

**Levan Ioseliani**

**Welcome Letter**

Dear Reader,

It is my pleasure to address you through the Journal of Personal Data Protection Law. As the Public Defender of Georgia, I warmly welcome and express my positive appraisal for the initiative of the Personal Data Protection Service of Georgia to launch a legal journal in this field.

In the age of modern technology and digital transformation, where progress takes on various forms daily whether it is computer programs, social networks, applications, or artificial intelligence — steadily encroaching into our personal space, initiating live discussions on the legal aspects of personal data processing and establishing an additional forum provides specialists in the field and representatives of scientific circles with a valuable opportunity to engage in discussions about the protection of personal life and data.

This necessity is also prompted by the fact that not too long ago, the primary European data protection regulation came into force and in Georgia, a new legal regulation was adopted at the national level. The current circumstances emphasize the heightened importance of consistently organizing academic discussions and dialogues on personal data protection issues in Georgia, which is crucial for the continued development of this legal field.

Simultaneously, it is noteworthy that the Public Defender has been actively pointing out in the parliamentary reports in recent years that in terms of access to public information in the country, the closure of open information containing personal data content and disregarding existing public interests for transparency has become a big challenge, which poses difficulties both for the people who want to receive public information, as well as for public institutions, for the effective management of their activities. In the country, given the provisions of the Georgian Law "On Personal Data Protection" and the presence of a supervisory institution on personal data protection, there is a discernible imbalance between the right to access public information and the mechanisms for safeguarding the right to privacy. Moreover, as per the Public Defender's assessment, such negative practices primarily stem from the misinterpretation of the Georgian Law "On Personal Data Protection" by the data controllers. For instance, state institutions decline to disclose information containing personal data, citing the absence of consent from the relevant subject as the basis for refusal. It disregards the fact that the legislation acknowledges alternative grounds for furnishing such information, which are entirely unrelated to the consent of the data subject.

I believe that the periodic publication of the scientific journal on personal data protection and the inclusion of problematic issues or academic evaluations within it will prove highly beneficial for the appropriate development of practice.

Once again, I express my gratitude to the Personal Data Protection Service of Georgia for this initiative, I am confident that such a scientific publication will contribute to the effective protection of rights, the advancement of this legal field, and the enhancement of awareness about it. It will also serve as a valuable forum for scientific discussion.

**Levan Ioseliani**

Public Defender of Georgia