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Open Society Foundations-Armenia

Monitoring of the National Assembly

5th Convocation | 6th session | 5th report

(September 8, 2014-December 17, 2014)

Yerevan 2015

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INTRODUCTION

Mandate NGO presents the findings of the monitoring of the work performed by the NA of the 5th convocation in the 6th session. The summary was prepared by putting together the journalistic observations, expert analyses and data generated by the statistical application of the *parliamentmonitoring.am* website.

The report contains 4 sections. The first section sums up the general tendencies and indicators of the parliament performance during the 6th session and presents information on legislative initiatives by NA factions and their level of engagement.

The *Legislation* section covers the distinctive features of the legislative process over the fall session, the monitoring results concerning several of the legislative packages adopted.

The *NA Oversight* section looks into the functions of oversight by the NA. The communications/reports presented over the session were reviewed against procedures set by law and in terms of effectiveness of parliamentary discussions.

The fourth section sums up the results of the work performed by the Ethics Committee set up in the National Assembly of the 5th convocation.

The final, *Appendix* section of the report contains expert analytical reviews of the laws.

The expert team

Gor Abrahamyan

Vilen Khachatryan

Vahagn Ghazaryan

NA 5th CONVOCATION, 6th SESSION

Indicators or the session in figures

During the 6th session of the National Assembly of the 5th convocation 5 four-day and 3 extraordinary sittings were held. 1 was initiated by the government, 2 by the NA deputies. Only the extraordinary sitting convened by the government was held. Following the end of the session 4 extraordinary sessions were convened: 1 initiated by the government, 3 by the NA deputies. One of them, initiated only by the non-ruling factions did not take place.

During the NA fall session and the extraordinary sessions held afterwards the parliament adopted 132 laws (46 legislative initiatives), with 12 being “mother” laws, and 117-amendments and additions to the operating laws. 13 of the adopted laws are authored by NA deputies and 119 by the RA Government. Almost half of the laws, 64, were adopted over the extraordinary sessions.

The adopted laws mostly concern the economic (63), state and legal (24) as well as social (14) sectors.

Over the session 2 draft decisions and 3 legislative initiatives were declined.

The NA ratified 16 international treaties, discussed the communication of the Board of the Public Television and Radio Company on the work of the company in 2013 and Human Rights Defender's Annual report 2013.

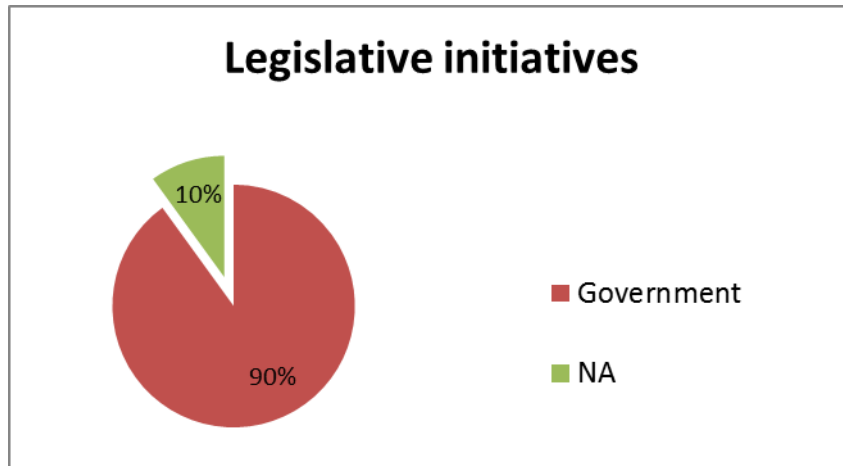
Noteworthy facts about the session

- The parliament of the 5th convocation almost unanimously (103 in favor, 7 against, 1 abstaining) ratified the treaty on Armenia's accession to the Eurasian Economic Union. 5 out of 6 parliamentary forces voted in favor, with only “Heritage” opposing.
- The legislative package submitted in order to bring the operating customs procedures to compliance with EAEU requirements, was adopted through the vote by only 2 parliamentary forces out of 6, RPA and ARF (71 in favor, 5 against). The 4 NA factions boycotted the December 17 extraordinary session initiated by the government.
- Staying true to the tradition the parliament adopted nearly as many laws during the extraordinary sitting and the session as over the entire regular session. 64 out of 132 laws were adopted during the extraordinary sessions.

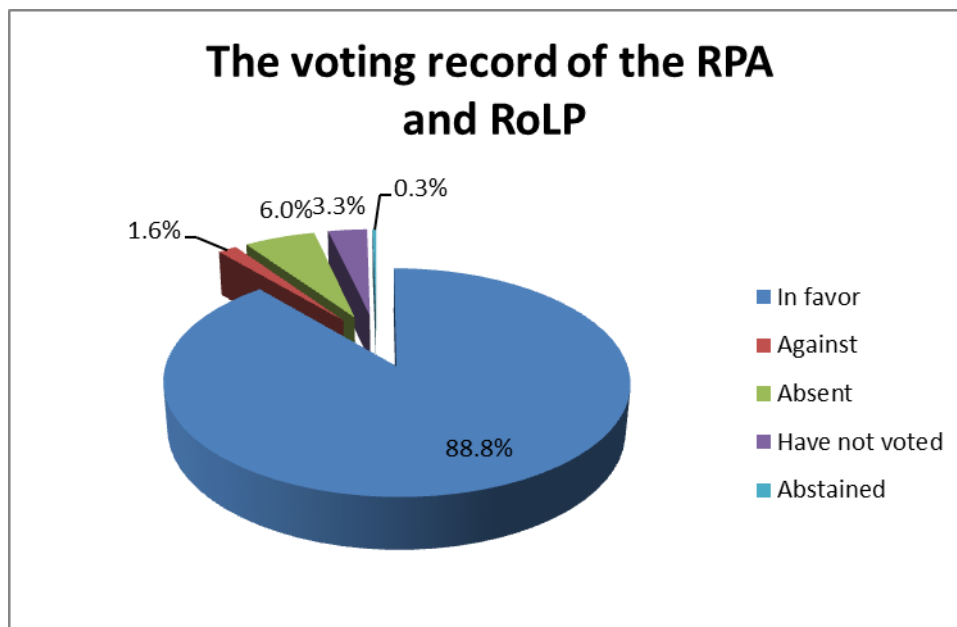
- In violation of the procedures set by law, the parliament discussed, but never voted on the 2015 Work plan of the Control Chamber during the session, neither did it discuss the 2013 annual report of the same structure.
- In violation of the timelines and procedures the 2015 Annual Work Plans of the State Commission on the Protection of Economic Competition and Public Services Regulatory Commission were not discussed either.
- The parliament also failed to discuss the conclusion of the NA ad-hoc committee studying the work of the gas supply system. As per the decision adopted in June of 2014 it had to be presented before the end of the 6th session.
- the NA voted against the inclusion of 7 legislative initiatives, authored by the non-ruling factions, on the agenda. 3 drafts made the agenda through an extraordinary procedure and were rejected upon discussion.
- Also, there were two instances when the drafts authored by the government were declined. One of them, the draft law on the Fundamentals of Administration and Administrative Procedure with related 4 drafts, was again presented and passed 3 readings over the extraordinary session. The other package containing the draft law on the “Protection of personal data” with related 17 drafts, was again circulated on December 3, 2014.
- In the 6th session the Ethics Committee recorded an unprecedented figure: it received only 1 application, held only 1 sitting and made a decision on declining the application.
- On December 11 Aram Manukyan, the NA ANC faction secretary was attacked. Declining the proposal by PAP, ANC, the Heritage and RoLP factions to convene an extraordinary session in order to discuss the matter, the parliamentary majority, as proposed by the ARF, initiated an extraordinary discussion and adopted a statement condemning the violence.
- RPA member Sedrak Saroyan, made his very first speech in the parliament over the 7-year work as a deputy in the discussion of the statement condemning the acts of violence committed against public and political figures.

Tendencies or behind the figures

- The level of proactiveness of the parliament in the law-making work increased compared to the previous session. If during the 5th session the NA/Government ratio of legislative initiatives was 5/95, in the 6th session it was 10/90.

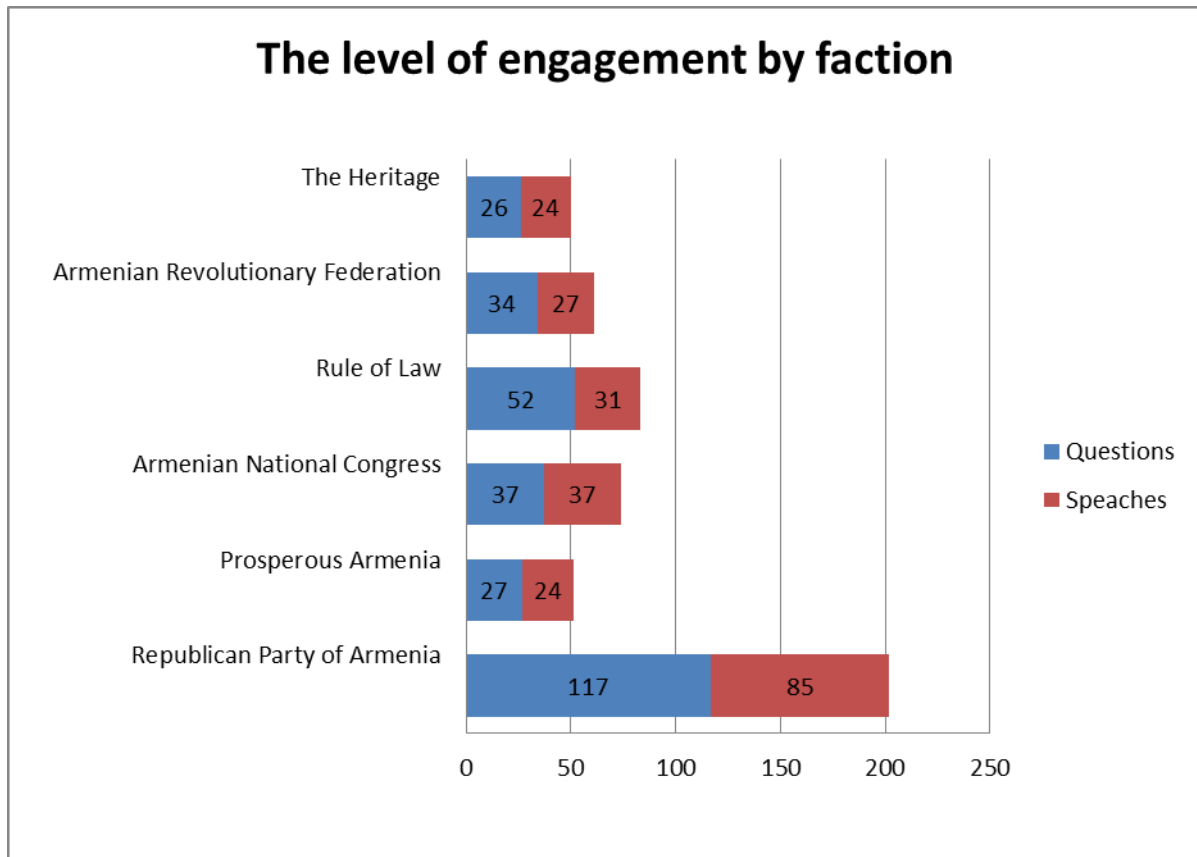


- During the 6th session of the National Assembly of the 5th convocation the parliamentary majority, the Republican party, maintained the voting pattern. As in the previous sessions the votes against are around 1% and concern solely the initiatives by the opposition.



- According to the statistics of questions and speeches in the period under review the Republican faction recorded the highest indicator (202 questions and speeches), with the lowest performance by the Heritage (50 questions and speeches). However, if we adjust these numbers based on the size of the factions, it will turn out that on average each deputy from the two largest NA factions, RPA and PAP asked questions or made speeches twice, whereas deputies representing small faction around 15 times.

The level of engagement by faction



- According to ParliamentMonitoring.am statistics the top absentee in the National Assembly of the 5th convocation is PAP leader Gagik Tsarukyan. RPA faction deputies Razmik Zohrabyan and Hovhannes Sahakyan voted in favor the most. The lawmaker with the most votes against is Nikol Pashinyan. The most active deputy from ARF in terms of questions and speeches is Artsvik Minasyan.
- According to ParliamentMonitoring.am statistics the tradition formed in the previous sessions of the National Assembly of the 5th convocation carried on in the 6th session: 67 out of 131 deputies neither asked a single question nor made speeches in the discussions over the legislative initiatives. In the RPA and PAP factions “silent” deputies make up over half: in the RPA- 40 out of 70, in the PAP- 26 out of 36.

NA FACTIONS

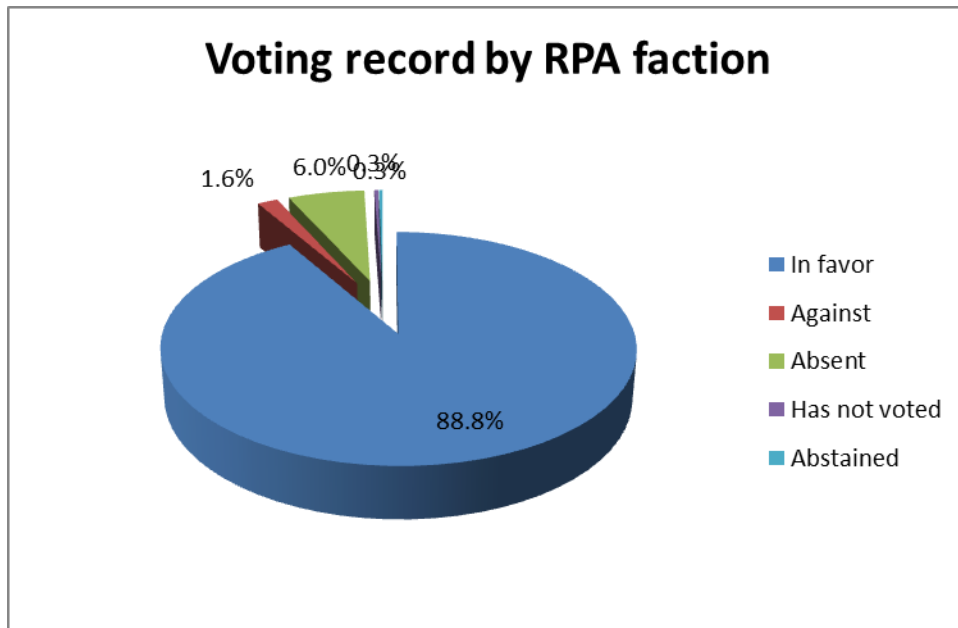
Proactiveness, level of engagement

13 out of 132 laws adopted during the 6th session of the National Assembly of the 5th convocation were authored by the NA deputies, 119 by the RA Government. In all the laws initiated by the deputies that were adopted, the RPA members, making the parliament majority, were either authors or co-authors.

None of the legislative initiatives authored by the oppositional factions was adopted in full (the draft law of Zaruhi Postanjyan from the Heritage faction proposing amendments to the NA Rules of Procedure, passed the first reading). 2 laws by PAP faction deputies that were adopted were co-authored with the RPA deputies.

The NA voted against the inclusion of 7 legislative initiatives authored by the non-ruling factions. 3 draft laws made it on the agenda through an extraordinary procedure and were rejected upon discussion. One of them was the draft law authored by the ANC on the “Legal regime of the State of Emergency”, the other two were draft decisions (on Improving the Republic of Armenia Electoral Code, authored by 4 non-ruling factions and on the “Military and political premises of Security Provision for Nagorno-Karabakh and Republic of Armenia”, authored by the Heritage faction).

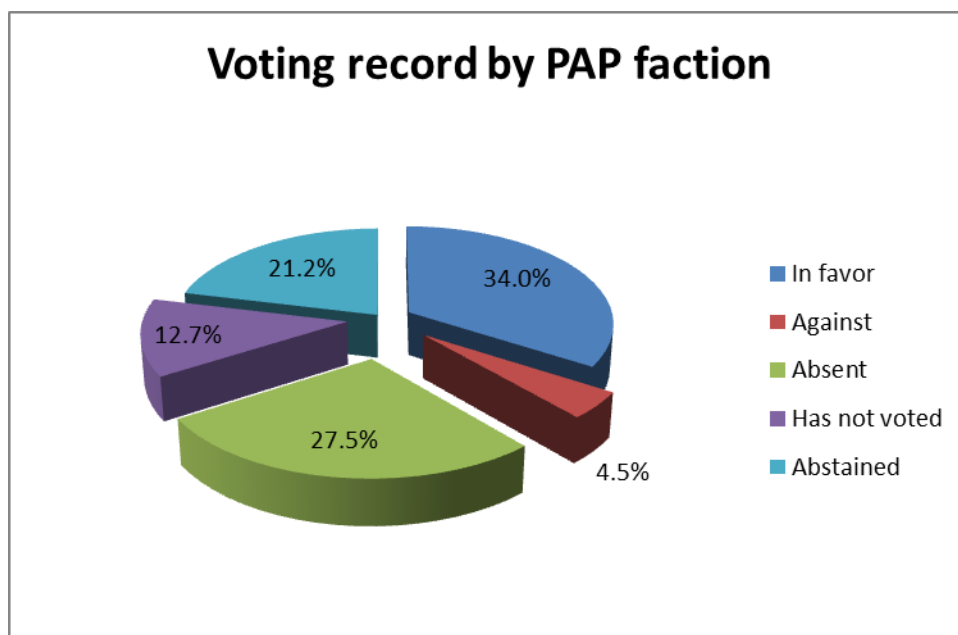
Republican faction. Over the session the RPA authored 18 legislative initiatives. 6 of them were adopted in full. Only 2 out of 6 passed all the readings during the 6th session, the rest were carried over from the previous session. 2 of these draft laws are written together with the PAP. Over the extraordinary sitting following the session (initiated by RPA and ARF), a draft statement by the RPA and ARF faction leaders was adopted.



The RPA has 5 draft laws, that were circulated in September-December of 2014, but their inclusion on the session agenda was postponed. Another 2 drafts not included on the session agenda yet, are in circulation.

33 drafts authored by RPA deputies are on the session agenda and only 7 of them were included on the agenda in September-December of 2014. The RPA authored 5 drafts together with other factions. 2 of the drafts included on the agenda passed the first reading.

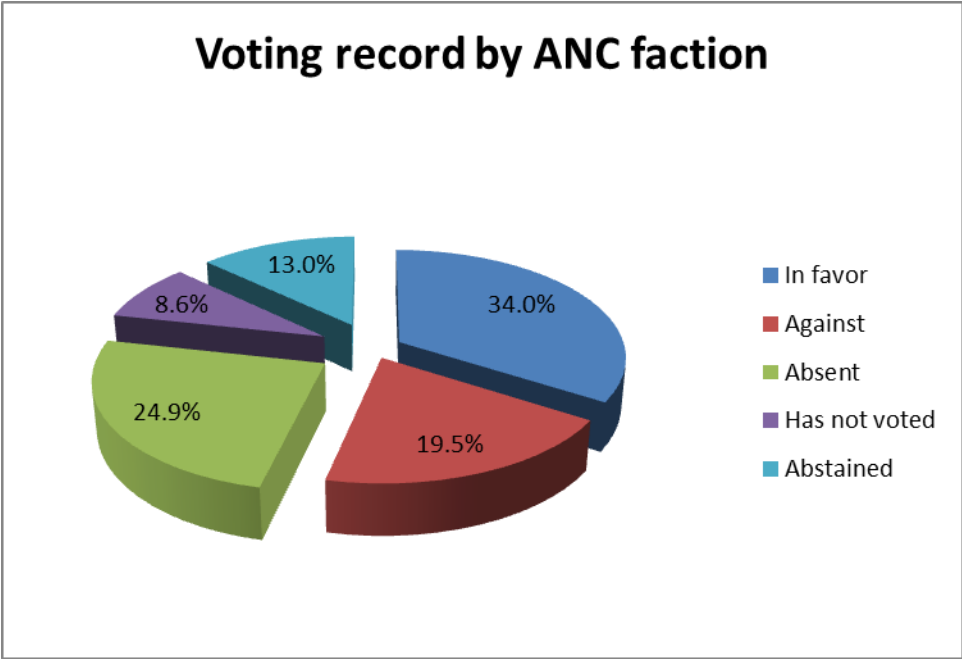
Prosperous Armenia faction. During the session 2 drafts authored by PAP were adopted in full. Both were included on the agenda in the previous, 5th session. The PAP had authored both together with the RPA.



The National Assembly voted against the inclusion of 3 PAP drafts lacking the Lead committee’s favorable conclusion, on the session agenda (1 of them the PAP had authored together with the non-ruling forces). In September-December of 2014 8 draft laws put into circulation by PAP did not make it on the session agenda and were postponed for up to 1 year. Only 3 of them were authored by the faction during the 6th session.

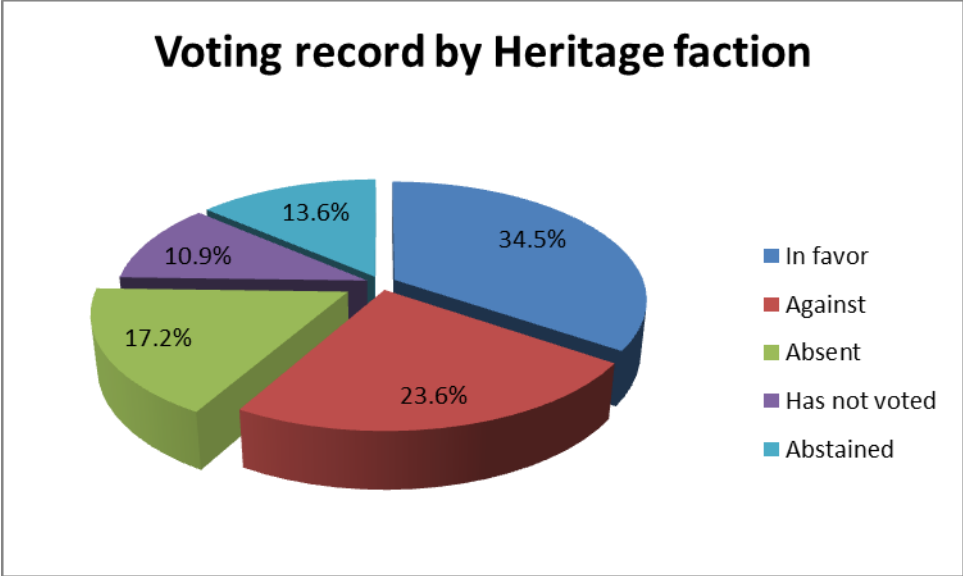
The session agenda has 6 drafts authored by PAP deputies. Only 1 of them was written by the faction in the 6th session (together with the ANC). It is a draft statement on the crisis of governance.

Armenian National Congress faction. During the session the ANC authored 6 legislative initiatives and 2 draft statements. The lead committees did not issue a favorable conclusion to any of them. One of the drafts, on making amendments to the Law on “State of Emergency”, was discussed through an extraordinary procedure in the plenary session initiated by the faction and declined. The inclusion of one of them on the session agenda was declined by the NA in a vote (the draft authored by the ANC, PAP, ARF, the Heritage factions concerning the turnover tax). The inclusion of four drafts on the session agenda was postponed for up to one year.



Only 2 drafts authored by the ANC in September-December of 2014 are on the session agenda. One was co-authored with RPA-ARF-RoLP (proposing amendments to the law on the Budgetary System), and the other co-authored with PAP (draft statement on the crisis of governance).

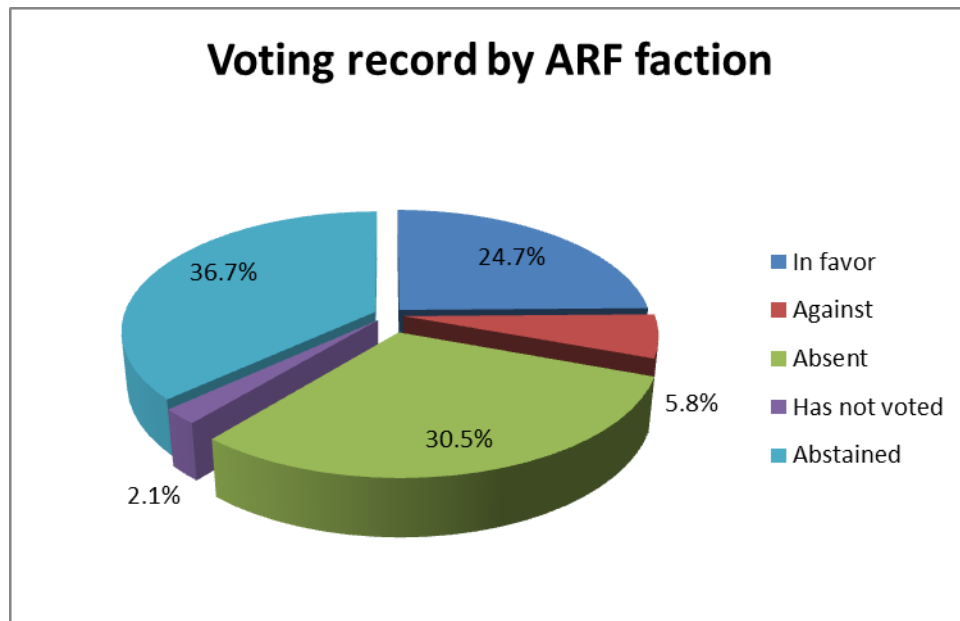
The Heritage faction. 1 draft law authored by the Heritage faction proposing amendments to the NA Rules of Procedure passed the first reading during the session. 3 drafts by the faction, 1 written together with other parliamentary forces, were discussed through an extraordinary procedure and declined.



The inclusion of the 9 drafts of the faction on the session agenda was postponed for up to 1 year (1 of them coauthored with other forces). The Heritage has 3 draft laws put into circulation but not included on the agenda yet.

The Heritage has 9 draft laws on the session agenda, at that only 3 of them were authored by faction deputies in the 6th session.

Armenian Revolutionary Federation faction (voting chart): During the 6th session the ARF authored 2 draft laws, 2 draft decisions and one draft statement. Only the draft statement was adopted.



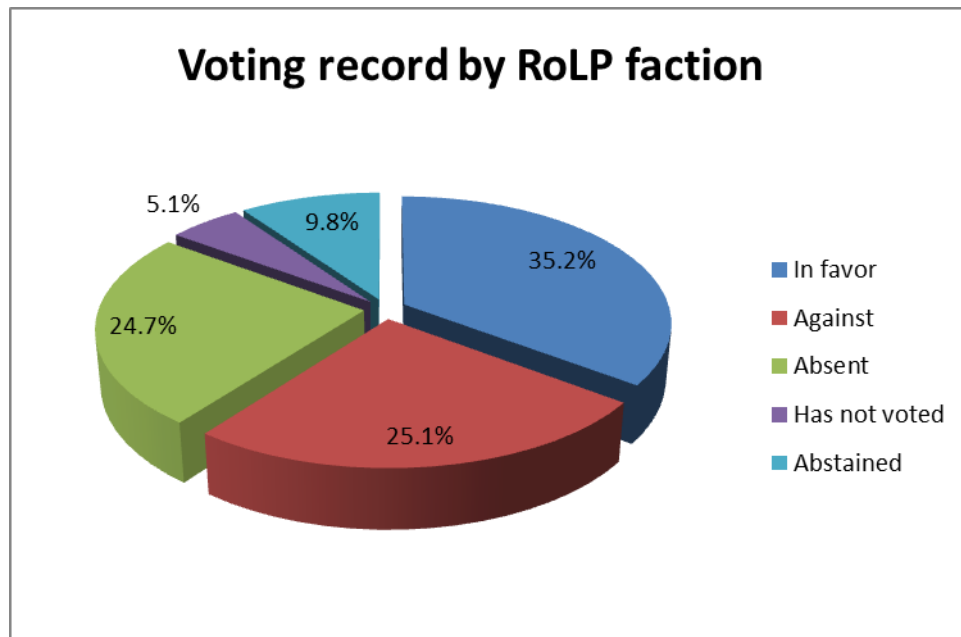
The National Assembly voted against the inclusion on the session agenda of one draft by the ARF submitted together with the PAP, ANC and Heritage. It proposed amendments to the Law on Turnover Tax. The inclusion of 1 draft on the session agenda was postponed for up to 1 year

The inclusion of the ARF draft decision on setting up and ad-hoc committee inquiring into “Nairit” cjsc issues on the session agenda was postponed for up to 1 year. The PAP, ANC, RoLP and the Heritage factions joined it.

The NA agenda has one draft law on the budgetary system authored by the ARF, RPA, RoLP and ANC in the 6th session. Another 2 draft laws carried over from the previous sessions made it on the session agenda. 1 of them the ARF authored together with RPA, PAP and RoLP.

After the end of the 6th session the ARF faction together with the RPA initiated an extraordinary session, where the draft statement prepared by the ARF and RPA on condemning the violence against political and public figures was adopted.

The Rule of Law Party. During the session only 1 RoLP draft was adopted in the first reading. The faction authored it together with the RPA and PAP. The NA voted against the inclusion on the session agenda of 1 draft which had failed to get the favorable conclusion of the Lead committee.



One draft authored together with the RPA, PAP and ARF, made it to the agenda of the four-day sittings. The inclusion of another two on the agenda of the four-day sittings got postponed for up to 1 year. The inclusion of 15 drafts on the session agenda was postponed for up to 1 year. 1 of them was submitted by the RoLP together with the RPA, ARF, ANC and **the Heritage** factions. The RoLP has 1 draft law circulated in November of 2014 which is still not on the session agenda.

During the session 1 interpellation by RoLP to the government on deposit compensation process was discussed and the extraordinary sitting initiated by the faction (for the purpose of amending the Law on “Enforcement of Judicial acts”) did not take place.

NA OVERSIGHT

Note: Over the 6th session the National Assembly heard 1 communication and 1 report. It discussed the PTRB communication on the work of the Public Television and Radio Company in 2013 and RA Human Rights Defender's annual report on its performance and violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the country during 2013. The parliament discussed but did not vote on the Control Chamber's 2015 Annual Work plan. The annual work plans for another 2 structures (the State Commission on Protection of Economic Competition and the Public Services Regulatory Commission), 1 report and 1 communication were included on the 6th session agenda, but were not discussed.

Oversight is one of the key functions of the parliament stated in the supreme law of the country. The authority vested in the parliament by the Constitution arises from the fundamental principle of separation of branches of government and checks and balances, implying also the parliament's great responsibility in performing this function. Apart from the authority to set up an appropriate legal framework for the work of the executive and judicial branches the legislature has a number of tools to perform its function of oversight. It approves programs and reports, ratifies international conventions, intergovernmental treaties and agreements and appoints senior officials. So, the parliament is vested with the authority by the Constitution to have and express its position in all the important state matters. Now, how this authority has been traditionally exercised is a different question.

Equally important are the legal mechanisms set for the parliament to effectively perform its oversight function. For the time being, the oversight by the National Assembly is mostly of formal nature, since the procedures for presentations of reports-communications entail the parliament's authority to merely "take them into consideration".

In other, fewer cases, when the National Assembly is equipped with major levers of oversight (approval of the government program and the budget performance report), the political majority of the parliament demonstrates an attitude neutralizing this opportunity and showing unwavering trust towards the executive.

The crisis of the oversight function in the parliament

The 6th session was unprecedented in terms of the formal and devalued nature of the NA oversight function. The practice of disregard of timelines set for discussions on performance reports and work plans of various state bodies entered a new level. Several cases were noted.

- In violation of the procedure the parliament did not discuss the Annual report of the Control Chamber of 2013 and did not vote on its 2015 Work Plan.

According to the Article 10 of the NA Rules of Procedure the Annual report of the Control Chamber is presented for discussion by the parliament no later than three months following the end of the budget year and is discussed before the end of the given regular session. The deputies discuss it without adopting any document.

So the NA had to discuss the report and take it into consideration back in the 5th session. The parliament, however, did not find time to discuss the document either during the 5th or the 6th sessions. In fact, behind the discussion of the report is not only the principle of ensuring public oversight towards the efficient use of budget funds but also the government's accountability to the parliament for the faults and violations presented in the report. During the 6th session the 2015 State Budget was adopted. So the discussion, albeit, belated, of the Control Chamber's performance report for the previous year could have been guiding and helpful to the parliament in forming its position regarding the budget.

- The discussion of the Control Chamber performance report does not lead to any legal consequences, since the parliament does not adopt any decision regarding it, whereas the National Assembly shall approve the action plan of the Control Chamber according to the

According to Article 100 of the NA Rules of Procedure the National Assembly is presented the draft annual work plan of the Control Chamber for discussion at least 60 days prior to the start of the budget year and the discussion on this document starts no later than in the first four-day sittings in the month of December preceding the budget year.

Article 83.4 of the RA Constitution.

The NA did not approve the program in the set timeline. Moreover, it was not done even given the fact that the NA had initiated three extraordinary sessions til the end of the year. So, on one hand the parliament acted in violation of the NA Rules of Procedure and RA Constitution, on the other it called the legal grounds for the work of the Control Chamber in 2015 into question. It is difficult to comment whether the Control Chamber is authorized to oversee the budgetary

expenditures without an approved work plan. It is also hard to tell whether this attitude was simply due to the heavy workload of the parliament during the session or was a specific political attitude towards the Control Chamber. The reality is that the parliament failed to follow-up and was cavalier in exercising its own oversight authority.

- During the session the NA failed to perform its function of putting into circulation the 2015 Monetary Policy by the Central Bank. According to Article 6 of the RA Law on the Central Bank, the Central Bank sends the document to the NA within 10 days following the adoption of the state budget of the given year. The RA State Budget for 2015 was adopted on December 4, therefore the Central Bank had to present the program for the next year to the NA by December 14. However, as of December 30 the NA official website contained no information on whether the Central Bank had met this requirement of the law. However, the discussion on this topic was more than urgent given the Armenian financial market crisis in December. On December 17 the parliament held an extraordinary sitting on the topic, but the discussion took place behind closed doors. The head of the Central Bank offered explanations on the current situation and possible ways out without covering the monetary policy program for the coming year.

- 2015 Annual Work Plan of the RA State Commission for the Protection of Economic Competition, which the parliament also takes into consideration was never discussed during the session despite being on the agenda of the four-day sittings since October. However, the inflation seen especially at the end of the year and the allegations on the speculative factor in fluctuations of prices and foreign currency related to the government and Central Bank rendered the discussion of SCPEC Work plan in the parliament called-for.

- The parliament also failed to meet the requirement of the decision adopted in February of 2013 on “setting up an NA ad-hoc committee to evaluate the performance of the gas supply system in the RA. It had been set up in the wake of the Armenian-Russian “gas” agreements ratification and sought to look into the issues of legitimacy of debt accumulation for gas imported from RF to RA and the reasoning behind its size, as well as the valuation of the RA share in the charter capital of “ArmRusGazProm” cjsc, alternative import channels for natural gas, transit opportunities through Armenia, etc. The commission was supposed to present to the parliament a conclusion on its findings before the end of the NA 5th session. However, over the discussion of the interim conclusion in June the work of the committee was extended till the end of the NA 6th session to further carry out sector-specific research in order to make the final conclusion more well-grounded and trustworthy. The 6th session ended, however the conclusion was never put up for discussion by the NA.

This goes to show that the committee set up under the pressure of the parliamentary minority lacks purpose and is a mere formality. So the objective of the initiative turned out to be not so much to identify the issues faced in the gas supply sector, but rather to calm down the emotions on the socio-political scene through setting up the desired format.

EAEU ACCESSION TREATY

During the 6th session the National Assembly of the 5th convocation finalized the process of immense political and economic significance, a turning-point for Armenia. The parliament ratified the treaty stating Armenia's accession to the Eurasian Economic Union. The National Assembly got involved in the process at the final stage, nearly a year after RA President Serzh Sargsyan's September 3, 2013 statement declaring the intention to join the new union and a month before the treaty was to take effect. Below we discuss how effective was the involvement of the legislature, the legal opportunities for potential impact and the distinctive features of the parliamentary discussion. We also looked at how the Eurasian orientation of the parliamentary forces is reflective of their programmatic approaches.

Note: On December 4, 2014 the 5th convocation of the National Assembly with 103 votes in favor, 7 against and 1 “abstained” ratified the treaty on accession to the “Eurasian Economic Union Treaty” of May 29, 2014 signed by the RA President Serzh Sargsyan on October 10 in Minsk. The Heritage faction members, ANC faction deputy Nikol Pashinyan, independent deputies Edmon Marukyan and Khachatur Kokobelyan voted against. The only one abstaining was the ARF faction secretary Aghvan Vardanyan. 5 out of 6 NA factions, the RPA, PAP, ANC, RoLP and ARF, voted in favor of the treaty.

The treaty contains a core treaty and 5 appendices. With it the Republic of Armenia joins the treaty of May 29, 2014 on Eurasian Economic Union, as well as other international treaties signed in the framework of the legal-contractual base of the Customs Union and Common Economic Zone and part of the Eurasian Economic Union's legal framework. It envisages trade without customs duty and document processing between Armenia and EAEU member states-Russia, Kazakhstan and Belarus, and sets common customs regime for goods imported from the states outside the union.

The involvement of the parliament in the decision-making on EAEU accession: isolation or a formal presence?

On December 1, 2014 during the last four-day sittings of the NA fall session and exactly a month before the EAEU treaty was to take effect, the National Assembly started a discussion on the treaty on accession of the Republic of Armenia to the “Eurasian Economic Union Treaty” of May 29, 2014 treaty, with appendices. Prior to this, on November 24, the NA standing committees on Economic issues and Foreign relations organized joint parliamentary hearings on the topic. So basically the involvement of the parliament in the EAEU accession decision did not go any further.

The ratification of international treaties by the parliament in order to ensure the participation of the political and representative body and to exercise the duty assigned to it, is stated in the RA Constitution. From the perspective of merely following the legal procedures the NA performed the function it is vested with. However, the parliament got involved in the decision-making on such a landmark issue, without the opportunity to influence its adoption or design and simply followed the legal procedure of performing the constitutional function of ratification.

Upon the recommendation of the President of the Republic, the National Assembly shall ratify, suspend or revoke the international treaties of the Republic of Armenia. The National Assembly shall ratify the international treaties which are of political or military nature or envisage modifications of national frontiers; which concern human rights, freedoms and obligations; which envisage financial obligations for the Republic of Armenia, the implementation of which envisages amendments to laws or adoption of a new law or defines norms contradicting the laws.

RA Constitution, Article 81

The international treaty is presented to the National Assembly for ratification if it or the obligations stated therein do not contradict the Constitution according to the decision by the Constitutional Court.

NA Rules of Procedure, Article 93

So, in fact, the supreme law does not allow the parliament to suspend or annul international treaties without the president's proposal, in other words, on own initiative. The parliament is

not given the function to make qualifications, whereas the NA Rules of Procedure states that international treaties can be put up for ratification also with qualifications indicated by the key presenter. So, in practice the parliament is resigned to expressing its political stance towards final texts of the treaties to be ratified by adopting them or declining.

On the other hand, by RA Constitution the decision on joining an international organization is at the sole discretion of the head of the state, since he/she is in charge of the overall leadership in the area of foreign policy. The Constitution does not state any concept and procedure for deciding the issue of joining an international organization through a referendum. This idea is only now being discussed and is covered in the published concept of constitutional amendments. According to the principles of the concept it is advisable to hold a referendum for the issue of joining those international organizations that entail partial restrictions of state's sovereignty (According to Appendix 1 of the Eurasian Economic Union Treaty signed on May 29 in Minsk and effective January 1, 2015, the decisions adopted by EAEU Commission are mandatory for the member states and shall be applied immediately in their territory).

But before such amendments are made to the main law, the public does not have legal levers to have immediate influence on such critical issues. The exception is the case when the RA President, based on the Article 4 of the RA law on Referendum, deems it “a question of utmost importance for the state” and prefers leaving it to the referendum to decide. However, we have not had such a precedent in Armenia.

In these circumstances full political involvement of the parliament as a representative body formed through direct elections can potentially fill this gap. This is especially so, when it concerns a decision that makes impossible the signing of the agreement on the creation of a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area in the framework of the EU Eastern Partnership program which was already worked out and negotiated. In addition, the jeopardized reputation of a dependable partner is the price to pay.

As for the isolation from the process of the parliament by the executive, this was reflected by essentially not disclosing the treaty on EAEU accession up until September of 2014, stating that it arose from the existing agreements between the parties. Over this time the NA deputies could not study this extensive document with appendices by any stretch of imagination, initiate discussions on them, come up with a statement, etc.

On the other hand, the parliament has other tools to exert its political influence stated in the rules of procedure. Perhaps, the most effective ones are issuing statements and addresses as well as the full operation of the concept of parliamentary hearings. The NA factions did not exercise the right to present a draft statement or an address on EAEU accession, and the NA organized hearings a day before ratification although following the publication of the treaty package by the RA Ministry of Foreign Affairs, for over two months it was accessible to the members of parliament. So the mechanism of holding hearings was not effectively applied. The discussions in that format were not intended to look into the advisability, motives, potential risks or advantages of making this important decision, but rather in response to the inevitability and irreversibility of ratification.

The characteristics of parliamentary discussion

The discussion of the treaty on the “Accession of the Republic of Armenia to the Treaty on Eurasian Economic Union” was more political, than professional. This was due to the political significance of the treaty and the predetermined political choice of the forces present in the NA, which manifested itself also during the vote on the treaty. The parliamentary discussion on the treaty ratification revealed some interesting patterns.

- The accompanying notes to the international treaty do not offer any clarity on the economic indicators and their changes once the treaty comes into force and upon EAEU accession. When ratifying the treaty the parliament did not refer to exact or approximate quantitative indicators of its socio-economic implications, or economic analysis built on potential risk identification, but rather to presumptions and assurances based on the positive expectations of the executive in the economy. According to them 3 specific indicators were set. Upon accession to the EAEU Armenia will receive 1,13% of customs duty amount on goods imported to the Eurasian Economic Union Space. Then, the inflationary pressures associated with higher customs duty for the goods imported into Armenia from non-EAEU member states will be in the range of 0,3 %-0,6 %. And also, the EAEU accession will secure an additional 2.5% economic growth. How these two indicators were calculated and by how much the volume of exports from Armenia to EAEU member states would increase was not duly covered. Also, the impact of accession to EAEU on GDP and national currency, as well as on trade volumes with EU and other countries, were considered secondary in the course of discussions.

- In the positions of all the factions voting in favor the political stance on the extent to which the accession to EAEU restricts RA sovereignty was virtually ignored. This could pose a problem particularly due to the regulation arising from the appendices of the treaty stating that the EAEU commission, within the scope of its authority, makes decisions, which shall be implemented on a mandatory basis in the member states. The parliamentary discussions did not cover the reasons for the decision of September 3, 2013 by the RA President Serzh Sargsyan on Armenia's joining the Eurasian economic integration projects. Nonetheless, this factor was critical, first because of the ongoing great socio-political interest, and secondly it had a crucial impact on the negotiations on the creation of the Deep and Comprehensive Free trade area worked out with the EU and prepared for presigning.

- All the factions voting in favor were backing their position stating the need to ensure economic and military security for Armenia and NKR, although the EAEU, according to the founding treaty, pursuing aims of economic cooperation and integration, may concern only economic security issues and regulations. The non-ruling forces voting in favor, the PAP, ANC, RoLP and especially the ARF, prioritized the security factor in the discussions citing absence of alternatives.

- The fact that the NA factions voting in favor of the ratification of the treaty demonstrated rare unity over the stereotypical idea of absence of alternatives shows that 5 out of 6 parliamentary factions are guided by common ideas regarding the foreign policy and Russia in particular. This underlines the identical perception of the ruling and non-ruling forces of the external challenges.

- During the discussion on the ratification of the treaty all 6 factions (the PAP with certain qualifications) followed the principle of participation. 111 out of 131 deputies participated in the vote, although a political position was demonstrated by 124 given that 13 deputies who had registered did not participate in the vote. In fact, 5 out of 6 factions were registered in full on the voting day without absentees. All 7 absentees represented the PAP. In addition, 10 out of 13 registered deputies who did not participate in the vote also represented PAP, which attests to the PAP's inconsistent conduct with regard to the ratification.

Eurasian orientation in the election platforms

5 out of 6 NA factions, the RPA, PAP, ANC, ARF and the RoLP, voted in favor of the treaty, while the Heritage faction in full voted against. The factions voting in favor and against based their attitudes towards the treaty predominantly on political factors viewing the matter in the context of provision of security guarantees for Armenia and NKR. This approach is generally not reflective of the essence and logic of the election platforms of the political forces in the parliament. This can be explained by three key factors.

- When the 2012 election platforms were being designed and promulgated the RA foreign policy vectors were directed towards the creation of the EU Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area and creation of its legal-contractual base, whereas the EAEU foundation, as a mechanism for political and economic integration in the Eurasian region, was still on the stage of concepts diligently developed by Russia.

- The response of the Russian Federation to the EU Eastern Partnership and particularly the inclination of the six participating states towards EU association was still not obvious and measurable. Neither was the likelihood of emerging international tension and consequently new challenges in terms of sovereignty of the states, maintenance of territorial integrity and security. The factors associated with them and cited by the parliamentary forces in support of their position in the voting on the EAEU accession treaty did not exist when the election platforms were being designed.

- With the exception of the Heritage faction, other parties do not state objectives of joining any new political, economic, military or other types of unions, alliances and integration in their election platforms. At the most, the programs stress the need for further work and development of already existing relations, formats, and honoring the obligations assumed. This

allows us to judge how flexible the programs of the parliamentary forces are in terms of projections on potential challenges and risks.

RPA. In its election platform the party viewed the process of signing the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement with the European Union as a reality without alternatives clearly stating the commitment to move forward with the process and finalize it. When designing its 2012 election platform the parliamentary force making the political majority did not aim to enter a new level of legal-contractual relations of cooperation with Russia, or deepen and extend it, or join any organization. It simply intended to increase the implementation efficiency of the existing treaties. The EAEU treaty ratification by the RPA shows that the party went against its own program.

RoLP. The program contains a clause on developing the Armenian-Russian strategic partnership based on equality, friendship and mutual interests, although it is not clear what the concept of development entails. Does it imply joining a union seeking to create a common economic area? Or are the relations arising from the ratified treaty truly anchored in the principle of equality and honoring mutual interests? The RoLP also supports the idea of promotion of democracy in Armenia and upgrading of its the economic, political systems and security mechanisms through the due implementation of the new neighborhood program with the European Union. However, either before voting in favor of EAEU treaty ratification or afterwards the RoLP did not comment on how this decision conflicting with the EU association programs was in line with the programmatic principles of promotion of political system and democracy, in particular.

ARF. The party has built its foreign policy concept on the protection of overall national interests viewing Armenia and the Diaspora as a unit. The program does not call for the need to change the geopolitical orientations or join new structures. From the very start the ARF viewed the decision on EAEU accession in the context of ensuring national security. Convinced in the inevitability of accession they interpreted their stance to be in line with the programmatic clause on “withstanding the anti-Armenian plans of the Turkish-Azeri tandem”. This, of course, is very much open to interpretation. The ARF, unlike the other parliamentary forces, supports the concept of adoption of key foreign policy decisions through a referendum. Nevertheless, the ARF overlooked this essential demand set out in its program when it came to the issue of EAEU accession.

PAP. The position of the party is to bring Armenia's political, economic, social infrastructures up to European standards in the framework of the Eastern partnership program, at the same deepen the Armenian-Russian strategic partnership, without clarifying whether this is a bilateral format or a multilateral one of Eurasian scope. The inconsistency in the position expressed in a vote and programmatic approaches is seen especially against the belief that economic infrastructures should be brought to the European standards. Despite the fact that the faction made the political decision to support the accession to EAEU, its voting was marked with interesting division: almost half of the 36-member faction, 17 deputies either did not vote or were absent.

The Heritage. The party stance is the creation of a social state of the European type, where national security is anchored in fundamental human rights and freedoms, and protection of state's sovereignty. The only faction that looks at the integration with international and regional organizations as a way to secure sovereignty of the state, without making specifications or exceptions. Also, the only one that sets forth the need for revision or reshaping of relations with Russia along with the underlying message that the Russian Federation does not treat Armenia as an equal partner. As a way to redress the balance the Heritage suggests that Armenia be led by the obligations of adoption of the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade agreement in the framework of the Eastern Partnership and implementation of its components. In this context, the highly negative position of the Heritage towards the signing of the EAEU accession treaty is strictly programmatic and stems from the party ideology.

ANC. It attempted to offset the fact of not having a common and comprehensive election platform through the design of sectoral conceptual frameworks and strategies. However, they do not cover foreign policy and state security areas.

NA LEGISLATIVE WORK

During the 6th session and the extraordinary sessions of the NA of the 5th convocation held afterwards the parliament adopted 132 laws (46 legislative initiatives), with 12 being “mother” laws, and 117-amendments and additions to the operating laws. Almost half of the laws, 64, were adopted over the extraordinary sessions. 13 of the adopted laws are authored by NA deputies and 119 by the RA Government. The adopted laws mostly concern the economic (63), state and legal (24) as well as social (14) sectors.

Law-making: opportunities and limitations

The indicators of the effectiveness in performing the legislative function are the involvement of the parliament in the drafting of key decisions and the ability to respond adequately to public demands and lend them legal-political substance. Some of the tools to exercise it is the initiation of extraordinary sittings and sessions, and transformation of the public demand into legislative initiatives. The effectiveness of their use hinges on the ratio of ruling and non-ruling forces in the parliament and the nature of their relationship. In this sense, certain negative tendencies noted earlier in the parliament became more pronounced in the NA 6th session.

Sabotaging the extraordinary sittings initiated by the parliamentary minority

Traditionally, the government and the parliamentary majority had the “prerogative” to convene extraordinary sittings and sessions. In the 6th session, however, the political minority, only in the sense of proactiveness, broke with the tradition since 5 out of 7 extraordinary sitting-sessions were initiated by the parliamentary minority.

- One of them concerned the law on the Enforcement of Judicial Acts. The initiative was presented in response to public demand to revise the practice of extrajudicial confiscations by the Service of Enforcement of Judicial Acts. The RoLP faction was the author, which was later joined by the other 4 non-ruling factions. The next extraordinary sitting was initiated by the non-ruling forces in order to make amendments to the law on Turnover Tax. This was also driven by the public demand to get rid of the imperative requirement to change the tax scheme. Neither of the sittings took place because the parliamentary majority did not secure quorum. Interestingly, in both cases the majority explained its political decision to boycott the sittings by the fact that the government opposed the presented draft laws.

- In December the NA majority also sabotaged the extraordinary session initiated by the non-ruling parliamentary forces in order for the NA to adopt a statement condemning the instances of violence against the ANC faction deputy Aram Manukyan and other public figures. The initiative failed due to the disagreement the ruling power and the opposition had over the content of the document. The NA statement with formulations acceptable for the parliamentary majority was adopted the next day during the extraordinary session initiated by the RPA and ARF deputies.

The only case, when an extraordinary session was held involving all political forces, was recorded at the end of the year in order to discuss behind the closed doors the reasons for the panic in the financial markets caused by the devaluation of the dram and for unjustified inflation.

Sabotage of the initiatives presented through the extraordinary procedure

According to Article 104.2 of the NA Rules of Procedure it is the exclusive authority of the non-ruling faction to initiate a discussion on the issue regarded as extraordinary. This is one of the key clauses in the Rules of Procedure seeking to strengthen the political role of the parliamentary minority. During the session the parliamentary minority exercised this authority 4 times.

- In October the draft statement on Overcoming the governance crisis in the RA and the draft decision on Reforming the Electoral Code by the end of the session initiated by the ANC, PAP and the Heritage factions were put on the NA agenda through the extraordinary procedure. The Heritage had declared the draft statement on the Military and political premises of Security Provision for Nagorno-Karabakh and Republic of Armenia urgent and put it up for discussion. The ANC had done so with the draft law on the Legal regime of the State of Emergency proposing revoking the right of the RA President to use the armed forces during the state of emergency.

First of the drafts was not discussed since those submitted by the government were recognized more urgent. The rest were discussed and declined in a vote.

Appropriation of the initiatives of the minority by the majority

Certain elements of this were noted already during the NA 5th session, becoming a common occurrence in the 6th session. By blocking various legislative and political initiatives of the non-ruling forces the RPA itself authored similar drafts having the ideological, programmatic approaches of the non-ruling forces or their somewhat revised versions at the core. This attitude seeks not so much to find common ground with the minority, but rather to make these initiatives fail. At least 4 such cases were recorded during the 6th session.

- In September the RPA sabotaged the extraordinary sitting that was to discuss the amendments to the Law on Enforcement of Judicial Acts proposed by the non-ruling forces. However, in December they adopted the legislative package authored by the government addressing the same issues, though the non-ruling forces were not content with the solutions it proposed.

- Due to boycott by the political majority the draft proposing amendments to the law on Turnover Tax submitted by the non-ruling forces was not discussed. Later, the draft by the government proposing amendments to the same law was adopted. In fact, it did not answer the demands of the business entities working under turnover tax scheme but simply postponed for 6 months the effective date of the requirement for document processing, which had among others caused the discontent of the businesses.

- Immediately after sabotaging the initiative of the trio to hold a NA extraordinary sitting for the adoption of a statement on the acts of violence committed against public and political figures, the RPA, in cooperation with the ARF, initiated an extraordinary sitting for the same purpose. In fact, the statement adopted on behalf of the parliament, did not get the support from other parliamentary forces due to disproportionate political view of these cases. In this regard the political value of the statement was considerably reduced.

- In September the parliament voted against the inclusion of deputy Nikol Pashinyan's draft law on "Border-keeping communities" on the session agenda. The draft law aimed to provide certain guarantees to the residents of communities that are under direct fire from Azeri armed forces, exempting them from land tax and property tax and reimbursing 50% of payments for used natural gas, electricity and water for drinking and irrigation purposes. In support of their negative position on the draft the majority representatives cited the unacceptability of the term "border-keeping" and the intention of the government to submit a more comprehensive package. In November the government presented to the NA the law on Social Assistance to frontier communities, which was adopted along with the legislative package on exempting the business activities carried out in frontier rural communities from tax.

The new practice of depriving the opposition deputies from the right to expression

This tendency manifested itself mostly towards two NA deputies, Zaruhi Postanjyan and Nikol Pashinyan when the chairpersons of the NA sittings would deprive them of the right to speak by instructing the NA staff to turn off the microphone. These decisions, within the authority set out in the NA Rules of Procedure, were never duly justified. The right of deputies to expression was restricted usually when they would voice their criticism towards the RA President and those from the ruling power. This attitude by the NA leadership can easily be regarded as

arbitrary and personalized. However, even the parliamentary minority did not care to look closely at the legal acceptability of such treatment either from legal or ethical standpoints.

Key conclusions

- The stated ability of the political minority to influence the legislative process by initiating extraordinary sittings and holding discussions on drafts through the extraordinary procedure does not work in practice, since the majority pursues a clear policy of formalizing these opportunities, minimizing their political and practical significance.

- It is noteworthy that the minority prefers utilizing these resources mostly for ambitious political interests. They essentially seek to win public trust towards the “trio” and amass political capital by immediately responding to the public demands and politicizing them. The attitude of rejection of the parliamentary majority is perhaps due to the desire to restrict these opportunities and undermine them, which has further increased the grounds for confrontation and minimized chances for mutual understanding.

- The realities of the 6th session show that the resources of the opposition for participation and influence in lawmaking are restricted and the development prospect for the culture of dialogue is jeopardized. In addition, adopting a radical approach becomes more advantageous for the forces representing the minority, and they are less motivated to come up with alternative ideas and legislative solutions and demonstrate a constructive attitude.

- The intolerance of the majority, the desire to put the forces viewed as their alternative in a political blockade, as well as restriction of the ability to express criticism and critical opinions can be perceived as a failure to adequately respond to socio-political reality and existing issues outside the party agenda. Curiously, these tendencies became more obvious following the speech of the RA President Serzh Sargsyan, the RPA leader at their Council meeting at the start of the session where he urged his fellow party member deputies to look at the parliamentary work as a “battle field”, a “trench”, not absent themselves, assist the government in its work and vote according to the priorities in implementing the party programs.

The impact of the civic movement on the parliament

During the NA 6th session the parliament responded to public demands concerning various sectors and came up with certain legislative solutions acting not as an initiator but simply in response. Certain processes evidencing this unfolded in the previous session.

- The minority came up with a relevant legislative initiative only after the “Stay out of our pockets” civil movement started protest activities demanding to lower the fine amounts for traffic violations, to pardon the previous fines, to stop the extrajudicial decisions on confiscation and to get rid of the practice of arresting citizens’ bank accounts. The government and the NA majority took steps to offer legislative solutions, once the NA minority came up with its own legislative proposal to settle the issue.

Note: The need for amendments to the laws on Enforcement of Judicial Acts, on the Fundamentals of Administration and Administrative Procedure and Administrative Violations Code came up following the introduction of paid parking, red lines and photo and video cameras recording traffic violations. Violations recorded through the cameras led to a hike in the number administrative fines. Another contributing factor was that the citizens were not properly notified, and as a result the bank accounts of many people were arrested. Many people unhappy with this situation led by the “Stay out of our pockets” initiative, raised a political wave of protest demanding that the Government and National Assembly find new solutions to the problem. To address the issue several legislative initiatives were put in circulation in the parliament. One of them was authored by ANC member Nikol Pashinyan. He proposed reducing the fine amount set for the violations. The government did not issue a favorable conclusion to the draft and the NA declined to put it on the agenda. The RoLP draft, supported also by other factions, was included on the session agenda in September of 2014 given the public discontent. However, in December the RPA voted against including it on the agenda of the four-day sittings. The RoLP proposed restoring the constitutional right of the citizens stating that the Service for Enforcement of Judicial Acts can confiscate a person’s property only based on a judgment by the court which has come into force.

In order to discuss the issue the RoLP came up with the initiative to hold an extraordinary sitting which did not take place since RPA failed to secure quorum.

In September the RPA deputy Arpine Hovhannisyanyan came up with 2 legislative initiatives regulating the issue. One of them concerned the Administrative Violations Code and stated that decisions on violations shall be handed to the addressee, and the receipt confirming it shall be signed by the addressees themselves. The second proposed amendments to the law on Enforcement of Judicial Acts. It stated that the bank accounts of citizens having debts can be arrested only in the amount indicated in the decision of the enforcement authority. Both drafts by the RPA deputy were adopted without votes against.

These set out certain mechanisms to settle the issue, but the questions of the amount of fines and arresting property without a court judgment remained unsolved. Later, in December, the parliament discussed the legislative package submitted by the government. While it contained ways to mitigate the fine amount, it essentially failed to address the issue of property arrestment. According to the draft law the issue of the right to arrest property will be settled through a court procedure, if the fine amount exceeds 200,000 drams. According to the information from the traffic police presented to the parliament only for 9 out of 1,257,933 violations recorded in 2013 the fine amount exceeded 200,000 AMD. On December 15, 2014 over the extraordinary sitting initiated by the government the package was discussed through a special procedure and was adopted with 68 votes in favor and 12 against.

- The initiative to make amendment to the law on Turnover Tax followed the same scenario: the NA minority submitted a draft law and then the government did it. However, the executive did not offer a fundamental and holistic solution to the problem, and chose the temporary and cosmetic solutions instead. Here as well it all started from the actions of the “Suspension” civic initiative which pulled together business people working under turnover tax scheme.

Note: On November 19, 2014 the National Assembly made amendments to the Law on Turnover Tax and postponed the date that the amendments made to the same law in June were to take effect. In June the parliament had approved the draft authored by the government reducing the turnover tax rate from 3.5% to 1% but at the same time introducing the requirement for mandatory document processing. As per the government the amendments sought to bring large businesses under taxation and were to take effect on October 1, 2014. The discontent and protests from the small and medium businesses forced the government to make concessions: the effective date of the requirement for document processing when buying goods was postponed til February 1. The non-ruling parliamentary factions had also submitted a draft with amendments to the Law on Turnover Tax. They proposed giving the SME employees an option to either pay 3,5% turnover tax without supporting documents or 1% with supporting documents. The second amendment proposed raising the taxable threshold for the turnover from 58 million to 150 million. The extraordinary sitting initiated on September 30, 2014 in order to discuss the draft, did not take place due to the boycott by the NA majority.

- In December the NA adopted the package proposing amendments to the Law on Temporary Disability Allowance, introducing new methodology and principles in the calculation and payment of pregnancy-related temporary disability allowance. The package put up for public discussion led to a wave of public discontent and protest driving the government to revise the draft of amendments.

Note: The preliminary version proposed paying allowance also to expecting women who do not work by reducing the pregnancy allowance amount and applying certain restrictions for working women. This caused a wave of discontent forcing the executive to revise the draft. The new draft calculated the maternity allowance in the 100% amount of the salary regardless of the years worked. However, a maximum salary threshold (1 million drams) was set, above which the employers also contributes to the payment of the allowance.

The draft law proposing amendments and additions to the Law on Temporary Disability Allowance with accompanying package was adopted on December 1, 2014 with 68 votes in favor and 1 against. Only the RPA faction deputies voted on the legislative package. The PAP, ARF, RoLP, ANC and the Heritage did not participate in the vote stating that it contained risks and restrictions and placed additional burden on the employer.

- These facts attest to the increased impact of socio-political movements and initiatives on the executive and legislative bodies. However, at the heart of it, is not the commitment to offer comprehensive legislative solutions to the issues that raised public discontent but the desire to prevent the further development of these movements. Therefore, even given the response to the signals coming from the socio-political field, the process does not anyhow affect the level of public trust toward the parliament.

THE ETHICS COMMITTEE

The level of public trust towards the Ethics Committee that started its work in the parliament of the 5th convocation is gradually declining judging by the number of applications received. Over the second session the committee received 13 applications, in the third session 6, in the fourth session 2, and the fifth had 3 applications. During the 6th session the ad-hoc Ethics Committee received only 1 application which it did not accept for review. For 2 out of 3 applications reviewed over the 5th session the Ethics Committee had made a decision to discontinue their review. And only for 1 case did it rule that the deputy Arakel Movsisyan had violated the norms of ethics.

- In the 6th session only the RPA faction changed its member list in the Ethics Committee of the National Assembly of the 5th convocation.
- The ANC continued boycotting the work of the committee and the committee was again headed by the representative of the largest ruling faction, the Republican party. Hovhannes Sahakyan was succeeded by Arpine Hovhannisyan in the committee.
- The committee operated with 6 members where the non-opposition was represented by only 2 RPA members and the opposition with ARF-RoLP-Heritage trio (the PAP has 1 member). In order to secure the opposition-non-opposition balance in the committee the ruling power was not too quick in adding another RPA member to the committee although the NA Rules of Procedure allowed to do this at the beginning of the session while setting up the committee.
- In the 6th session the Ethics Committee received only 1 application and it was from Zaruhi Postanjyan. It held only 1 sitting where Zaruhi Postanjyan's application was declined. In her application Postanjyan requested to discuss the legitimacy of the actions by the head of the NA Standing committee on Foreign Relations Artak Zakaryan. According to the Heritage deputy he conducted the off-site sitting held on November 2 in NKR "with blatant violations and went straight to the discussion of the question without approving the agenda of the sitting and made a decision on holding it behind the closed doors". The Ethics Committee did not accept the application for review citing that the foreign relations committee is a collegial body, which adopts decisions through a vote, and as per the NA Rules of Procedure the Ethics Committee did not have the authority to discuss the decisions adopted by a collegial body.

Note: According to the NA Rules of Procedure the Ethics Committee issues a conclusion regarding the violation of Clause 1 of the Article 65 of the Constitution by the deputy (“Deputies may not engage in entrepreneurial activities, hold a position in state or local self-government bodies or in commercial organizations, perform other paid work except for scientific, pedagogical or creative work”), existing conflict of interest and violation of the ethics rules by the deputy, if it receives applications regarding these matters. Anybody can apply to the committee. The law prescribes a 30-day period for the application review and if needed another 15 days are added.

The ethics committee in crisis

(Expert review)

The fact that the NA Ethics Committee received only 1 application during the 6th session and held 1 sitting reflects the declined trust towards the committee and a further drop in its reputation and influence.

The change in the ratio of political forces in the NA (due to RoLP's decision to become opposition) provided the opposition with the opportunity to take practical steps towards the “resuscitation” of the Ethics Committee. Under the new distribution of forces in the Ethics Committee the RPA, with only two votes, had turned into a minority. In fact, according to the NA Rules of Procedure the parliamentary majority had the opportunity to secure another member in the new Ethics committee at the beginning of the session to ensure a balance between the ruling and non-ruling forces. Nonetheless, both in the 5th and 6th sessions they were not in a hurry to use this opportunity, which shows that the majority is quite complacent. Such attitude by the NA majority is especially interesting seen against its previous approach of not surrendering its controlling stake in the decision-making of the committee. This allows us to infer that the parliamentary majority was led by the fact that the non-ruling forces were not particularly motivated to raise the efficiency of the committee. It should be noted that the controversial attitude of the PAP as well as the practice of being guided by internal agreements in the votes on decisions by the Ethics Committee during the previous sessions provided the majority with certain guarantees. Along with this, the ANC continued boycotting the work of the committee also relinquishing the right given by the NA Rules of Procedure to head the committee.

Another reason for the declining clout and reputation of the NA Ethics Committee is the fact that the adopted decisions do not lead to any practical or legal consequences.

In the NA 5th session the Ethics Committee issued a conclusion finding deputy Arakel Movsisyan's remarks thrown at journalists to be in violation of ethical norms: the decision of the committee on this was distributed to the deputies instead of making it public. Despite this

,during the 6th session, specifically over the discussion of the package of amendments to customs legislation arising from Armenia's accession to the EAEU, Arakel Movsisyan threw an indecent slang phrase at deputy Nikol Pashinyan. This is a clear evidence that the decisions of the Ethics Committee do not really affect the conduct of the deputies. It is worthy of note that during the previous session there were a number of cases that would merit the attention of the Ethics Committee (Nikol Pashinyan-Zaruhi Postanjyan-Vardan Ayvazyan dispute, the issue of legitimacy of the frequent decisions depriving Zaruhi Postanjyan of the right to speak, etc.)

Zaruhi Postanjyan's application to the Ethics Committee regarding the legitimacy of actions by the head of the NA Foreign relations committee Artak Zakaryan was rejected. This fact and the reasons cited by the committee can potentially raise another legal issue associated with the right and ability of a deputy (deputies) to look at the legitimacy of actions by another deputy (deputies) from the ethical standpoint. According to Article 24.3 of the NA Rules of Procedure the deputies can apply to the Ethics Committee only with questions concerning themselves: specifically in order to get a conclusion whether a certain activity should be deemed scientific, teaching or creative work pursuant to the requirement of the RA Law on Public Service and the need to issue a statement on conflict of interest. In all other cases, including when the lawfulness of the deputies' conduct, actions and decisions is in question, the lawmakers can apply to the NA the Ethics Committee only as citizens, which can create problems for the applying deputy due to the difference in status.

The existing situation when the Ethics committee does not receive applications anymore is evidence that the public has solidified its belief that the work of the committee is not to cultivate the parliament's internal norms of morality and ethics or establish the concept of conflict of interest and declaration, but rather to make it as formalized as possible.