

No. 8–9 | August–September 2026

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT



EU Awareness Centre at the Wilfried Martens Centre: Europe's Strategic Risks and Security Challenges

On 8 September Dr George Robakidze, Executive Director of the EU Awareness Centre, attended the event “Hic sunt leones: Strategic Risks and Security Threats for Europe,” organised by the Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies.

The event brought together contributors to the latest issue of the “European View” to examine Europe’s evolving strategic environment, including the renewed geopolitical significance of the Mediterranean, the role of enlargement and integration in stabilising the EU’s eastern neighbourhood, and broader global developments shaping the Union’s future.

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EU Awareness Centre at International Democracy Day Brussels 2026

On 17 September 2026, Dr George Robakidze, Executive Director of the EU Awareness Centre, participated in International Democracy Day Brussels (IDD Brussels) at the European Economic and Social Committee in Brussels.

Held under the theme “What’s Next for Democracy? Innovation and Alliances in a Changing World,” the conference brought together policymakers, civil society representatives, and democracy practitioners to discuss resilience, information integrity, foreign interference, inclusive participation and new approaches to supporting democracy.

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EUAC at Vienna Symposium on Ukraine and War Crimes

On 22 September 2026, EU Awareness Centre Chairman Ambassador David Dondua attended the symposium “Ukraine: War and War Crimes” at Vienna City Hall. The event, organised by the Ukrainian–Austrian Association in cooperation with the Vienna School of International Studies, the Ukraine Office Austria, the Paneuropean Movement Austria and the University of Vienna, brought together diplomats, academics, legal experts and security specialists to discuss the war in Ukraine and its broader implications for Europe.

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EU Awareness Centre Chairman Ambassador David Dondua participated in various events of the Vienna Humanities Festival 2026, held in Vienna, Austria, from 23 to 27 September. Organised by the Institute for Human Sciences (IWM), the festival brought together scholars, writers, journalists and public intellectuals for lectures, expert discussions and public debates addressing some of the major challenges ...

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STATEMENTS

Eighteen Years of Occupation: We Remember, We Resist

On 7 August 2008, Russia invaded Georgia. The war led to the occupation of Abkhazia and the Tskhinvali Region. Eighteen years later, the occupation continues. The occupation lines move quietly, year by year, cutting through villages, taking new territories and separating families. People still cannot return to their homes. The wound stays open.

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80

AMBASSADOR
TEDO JAPARIDZE

*With warm congratulations
on his 80th birthday*



Happy 80th Birthday, Ambassador Tedo Japaridze

The EU Awareness Centre warmly congratulates Ambassador Tedo Japaridze on his 80th birthday. We are honoured to have him as a Distinguished Fellow of the EU Awareness Centre and grateful for his wisdom, experience and continued contribution to our shared European values.

We wish Ambassador Japaridze good health, happiness and many more years of meaningful engagement. Happy 80th birthday, Ambassador!

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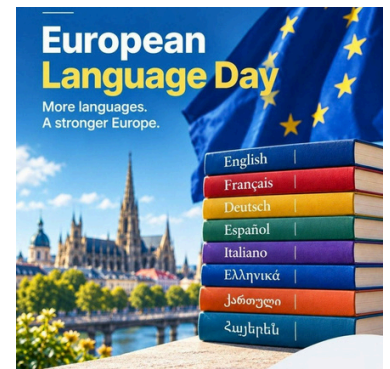
European Language Day – 26 September

Europe's linguistic diversity is more than a cultural asset. It is part of a resilient democratic society.

Understanding different languages and perspectives helps us engage critically with information, recognise manipulation and build meaningful dialogue across borders.

At the EU Awareness Centre, we believe that language diversity and democratic resilience reinforce one another. More languages. More understanding. A stronger Europe.

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IN MEMORIAM

Richard Giragosian

MEMBER OF THE EU AWARENESS CENTRE
BOARD OF ADVISORS

With sadness, the EU Awareness Centre remembers Richard Giragosian, a member of our Board of Advisors.

His experience, insight and dedication made a meaningful contribution to our Centre.

We extend our deepest condolences to his family and loved ones.

In Memoriam: Richard Giragosian

The EU Awareness Centre deeply mourns the passing of Richard Giragosian, a valued member of our Board of Advisors. We extend our heartfelt condolences to his family and loved ones during this difficult time.

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PUBLICATIONS

FORUM**The Anchor before the Vectors: View from the United States**

I agree strongly that in the design of foreign policy, any state should have a concept of what it is and who it is. The problem in practice is how to develop a consensual and enduring understanding of identity and purpose. Consensual in the sense that it is shared by the people and the political elite. Enduring in the sense that this understanding is stable over time as circumstances change. This is a very tall order. Think about the US: Ambassador Japaridze suggests the US is a country that answers yes to his three questions: Who are we, where do we belong, and what kind of state do we aspire to be? It was never clear that the US had a clear... [READ MORE](#)

New government, old information warfare? Countering disinformation and foreign influence in Bulgaria

Bulgaria's new government enters office with something the country has lacked for nearly three decades: clear parliamentary majority and an equally clear anti-corruption mandate. But with administrative corruption in 2026 at the highest level ever recorded, political will alone will not be enough. If this rare reform window is to remain open, the government must confront entrenched corruption, as well as the information warfare and networks of foreign influence that have long undermined public trust and sustained state capture. [READ MORE](#)

ALMANACH**EU Unpacked****The Cyber Resilience Act**

For most of the last two decades, European cybersecurity law addressed organisations rather than objects. The NIS2 Directive tells hospitals, energy operators and digital infrastructure providers how to manage risk. The 2019 Cybersecurity Act built a certification scheme that companies could use if they chose to. Neither instrument, however, told the manufacturer of a smart thermostat, a home router or an industrial sensor that its product had to be secure before it reached a shop shelf. That gap sat uneasily beside a fact regulators had long known and citizens experienced directly... [READ MORE](#)

Again, Anchor First, Hedge Second: Georgia Between Two Orders

On September 1, 2026, The New York Times published an essay by the distinguished Oxford historian Margaret MacMillan under a title that was difficult to ignore: "A New World Order Is Coming. We Aren't Ready." I read it with the utmost attention, armed with a pen and a pad, and although Professor MacMillan's subject was the international system rather than Georgia, I found myself thinking almost immediately about my own country. [READ MORE](#)

ALMANACH[READ MORE](#)

PUBLICATIONS

ALMANACH

Russia's Hybrid Campaign Against Georgia: Motives, Methods, and Actors

In a 2025 interview with Radio Free Europe's Georgian Service, former Federal Security Service (FSB) Colonel and Russian opposition figure Gennady Gudkov provided insight into Russia's influence campaign over Georgia. Gudkov claimed that Putin's disdain for democratic institutions, especially those "in Russia's immediate neighbourhood," has driven the Kremlin to covertly erode democracy through various instruments. Specifically, Gudkov argued that Russia seeks to influence Georgian politics through political parties, notably Georgian Dream, to install a "totalitarian" regime to diminish Georgia's sovereignty, similar to Belarus.

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The EU's Black Sea Strategy After One Year

In May 2025 the European Commission set out the European Union's strategic approach to the Black Sea region¹ – a document this publication examined at the time as a significant but under-resourced attempt to treat the Black Sea as strategic space rather than periphery. It contained an unusual instruction: it asked its own authors to report back within a year. On 3 July 2026 they did. The resulting Final Report is the joint report on the implementation of the EU's strategic approach to the Black Sea region, and it is the subject of this analysis.

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EU Unpacked



Commentary

"A Battle of Narratives", Treated as an Afterthought

Commentary on the 2026 State of the Union Address by President von der Leyen

In her State of the Union address on 16 September, Ursula von der Leyen put information warfare on the same level as war and economic competition. She said Europe faces three threats: a war on its border, a fight for industrial capacity, and a "battle of narratives" that seeks to weaken confidence in Europe and paralyse its democracies. Later in the speech, she used an even stronger term: cognitive warfare. She used it to describe foreign disinformation campaigns and deepfakes targeting elections.

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After the Anchor: What Georgia at 35 Teaches About Small-State Strategy

Synthesis paper of the EU Awareness Centre Forum "Georgia at 35: Lessons of a Generation"

The Forum opened with Ambassador Tedo Japaridze's essay "The Anchor Before the Vectors" (25 June 2026) and a deceptively simple proposition. Before a country decides how to navigate among competing powers, it must first know who it is, where it belongs, and what kind of state it seeks to become.



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THINK BEFORE YOU TRUST

Facts vs Manipulation



MANIPULATION 11

Rewriting the Treaty of Georgievsk. On 12 and 18 August, Prime Minister Irakli Kobakhidze claimed the 1783 Treaty of Georgievsk "saved" Georgia, calling Erekle II's choice "the only correct, alternative-free decision." The documented historical record shows otherwise. Russia, breaking its treaty obligations, failed to defend Tbilisi in 1795, abolished the Kingdom of Kartli-Kakheti in 1801, and abolished the Georgian Church's autocephaly in 1811. Ivane Javakhishvili, the founder of Georgian historiography, concluded the treaty "brought Georgia nothing. The damage, however, was immense." **Verdict: False.**

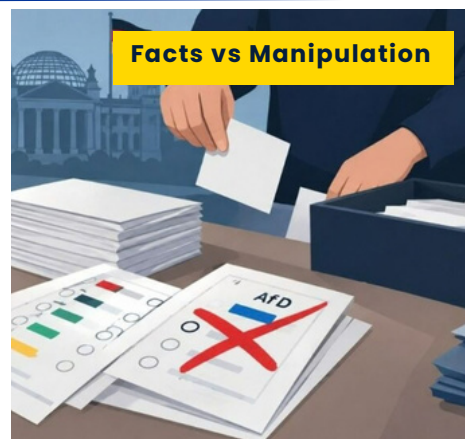
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MANIPULATION 12

Fake Ballots, Real Manipulation. On 4 September, two days before Saxony-Anhalt's state election, a video circulated on "X" purporting to show officials discarding AfD postal ballots. German fact-checkers compared the documents with official Saxony-Anhalt postal-voting materials and found multiple discrepancies, including design and numbering. Correctiv concluded the footage provides no evidence of postal-vote manipulation. Several accounts spreading it were previously identified as part of Storm-1516, a network linked to Russian military intelligence (GRU).

The alleged fraud never happened as presented. [READ MORE](#)

Facts vs Manipulation



AI OR REALITY?

Introducing EUAC's new section on AI-generated content and how to recognise it

One Playbook, Several Countries



How a Russia-linked operation fakes trusted media brands across Europe.

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How a Fake Pope Image Fooled the Internet



How a Fake Pope Image Fooled the Internet and

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All Eyes on Rafah": When One AI Image Reached 50 million People



How an AI-generated image became a global political message.

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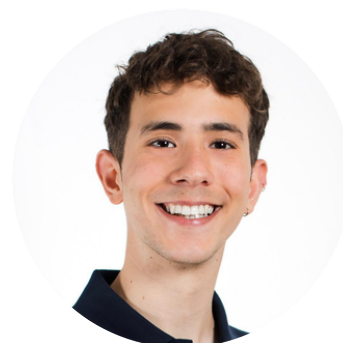
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