



## The Public Broadcaster will be staffed by GDS Employees

The staff changes currently taking place in the Public Broadcaster confirm reports about the plan to close GDS social/political programs and transfer its employees to the Public Broadcaster.

The Public Broadcaster will hire 30 new employees, most of which used to work for GDS. This shows that the new Director General who is also a former GDS employee has certainly put the plan in motion.

Here we must note that according to a member of the Public Broadcaster's Board of Trustees, Sul Khan Saladze, total compensation for the new hires amounts to a total of GEL 80 thousand a month, while the new management has been talking about the need to cut expenses since the very beginning and was even planning mass layoffs to that end.

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The management has cited new needs of the newsroom as justification for hiring the GDS employees but according to the information that has been released, not all of the new hires will be working in the so-called unified newsroom. Hiring of the new employees occurs right before announcement of a competition for selection of programs by the Public Broadcaster.

The Coalition for Media Advocacy has criticized the new management's steps on a number of occasions and it continues to monitor the processes in the Public Broadcaster, including the competition for selection of programs. The Coalition hopes that the competition committee will be able to act in best interests of the Public Broadcaster and not the management, evaluate the projects based on professional criteria and present them to public.