A Study of E-Government and E-Governance: An Empirical Examination of Municipal Websites,” *Public Administration Quarterly*, 2011, 3–25;

Carolyn T. Harder and Meagan M. Jordan, “The Transparency of County Websites: A Content Analysis,” *Public Administration Quarterly* 37, no. 1 (2013): 103–28;

Fang, “E-Government in Digital Era,” 2;

Pascual, “E-Government,” 23.

¹³ D’agostino et al., “A Study of E-Government and E-Governance,” 10.

¹⁴ Moon, “The Evolution of E-Government among Municipalities,” 426.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

through which users can pay their taxes, apply for financial aid, etc.¹⁷ In the fourth stage governmental websites develop vertical (intergovernmental) and horizontal (intragovernmental) integration of the back-office and online systems.¹⁸ The fifth stage includes online political participation in the form of online voting, online opinion polls, etc.¹⁹

A well-developed governmental website must have the following characteristics: comprehensiveness, integration between applications within the site and with other governmental sites, security and privacy, presence of developed e-governance systems, ubiquity and accessibility, and usability.²⁰ These characteristics have disproportionate importance and are not studied equally. According to Graafland-Essers and Etedgui most of the researchers focus on three concepts: “the supply-side of e-government, availability and level of sophistication of online services and usage.”²¹

There are several reasons for the governmental institutions to improve their sites in terms of usability. First of all, a user-friendly and well designed website attracts visitors and motivates them to use its information resources.²² Second, it facilitates the process of finding information and thus increases the satisfaction of its users.²³ Finally, it leaves a positive impression on interested parties.²⁴

It is necessary to underline though that while e-government is believed to enhance democratic process and increase public trust, practical implementation of the theoretical framework does not necessarily lead to these outcomes. According to Kluver, information

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid., 427.

²⁰ Fang, “E-Government in Digital Era,” 12;

Pascual, “E-Government,” 32.

²¹ Graafland-Essers and Etedgui, *Benchmarking E-Government in Europe and the US*, 6.

²² Norman E. Youngblood and Jo Mackiewicz, “A Usability Analysis of Municipal Government Website Home Pages in Alabama,” *Government Information Quarterly* 29, no. 4 (October 2012): 6.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

provision and development of technologies are not a guarantee of the distrust problem solution if there is no change in the upper administrative level.²⁵ Another criticism assumes that e-government can have a completely opposite impact, such as a higher level of governmental influence and control which is totally undemocratic.²⁶ Finally, e-government has a very significant challenge – digital divide that excludes poorer segments of population.²⁷ Probably this barrier is not a case in developed states, but it has a high significance for the developing countries, especially for their elderly segment of population.

Civil-Military Relations, and Interaction between Civil and Military Sectors

In the broad sense civil-military relations can be understood as “military responsiveness to the policies of politically responsible government.”²⁸ In general civil-military relations mean “civilization” of armed forces and “militarization” of civilians:²⁹ military sector becomes more engaged in the social life, and the civilian – in military affairs.

The crucial element of civil-military relations is the civilian control over armed forces. The traditional theory, developed by Samuel Huntington, distinguishes two types of civilian control and minimization of military power: objective and subjective.³⁰ The subjective control implies the superiority of the civilian power to the military.³¹ The objective sense, on the contrary, means the maximization of professionalism of the armed forces and distribution of

²⁵ Randolph Kluver, “The Architecture of Control: A Chinese Strategy for E-Governance,” *Journal of Public Policy* 25, no. 1 (May 2005): 94.

²⁶ Marc Holzer, “Restoring Trust in Government: The Potential of Digital Citizen Participation,” *Frontiers of Public Administration*, 2006, 19; Shanthi Kalathil,

“Dot.Com for Dictators,” *Foreign Policy*, no. 135 (March 2003): 45.

²⁷ Holzer, “Restoring Trust in Government: The Potential of Digital Citizen Participation,” 19.

²⁸ Gene M. Lyons, “The New Civil-Military Relations,” *The American Political Science Review* 55, no. 1 (March 1961): 53.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 63.

³⁰ Samuel P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations*, 15th ed. (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2000).

³¹ *Ibid.*, 80.

political power between both civilian and military sector rather than only civilian; militarization of the military sector rather than civilization; making it a tool of the state rather than its reflection.³² According to Huntington, “civilian control exists when there is this proper subordination of an autonomous [military] profession to the ends of policy.”³³ Modern democracies represent the objective civilian control which is considered more efficient.

Surprisingly, civilian control is likely to be established after armed conflicts. Political leaders become military leaders and engage in the military sector during armed conflicts. When the conflict is resolved, their military experience helps them to disarm and demobilize the country and thus sustain civilian control.³⁴

It is generally acknowledged that the blur of the border between civil and military sectors leads to higher probability of their interaction and cooperation.³⁵ Several factors cause it, such as national traditions of a state, its regime and military doctrine.³⁶ The lack of a clear border is especially typical for communist states where it is sometimes hard to distinguish the line between party and armed forces that have a high level of cooperation and interaction.³⁷

The interaction can be examined on two levels: upper, between civilian administrative heads in the security sector or other sectors that cooperate with military; and lower, between military sector and public in general. It is hard to ensure the integration of military sector in the civilian and their interaction if there is lack of trust and cooperation in the upper level, leading to

³² Ibid., 83.

³³ Ibid., 72.

³⁴ Jendayi Frazer, “Conceptualizing Civil-Military Relations during Democratic Transition,” *Africa Today*, 1995, 44.

³⁵ David E. Albright, “A Comparative Conceptualization of Civil-Military Relations,” *World Politics* 32, no. 04 (July 1980): 575.

³⁶ Henry Bienen, “Civil-Military Relations in the Third World,” *International Political Science Review* 2, no. 3 (1981): 364–365.

³⁷ Ibid., 364;

Amos Perlmutter and William M. LeoGrande, “The Party in Uniform: Toward a Theory of Civil-Military Relations in Communist Political Systems,” *The American Political Science Review* 76, no. 4 (December 1982): 781.

alienations. To prevent it, it is necessary to establish unhampered “information flows, efficient implementation of policies and effective spending of limited public resources.”³⁸ The handbook, written by DCAF, determines three main basic requirements needed for the establishment of civil-military relations, which are: goal-orientation and “cooperation on working-expert-level”; “distribution of decision-making authority according to specific expertise and vested interest”; and civilian control over defense planning and policies.³⁹ The integrated Ministry of Defense is to provide necessary ground for the multi-layer interaction.⁴⁰ Most of the studies on civil-military relations do not cover interaction though; it still needs further research.⁴¹

As explained in the introduction above, this study aims to contribute to the field by a comparative analysis of the interaction between Ministry of Defense and public in two developing countries, Armenia and Georgia, focusing specifically on information provision through their websites. Next sections cover briefly their recent historic-legal background and analysis of the empirical findings.

³⁸ Plamen Pantev, ed., *Civil-Military Relations and Democratic Control of the Security Sector: A Handbook for Military Officers, Servicemen and Servicewomen of the Security and Intelligence Agencies and for Civilian Politicians and Security Experts* (Sofia: ProCon Ltd, 2005), 38.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 41.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 38.

⁴¹ Bienen, “Civil-Military Relations in the Third World,” 369.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Armenia and Georgia are relatively new states, having declared independence from USSR almost simultaneously in 1991. A year later a violent territorial conflict broke out in Georgia. At that time Armenia, as an ally of the non-recognized Nagorno Karabakh Republic, was engaged in a full-scale war with Azerbaijan, which ended with the cease-fire agreement in 1994. Fourteen years later Georgia also participated in a war caused by continuous territorial disputes, which left a serious impact on the social moods and state politics. While there are many differences in the nature of these wars, and in the recent history of their stakeholders, Armenia and Georgia share socio-cultural similarities and common Soviet experience. Furthermore, they are both engaged in territorial disputes.

Governmental policies towards armed forces changed with the collapse of the Soviet Union in its former member-states. In Soviet period party bodies exercised full civilian control over armed forces and demonstrated high level of cooperation, as it often happens in communist states (see page 11). When Armenia and Georgia became independent, first democratic institutions were established and the nature of state policies changed.⁴² Development of the civilian control of armed forces and civil-military relations in both countries after the collapse of USSR is discussed in the subsections below.

⁴² “Armenia and Democratic Control of the Armed Forces: Analysis and Perspectives.” (Yerevan: OSCE Office in Yerevan, 2011), 23.

Development of Civil-Military Relations in Armenia

According to the Global Militarization Index of 2014, Armenia is in the top-3 of the world most militarized countries (after Singapore and Israel).⁴³ Periodic violations of cease-fire agreement, blockade and serious danger of the escalation of the situation explain Armenia's pro-military politics.⁴⁴ However, as discussed in the literature above, the war experience often provides a perfect ground for the establishment of civilian control, and Armenia is able to use it.

Civilian control over armed forces and their political neutrality are stated in Constitution.⁴⁵ However, the Constitution does not impose clear restrictions on the engagement in political and trade unions and participation in demonstrations by the officers: according to the Article 28 and Article 29 these restrictions *may* be prescribed by law.⁴⁶ Another important element is prescribed in the Article 55.12, according to which President⁴⁷ is the Supreme Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces.⁴⁸

The first steps towards "civilizing" of the armed forces were done in 1996, such as establishment of the Disciplinary Bylaws of the RA Armed Forces. Its Article 81 requires from the commanders to improve their professional knowledge and leadership skills; to cooperate closely with administration bodies (both state and public), NGOs, media; and to allow their servicemen to contact their family and NGOs.⁴⁹ Thus, the bylaw was supposed to increase not only the interaction with civilian sector, but also the professionalism of armed forces, which is the basis for the objective civilian control (see pages 10-11). However, the law was never

⁴³ Jan Grebe, "The Global Militarisation Index" (BICC, 2014)

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ In the Article 8.2; "Constitution of the Republic of Armenia (With Amendments)" (National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia, 2005)

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Armenia was in a transition from a Presidential Republic into a Parliamentary at the period when this research was done. The analysis is based on the old Constitution (last amendments of 2005) because the new one was not yet enforced, particularly in the aspect of civil military relations.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ "Armenia and Democratic Control of the Armed Forces: Analysis and Perspectives.," 24.

implemented appropriately: authorities have not forced commanders to follow the prescriptions.⁵⁰

Government undertook several other steps. Most importantly, it declared the post of Minister of Defense to be civilian.⁵¹ The Republic of Armenia has had six ministers (two of them – Vazgen Sargsyan and Serzh Sargsyan – were in office two times). However, only three ministers did not graduate any military institutions: Vazgen Sargsyan, Vasgen Manukyan, and Serzh Sargsyan. Interestingly, one of them (Vazgen Sargsyan) became national hero and one of the most recognized military leaders.

Government implemented other changes. In 2008 Law on Defense came into force. Government also introduced The Military Disciplinary Code of the Armed Forces,⁵² Rules of Procedure of the RA National Assembly, Law on Budgetary System, etc.⁵³

In 2010 Ministry of Defense published Public Information Concept with its aim to improve civil-military relations. Its main objectives include transparency of defense policy, public accountability, and increase in the level of civilian control over armed forces and human rights protection of military servicemen.⁵⁴ Its main priorities are public participation, particularly in developing strategic and conceptual documents and formulation of the defense policy; and involvement of officers in the future works with public.⁵⁵

At the same time, Armenia has not endorsed any piece of legislation that would cover all the aspects of the civilian control over armed forces.⁵⁶ All the laws introduced tackle only

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ “Armenia and Democratic Control of the Armed Forces: Analysis and Perspectives.”

⁵² “Annual Report on the Activities of the RA Human Rights Defender on the Violations of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms in the Country during 2012” (Yerevan: The Ombudsman’s Staff of the Republic of Armenia, 2013), 12.

⁵³ “Armenia and Democratic Control of the Armed Forces: Analysis and Perspectives.,” 24.

⁵⁴ “Public Information Concept of the Arm Mod.” (Armenian Ministry of Defense, 2010)

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ “Armenia and Democratic Control of the Armed Forces: Analysis and Perspectives.,” 24.

specific components, but even they are not observed appropriately. There are several reasons, causing that failure. OSCE office in Armenia determines six main challenges that Armenia, as other post-Soviet countries, faces nowadays in terms of establishing democratic control over armed forces.

First challenge is the confidentiality regime that OSCE finds unjustified in most cases.⁵⁷ The problem is also a matter of concern of many NGOs. According to the report of Helsinki Citizens Assembly Committee in Vanadzor, MOD provided information only to 60% of their inquiries (out of 39) in 2010-2011. While the percentage of the information provided shows that absolute majority of inquires were responded, HCA argue that rejection of those 40% was completely unjustified.⁵⁸

Another challenge is the lack of proper coverage and analysis of developments in the defense sector.⁵⁹ Together with the confidentiality regime it contributes to another challenge: lack of active involvement of media and NGOs⁶⁰ (although several NGOs are working on military issues in Armenia: Safe Soldiers for a Safe Armenia, Helsinki Citizens Assembly Committee in Vanadzor, Zinvori Mair (*mother of a soldier*), Azatamartik (*freedom-fighters*), Gates of Motherland, etc.

Next challenge is the lack of political will,⁶¹ which can be observed from the inappropriate implementation of legislature in armed forces discussed briefly above. Finally, the level of legal awareness and knowledge of the Armenian society is too low.⁶² It is correlated with other problems, especially lack of proper coverage and involvement of civil society institutions.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 23.

⁵⁸ “The Possibilities for Democratic, Civil and Public Control over Armed Forces in Armenia.” (Vanadzor: Helsinki Citizens Assembly, 2012), 17–18.

⁵⁹ “Armenia and Democratic Control of the Armed Forces: Analysis and Perspectives.,” 23.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² “Armenia and Democratic Control of the Armed Forces: Analysis and Perspectives.”

That problem also leads to another one: Armenian society is too passive in standing up for their rights.⁶³

These challenges are highly dependent on each other and should be solved jointly. The most necessary step is to strengthen political will, since changes should come from above. On the other hand, public can have a strong influence on the formation of political will. However, Armenian authorities demonstrated concern about the problem and have been working on the development of civil-military relations during last twenty years.

Development of Civil-Military Relations in Georgia

The military sector does not have such a significant role in Georgia as in Armenia. Moreover, in contrast to Armenia that won the war and thus ensured public trust in army, Georgian forces failed in Abkhazia in 1992, leading to a widespread discontent among Georgian population.⁶⁴

The development of civil-military relations in Georgia and, in particular, democratic control over armed forces has been influenced mainly by the intensive cooperation with the Euro-Atlantic institutions.⁶⁵ In particular, the most significant changes in the Georgian defense sector were made in assistance and coordination of NATO members: for instance, the budget program of 2001 and the program for training and equipment of 2002, prepared mainly by the American experts.⁶⁶

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Levan Alapishvili, "The Civil-Military Relations and Democratic Control on Armed Forces in Caucasus Region - Comparative Study" (NATO, 1995), 17.

⁶⁵ Tamara Pataraiia, "Civilians in National Security Structures and Civil-Military Relations in Georgia," *After Shevardnadze: Georgian Security Sector Governance after the Rose Revolution*, 2006, 91.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 100.

The legislative basis for civil-military relations in Georgia was established in its Constitution in 1995. It does not recognize any privilege for military⁶⁷ and, at the same time, establishes compulsory military conscription.⁶⁸ The Article 73.4 says that President is the head of armed forces,⁶⁹ which means the superiority of civilian control over military. The Article 26.5 of Constitution and the Article 5 of the Law on the Status of the Military Man (1998) underline that members of armed forces shall not be members of any political association.⁷⁰

Next important step was the establishment of the Council of National Security (1996), which is the advisory body to President and aims to ensure civilian control over armed forces.⁷¹ At the same times, its personnel are military trained; however, their military ranks are formality, rather than a proof of high military competency.⁷²

Post of the Minister of Defense is civilian. Georgia has had seventeen ministers since its independence. In contrast to Armenia, no Minister of Defense in Georgia was in office more than once, and only four of them graduated military institutions: Joni Pirtskhalaishvili, Levan Sharashenidze, Giorgi Karkarashvili and Varden Nadibaidze.

One of the most important steps was the Law of Georgia on The Group of Confidence of 1998.⁷³ It is the first law in the whole post-Soviet country that introduces mechanisms for the financial control over armed forces.⁷⁴

The challenges, described above in the subsection on Armenia, such as the lack of public involvement, rule of law and political will, are applicable to Georgia as well.⁷⁵ NGOs and media

⁶⁷ Ibid., 91.

⁶⁸ Ch.7 Art.101 in "The Constitution of Georgia" (Parliament of Georgia, 2006), 33.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 22.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 7;

Pataraiia, "Civilians in National Security Structures and Civil-Military Relations in Georgia," 94.

⁷¹ Pataraiia, "Civilians in National Security Structures and Civil-Military Relations in Georgia," 98.

⁷² Ibid., 98.

⁷³ Alapishvili, "The Civil-Military Relations and Democratic Control on Armed Forces in Caucasus Region - Comparative Study," 18.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

are also involved very passively.⁷⁶ The only NGO to which the literature reviewed refers is the Centre for Civil-Military Relations and Security Studies – a subdivision of the Caucasus Institute for Peace, Development and Democracy.⁷⁷ There are four NGOs working with military issues in Georgia according to the database, provided by the *Friends and Partners* project, but none of them is military-patriotic.⁷⁸

However, researches determine several other obstacles that were not covered by OSCE and that are also typical for Armenia. The first problem is the national mentality which makes the whole structure determined by personal relationships and other human factors, rather than democratic procedures.⁷⁹ Next problem is the consequence of Soviet bureaucracy that transformed in the contemporary corruption and “clientelism” in Georgia.⁸⁰ Another challenge is the lack of financial resources and problem in defense budgeting, which leads also to the misuse of foreign assistance.⁸¹ Finally, there is a lack of integration of the retired servicemen in the civilian life. As a result they often become engaged in illegal activities.⁸²

It can be concluded from the brief background summarized above that Armenia and Georgia are approximately in the same stage of civil-military relations development, despite the significantly higher militarization level of Armenia. While they share several similarities, such as legal basis provided in the Constitution, some policies vary. For example, the Armenian MOD provides the Public Information Concept, and Georgia has policies on the budgetary control.

⁷⁵ Antje Fritz, “Security Sector Governance in Georgia (I): Status,” *After Shevardnadze: Georgian Security Sector Governance after the Rose Revolution*, 2006, 156-162.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 157.

⁷⁷ Duncan Hiscock, “Domestic and International NGOs and Security Sector Governance in Georgia,” *After Shevardnadze: Georgian Security Sector Governance after the Rose Revolution*, 2006, 132.

⁷⁸ Natasha Bulashova and Greg Cole, “Georgian NGO’s Database” (Friends and Partners, n.d.).

⁷⁹ Fritz, “Security Sector Governance in Georgia (I): Status,” 154.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 154–155.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 162-164.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 165.

One of the important factors determining public perceptions of armed forces and their willingness to be engaged with them is the nature of the conflicts of both countries: first, Armenia is in the winning position in contrast to Georgia, and second, the threat of war is significantly higher for Armenia, than for Georgia. This factor may be the reason, for instance, of the absence of military-patriotic NGOs in Georgia and their existence in Armenia. However, this observation explains the nature of civil-military relations, rather than the level of their development.

Despite some differences in perceptions, Armenia and Georgia face similar challenges in strengthening civil-military relations: lack of coverage of developments; confidentiality regime; and passiveness of public, NGOs, media, and the authorities. All these problems lead to the lack of information which can cause alienation of the military sector from the civilian. Next sections aim to measure the role of the Ministries of Defense of Armenia and Georgia in the information delivery and interaction with the public sector.

METHODOLOGY

Analysis focuses on four concepts of civil-military relations. The civilization of military is understood as the integration of armed forces in the social life; and the components of the militarization of civilians are: military-patriotic education and ideology promotion; public readiness for mobilization; prestige and image of the MOD and military service. These components (in terms of the interaction between the MOD and public) were measured through the websites of the ministries. In particular, importance was given to the information provision, including coverage of the developments, news and reforms; and cooperation with NGOs and media. Mixed methodology (qualitative and quantitative) was used in the comparative analysis. The data collection was completed by March 21st, 2016 and does not include any further developments of the websites.

The analysis is aimed to answer the following question:

RQ: Which Ministry of Defense contributes more to civil-military relations through information provision?

As stated above, information provision is measured through the analysis of the ministries' websites. The hypotheses of the study are listed below:

H₁ The Ministry of Defense of Georgia provides more information than of Armenia.

H₂ The Ministry of Defense of Armenia provides more information than of Georgia.

Analysis of the Websites

Analysis of the sites of the Georgian⁸³ and Armenian⁸⁴ Ministries of Defense is made in two steps. First, sections that both sites contain were compared. Each page of the site was analyzed in terms of its structure/usability and the amount/quality of the information provided. Each page is evaluated according to the following coding strategy:

Table 1. Coding scale

0	1	2	3
very bad	bad, serious issues	good, minor issues	very good

Twelve units of analysis were identified during the content analysis of the websites: translation, usability, departments, branches, minister of defense, deputies of the minister, staff, international cooperation, defense policy, news, and contact information. The unit *Translation* covers the number of foreign languages to which the sites are translated and the percentage of the translated text to the original text. The unit *Usability* measures the structure, navigation and design of the site: ease of finding information, structure of the home page and the sections, connection to social networks, mobile version of the site, and presence/lack of non-working links or photos that the page does not show. The units *Departments* and *Branches* combine two sections: the departments/branches of the ministry and the departments/branches of the staff respectively. The unit *Minister of Defense* represents the section for the minister; the unit *Deputies* combines the sections on his/her deputies. The unit *Staff* represents the sections on the Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces and their deputies. The units *International Cooperation* and *Defense Policy* cover all the information provided on the respective topic, including relevant documents. The *News* unit covers all the news available on the site; and the

⁸³ www.mod.gov.ge

⁸⁴ www.mil.am

Contact unit measures the amount and quality of the contact information and the ways the information can be requested.

As explained above, some of the units combine several elements, pages, sections, etc. The sections that are combined in some of the units described above may contain subsections or may represent one single page. E.g., the *Departments* unit at the Georgian site contains only one document which is a scheme of the departments, while the Armenian site has two sections in the separate blocs, each of them have subsections, and the subsections contain several pages. The complex units of this type were scored level by level as described below:

1. all the pages, included in a subsection, are evaluated and scored;
2. the average of the pages' scores is calculated (and summed with the score for the subsection's home page if existent) and represents the score for a subsection;
3. all the subsections' scores are summed, their average calculated (and summed with the score for the section's home page if existent);
4. all the sections' scores are summed, their average calculated.

The final calculation is rounded to the numerical value from the Table 1. The final score is given to the complex unit.

Translation

The amount of information translated from the respective titular languages into English was analyzed quantitatively in addition to analyzing the content of the sites, using the coding scheme described above. Only translations into English were considered, because the Georgian site does not employ any other foreign language. It can be noted, however, that the Armenian website also has information in Russian; the amount of translations into Russian on the

Armenian site is almost equal to the English translations. The amount of translations is important for the analysis, since the research studies civil-military relations through interaction not only with the citizens, but also Diaspora, foreign media and any other civilian users that do not know Armenian and Georgian languages.

There are three types of translation on the sites:⁸⁵

1. complete translation of a page/document/media;
2. partial translation (some amount of the text appears on the English page in its original language or/and there is less information on the English page than on the original one);
3. no translation (the page does not exist on the English site).

The pages/documents/media of the first type have 100% of translation; of the third type – 0%. The pages/documents of the second type can be divided into two subtypes by their structure:

- 2.1. the pages/documents that have certain blocks of the non-translated text;
- 2.2. the pages/documents for which translation is a summary of the original text.

The pages from the 2.1 subtype are evaluated by the following method:

1. the number of the words on the original page is counted;
2. the non-translated blocks of the text on the original page are distinguished;
3. the number of the words in the non-translated blocks are subtracted from the total number;
4. the ratio of the number of the translated words to the total number is calculated;

⁸⁵ The translation of the websites' frames was calculated only for the home pages. The rest of the pages were analyzed only by the text, dedicated to them (not considering the text in the upper and lower constant blocks).

5. the value is transformed into percentage that represents the amount of translation per page.

The 2.2 subtype is present only at the Armenian site: two pages⁸⁶ and three documents.⁸⁷ The percentage of the partial translation per page/document was counted by the ratio of the number of the words on the English page to the number of the words on the Armenian one. The percentage of translation per document was counted by the ratio of the number of pages in English to the total number of pages.

Ten news from each site were randomly analyzed: every 300th on the Armenian and every 400th on the Georgian webpage.⁸⁸ The translation of the pages selected was of 100%. It is assumed that all the news are either fully translated or not translated at all, since it was impossible to review all the 7280 news due to the limitations of the study. Following that assumption, the calculation of the news' translation was done by the ratio of the number of English pages to the number of the pages in the original language.

Usability

Another unit of analysis that was measured is *Usability*. A short opinion poll was conducted among active internet users to compare the usability of the sites. The population of the poll is 100 citizens of eleven countries⁸⁹ outside the South Caucasus region. None of the respondent is of the Armenian, nor Georgian heritage; 20% of the respondents work in the IT-

⁸⁶ The text on these pages is large: more than 1500 words. At the same time, the text is not divided into blocks: some sentences are not translated or translated partially. Therefore it is hard to compare these pages with their English version by the method, described above.

⁸⁷ The documents are academic journals, each of them has more than 100 pages. The articles are not translated; however, most of them have short summaries in Russian and English. Only pages of the articles and their summaries were counted for the analysis.

⁸⁸ The news-block on the Armenian site had 313 pages, and the Georgian – 416. The first news-page on every 30th page of the news-block was analyzed for the Armenian site, and the first page on every 40th – for the Georgian.

⁸⁹ Russia, Ukraine, Poland, Sweden, Spain, Italy, Portugal, Israel, USA, Mexico and Venezuela.

sector. Convenience sample strategy was used: the interviewer surveyed her acquaintances, and they continued the poll by the snowball strategy. The respondents were asked to choose which site they consider more convenient in terms of usability, structure, navigation and ease of finding information. The main aim of the poll was to receive feedback for the qualitative analysis of usability, in particular from those who specialize in IT. However, their preferences were also calculated quantitatively.

Limitations

In the beginning of the work on the topic the study used another tool of data collection: information request experiment.⁹⁰ However, emergency situation occurred in the middle of the experiment process. Violent clashes on the border of the unrecognized Nagorno Karabakh Republic turned into the Four-Day War with Azerbaijan. As a result, the threat of a full-scale war between Armenia and Azerbaijan became the primary problem in all the spheres of political and social life in Armenia and made the MOD of Armenia incomparable with the MOD of Georgia. Despite the fact that the MOD of Armenia continued to answer email and phone requests, the experiment was stopped. Other limitations are the word-limit determined for the study and the short time-terms.

⁹⁰ The experiment was initiated to understand the reason of the lack of information on the websites: confidentiality regime, insufficient development of the websites, or lack of accountability of the ministries. The experiment consisted of two parts: sending information requests to the ministries by email and calling directly to the ministries. The direct calls were done if the ministry did not respond by email during 2 weeks.

FINDINGS

Translation: Statistical data

Table 2. Percentage of translation of web information

Units	Armenia		Georgia	
	N of units	Translation in %	N of units	Translation in %
Documents ⁹¹	190	21.5%	258	3.1%
Web-pages	254	64.9%	47	52.2%
News	3124	43.5%	4156	99.6%
Total number/ Mean	3927	43.3%	4461	51.6%

Table 2 represents the percentage of translation of the documents uploaded to the sites, news-pages and other web-pages. According to the data, documents are the least translated unit on both sites. Yet the most important documents such as National Security Strategy, Military Doctrine, etc. are fully translated. The Georgian site provides more documents and news than the Armenian site. In contrast to the documents, almost all the news on the Georgian site are translated, while more than the half of the Armenian news are available only in the original language. The Armenian site has significantly more web-pages than the Georgian one, and the percentage of their translations is also higher. However, the mean is higher for the Georgian site (the gap is 8%).

Table 3. Percentage of translation of the web-pages

Translation type	Armenia	Georgia
No translation	15.2%	40.4%
Partial translation	34.0%	25.5%
Complete translation	50.0%	34.0%

⁹¹ The analysis includes the videos, uploaded on the Armenian site, in the section of *Documents*.

Table 3 shows the percentage of the web-pages (not considering news and documents) that are translated completely, partially or not translated at all. The percentage of non-translated pages on the Georgian site is more than three times higher than on the Armenian one. Complete and partial translations are done in a higher percentage on the Armenian site.

Comparable sections

Table 4 describes the evaluation of the units of analysis. Ten comparable sections are analyzed, in addition to two generalized units of analysis (*Translation* and *Usability*).

Table 4. Comparable units of analysis

		ARMENIA			GEORGIA
Units	Score	Notes	Score	Notes	
Translation	2	Two languages of translation: Russian and English. All the pages on the English/Russian sites contain only the information translated into the language indicated, except 14 pages in development where the phrase “in development” is written in Armenian. <i>Minor issues:</i> not all the information is available in English/Russian (see Tables 1 and 2).	1	One language of translation: English. <i>Major issues:</i> Not all the information is translated into English; all the partially translated pages contain text in the original language.	
Usability	2	The site has the mobile version. Every block has its home page, navigation is simple and easy, all the links are working. There are direct links for sharing in Facebook, Twitter and G+ and “like” in Facebook for all the pages on the site. There is a sitemap which simplifies the navigation. <i>Minor issues:</i> some sections duplicate each other. Some sections do not have direct links to the documents in the library.	1	Navigation is simple, sections are combined in blocks on the top and appear when the mouse is pointed to the blocks’ titles. Most of the links consist of the names of their pages. <i>Major issues:</i> there are no return links on the pages of the subdivisions back to the sections. Many links (especially on the English site) are not working. Facebook is the only network connected to the site, but the sharing/liking option is working only on the news pages.	
Departments	2	All the departments have their sections. Most of them have separate pages for their heads, some of them – for the departments’ activities and the news. <i>Minor issues:</i> not all the departments provide information on their activities, heads, etc.	0	The whole information is presented only in the scheme without any media, details, links, etc.	

Branches	2	Each section has its home page with links to their subdivisions. Each department page also has its home page with blocks for activities and the head of the department where their names and military ranks are indicated. <i>Minor issues:</i> not all the branches provide information on their activities, heads, etc.	0	The whole information is presented only on the scheme without any media, details, links, etc. The scheme does not contain any names.
Minister of Defense	3	There is a short block at the home page with links for: general information, biography, news, meetings, messages, photo, video, reception of citizens, visits and messages. The biography is detailed.	2	The text is divided by blocks, information in each section is concise and full. <i>Minor issues:</i> information provided is not very detailed. There are no external links, information on activities, media, etc.
Deputy Ministers	2	Concise and full information about education, awards, service, work experience and private life is provided. <i>Minor issues:</i> information is not detailed, no information about military ranks.	2	The information is detailed. <i>Minor issues:</i> there are no external links/additional information.
Staff	2	Concise and full information about education, awards, service, work experience and private life of the Chief and his deputies is provided. <i>Minor issues:</i> the information on the deputies is not detailed.	2	The information is detailed. <i>Minor issues:</i> there are no external links/additional information on the military ranks, etc.
International Cooperation	2	There are three pages: general information, NATO IPAP and the military representatives abroad. The brief history of the IPAP is presented; the mission is described, including the main fields and spheres of cooperation. There is information on CSTO, CIS, OSCE and ICRC. <i>Minor issues:</i> there is no information on the Armenian strategic partnership, nor the Russian military bases. The information is not detailed; there is no information on the activities, trainings, etc. There is also no information on the results: goals achieved, etc. Action plans are the only documents available.	2	There is a separate block where all the information on the international cooperation is located. It includes information on bilateral cooperation, NATO and the cooperation with EU. The information is detailed, including the history of cooperation, documents, activities, summits, programs, initiatives, etc. All the countries with which Georgia has bilateral relations are listed (including trilateral cooperation with Azerbaijan and Turkey). <i>Minor issues:</i> there are no external links. The information on the bilateral cooperation is not detailed and is too brief. There is no information on the cooperation with other international organizations. The substantial package is the only document available.
Defense Policy	3	The defense policy block contains pages on the military doctrine, national security strategy, reforms and the strategic defense review (besides the pages discussed above). The relevant documents are available in the library.	2	There are links to the following documents: national security concept, national military strategy, threat assessment document, strategic defense review, minister's vision, defense planning guidance, etc. <i>Minor issues:</i> Minister's vision page is the only one that contains some information about the documents: the rest of the links lead directly to them.

Public Affairs	2	There are five pages in the block: the spiritual service, the cooperation with media and NGOs, public council and press secretary. The information is detailed, the page for the cooperation with NGOs also contains a document uploaded. Information on activities is provided. <i>Minor issues:</i> there is no enough information on the public activities.	1	There are FAQ and request information sections. Some documents on the legislature are available. <i>Major issues:</i> the block of public information contains links to the pages from other section. There is little new information. Some of the pages almost do not contain any information: e.g. there is just one simple sentence on the page dedicated to the legal acts. The majority of the links are not working.
News	3	Topics of the news are different, a special attention is given to the public sector, such as meeting at the national assembly of science, press-releases, reception of citizens, etc.	3	The pages are structured compactly; topics are different, from the international cooperation to the gender issues. The archive of news is large.
Contact	2	The contact information is available on the top and the bottom (more detailed) of the page. The sample of information inquiry is available, there is also information on the Freedom of Information law and all the necessary requirements for requesting information, including the time-term in which the answer must be provided. <i>Minor issues:</i> the sample is located in the library section and is hard to find. There is no contact information for the departments and their heads.	2	The phone numbers for all the departments are available. There is a direct link for the information request. <i>Minor issues:</i> there is no sample of inquiry, nor information of the request procedures. The link for the request is not working. There is no email address.
Average	2.25		1.50	

According to the evaluation in Table 4, both sites lack some information, but the most important units are described and documents are made available. On average, the Armenian site provides more information for its users than the Georgian site.

Translations and usability. In general the Armenian site is better developed. All the links are working, information is easy to find, there is a large amount of media (both photo and video files). Many pages have external links and interconnections. 54% of the respondents of the opinion poll preferred the Armenian site. The confusing part of the Armenian site is the “Library” section where additional information can be found. It might be more convenient if other sections had links to it: for example, it might seem that the defense policy block does not have enough information since it does not contain links to some of the documents available in the library. At the same time, the Georgian site has all the documents relevant to a certain section

within that section, its structure is more modern according to the opinion of the users surveyed. Nevertheless, it contains many links that are not working, some pages do not show the photos uploaded there. The Georgian site is translated only into English, most of the pages have the English version, but all the English pages have some blocks in Georgian that are not translated. In particular, there is a section on the bottom of page (it appears on all the pages) which is completely in Georgian.

Staff and structure of the ministry. The Armenian site provides pages for all the departments and branches of the ministry with their heads. Some of the pages still lack detailed information. Yet there is detailed information provided for the minister and his deputies. The Georgian site provides the necessary information on its minister and her deputies, but lacks details in its structure. The only information available on the site is two schemes of the departments and their branches without any links, nor details. The scheme for the staff does not have any information on the branches' heads either, even their names are missing.

International cooperation. In general the Georgian site is more informative, but in the narrow sense. It provides very detailed information on the cooperation with NATO and EU, including the history of the cooperation, activities, documents, etc. However the information is disproportionate: it is focused mainly on NATO and EU and does not say anything about OSCE or other organizations. The Armenian site has information on them, but it is not detailed. In particular, there could be more information on the strategic partnership.

Policies and public affairs. The Armenian site has more information: most of the pages for the Georgian policies do not provide any summary, explanation, description or any other additional information and lead directly to the documents; while the Armenian ones do, in addition to the documents uploaded. The Georgian site does not have enough information on the

public activities either (except some of them described in the news); however, in contrast to the Armenian site it has FAQ section. It also provides some limited information on the legislature. Most of the documents are not uploaded though and only titles are available, while the Armenian site has ten laws, seven bills and three orders. At the same time, the Armenian site offers information on the cooperation with civil society.

The rest of the sections are hard to compare since they are structured in a completely different manner or are present just on one of the sites. Nevertheless, these sections are important for understanding the priorities that ministries of Armenia and Georgia see in civil military relations.

Non-comparable sections

Education. The education sector is very large on the Armenian site. Five institutions are presented there with detailed information on the requirements. Seven academic journals are uploaded. There is also information of the future opportunities of the graduates and education abroad. The Georgian site only has links to the sites of the institutions.

Media. The Armenian site provides significantly more video- and photo-files than the Georgian. In particular, there are 29 video files (including the anthem and some patriotic short films) uploaded to the Armenian site in addition to the direct link to the Youtube channel, while the Georgian site has only the link to Youtube and no videos.

Additional information. There are some sections on the Georgian site that provide additional information while the respective Armenian ones do not. At the same time, the Armenian site has the “Library” section which provides some of it. Special attention is given to the history (Artsakh in particular), national heroes, insignia and state symbols. Important

information that the Georgian site provides and the Armenian does not is its job vacancies, budget and tenders. There is also information on the employees of the ministry, killed during the August 2008 war, and the peace keeping missions.

ANALYSIS

Both sites have elements which could facilitate civilian control over armed forces: generally, they are informative, provide strategic documents and legislature, have a large archive of news, information on the gender issues, contact information and inquiry mechanisms. It is hard to say which site is more transparent, since they focus on different sectors. In terms of civilian control, the crucial advantages of the website of the Armenian MOD are:

1. information on the Freedom of Information law, sample of inquiry, time-term of the response and details on the requirements/procedures of requesting information from the ministry;⁹²
2. information on the cooperation with NGOs and media;
3. information on the reception of the citizens by the minister.

The advantages of the website of the Georgian MOD are the following:

1. contact information for the departments and branches;
2. information on the budget and tenders.

⁹² As stated in the limitations above, due to emergency situation in Armenia the information request experiment was not completed, and thus its results are not included in the findings. However, it can be noted that the Armenian ministry indeed followed the time-terms of response even during the Four-Day War, while the Georgian ministry did not answer by email. (As mentioned above, the information request link is not working on the Georgian website and it does not provide email address. Acquiring the email address was possible only after the direct call to the ministry.) Thus, the Armenian website is on the second stage of development, and the Georgian – on the first one (see the typology on the pages 8-9).

In general, it can be argued that the Armenian site is more focused on patriotic issues, and the Georgian one – on transparency and democracy. The Armenian site provides a large amount of patriotic videos, detailed information on the heroes of Nagorno Karabakh, medals and other symbols. Academic military journals are available; information on the educational opportunities is detailed. At the same time, the only highly democratic component that can be distinguished is the Freedom of Information law which is available in the inquiry section. This perspective facilitates the integration of the military sector in social life, increases the prestige of the MOD and, consequently, public readiness for mobilization. Furthermore, it develops patriotic education, for instance by the promotion of the military educational institutions.

The international cooperation section is very exemplar in the comparison, since it demonstrates the Georgian foreign policy of Europeanization: almost all the information on the international cooperation available on the Georgian site is on NATO and EU. This observation goes in accordance with the studies on Georgia reviewed in the background section above. The aspiration for the international cooperation can be assumed even from the design of the site: there is a world map on the top of the site (however, it is not understandable in that case why translations are done partially). At the same time, the information on the financial issues raises the transparency level. Considering that some analysts consider budgeting problem a serious challenge for the establishment of civil-military relations in Georgia, as discussed above in the background, providing financial information on the website is a significant advantage. Thus, the Georgian MOD is more concerned with its democratic image, rather than public readiness for mobilization.

Another interesting observation is the way each of the ministries reflect its armed conflict (over NKR in Armenia and South Ossetia and Abkhazia in Georgia). Both sites have information

on the conflict, but the Armenian site emphasizes the role of the national heroes, and the Georgian – the victims of the war. Thus, the Armenian MOD develops the military ideology and civilian militarization by raising military pride in its citizens, while the Georgian MOD, on the contrary, shows the negative aspect of war by focusing on the losses. It can be concluded that the Georgian MOD structures the site and the information on it in the way to appear transparent, democratic and following the western military standards, while the Armenian MOD builds its site in the manner to raise the national interest in the defense sector and patriotism, make people feel pride for it and want to be part of it. There is more evidence for the militarization of civilians in Armenia, rather than civilization of armed forces, and the picture in Georgia is reversed.

Coverage of the news and developments is another important element. Both ministries do it at the approximately equal level. As mentioned above, during the work on this study violent clashes happened on the Armenian and NKR borders, providing a perfect ground for the analysis of the news coverage by the Armenian MOD.

The MOD was posting news on its website and in social networks several times per day (in particular, the press-secretary, Artsrun Hovhannisyan was uploading information on his Facebook page almost every hour). However, in most cases the first sources to deliver information were Armenian media that had their reporters in the zone of the clashes. On average, the press releases by the MOD were published approximately 1-2 hours later. Another important element is the delivery to public of four main messages through the news:

1. Armenian military professionalism and superiority to the enemy;
2. Armenian moral superiority to the enemy, in particular by emphasizing the war crimes, committed by the enemy;

3. high patriotism and collectivism of Armenians (including Diaspora) that go voluntarily to the frontier or/and make donations;
4. foreign support of Armenia as the “right side”.

All these aspects have one common aim: the rise of the national pride and patriotism. It includes some transitional goals: for instance, to smooth the pain of having losses by distracting public attention from them to significantly higher losses of the enemy (first message); and to encourage public to make any kind of contribution (third message). This observation repeats the analysis of the findings described above and proves that the MOD of Armenia has the same approach and priorities both in the periods of peace and violence. However, this observation does not contribute to the comparative study, since the respective comparison for Georgia is not possible.

While websites vary in their priorities and ways of information delivery, the analysis showed that the Armenian website provides more information, than the Georgian. Following this result, the second hypothesis is accepted. However, this result does not necessarily mean that civil-military relations are better developed in Armenia, than in Georgia, since only one aspect was examined.

CONCLUSION

The literature review on e-government distinguishes several important functions, two of them are observed in the analysis of the websites of Armenia and Georgia: e-services and e-democracy. According to the analysis above, the first function is better developed on the Armenian website. The development of second function depends on the understanding of accountability: on the one hand, the information request procedures are articulated clearer on the Armenian website; on the other hand, the Georgian one has information on its budget and tenders. Nevertheless, none of the websites provides information on the results of the implementation of policies, etc.

Literature review also suggests five stages of the development of websites. The Georgian website is on the first stage since it does not have working mechanisms on the feedback provision, and the Armenian one is on the second. Another important element is the connection to social networks which is also better developed on the Armenian website.

The second subsection of the literature review describes the concept of civil-military relations that can be summarized as civilization of armed forces and militarization of society. The first element is more typical for Georgia and the second one describes the situation in

Armenia – the third most militarized country in the world. Nevertheless, both countries have similar legal basis ensuring civilian control over armed forces. The brief analysis of legal documents showed evidence for objective control in Armenia; the Georgian case is less obvious, but it appears to be subjective, rather than objective.

The comparison of the legislature of Armenia and Georgia does not show significant differences in the level of development of civil-military relations, but it shows their distinct features and governmental priorities. That observation is supported by the analysis of the websites that demonstrated a high focus on patriotic education and national military pride in Armenia, and on Europeanization through democratic issues in Georgia. Nevertheless, the Armenian website is better translated into English, while the Georgian one provides translations disproportionately, focusing on the news.

The websites have non-comparable sections, different advantages and flaws. However, the analysis above shows a stronger interaction between MOD and public through the official website in Armenia, than Georgia.

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