

## **Roundtable: Georgia after the parliamentary elections**

9 December, 14.00-15.30

*Location: Kleiner Sitzungssaal, Rosensäle, Fürstengraben 27, Jena*

On October 26, parliamentary elections were held in Georgia, widely regarded as fraudulent, resulting in a contested victory for the ruling Georgian Dream (GD) party with an alleged 54% of the vote, granting them the mandate to govern for another four years. The major opposition parties, elected to parliament, chose to boycott their mandates, while President Salome Zourabishvili declared the elections “illegitimate”. Shortly after, Prime Minister Irakli Kobakhidze announced the suspension of Georgia's EU accession talks and the rejection of EU financial aid until 2028. Since then, mass protests have erupted across the country, with people voicing their dissatisfaction to what they call a “pro-Russian” government, and demanding a return to Georgia’s European path, renewed elections or even regime change.

How did Georgia arrive at this point, and what are the broader implications of these political decisions for Georgian society and the country's political future?

In this roundtable discussion, we aim to place these developments in a larger context by analyzing both domestic and external reactions and decisions which followed the elections. We will focus on four key areas: internal politics, including GD’s political narratives and the governmental-opposition dynamics; the constitutional dimension of the political crisis; the positions of universities and the implications on the scientific community; and finally the EU’s and Russia’s reactions towards the events in Georgia. Our goal is to provide a nuanced understanding of Georgia's political developments at this critical juncture.

The discussion will be followed by a Q&A session with the audience.

### **Speakers:**

- Bidzina Lebanidze (University of Jena)
- Nino Tsereteli (Democracy Reporting International)
- Tamar Khoshtaria (CRRC Georgia/Ilia State University)
- Stefan Meister (DGAP - German Council on Foreign Relations).

### **Moderators:**

- Veronika Pfeilschifter (University of Jena / Zentrum für Osteuropa- und internationale Studien (ZOiS))
- Irena Gonashvili (University of Jena)