

Democracy at its core requires people to engage in political activities, shaping local communities and politics, thus creating a democratic society that aspires to improve the quality of life for everyone. While some people argue that civil engagement primarily serves the purpose of gaining political power, in my opinion, civil engagement shouldn't be a means of gaining individual power, but actually a way to strengthen the community and their well-being by masses gaining political authority. By exploring practical community initiatives and highlighting differences between inclusive and constructive engagement through examples from both the United States and Georgia, in this essay, I will demonstrate how citizen engagement focused on enhancing societal living conditions fosters progress, stability, and well-being.

Civil engagement encompasses various means of citizen participation, including voting, protests, volunteering, striking, and community organizing. This active participation gives individuals the power to influence politics, advocate for systemic change, and address community problems loudly. As we can notice all these actions are collective, meaning that active participation will not help individuals if the actions themselves aren't of populist pathos driven by the incentive of private profit. Thus civil engagements' only purpose logically seems to be to foster democratic values that will improve everyone's everyday life.

In my opinion, in its sense, every civil engagement should boil down to the ideas of defending workers' rights and changing the economic state. Moreover, core ideas should revolve around diversity and equality of demographic groups such as working class and societal minorities. However, this engagement shouldn't be performative or ignorant since it will take the shape of a community activity that only benefits individuals. To avoid such surface-level activities, political engagements should take the form of actual protests and strikes. Historically, strikes and labor movements have been essential methods of civic engagement, allowing workers from diverse

backgrounds to demand improved working conditions, fair wages, and equitable treatment.

Strike culture embodies the sound of solidarity and collective action, significantly contributing to addressing systemic injustices towards the working class.

In Georgia, citizen engagement has played a pivotal role in addressing quality-of-life issues through labor protests. Georgia itself has a culture of massive protests, which I think are the highest form of civil engagement from the retrospective of masses addressing their viewpoints. Notably, the Georgian protests I would highlight the most are the Tkibuli miner protests as they highlighted significant safety concerns and poor working conditions within Georgia's mining industry. Miners demanded governmental and corporate accountability following tragic workplace accidents. To me, those brave miners were a torch that should've guided Georgian workers to speak about their rights. Thus, the Tkibuli miner protests are an example, of how civil engagement shouldn't give an advantage to individuals but to improve quality of life among workers.

Similarly, In the United States, contemporary examples of citizen engagement highlight the growing focus on strikes. For example, The Hollywood actor's and writers' strikes in 2023 saw unions demanding better pay, deserved residuals, and protections against job displacement due to artificial intelligence. Similarly, Amazon workers across multiple facilities, engaged in strikes and protests between 2020 and 2023 to demand safer working conditions, increased wages, and union recognition. These movements highlight civic engagement driven by practical improvements in workers' lives rather than mere political ambitions.

In conclusion, citizen engagement rooted in improving quality of life helps inclusion, development, and stability. Examples from Georgia and the United States show the strength

and importance of this approach, especially strikes. In the end, prioritizing the enhancement of people's living conditions over individualistic motivations is the only humane, moral, and effective way of achieving societal change.