

Papuashvili Says EU Membership Could Lose Value for Smaller States Without Unanimity Rule

By MESSENGER STAFF

Georgian Dream Parliament Speaker Shalva Papuashvili said smaller countries could be better off outside the European Union if the bloc abolishes the unanimity principle in decision-making, arguing that such a move would strip member states of meaningful influence and undermine their sovereignty.

In a social media post on July 27, Papuashvili said there is a "growing impression" that Europe's largest countries are trying to reshape the EU in a way that would concentrate power in their hands.

He warned that ending unanimity would fundamentally change the nature of the bloc.

"If this initiative is implemented, the European Union will, almost certainly, be transformed from a union of equal member states into a union ruled by the major powers," Papuashvili wrote, referring to Germany's proposal to replace unanimity with qualified majority voting.

Papuashvili argued that joining the EU should not be treated as a goal in itself, but as a way for countries to better protect their national interests.

"Membership of the European Union is not an end in itself. Membership is a means by which a country can protect its national interests more reliably," he said.

According to Papuashvili, the



unanimity principle is what allows smaller states to defend themselves within the bloc.

"It gives a small state the right to block a decision that would be harmful to it and to demand that its national interests be taken into account," he said.

Without that safeguard, he argued, smaller countries would become "entirely dependent" on the will of larger member states

and lose the ability to defend their most important interests.

"In such circumstances, the issue would no longer be one of sharing part of a country's sovereignty through EU membership," Papuashvili wrote. "Instead, it would amount to the almost complete loss of genuine sovereignty."

He added that countries would no longer function as independent political entities, but would

instead be reduced to "a small region or province within a much larger political system."

Papuashvili described such a scenario as a "catastrophic change" for smaller nations and questioned whether EU membership would still serve any purpose if member states were deprived of their ability to influence decisions.

"What is the point of membership if its principal benefits and

instruments of influence are taken away from the outset?" he asked.

He argued that if countries cannot support decisions that advance their interests or block those that threaten them, the EU would lose its value as a mechanism for protecting national priorities.

"Moreover, under such conditions, remaining outside the European Union might even prove more advantageous for a small state, since it would at least retain the freedom to make its own independent decisions," Papuashvili wrote.

He also suggested that the discussion over changing the voting system may be connected to the future of EU enlargement, saying it has become "increasingly clear" that the bloc is not planning to admit new members under its current structure.

"The central question is not merely when we will be admitted to the European Union. The central question is: what kind of European Union are we being invited to join, with what rights and with what degree of equality as a member?"

Papuashvili concluded by arguing that accession without effective guarantees for national sovereignty would defeat the purpose of joining the bloc.

"For membership that deprives a country of its sovereign rights without providing mechanisms for their protection is not integration, but the abolition of sovereignty," he said.

MMA Fighter Launches Movement to Defend 'Georgian Values'

By MESSENGER STAFF

Georgian MMA fighter and government supporter Giorgi Kartvelishvili has announced the creation of a new "people's movement" that he said will defend Georgian values and traditions from what he described as foreign-backed groups promoting "pseudo-liberal ideology."

Speaking at a July 27 briefing at the Georgian Federation of Journalists, Kartvelishvili said Georgia was facing an organized campaign against its national identity, religion, traditions and cultural heritage. He claimed these efforts were being carried out by foreign-funded organizations, politicians, activists, media representatives and others connected to them.

"This confirms that attacks on everything Georgian are not a natural process, but a deliberately planned and artificially fuelled one, which in the modern technological era often takes on an uncontrolled

form," he said.

Kartvelishvili argued that insulting Georgian history, culture and national identity, and then trying to normalize such behavior, was intended to weaken the values that unite the country.

"That is why our initiative group is founding a people's movement to defend Georgian values and traditions," he said, adding that the group would fight "foreign-funded people who are in servile obedience to external interests and those with a distorted ideology, as well as against groups formed by them."

He called on "every patriotic Georgian" to join the initiative.

Kartvelishvili said the movement would be active and operate constructively, but added that its members were prepared to face legal consequences if necessary.

"We will not shy away from any danger. We are ready to be held accountable for each of our



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