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COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT

Georgia 2025 Report

Accompanying the document

**COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN
PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL
COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS**

2025 Communication on EU enlargement policy

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1. INTRODUCTION¹

1.1. CONTEXT

In December 2023, the European Council granted Georgia candidate status on the understanding that the relevant reforms (i.e. the nine steps) set out in the Commission recommendations of 8 November 2023 were taken. In view of the developments in Georgia, the European Council concluded in June and October 2024 that the authorities' course of action jeopardised Georgia's EU path, de facto leading to a halt of the accession process. In December 2024, the European Council regretted the Georgian government's decision to suspend the country's EU accession process until 2028. In the 2024 Communication on EU Enlargement Policy, the Commission concluded that, unless Georgia reverted to its EU path and demonstrated tangible efforts to address key reforms, the Commission would not be in a position to consider recommending opening negotiations with Georgia.

Instead of demonstrating commitment to further EU integration and taking the necessary reforms forward, in the reporting period Georgia further derailed from the EU path. In the aftermath of the parliamentary elections on 26 October 2024, which were marked by widespread irregularities, increasingly repressive actions and legislation targeting protesters, civil society, independent media and the political opposition, Georgia was plunged into a deep political crisis. Widespread human rights violations were consistently observed. In November 2024, the Georgian authorities' decision not to pursue the opening of accession negotiations unequivocally confirmed their shift away from the policies of previous governments, the European aspirations of the vast majority of the Georgian people, and the commitment inscribed in the Constitution of Georgia of ensuring Georgia's full integration into the EU. The Georgian authorities' decision was followed by further repressive action, which is fundamentally incompatible with EU values of democracy, the rule of law and fundamental rights. In parallel, the Georgian authorities systematically engaged in unprecedented, hostile anti-EU rhetoric, often echoing Russian-style disinformation.

As Georgia's accession process reached a halt, this report focuses on the fundamentals of the accession process that underpin its candidate status and the related recommendations. Given the substantial backsliding observed in this year's report, and the need to address the steps identified by the Commission in 2023 as a matter of priority, it does not set recommendations for the chapters beyond the fundamentals .

1.2. MAIN FINDINGS OF THE REPORT

CLUSTER 1: THE FUNDAMENTALS OF THE ACCESSION PROCESS

Democracy

The state of democracy in Georgia was marked by significant backsliding during the reporting period. The Georgian authorities have imposed repressive measures against civil society, media representatives and opposition leaders that severely undermine democratic processes and effectively abolished civic participation and the system of checks and balances. Eight opposition figures were sentenced to 7-8 months' imprisonment and banned for holding public office in the next two years. Of these, six are currently incarcerated, while two have been granted pardons by the President of Georgia. Another opposition figure is under criminal investigations with potential imprisonment up to fifteen years, if convicted. The absence of effective parliamentary oversight has led to an increase in executive power. Civil society and critical voices face intimidation, with hostile rhetoric, threats and

¹ This report covers the period from 1 September 2024 to 1 September 2025. It is based on input from a variety of sources, including contributions from the government of Georgia, EU Member States, European Parliament reports and information from various international and non-governmental organisations. It also includes the results of comparative assessments and indices produced by other stakeholders, in particular in the area of rule of law.

The report uses the following assessment scale to describe the state of play: early stage, some level of preparation, moderately prepared, good level of preparation and well advanced. To describe progress made during the reporting period, it uses the following scale: backsliding, no progress, limited progress, some progress, good progress and very good progress. Where appropriate, interim steps have also been used.

violence becoming more prevalent. Parliament removed the mandatory participation of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in decision-making, further excluding civil society from governance. Gender equality councils in Parliament and at municipal level were abolished. A large number of civil society organisations received court-approved orders by the Anti-Corruption Bureau requesting sensitive and excessive information. Protests against the authorities' decision not to pursue EU accession negotiations until 2028 were met with a disproportionate use of violence and repression. The Georgian authorities should reverse their course of action, which runs counter to the values and principles upon which the EU is founded, and the obligations of the country under international law. Georgia should repeal repressive legislation, adopt democratic, comprehensive and sustainable reforms, in line with the core principles of European integration. Fundamental rights and principles, including the right to a fair trial, freedom of expression, freedom of assembly, and media freedom and pluralism, should be upheld and guaranteed. Those arbitrarily detained should be released. All cases of alleged human rights violations and abuses should be effectively and promptly investigated and perpetrators brought to justice.

The general framework for **elections** requires comprehensive reforms, as highlighted by the OSCE/ODIHR, Venice Commission and the European Commission in past recommendations, which remain unaddressed. Parliamentary elections were held on 26 October 2024. The Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) / Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) observation mission found that the elections were held in a highly polarised atmosphere marked by democratic backsliding, with restrictive laws undermining fundamental rights passed earlier in the year. Several shortcomings persisted, including but not limited to reports of intimidation, coercion, inducement and pressure on voters, especially public sector employees and persons in economically vulnerable situation persisted. This raised concerns about the ability of some voters to freely form their opinions and cast their votes without fear of retribution. Other shortcomings included insufficient handling of post-election day complaints and violations of vote secrecy. Recent legislative amendments have moved further away from international standards.

Municipal elections were held on 4 October. The lead-up to the elections was marked by intense political polarisation, violence, as well as intimidation targeting civil society and independent media. Most opposition parties boycotted the elections. The amendments to the electoral legislation favouring the ruling party, coupled with the extensive crackdown on dissent, drastically reduced the possibility of holding competitive elections. Furthermore, the refusal by the Georgian authorities to invite international observers in due time, in particular OSCE/ODIHR, undermined the transparency of the electoral process and prevented credible international monitoring. Domestic observers were also largely absent due to the repressive environment. The voter turnout was relatively low.

As a result of the October 2024 elections, only members from the ruling Georgian Dream (GD) party have exercised their mandate in *Parliament*. In this context, Parliament's exercise of its powers, including oversight of the executive and involvement in the legislative process, is severely limited. MPs from three opposition parties renounced their seats, deeming the elections rigged. In February 2025, Parliament terminated the mandates of 49 opposition MPs at their request. MPs from one opposition party, which did not resign their seats, but did not participate in parliamentary proceedings, decided in October to take up their seats in Parliament, thereby ending an almost year-long boycott. . Legislation on important issues, including laws affecting freedom of expression, peaceful assembly and association, was adopted in expedited procedures by Parliament. This undermines the transparency and accountability of the legislative process.

On **governance**, there has been very little progress in decentralising policy- and decision-making from the national to the local level. In April 2025, Parliament removed the requirement to involve civil society/citizens in decision-making process. There are no formal participatory mechanisms in place to involve civil society/citizens in local decision-making.

The government programme for 2025-2028, titled 'Only with peace, dignity and prosperity towards Europe', articulates Georgia's commitment to Euro-Atlantic integration. Contrary to this stated aim, on 28 November 2024 the Prime Minister announced the decision not to pursue the opening of

accession negotiations and reject EU financial support until 2028, sparking unprecedented widespread protests. This marked a significant departure from past policies and the European aspirations of Georgian people. While a 2025 action plan was adopted to further *EU integration*, the authorities have not reported on the implementation of the key reforms (the nine steps) outlined in the Commission's 2023 enlargement policy Communication, which is crucial for Georgia's progress on the EU accession path.

Civil society organisations (CSOs) operate in a repressive environment which increasingly deteriorates. This undermines the fundamental role of civil society in upholding and strengthening democracy. The adoption of repressive laws has consistently restricted the legal framework for civil society and the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) has been vested with wide discretion in applying these laws. CSOs and activists have been subjected to repressive actions, including court-approved information orders from the ACB, the freezing of bank accounts of several CSOs and increasing administrative hurdles. The financial environment for CSOs has been severely undermined by the amendments to the Law on grants and the Foreign Agents Registration Act. In addition, many human rights defenders and civil society activists have been increasingly subject to acts of intimidation, threats, physical assaults and smear campaigns.

Public administration reform

Georgia is **between having some and a moderate level of preparation** in the area of public administration reform (PAR). There was **backsliding** during the reporting period. The previous PAR framework has been undermined by institutional changes and legal amendments that reverse civil service legal protection and weaken guarantees of a merit-based civil service free from undue political pressure. To ensure a stable, modern, people-centred, effective, accountable and transparent civil service, significant efforts are necessary.

The Commission's recommendations from last year were not implemented and therefore remain valid. In the coming year, Georgia should in particular:

- realign the public administration reform agenda with European public administration principles and standards, and ensure an open, participatory and evidence-based process for public policy development, monitoring and evaluation;
- reverse the backsliding in civil service legal protection by reintroducing sufficient guarantees and protection from undue political interference and other interference;
- ensure the right to access to public information, including by strengthening the legislative and institutional framework, and re-engage with the Open Government Partnership.

Chapter 23: Judiciary and fundamental rights

In the area of judiciary and fundamental rights, Georgia is **between an early stage of preparation and having some level of preparation**, down from some level of preparation in 2024. For a second consecutive year, there was **backsliding** during the reporting period.

Functioning of the judiciary

Georgia is at an **early stage of preparation**, down from some level of preparation in 2024, and for a second consecutive year, there was **backsliding**. The revised legal framework undermines the independence and integrity of the judicial system and reverses earlier reforms. Amendments to the Law on common courts adopted in June 2025 weaken the legitimacy of the judiciary and jeopardise the accountability and impartiality of key judicial institutions and judges. The amendments were passed through accelerated procedure, without proper consultations or in-depth consideration. The amendments exacerbate risks of judicial capture and go against numerous recommendations of the Venice Commission and the nine steps. The revised composition and election rules of the High Council of Justice (HCJ) amended regulations on judicial disciplinary liability and the incorporation of the inspector's service into the HCJ significantly weaken the independence and accountability of

the judiciary. The transparency of court proceedings is limited by the June 2025 amendments that grant the HCJ the right to decide on public access to court proceedings. There were also negative developments, including the appointment in June 2025 of a new Prosecutor General by simple majority and four years prior to the end of the predecessor's mandate. A Supreme Court judge was appointed as a judge at the Constitutional Court. The appointment of a non-judge member to the HCJ by the President of Georgia was annulled and subsequently a competitor was appointed by the decision of the Tbilisi City Court. Georgia has not addressed recommendations in the EU's nine steps and those of the Venice Commission. The harsh and disproportionate sentences inflicted on protesters show that the judiciary system is used by the governing party to enforce a system of repression.

The Commission's recommendations from last year were not addressed and therefore remain valid. Moreover, Georgia needs to:

- reverse amendments to the Law on common courts and adopt legislation to bring it fully in line with Venice Commission recommendations on the powers of the HCJ concerning transfers of judges and on the selection process for the Supreme Court (including effective appeal, qualifications of Supreme Court judges and an anti-deadlock mechanism);
- adopt and implement a broader reform of the judiciary, in particular to reform the HCJ in line with Venice Commission recommendations, including restrictions on the reappointment of its members, notably by fixed non-renewable terms. Moreover, establish a system of extraordinary integrity checks, with the involvement of international experts with a decisive role in the process, for candidates and persons currently appointed to all leading positions in the judiciary, in particular the HCJ, the Supreme Court and Common Court presidents;
- adopt constitutional amendments, which include changing the appointment procedure of the Prosecutor General from simple to qualified majority in Parliament; align the Law on the Prosecutor's Office with European standards following the recommendations of the Venice Commission, OECD and the Technical Assistance and Information Exchange (TAIEX) peer review on the functioning of the justice sector and the fight against organised crime carried out in May 2023.

Fight against corruption

Georgia has **some level of preparation** in the area of the fight against corruption. There was **backsliding** in the reporting period. The authorities still failed to address key Venice Commission recommendations related to the independence of the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB), its lack of political neutrality and investigative functions in high-level corruption cases. The ACB's mandate was substantially extended, allowing it to be instrumentalised for the enforcement and monitoring of repressive legislation targeting civil society and media organisations. Substantial efforts are needed to address corruption at all levels. A comprehensive strategic framework on anti-corruption needs to be adopted. No step was taken to address de-oligarchisation, and no effort was made to pursue it through a systemic approach. Targeted risk assessments and specific measures are also needed to address corruption in the most vulnerable sectors.

The Commission's recommendations from last year were not implemented and therefore remain valid. Moreover, in the coming year Georgia should in particular:

- align the legislation on the ACB to the ODIHR/Venice Commission recommendations and ensure that the ACB, as well as the relevant enforcement agencies, operate independently and effectively, avoiding any politically selective approach; adopt an anti-corruption strategy and action plan, and ensure that it is comprehensively implemented through realistic timelines, adequate funding and appropriate monitoring mechanisms; the ACB should consistently publish officials' asset declarations;
- repeal the decision of February 2023 to withdraw from the OECD/Anti-Corruption Network Istanbul Anti-Corruption Action Plan monitoring programme and fully implement recommendations from the 2022 pilot report, including on combating bribery of foreign public officials in international business transactions;

→ implement a systemic approach on de-oligarchisation in line with the recommendations by the Venice Commission (opinions of March 2023 and June 2023).

Fundamental rights

Human rights are being severely curtailed and are undermined by the adoption of new repressive laws and amendments to existing laws that infringe upon fundamental rights, including equality and non-discrimination, the freedoms of expression, assembly and association, as well as the right to privacy, family life, liberty and security. Ill-treatment of participants in protests, in some cases amounting to torture or inhuman and degrading treatment, was widespread during the reporting period. Law enforcement agencies have made disproportionate and indiscriminate use of crowd control measures. Investigations launched by the now abolished Special Investigation Service have not resulted in bringing the perpetrators of violence to justice, and the lack of accountability of law enforcement raises serious concerns. Cases of arbitrary detentions, excessive use of pre-trial detention and the disproportionately harsh sentencing of protesters and journalists raises concerns about the right to fair trial.

The Commission's recommendations from last year were not implemented and therefore remain valid. In the current context, Georgia should take urgent action to:

- repeal laws and amendments that restrict fundamental rights and freedoms, violate the principle of non-discrimination and contradict relevant European and international standards, in particular the Law on transparency of foreign influence, the Foreign Agents Registration Act and the legislative package on family values and protection of minors;
- investigate reports and allegations of excessive use of force, including torture and other ill treatment, by law enforcement agencies and violence by informal groups, and bring the perpetrators to justice; ensure that the right to a free trial is upheld;
- ensure that the right to assembly is upheld and there are no arbitrary or unlawful restrictions on exercising it.

Freedom of expression

Georgia declined to **an early stage of preparation** in the area of freedom of expression, down from between an early stage of preparation and some level of preparation. For a second consecutive year, there was **backsliding** during the reporting period. The new legislation, including amendments to the Law on broadcasting, the Foreign Agents Registration Act and the legislative package on family values and protection of minors, negatively affects the right to freedom of expression and the ability of the media to operate freely. Acts of intimidation, threats and verbal and physical assault against journalists and media workers were widely reported.

The Commission's recommendations from last year were not implemented and therefore remain valid. In the current context, Georgia should take urgent action to:

- release journalists being held arbitrarily in pre-trial detention and ensure that the criminal cases against them are concluded in accordance with the criteria set by the European Convention on Human Rights and the relevant case law of the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR);
- ensure the safety of journalists and provide prompt, impartial and due legal follow-up to all cases of attacks against and intimidation of journalists; restore a safe and pluralist environment that enables the media to carry out their work independently and without fear of reprisals or dismissals;
- repeal amendments to the Law on broadcasting as well as laws and amendments which do not respect freedom of expression.

Chapter 24: Justice, freedom and security

Georgia has **some level of preparation** in the field of justice, freedom and security. There was **backsliding** during the reporting period. Reports of brutal, disproportionate and unlawful use of force

by the police and intimidation tactics against protestors, as well as perpetrators' lack of accountability resulting in impunity for these acts underscore serious deficiencies that undermine the independence and credibility of the justice' system. The conduct of the law enforcement authorities shows signs of undue political interference. Law enforcement oversight and accountability mechanisms were further weakened, and investigative functions were further concentrated within the Prosecutor's Office following the abolition of the Special Investigation Service. The envisaged legislation on the separation of powers between criminal prosecution and investigation bodies is still pending. Georgia is not complying with and departed further from the recommendations of the seventh visa suspension mechanism report.

The Commission's recommendations from last year were not implemented and therefore remain valid. Moreover, in the coming year Georgia should in particular:

- ensure fulfilment of the visa liberalisation benchmarks; address the recommendations of the seventh visa suspension mechanism report, strengthen action to address the increasing number of unfounded asylum applications and irregular stays of Georgian citizens in EU Member States, and align visa policy with the EU *acquis*;
- fulfil the visa liberalisation benchmarks regarding measures to combat anti-money laundering, and to prevent/tackle corruption and organised crime, and address asset recovery;
- strengthen institutional and operational capacities to fight organised crime and improve international police cooperation.

Fight against serious and organised crime

Georgia has **some level of preparation** in fighting serious and organised crime. **Limited progress** was made during the reporting period. Some measures were taken to tackle money laundering and terrorist financing, including risk assessment and legislative amendments, sectoral risk assessments and the establishment of a regulatory framework for Virtual Asset Service Providers. Additional steps are necessary to comply with MONEYVAL recommendations related, *inter alia*, to the lack of anti-money laundering/combating the financing of terrorism obligations for real estate agents and trust or company service providers. Inadequate communication and enforcement of targeted financial sanctions and insufficient regulation and supervision of designated non-financial businesses and professions also remain to be addressed.

The Commission's recommendations from last year were partially implemented and therefore remain mostly valid. Moreover, in the coming year, Georgia should in particular:

- increase the accountability and effectiveness of investigations into criminal networks and participation in international police cooperation on drug trafficking and high-risk organised criminal networks;
- address recommendations identified in MONEYVAL's Third Enhanced Follow-up Report and Technical Compliance Re-Rating;
- adopt legislation on the separation of powers between criminal prosecution and investigation bodies; set up an asset recovery office and an asset management office and introduce a register of ultimate beneficial owners.

ECONOMIC CRITERIA

The existence of a functioning market economy

Georgia is **moderately prepared** and made **limited progress** in establishing a functioning market economy. The authorities' course of action and the decision not to pursue EU accession negotiations until 2028 created high uncertainty for businesses. While growth remained strong, it is subject to downside risks reflecting heightened political instability and the developments regarding Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. The macroeconomic policy mix was broadly appropriate. Despite improvements in the labour market, the structural weaknesses remain unaddressed. While the

authorities continued with selected public finance reforms, the reform of state-owned enterprises advanced slowly. No progress was made on strengthening the legislation related to independence of the central bank, although the vacancies at the NBG board were filled.

The Commission's recommendations from last year were only partially implemented and therefore remain mostly valid. In the coming year, Georgia should in particular:

- strengthen the legislation towards ensuring the independence of the central bank, enhance and implement the medium-term revenue strategy and the reform of public investment management, streamline tax expenditures, and further improve fiscal oversight and governance of state-owned enterprises;
- address the main weaknesses of the labour market, such as the low employment rate and significant regional differences, adopt and start implementing the new Labour Market Strategy, and prepare a programme to reduce informal economy in a comprehensive manner;
- further develop the non-banking segments of the financial sector, including by implementing the capital market development strategy, and strengthening the insurance sector.

The capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union

Georgia has **some level of preparation** and has made **some progress** in coping with competitive pressure and market forces within the EU. It continued to upgrade its education framework and adopted a vocational education and training (VET) strategy. Spending on research and innovation remains very low. The level of public investment continued to be high, with a focus on transport infrastructure. The structure of the economy is dominated by low-skilled services, and economic integration with the EU remains limited, with a decreasing value of exports from Georgia to the EU.

The Commission's recommendations from last year were only partially implemented and therefore remain mostly valid. In the coming year, Georgia should in particular:

- further improve the quality of education and training to ensure that their outcomes align with labour market needs, in particular through further VET reforms, enhancing cooperation between the educational institutions and business and improving teachers' professional development;
- continue efforts to develop the necessary transport, connectivity and energy infrastructure and to increase the share of renewables in the energy mix;
- stimulate innovation and make efforts to increase exports of higher value added goods and services, in particular by facilitating certification, compliance with sanitary and phytosanitary standards, export promotion, logistics and the development of the necessary infrastructure for exports.

Chapter 5 – Public procurement

Georgia has **some level of preparation** in the area of public procurement. **No progress** was made during the reporting period.

The Commission's recommendations from last year were not implemented and therefore remain valid. In the coming year, Georgia should in particular:

- further align its legislative framework with the EU public procurement *acquis*, including on utilities and concessions and public-private partnerships;
- further align its legislation with Directive 2009/81/EC on procurement in the fields of defence and security;
- further strengthen the Procurement Dispute Resolution Council, in particular by safeguarding its independence and extending its jurisdiction to cover public procurement processes that are implemented according to the rules of international financial institutions.

Chapter 18 – Statistics

Georgia has **some level of preparation** in the area of statistics. **Limited progress** was made, including by establishing the Inter-Agency Coordination Council to promote coordination among statistical authorities. Georgia has transmitted slightly more data to Eurostat.

The Commission's recommendations from last year were only partially implemented and therefore remain largely valid. In the coming year, Georgia should in particular:

- further strengthen coordination of the national statistical system and improve cooperation with data providers from line ministries and agencies;
- further improve the human resources and technical capacity of the National Statistics Office (Geostat);
- increase the production and dissemination of timely and high-quality data and prepare new versions of classifications.

Chapter 32 – Financial control

Georgia has **some level of preparation** in the area of financial control. **No progress** was made during the reporting period.

The Commission's recommendations from last year were not implemented and therefore remain valid. In the coming year, Georgia should in particular:

- implement financial management and control arrangements and strengthen managerial accountability;
- consolidate the capacity of the central harmonisation unit within the Ministry of Finance in terms of human and financial resources;
- increase the implementation rate of State Audit Office recommendations by the government.

Cluster 2: Internal Market

Chapter 1 – Free movement of goods

Georgia has **some level of preparation** in the area of free movement of goods. **No progress** was made during the reporting period.

Chapter 2 – Freedom of movement for workers

Georgia is at an **early stage of preparation** in the area of freedom of movement for workers. **No progress** was made during the reporting period.

Chapter 3 – Right of establishment and freedom to provide services

Georgia is **moderately prepared** in the area of the right of establishment and freedom to provide services. There was **no progress** during the reporting period.

Chapter 4 – Free movement of capital

Georgia is **moderately prepared** in the area of free movement of capital. However, there was **no progress** in the reporting period.

Chapter 6 – Company law

Georgia has **some level of preparation** in the area of company law. There was **no progress** during the reporting period.

Chapter 7 – Intellectual property law

Georgia has **some level of preparation** in the area of intellectual property law. **Limited progress** was made during the reporting period, notably with amendments to the Law on trade marks.

Chapter 8 – Competition policy

Georgia is **between an early stage of preparation and having some level of preparation** in the area of competition policy. There was **no progress** during the reporting period.

Chapter 9 – Financial services

Georgia has **some level of preparation** in the area of financial services. Georgia made **no progress** during the reporting period.

Chapter 28 – Consumer and health protection

Georgia has **some level of preparation** in the area of consumer and health protection. There was **limited progress** on alignment with the EU *acquis* on blood, tissues, cells and organs.

CLUSTER 3: COMPETITIVENESS AND INCLUSIVE GROWTH

Chapter 10 – Digital transformation and media

Georgia has **some level of preparation** in the area of digital transformation and media. **No progress** was made. Strategies on the digital economy and information society as well as the action plan on digital governance were adopted. However, the adoption of amendments to the law on broadcasting seriously restricts media freedom.

Chapter 16 – Taxation

Georgia is **between having some and a moderate level of preparation** in the area of taxation. There was **limited progress** during the reporting period, notably with amendments to the Tax Code, the increase of excise duties on tobacco products and the implementation of the automatic exchange of information.

Chapter 17 – Economic and monetary policy

Georgia is **moderately prepared** in the area of economic and monetary policy. **Limited progress** was made in the reporting period gradually improving fiscal oversight of state-owned enterprises. The legal amendments necessary to strengthen the central bank's independence have not been adopted.

Chapter 19 – Social policy and employment

Georgia has **some level of preparation** in the field of social policy and employment and made **no progress** in the reporting period.

Chapter 20 – Enterprise and industrial policy

Georgia is **moderately prepared** in the area of enterprise and industrial policy and made **no progress** in the reporting period.

Chapter 25 – Science and research

Georgia is **moderately prepared** in the area of science and research. There was **limited progress** related to the European Research Area, and increased participation of universities and research centres in Horizon Europe.

Chapter 26 – Education and culture

Georgia is **moderately prepared** in the area of education and culture. **Limited progress** was made during the reporting period with regard to the adoption of the 2024-2030 VET strategy and the implementation of the 2024-2030 strategy for professional orientation, counselling and career guidance.

Chapter 29 – Customs union

Georgia is **moderately prepared** in the area of the customs union. **Limited progress was made**

during the reporting period. Georgia acceded to the Common Transit Convention supported by the New Computerised Transit System (NCTS) on 1 February 2025.

CLUSTER 4: THE GREEN AGENDA AND SUSTAINABLE CONNECTIVITY

Chapter 14 – Transport policy

Georgia has **some level of preparation** in transport policy. There was **some progress** during the reporting period, in particular on alignment with the Directive on transport of dangerous goods by road and the establishment of the national accident investigating body for rail transport. The maritime single window system is now operational across all ports. Georgia needs to make additional efforts on road safety to reduce the high number of road crashes and fatalities.

Chapter 15 – Energy

Georgia has **some level of preparation** in the area of energy. There was **limited progress** during the reporting period, notably towards the unbundling of transmission system operators, adopting all implementing legislation on energy labelling, and largely completing harmonisation with the Regulation on measures to safeguard the security of gas. Technical regulations on radiation protection were adopted.

Chapter 21 – Trans-European networks

Georgia has **some level of preparation** in the area of trans-European networks. There was **limited progress** during the reporting period, notably in aligning with the TEN-T road network standards.

Chapter 27 – Environment and climate change

Georgia is at an **early stage of preparation** in the area of environment and climate change. There was **limited progress** in the reporting period, notably with the adoption of the air quality plan for Tbilisi and implementing legislation for the management of river basins.

CLUSTER 5: RESOURCES, AGRICULTURE AND COHESION

Chapter 11 – Agriculture and rural development

Georgia is at an **early stage of preparation** in the area of agriculture and rural development. **Limited progress** was made in the reporting period, in particular to advance setting up an integrated administration and control system (IACS).

Chapter 12 – Food safety, veterinary and phytosanitary policy

Georgia has **some level of preparation** in the area of food safety, veterinary and phytosanitary policy. **Some progress** was made in the reporting period, notably on alignment with the EU Regulation on official controls and the adoption of some new strategies and action plans.

Chapter 13 – Fisheries and aquaculture

Georgia **has some level of preparation** in the area of fisheries and aquaculture. There was **limited progress** during the reporting period, notably on the adoption of a strategy for sustainable development of aquaculture 2024-2028, the monitoring, control and surveillance of the anchovy fishing industry and the ongoing allocation of delimited zones for marine aquaculture.

Chapter 22 – Regional policy and coordination of structural instruments

Georgia continues to be **between an early stage of preparation and having some level of preparation** in the area of regional policy. **No progress** was made during the reporting period.

Chapter 33 – Financial and budgetary provisions

Georgia is **at an early stage of preparation** in the area of own resources and made **no progress** during the reporting period.

Chapter 30 – External relations

Georgia is **moderately prepared** in the area of external relations. **No progress** was made during the reporting period.

Chapter 31 – Foreign, security and defence policy

Georgia is **between having some and a moderate level of preparation** in this area. There was **backsliding** during the reporting period. Georgia's alignment with statements by the High Representative on behalf of the EU and Council decisions on sanctions decreased during the reporting period and remains low, with an alignment rate of 40% as of 24 October 2025, compared to 53% in 2024. Georgia has not aligned with the vast majority of the EU's restrictive measures (sanctions) against Russia, Belarus and Iran. It did not participate in EU crisis management missions and operations under the common security and defence policy during the reporting period.

1.3. ASSESSMENT OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STEPS / PRIORITIES

Step 1: Fight disinformation and foreign information manipulation and interference against the EU and its values.

The Georgian authorities have been actively engaging in disseminating disinformation narratives against the European Union and have dismantled Georgian structures to combat disinformation. **There has been serious backsliding in the implementation of this step.**

The Georgian authorities continued to declare EU integration as their main priority, while systematically engaging in hostile anti-EU rhetoric, manipulative narratives and conspiracy theories, often mirroring Russian-type disinformation. The EU, its institutions and its policies, in particular EU integration, are discredited daily through disinformation by high-level state officials, the ruling party and affiliated media. These narratives have become increasingly aggressive, targeting EU and Member States' diplomats, politicians and officials. Moreover, CSOs receiving EU funding have been accused of undermining Georgia's sovereignty and stability. This framing is used to justify crackdowns on civil society and portray pro-EU actors as serving external interests, thus echoing Russian-type conspiracies and tactics. Under the pretext of combating foreign interference, the government has introduced a series of laws and regulatory changes that, in practice, target civil society, independent media and citizens exercising their fundamental rights. Rather than addressing genuine foreign disinformation threats, these measures have served to delegitimise organisations committed to human rights, the rule of law and accountability. This approach undermines Georgia's alignment with EU values and weakens its ability to counter foreign disinformation threats. The Georgian authorities' decision to abolish the Information Centre on NATO and the European Union will further weaken efforts to combat disinformation about the EU.

Step 2: Improve Georgia's alignment with the EU's common foreign and security policy.

There has been backsliding regarding Georgia's alignment with the EU's common foreign and security policy. Georgia's alignment with statements by the High Representative on behalf of the EU and Council decisions on sanctions decreased during the reporting period and remains low, with an alignment rate of 40% as of 24 October 2025, compared to 53% in 2024. Georgia did not join most restrictive measures relating to Russia, Iran and Belarus and significantly increased direct flights to multiple destinations in Russia. Cooperation in preventing that the territory of Georgia and/or legal entities registered in Georgia are used to circumvent **EU restrictive measures** needs improvement. Legislation allowing the tax-free transfer of offshore funds to Georgia passed last year remains in place, increasing risks of sanctions circumventions.

During the reporting period, Georgia did not systematically align with international and EU initiatives in support of Ukraine, including on resolutions adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations, the Human Rights Council, and the Council of Europe.

Step 3: Further address the issue of political polarisation, including through more inclusive legislative work with opposition parties in Parliament, notably on legislation related to Georgia's European integration.

The level of political polarisation further deepened and intensified. **There has been serious backsliding in the implementation of this step.** The aftermath of the 2024 parliamentary elections marked by reports of widespread electoral irregularities, the boycott of Parliament by opposition parties and Georgian Dream's announcement of its intention to ban certain opposition parties, further exacerbated political polarisation. The ruling party established a parliamentary investigative commission, which served as a tool for political retribution against the opposition. Under the pretext of non-cooperation with the commission, eight leading opposition figures have been sentenced to 7-8 months' imprisonment and banned from public office for two years. Two of them have been pardoned by the President of Georgia, while the other six remain in prison. Additionally, the ruling party has used the commission as a platform to amplify its rhetoric on the need to ban certain opposition parties and to pressure critical CSOs, claiming that their actions represent a threat for peace and the country's constitutional order. This directly attacks the principle of democratic pluralism.

Several opposition representatives have been verbally and physically attacked and threatened, including by Georgian Dream representatives. The political discourse is characterised by strong hostility, aggressive rhetoric and threatening language. This environment undermines constructive dialogue and exacerbates social division. The opposition remains fragmented: while most opposition parties have boycotted local elections, two of them participated.

Step 4: Ensure a free, fair and competitive electoral process, notably in 2024, and fully address OSCE/ODIHR recommendations. Finalise electoral reforms, including ensuring adequate representation of the electorate, well in advance of election day.

There has been backsliding in electoral reforms, significantly undermining the prospects for free, fair, and competitive elections. Georgia failed to address any of the important OSCE/ODIHR recommendations from previous elections. There was no genuine commitment to carry out a comprehensive and sustainable electoral reform and to re-establish trust in the electoral process.

Amendments to the Electoral Code passed in December 2024 reversed changes to the legal framework for the municipal elections established in 2021, introducing significant modifications to the composition of the municipal/city assembly (*sakrebulo*), the delineation of the electoral constituencies as well as to the electoral threshold. The Venice Commission noted that the amendments modified the voting system for municipal elections in a way that may result in the further entrenchment of the governing party's position and undermine the principle of equal suffrage. The Venice Commission's recommendation to repeal the amendments were not addressed.

Further amendments introduced in March 2025 introduced new limitations for registration as local observers, media and electoral subjects, which may negatively affect the transparency of the electoral process. The ruling party's increased control over the selection and nomination process of Central Election Commission members further eroded public perception about the independence of this institution.

Any further amendments to the electoral framework should be based on a thorough review, ensuring a comprehensive reform, rather than fragmented adjustments.

The pre-electoral environment ahead of the local elections of 4 October 2025 was marred by high political polarisation, intimidation and hostile rhetoric against the opposition parties, activists and civil society observer groups. Among the opposition parties which reached the threshold in 2024 parliamentary elections, only two registered to participate while the remaining parties boycotted the election. The amendments to the electoral legislation favouring the ruling party, coupled with the

extensive crackdown on dissent, drastically reduced the possibility of competitive elections. The voter turnout was relatively low. The OSCE/ODIHR was unable to deploy an observation mission, as the invitation from the Georgian authorities came less than a month before election day preventing credible and meaningful international observation – an essential element for ensuring transparency in the electoral process. Moreover, established domestic organisations also refrained from observing due to the repressive environment.

Step 5: Further improve the implementation of parliamentary oversight notably of the security services. Ensure institutional independence and impartiality of key institutions, notably the election administration, the National Bank and the Communications Commission.

The effective absence of political plurality in Parliament and an increased politicisation of the work of the Central Election Commission and the Communications Commission have weakened oversight and institutional independence. **There has been backsliding in the implementation of this step.**

Several longstanding recommendations from ODIHR and the Venice Commission related to the impartiality of election administration remained unaddressed. This includes a recommendation to review the appointment process for election commission members at all levels to prevent dominance by any single political party and address the low level of trust towards election administration amongst citizens. In contradiction to these recommendations, amendments adopted in April 2025 further increased the ruling party's control over the selection and nomination process of Central Election Commission members, now only requiring simple majority of votes (76) instead of two thirds (90).

Whilst longstanding concerns about the effective independence and impartiality of the Communications Commission remain, amendments to the Law on broadcasting adopted in April 2025 significantly extended the powers of the Communications Commission to impose strict content restrictions on broadcasters. The self-regulatory regime previously in place, allowing disputes over ethics and impartiality to be processed by broadcasters' self-regulating bodies, was significantly weakened. The new provisions have already been used by the ruling party to submit complaints against opposition-leaning TV channels for use of allegedly inflammatory language.

With the approval of four new members, the Board of the National Bank of Georgia (NBG) is now fully constituted with a majority of non-executive members. However, no progress was made on strengthening the independence of the central bank. Several provisions, such as the grounds for dismissal of the governor and members of the NBG bodies, are not in line with the EU *acquis*. Georgia needs to take credible steps to strengthen the NBG independence, notably by strengthening the qualification and independence criteria for board members.

The quality of parliamentary oversight over security services remained limited. Since the formation of a new Parliament after the 26 October elections, the opposition quota in the Parliamentary Trust Group tasked with overseeing security services was filled by a representative of a group affiliated to the ruling party. The investigation into allegations of large-scale illegal wiretapping in 2021 has not, so far, led to any prosecutions.

Step 6: Complete and implement a holistic and effective judicial reform, including a comprehensive reform of the High Council of Justice and the Prosecutor's Office, fully implementing Venice Commission recommendations, and following a transparent and inclusive process.

Georgia has not undertaken any actions to address systemic and substantial reform of the judiciary and related European Commission and Venice Commission recommendations. Instead, legal changes introduced during the reporting period reverse earlier reforms, undermine the independence and integrity of the judicial system and exacerbate risks of judicial capture. Moreover, the justice system has been used by the governing party to enforce a system of repression. **There has been serious backsliding in the implementation of this step.**

A comprehensive reform of the High Council of Justice (HCJ) and the Supreme Court (SC) in line with the existing recommendations remains outstanding, particularly with regard to ensuring a system of integrity checks. Amendments to the Law on common courts adopted in June 2025 undermine the

independence, and jeopardise the accountability and impartiality of key judicial institutions and judges. The amendments reverse earlier reforms regarding the election and composition of the High Council of Justice (HCJ), and judicial disciplinary liability. The incorporation of the Independent Inspector's Service into the HCJ further concentrating powers to the unreformed HCJ risks to undermine judicial independence. The amendments also grant the HCJ the right to decide on public access to court proceedings. This, together with a new regulation limiting access to court decisions until they are final, severely constrains the transparency of court proceedings.

Key Venice Commission recommendations regarding the position of the Prosecutor General, in particular its appointment procedure, the functioning of the Prosecutor General's Office and the Prosecutorial Council, including the conduct of disciplinary proceedings, were not addressed. Amendments adopted in June 2025 revert earlier reforms and further undermine the independence of the position of the Prosecutor General.

The appointment procedures to key judicial positions, including the Supreme Court are not in line with European standards undermining the independence and integrity of the judicial system. The annulment by the Tbilisi City Court in March 2025 of the fifth President's decision to appoint a new non-judge member to the HCJ and the subsequent appointment of a competitor is concerning.

The excessive resort to pre-trial detention and disproportionate application of sentencing deeply affect the right to a fair trial. The continued violation of the right to a fair trial affected in particular court proceedings of individuals detained during protests. The harsh and disproportionate sentences inflicted on protesters show that the judiciary system is used by the governing party to enforce a system of repression.

Step 7: Further address the effectiveness and ensure the institutional independence and impartiality of the Anti-Corruption Bureau, the Special Investigative Service and the Personal Data Protection Service. Address Venice Commission recommendations related to these bodies, in an inclusive process. Establish a strong track record in investigating -corruption and organised crime cases.

There has been backsliding in the implementation of this step. Key Venice Commission recommendations related to the Anti-Corruption Bureau's (ACB) independence, political neutrality and investigative functions have still not been addressed. The mandate of this institution was substantially extended, based on repressive legislation, including the amendments to the Law on grants and the Foreign Agents Registration Act adopted in spring 2025. These laws give wide discretionary powers to the ACB and raise deep concern on the use of this institution for politically-motivated purposes and for the enforcement of repressive legislation targeting civil society and media organisations. Furthermore, in a setback for transparency, since 2025, public access to the system of monitoring asset declarations has not been consistently ensured.

The Special Investigation Service (SIS), tasked with investigating crimes committed by public officials and law enforcement agencies and which was accountable to Parliament, was abolished in May 2025 and its competencies were transferred to the jurisdiction of the Prosecutor General's Office. This change further increased the concentration of powers in the Office of the Prosecutor General, in a context where long-standing Venice Commission and EU recommendations regarding the strengthening of the independence of the Prosecution Service remain unaddressed. The number of cases referred to criminal prosecution has been very low and the Public Defender raised concerns about the lack of efficiency and independence in SIS investigations, including those in relation to the protests in 2024 and 2025.

The track record in prosecuting public sector including high-level corruption cases and investigating organised crime cases weakened in 2024. No action was undertaken to increase the effectiveness and institutional independence of the Data Protection Office and Venice Commission recommendations were not addressed.

Step 8: Improve the current action plan to implement a multi-sectorial, systemic approach to de-oligarchisation, in line with Venice Commission recommendations and following a transparent and inclusive process involving opposition parties and civil society.

The Georgian authorities have not undertaken any activities to implement the de-oligarchisation action plan in line with previous recommendations. **There has been no progress in the implementation of this step.**

No step was taken to address de-oligarchisation, and no effort was made to pursue it through a systemic approach and the recommendations of the Venice Commission have not been addressed. Implementation of the action plan is lacking and progress in sectoral aspects is not contributing to a coherent approach on de-oligarchisation. Consultation with the opposition parties and civil society on the action plan has not taken place amidst legal changes abolishing the mandatory consultation of CSOs in legislative processes and widespread attacks against opposition parties.

Step 9: Improve the protection of human rights, including by implementing an ambitious human rights strategy and ensuring freedom of assembly and expression. Launch impartial, effective and timely investigations in cases of threats against vulnerable groups, media professionals and civil society activists, and bring organisers and perpetrators of violence to justice. Consult and engage with civil society, allowing for their meaningful involvement in legislative and policymaking processes, and ensure they can operate freely.

The adoption of repressive legislation, including the Foreign Agents Registration Act, amendments to the Law on grants and Law on broadcasting, represent a **serious backsliding in the implementation of this step.** This legislation, adopted without due public consultation and in an expedited manner, infringes upon fundamental freedoms, in particular, the rights to freedom of association and expression, and significantly undermines the work of civil society and media. The legislation threatens the country's democratic foundations and is unprecedented among candidate countries. In its opinion of 15 October 2025, the Venice Commission found that the legal framework created by these laws cannot be regarded as compatible with the principles of legal certainty and proportionality in a democratic society and called for their repeal. It noted that their cumulative effect is coercive, stigmatising, and ultimately inconsistent with democratic pluralism.

The environment for media operation deteriorated significantly, with increasing threats, intimidation, hate speech and violence against journalists. The Foreign Agents Registration Act (FARA) places additional pressure on civil society and the independent media, given that non-compliance with its requirements may result in imprisonment up to five years. The amended Law on broadcasting gives more power to the Communications Commission to control broadcasting content and prohibits direct or indirect funding of audio-visual broadcasters by foreign entities. These developments add to the chilling effect on the freedom of expression that the Law on transparency of foreign influence had, stigmatising media outlets that receive foreign funding and exposing them to burdensome requirements.

The reporting period has been marked by a pattern of serious violations of freedom of assembly and expression guaranteed under the Constitution of Georgia and international treaties, resulting in the infringements on individuals' personal integrity and persisting reports of torture and other forms of ill-treatment. No perpetrators were held accountable, fostering an environment of impunity. Amendments to various laws governing the right to assembly, including the Law on assemblies and demonstrations, the Code of administrative offences and the Criminal code, result in undue restrictions on demonstrators and are incompatible with the principles of lawfulness, necessity, and proportionality. Cases of arbitrary detentions, lack of due process rights of those detained, excessive use of pre-trial detention and the disproportionately harsh sentencing of protesters and journalists put in question the right to a fair trial and revealed the political instrumentalisation of the justice system.

The civic space, fundamental for enabling human rights, shrunk significantly. The repressive legislation, combined with political pressure, the removal of consultation requirements, and the politicisation of public funding, reflects a deliberate policy of institutionalising control over civic space by severely undermining the independence and functionality of civic actors. A legislative package adopted in April 2025 dismantled key mechanisms for civil society consultation. Changes to the Rules of Procedure of Parliament removed the requirement for mandatory participation of non-governmental organisations in public decision-making processes. These steps represent a decisive departure from the hitherto *de jure* commitment to inclusive policymaking and a deliberate exclusion

of civil society from legislative processes. The authorities froze the bank accounts of several CSOs amid ongoing criminal investigations into alleged sabotage and activities against national security, raising concerns about the instrumentalisation of the justice system as another tool of systemic repression and political persecution against civil society.

The national strategy on the protection of human rights 2022-2030 has not been amended to incorporate the recommendations from the 2024 enlargement report. LGBTIQ persons in Georgia are facing an increasingly hostile and stigmatising atmosphere, in particular as a result of the legislative package on family values and protection of minors. The authorities not only fail to recognise and address the systemic nature of discrimination against LGBTIQ persons but amplify discrimination, intolerance and systemic violence. Investigations into the organisation of violence of the 2021 and 2023 Pride events have not been concluded. The national action plan for combating domestic violence and violence against women and protection of victims expired. Instances of physical assaults, sexual harassment, and threats of rape or death by law enforcement officials directed at women participating in demonstrations were reported. There was backsliding on alignment with the legal framework of the Istanbul Convention. The legal definition of rape does not comply with the standards set in the Convention.

2. CLUSTER 1: THE FUNDAMENTALS OF THE ACCESSION PROCESS

2.1. FUNCTIONING OF DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION REFORM

2.1.1 Democracy

The basic foundations of democracy were significantly undermined during the reporting period. The Georgian authorities' attack on democratic institutions and fundamental freedoms through hostile rhetoric, constant spreading of disinformation, intimidation, repressive actions and legislative measures is a drastic setback for the country's democracy. Civil liberties, the principle of checks and balances, and democratic decision-making have been eroded. There is an absence of effective parliamentary oversight and a consolidation of executive power was observed. Parliament, which is composed of members from the ruling party and its affiliated parties due to a boycott by the opposition, frequently used expedited procedures to pass legislation. Legislation adopted in a rushed manner without meaningful consultation includes laws that roll back human rights protection, unduly restricting fundamental freedoms and eroding democratic decision-making. Parliament removed the requirement for the mandatory participation of NGOs in public decision-making processes from legislation. Civil society organisations were not involved in decision-making processes. Several institutions and bodies essential to Georgia's democracy lack impartiality and independence, notably the Central Election Commission, Communications Commission, High Council of Justice, Constitutional Court, Prosecutor's Office, Anti-Corruption Bureau, National Bank, law enforcement and security agencies.

Persistent hostile rhetoric and increasing acts of intimidation, threats and physical assaults against civil society, opposition politicians, activists and journalists were observed in the reporting period. The Georgian authorities increasingly resorted to intimidation tactics and violence to silence dissenting voices. Following the protests that erupted throughout Georgia in response to the ruling party's announcement not to pursue the opening of EU accession negotiations until 2028, peaceful protesters, journalists and opposition politicians have been targeted for exercising their fundamental rights, including with arbitrary detentions. In June and July, eight opposition figures were imprisoned for 7-8 months and were barred from taking public office for the next two years. This was due to their refusal to appear before a politically motivated parliamentary investigative commission, which was set up in February 2025 to investigate the activities of officials affiliated with political parties under the United National Movement-led government from 2003 to the present. In September, the President of Georgia pardoned two of the imprisoned politicians. Other opposition leaders became the subject of criminal investigations, with some facing up to 15 years in jail if convicted. These steps illustrate an instrumentalisation of the justice system by the ruling party. The declared aim announced by the ruling party ahead of the 2024 parliamentary elections was to pave the way for the Constitutional

Court to ban opposition parties. This move fundamentally threatens democratic pluralism.

Elections

During the reporting period, Georgia held parliamentary elections on 26 October 2024. Voters had to elect 150 Members of Parliament for a four-year term under a proportional election system. Parties competed in a single countrywide constituency and had to pass a 5% threshold to be eligible for the allocation of mandates. In total, 18 parties registered for the elections. Voter turnout stood at 60.2%.

The final report by the OSCE/ODIHR election observation mission stated that numerous shortcomings negatively impacted the integrity of the elections and eroded public trust in the process. Elections took place in a tense and highly polarised environment amid serious concerns about the impact of legislation restricting fundamental freedoms and civil society's work. Reports of pressure on voters, particularly on public sector employees, remained widespread in the campaign. This, coupled with extensive tracking of voters on election day, raised serious concerns about the ability of some voters to cast their vote without fear of retribution. While preparations for the elections were well administered, a significant imbalance in financial resources and the incumbency advantage contributed to an already uneven playing field. A polarised media environment and the instrumentalisation of private outlets for political propaganda affected news coverage, hindering voters' ability to make an informed choice. Legislative shortcomings and inconsistent enforcement undermined the transparency and effectiveness of party and campaign finance oversight, which is exercised by the Anti-Corruption Bureau since 2023. According to the OSCE/ODIHR, the insufficient handling of post-election day complaints by election commissions and courts undermined the right to due process, failed to provide an effective remedy and did not comprehensively address widespread concerns about the integrity of election results.

None of the priority recommendations from the OSCE/ODIHR following previous elections have so far been implemented. On the contrary, additional amendments made to the Electoral Code in December 2024 and March 2025 mark a step further away from international standards. The latter reverse the changes to the legal framework on municipal elections established in 2021, introducing significant modifications to the composition of the municipal/city assembly (*sakrebulo*), the delineation of the electoral constituencies as well as to the electoral threshold. In its opinion published on 18 March 2025, the Venice Commission noted that the amendments reinforce the majoritarian component of local electoral legislation, which may result in the further entrenchment of the governing party's position and undermine the principle of equal suffrage. The Venice Commission urged the repeal of the changes introduced in 2024 and recommended the establishment, after the next local elections, of an impartial authority to oversee the delimitation of electoral boundaries. In addition, according to the Venice Commission, any further amendments to the Electoral Code should be made within the framework of a thorough review of the electoral system. This should ensure comprehensive reform rather than frequent and fragmented adjustments. This is in line with the European Commission's recommendation for necessary comprehensive electoral reform outlined in the 2024 enlargement report.

On 4 March 2025, Parliament adopted additional amendments that may negatively affect the transparency of the electoral process. The amendments introduced new limitations for registration as local observers, media and electoral subjects. Amendments adopted in April 2025 further increased the ruling party's control over the selection and nomination process of Central Election Commission members, now only requiring a simple majority of votes (76) instead of a 3/5 majority (90).

The municipal elections of 4 October 2025 were held against the backdrop of high political polarisation, physical confrontations, intimidation, arrests as well as hostile rhetoric against the opposition parties, activists and civil society observer groups. The polls were boycotted by a large part of the opposition and were marked by relatively low turnout. The amendments to the electoral legislation favouring the ruling party, coupled with the extensive crackdown on dissent, drastically reduced the possibility of competitive elections. The Georgian authorities did not invite an OSCE/ODIHR observation mission in a timely manner. OSCE/ODIHR declined the late invitation explaining that a request from Georgia less than a month before elections made credible and meaningful observation impossible. Moreover, most local observer organisations were unable to

deploy observation missions, largely due to on-going repressions against CSOs, including those working on elections.

On 13 May, Parliament adopted amendments to the Law on political associations of citizens and the Law on the Constitutional Court. The changes empower the Constitutional Court to prohibit opposition groups whose leadership, objectives, or activities are identical to those of a previously banned party. These provisions, combined with the absence of an independent Constitutional Court, risk undermining political pluralism and hampering the conduct of fair and competitive elections.

As regards **women’s participation** in elections, despite constitutional provisions requiring the state to take special measures to ensure gender equality and the Venice Commission’s opinion on the legal amendments adopted in 2024 that abolish mandatory gender quotas on parliamentary candidate lists, women remain under-represented in public office. The repeal of mandatory gender quotas, combined with existing under-representation of women in elected positions as well as entrenched stereotypes, internal challenges within political parties and gender-specific threats, had a significant negative impact on women’s political participation. As a result, in the 2024 parliamentary elections only 29% of party list candidates were women, with most of them in non-electable positions, marking a substantial decrease from 44% in the 2020 elections. Among the elected Members of Parliament (MPs), 34 were women, representing 23% of the total.

Parliament

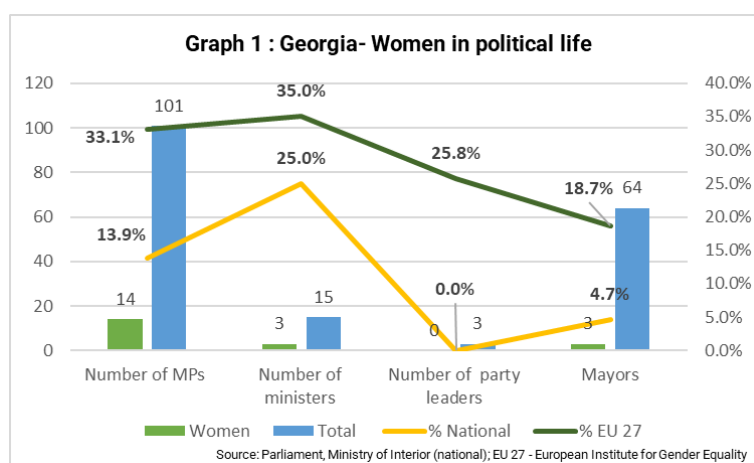
Following the October 2024 parliamentary elections, Parliament has been attended by only 89 MPs elected from the Georgian Dream party. Elected MPs from three of the four opposition parties that crossed the electoral threshold renounced their seats, while the fourth party declared the newly elected Parliament illegitimate, claiming that the elections were rigged. On 5 February, Parliament terminated the mandates of 49 MPs from three opposition parties after their formal request for their mandates to be revoked. A fourth opposition party did not resign the 12 MPs seats won in the elections, but did not participate in parliamentary proceedings. On 20 October, this party announced its decision to take up its seats in Parliament, thereby terminating an almost year-long boycott. Eight opposition figures were sentenced to for 7-8 months’ imprisonment and banned for holding public office in the next two years. Two of them were pardoned by the President of Georgia, while another opposition leader can face criminal charges with potential imprisonment up to fifteen years upon return.

The legislature is represented only by the ruling party and its affiliated parties. The ruling party effectively holds control over both the legislative and executive branches.

The new Parliament frequently used expedited procedures to pass legislation, including on significant and sensitive subjects, at times within a matter of a few days. Examples of legislation passed under expedited procedure within a couple of days include: amendments to the Election Code (December 2024), to the Law on assemblies and manifestations (February 2025); to the Code of administrative offences (February 2025 and October 2025); to the Criminal Code (October 2025) and the amendments to the Organic Law on common courts (June 2025). Parliamentary oversight of the security services, including through the Parliamentary trust group, remained limited. In March 2025, Parliament recognised a new composition of the trust group, with no participants from opposition parties.

Governance

The October 2024 elections were disputed by the four opposition parties that crossed the electoral threshold, considering the government to be illegitimate. The mandatory consultations of NGOs in the



policymaking process removed by the Parliament via legislative amendments marks another setback to the country's democratic governance.

The decentralisation strategy 2020–2025 continues to guide reforms in local governance. There has been very little progress in decentralising policy- and decision-making from the national to the local level. There are no formal coordination mechanisms between the national and local government authorities. The Prime Minister exercises legal supervision over the activity of municipalities. State authorities continue to exercise political, administrative and financial pressure on local decision-making. There are no formal participatory mechanisms in place to involve civil society/citizens in local decision-making.

EU integration

The government programme for 2025-2028, 'Only with peace, dignity and prosperity towards Europe', states that Georgia will continue its irreversible path of Euro-Atlantic integration. On 28 November 2024, the Prime Minister announced the ruling party's decision not to pursue the opening of accession negotiations and to reject EU financial support until 2028. The announcement marked a shift away from the European aspirations of the vast majority of the Georgian people and the provision of the Constitution of Georgia to ensure the full integration of the country into the European Union.

The authorities have not reported on the implementation of the action plan to address the nine steps defined in the Commission's 2023 Communication on EU Enlargement Policy, which are necessary for Georgia's progress on the EU accession path. Georgian authorities continued to declare EU integration as their main priority, while systematically engaging in hostile anti-EU rhetoric, manipulative narratives and conspiracy theories, often mirroring Russian-type disinformation.

EU integration formally remained under the coordination of the Directorate-General on European Integration in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The EU Integration Committee within Parliament retained its oversight function.

Civil society

Civil society organisations (CSOs) operate in a repressive environment that continues deteriorating. This undermines the fundamental role of civil society in upholding and strengthening democracy, the rule of law and fundamental rights. The introduction of multiple restrictive and discriminatory laws and amendments, which are against international human rights law, have a chilling effect on civil society and give the Georgian authorities additional tools to suppress dissent. The cumulative effect of the new legislation threatens the very survival of independent civil society in the country. This contributes to the further erosion of the foundations of democracy in Georgia and is fundamentally incompatible with EU values of democracy, rule of law, respect for fundamental rights and media pluralism. The Venice Commission opinion of 15 October 2025 found that these laws impose extensive and overlapping obligations combined with harsh liability provisions that disproportionately burden and subject to control those engaged in democratic oversight and rights advocacy. It concluded that their cumulative effect is coercive, stigmatising, and ultimately inconsistent with democratic pluralism, and called for their repeal.

The Foreign Agents Registration Act adopted in April 2025 requires individuals and entities to register as 'foreign agents', and they are obliged to submit detailed reports on their activities and finances. The law introduces harsher penalties for non-compliance, including criminal liability and the suspension of activities. The law also mandates individuals and entities to label their public statements as produced by a foreign agent, further stigmatising these organisations.

Amendments to the Law on grants adopted in April 2025 further contribute to a shrinking civic space. The legislation significantly narrows options for international financial support and introduces restrictive monitoring and punitive administrative liability. The law requires international donors to seek pre-approval for grants from state authorities, and non-compliance results in an administrative fine for the grant recipient. The requirements cripple civil society and discourage organisations from accepting international funds, including from the EU. Most CSOs, in particular at local level, are

dependent on funding from foreign donors. A state grant-making agency established in February 2025 also does not contribute to the development of an independent and vibrant civil society sector. The state grant agency risks fostering an environment dominated by government-aligned organisations (so-called GoNGOs), biased funding practices, thereby weakening genuine representation and CSOs' autonomy.

The **overall environment for CSOs** has also suffered from increasing acts of intimidation, vandalism, threats and physical assaults against civil society representatives, repressive actions including court-approved information orders from the Anti-Corruption Bureau, the freezing of bank accounts of several CSOs and increasing administrative hurdles making it difficult for CSOs to carry out their tasks. The legal uncertainty linked to the implementation of repressive legislation risks selective application.

The key mechanisms for **policy dialogue and civic participation** in policymaking and lawmaking have been abolished with the adoption of a package of legislative amendments in April 2025. Changes to the rules of procedure of Parliament removed the requirement for the mandatory participation of NGOs in public decision-making processes. This represents a decisive departure from the formal commitment to inclusive policymaking and the deliberate exclusion of civil society from legislative processes, against the EU's longstanding recommendations, including the nine steps.

2.1.2. Public administration reform

Strategic framework for public administration reform

The strategic framework for public administration reform (PAR) is partially in place, but has been significantly undermined by amendments to the Law on public service, the Law on the structure, powers and procedures of the government, and the Law on diplomatic service. The amendments were adopted amid widespread anti-government protests, raising concerns that they may serve as a tool for politically motivated persecution of dissenting voices within the public service. The legislative amendments, combined with the reorganisation of several institutions, led to a mass dismissal of public servants. Hundreds of civil servants - and reportedly some of those who were dismissed — signed collective statements in support of Georgia's EU integration path. The legal amendments are reversing civil service reforms and significantly impact accountability and transparency and the legal protection of civil servants. This indicates a growing political influence of the ruling party over the public administration. As a result of institutional changes, the central government entity's (Administration of the Government) critical role in supporting PAR as a strategic priority is no longer recognised. The PAR unit under the Administration of the Government was abolished and its responsibilities were transferred to the analytical department. The PAR interagency co-ordinating council did not convene in the reporting period.

No monitoring report was prepared on the implementation of the 2023-2026 PAR strategy and its 2023-2024 action plan. The 2025-2026 action plan has not yet been developed.

Policy development and coordination

Policy development and coordination aspects still need to be strengthened. The institutions for government policy development and coordination have been increasingly centralised. Evidence-based policy and legislative development, consultation and public coordination mechanisms and monitoring mechanisms have been severely constrained. Policy coordination has been significantly weakened. Civil Society Organisations' (CSO) mandatory participation in public policy and decision-making processes has been abolished.

Public financial management

Public financial management (PFM) is broadly in place but needs to be improved further. The implementation of the 2023-2026 PFM strategy and annual action plans contributed to the stable management of public finances. Budgetary control policies retain the budget deficit and public debt within the limits set by fiscal rules. A medium-term revenue strategy was adopted in December 2024. Internal audit capacities were strengthened, and risk management policies improved.

To strengthen the links between strategic planning and budgeting, a policy classifier was introduced within the eBudget electronic system. It covers among others gender equality, climate change and national development strategy markers.

Public investment management reform continued with the development of the electronic public investment management system (ePIM). New investment projects are selected in accordance with the PIM methodology before being included in the relevant budget.

No progress was made in public assets inventory and valuation, internal financial control and auditing.

Budget transparency is broadly ensured. There were no further developments on budget transparency. Public engagement in budget processes and dissemination of the citizens' budget needs to be improved.

Public service and human resources management

Public service and human resources management has been seriously affected by the December 2024 legal amendments to the Law on public service. These have reversed past core reforms and undermined civil service protections from undue political pressure and jeopardised a merit-based professional civil service. The amendments significantly weaken the rights of public servants, including to legal recourse, and increase the risk of politicising the public service. Since December 2024, hundreds of civil servants have been dismissed or their contracts not renewed.

The Civil Service Bureau was abolished in April 2025 and part of its functions were transferred to the human resources department under the Administration of the Government.

The civil service in Georgia is characterised by an underrepresentation of women in senior management positions.

Accountability of administration

The accountability of administration still needs to be improved. The government has yet to take action to introduce legislative reforms and establish an independent supervisory body to uphold the right to access to public information in line with international standards. There are legal gaps in freedom of information and the lack of recognition of the Council of Europe Convention on access to official documentation. Legal Entities of Public Law are not bound by the existing legislation on access to public information.

The right to access public information is not properly enforced. The rate of proactive information publication continues to deteriorate. In 2024, the Public Defender considered 60 complaints about restrictions on access to public information, particularly regarding media outlets, journalist and human rights defenders. Its analysis concluded that legislative amendments are necessary and the concept of a public institution needs to be more clearly defined.

The rate of implementation of recommendations from oversight bodies, including the Public Defender's Office and the State Audit Office, remains low. In 2024, out of 258 recommendations issued by the Public Defender to central authorities, only 19% were fully implemented by authorities, 24% were partially implemented and 34% were not implemented. Only 46% of recommendations by the State Audit Office were fully implemented, and 28% were partially implemented. The right to seek compensation lacks systematic enforcement, including as regards the length of judicial proceedings in the event of administrative disputes.

Georgia has failed to meet the recommendations of the Open Government Partnership (OGP), leading the OGP Steering Committee to officially suspend the Georgian government from the partnership following concerns over legislative actions that undermine civic freedoms and fundamental rights.

The Internal Audit Service was transformed into the Government Efficiency Department and established as a department within the Administration of the Government in May 2025. It will oversee both internal audits and efficiency evaluations across all executive bodies.

Service delivery to citizens and businesses

The service delivery to citizens and businesses needs further strategic development and investment. Progress was made with the adoption of the 2025-2030 strategy for the development of Georgia's digital economy and information society, and the 2025-2027 action plan. In February 2025, Georgia adopted the digital governance strategy 2025-2030 and action plan for 2025-2027. Existing strategies, including on public services development, still need to be implemented. The number of digital services increased, while the quality of services declined.

2.2. RULE OF LAW AND FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS

2.2.1 Chapter 23: Judiciary and fundamental rights

The EU's founding values include the rule of law and respect for human rights. An effective (independent, high-quality and efficient) judicial system and an effective fight against corruption are of paramount importance, as is respect for fundamental rights in law and in practice.

Functioning of the judiciary

Strategic documents

Structured and comprehensive strategic documents and a legislative framework still need to be adopted in view of a comprehensive reform of the judiciary. The High Council of Justice (HCJ) has not yet developed a strategy on the functioning of the HCJ and the judiciary.

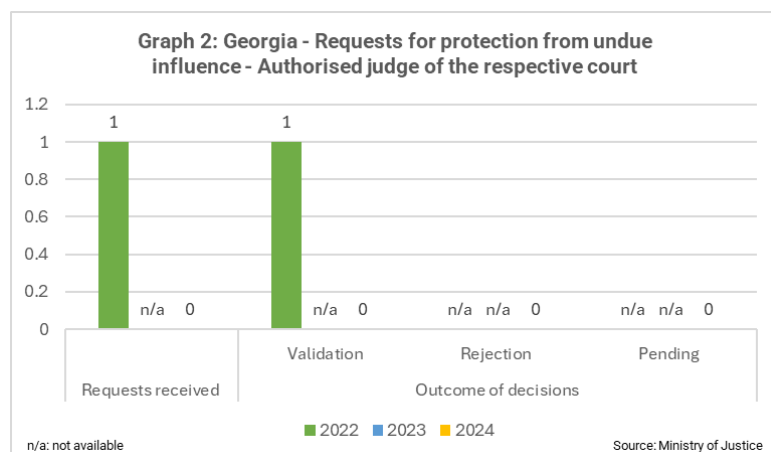
No reforms were undertaken to address all the existing systemic and substantial European Commission and Venice Commission recommendations. In particular, a comprehensive reform of the HCJ and the Supreme Court (SC) in line with the existing recommendations and conducted in a thorough and inclusive consultation process remains outstanding.

The revised legal framework undermines the independence and integrity of the judicial system and reverses earlier reform steps. Amendments to the Law on common courts adopted in June 2025, without consultation with the EU or the Venice Commission reverse earlier reforms and are contrary to former EU recommendations and Venice Commission opinions. The amendments further undermine the independence, accountability and transparency of the HJC by revised election rules and not ensuring the balance between the number of judges versus non-judge members as recommended by the Venice Commission. Additionally, the revised rules on the judicial disciplinary liability of judges negatively affect judiciary independence. They significantly broaden the legal basis for initiating disciplinary proceedings, which is too vague and creates a high risk of overly broad interpretation and abuse. Furthermore, the amendments shift the authority to initiate disciplinary proceedings from the Independent Inspector to the Secretary of the High Council of Justice, further concentrating powers to the unreformed HCJ, which risks undermining judicial independence. Furthermore, the new rules on the transfer of judges now foresee the possibility of a transfer without consent of up to five years (before three years), which seriously undermines judicial independence in particular as safeguards are still lacking. Moreover, the new rules restrict media access and limit the timely disclosure of court decisions, reversing previous reforms and reducing transparency. The constitutional provision on lifetime appointment of judges of all courts has come into full effect. Since 31 December 2024, judges are to be appointed for life tenure, without an initial three-year term.

The legislative framework for the Prosecutor General's Office, including the appointment procedure of the Prosecutor General and disciplinary proceedings of prosecutors, is not aligned with European standards. There has been no follow up to address the recommendations of the Venice Commission, OECD and the Technical Assistance and Information Exchange (TAIEX) peer review on the functioning of the justice sector and the fight against organised crime carried out in May 2023. Furthermore, the legal amendments on the Law on the Prosecutor's Office of June 2025 reversed earlier reforms. The amendments abolish consultations with CSOs and legal experts for the selection of candidates for the position of Prosecutor General and envisage that the procedure for nominating and appointing the new Prosecutor General is completed within one week. In June 2025, a new Prosecutor General was appointed by simple majority and four years before the end of the predecessor's mandate. This is not in line with EU and Venice Commission recommendations.

Management bodies

The management bodies, the HCJ and the Prosecutorial Council are in place. However, they do not meet EU and Council of Europe standards of independence, impartiality and transparency.



In the reporting period, no reforms were undertaken to align these judicial institutions with European standards. No steps were taken to address outstanding issues with the composition, functioning and powers of both management bodies outlined in the Venice Commission recommendations.

Georgia has not taken any steps to establish a system of integrity checks, with the involvement of international experts with a decisive role in the process, for

candidates and those currently appointed to all leading positions in the judiciary, in particular the HCJ, the Supreme Court and presidents of common courts.

In March 2025, the Tbilisi City Court annulled the appointment of a non-judge member of the HCJ nominated in July 2024 and decided that a competitor be appointed instead. The decision further undermined the independence and the integrity of the HCJ. The Venice Commission noted concerns over previous appointments of lay members of the HCJ in its opinions.

In November 2024, the ECtHR ruled that the HCJ had acted in a discriminatory manner by twice refusing to reappoint a judge in 2015-2016.

Venice Commission recommendations for the evaluation of candidate judges and judges have not been addressed.

Independence and impartiality

The independence and impartiality of the judiciary are inadequate both at higher-level courts and courts of first instance. A thorough and comprehensive reform of the judiciary is needed, as recommended by the Venice Commission, in particular to ensure integrity in the HCJ and the SC, to improve independence and impartiality and to increase public trust in the judicial system.

In September 2025, the Independent Inspector’s Service and the position of the Independent Inspector were abolished and its functions were incorporated into the HCJ, further concentrating powers to the unreformed HCJ, which risks undermining judicial independence.

No progress was noted in the reporting period in strengthening safeguards to protect the independence and autonomy of prosecutors and the Prosecution Service, in line with EU and Venice Commission recommendations. The recommendation by the EU and the Venice Commission to adopt constitutional amendments that would require a qualified majority in the appointment procedure of the Prosecutor General has not been addressed.

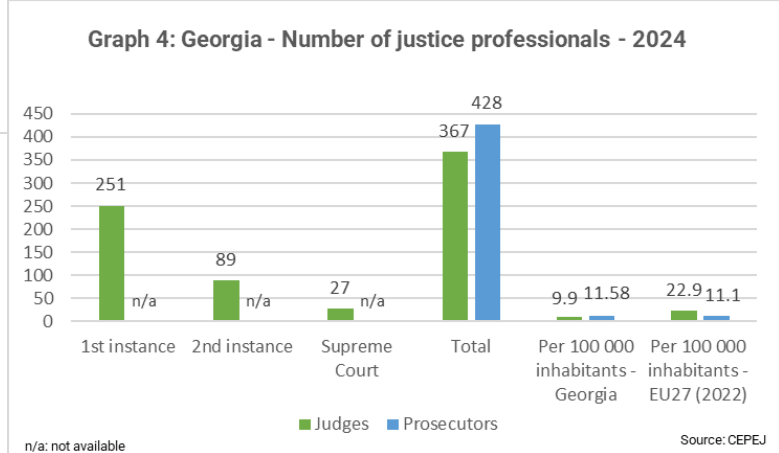
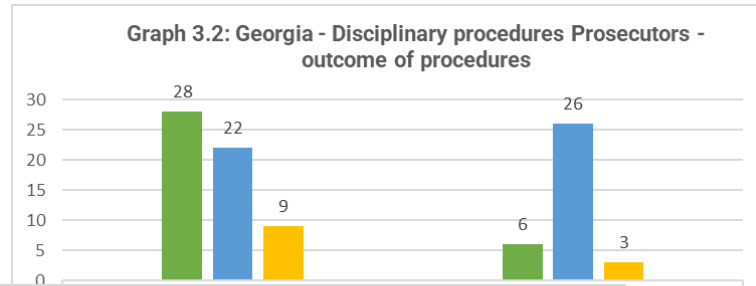
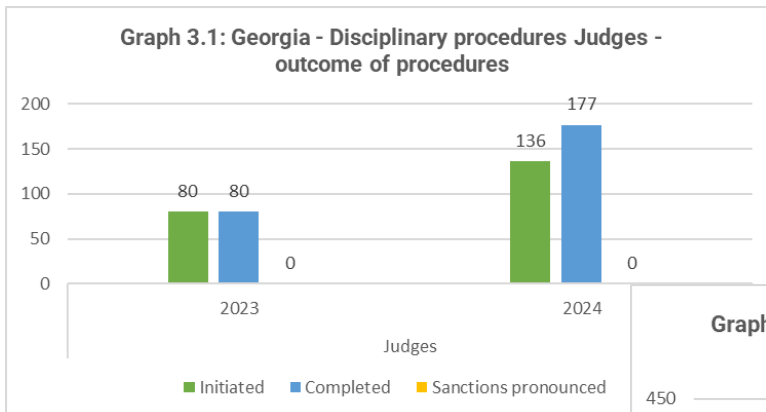
In its opinions, the Venice Commission underlined the need to ensure that candidates for judicial appointments are treated equally.

The June 2025 legislative amendments to the Law on common courts, which restrict photo, video and audio recordings at court premises, risks undermining public trust in the judiciary and seriously limit the oversight of judicial proceedings.

Accountability

The accountability of the judiciary is insufficient. There has been no progress to address challenges in the effective implementation of the legislative framework and the rules on the accountability of judges and prosecutors.

In 2024, the number of initiated and completed disciplinary procedures against judges increased significantly. The number of disciplinary procedures initiated and sanctions pronounced against prosecutors decreased compared to 2024.



The concentration of powers in the Office of the Prosecutor General (appointed politically by simple majority in Parliament) further increased with the absorption of the Special Investigation Service into the Office of the Prosecutor General in May 2025. This change further increased the concentration of powers in the Office of the Prosecutor General in a context where long-standing Venice Commission and EU recommendations regarding the strengthening of the independence of the Prosecution Service remain unaddressed.

There has been no progress to improve the transparency of the HCJ. Decisions or minutes were not published during the reporting period. The transparency of court proceedings is undermined by the June 2025 legislative amendments to the Law on common courts, which grant the HCJ the right to decide on public access to court proceedings.

Quality of justice

The quality of justice needs to be improved.

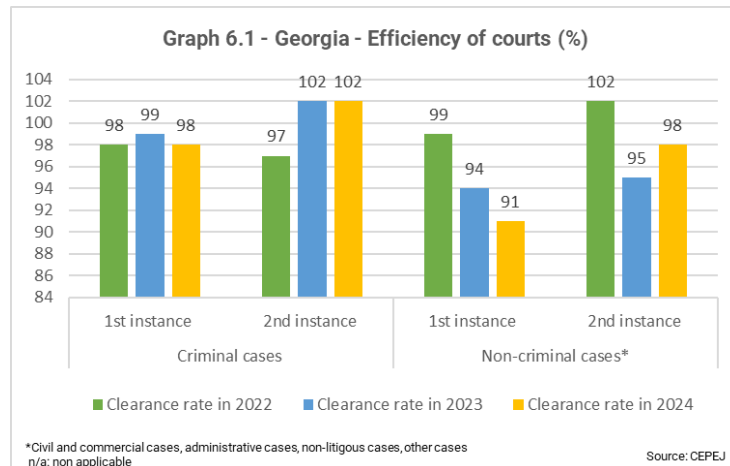
More efforts are still needed to further align it with European standards and best practices on effective and efficient administration of justice, including the use of European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice (CEPEJ) tools (Council of Europe).

There was no significant progress on increasing the number of second instance judges and prosecutors and filling open vacancies for judges and prosecutors. The quality of justice remains negatively affected by the high caseload, causing delays in cases and ineffective management of backlogs in the common courts system. The effective implementation of transparency standards declined. Open access to reasoned court decisions was not systematically ensured. Access to court decisions via freedom of information requests and the transparency of HCJ sessions and decisions further deteriorated during the reporting period. At the same time, the Supreme Court ensured proactive access to the anonymised texts of its decisions.

The number of cases resolved by mediation and accredited mediators has increased. Data collection needs to be improved.

The judicial training system needs further improvements. Training and the exchange of best practices should be further developed and integrated into professional development. Further improvements are needed on the scope, participation rate, and budgetary allocation of the judicial training system.

Efficiency



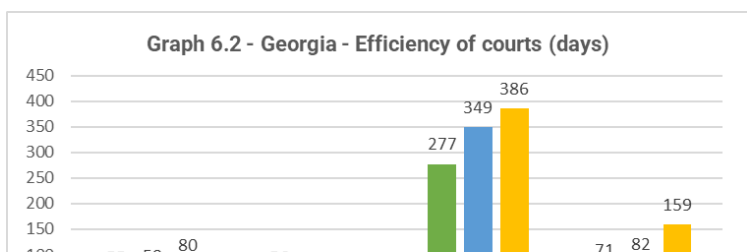
The efficiency of justice could be further improved, in particular for administrative cases.

The number of incoming non-criminal cases increased by 3% for first instance courts and by 8% for second instance courts in comparison to 2023 raising further the high caseload per judge. At the level of courts of first instance, the disposition time (the time a judicial system takes to resolve a case) in civil and commercial cases increased to 356 days compared with 325 days in 2023.

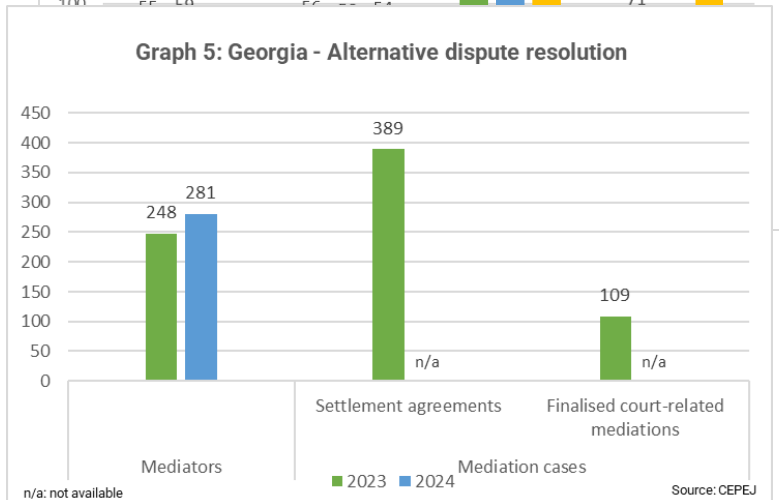
For administrative cases, the disposition time increased to 695 days in 2024 against 633 days in 2023. For criminal cases, the disposition time was 80 days in 2024, down from 144 days in 2023.

The clearance rates for civil and commercial cases in all courts remained at a high level overall in 2024. For civil and commercial cases, the clearance rate fell to 91% in courts of first instance in 2024 (94% in 2023).

The backlog of pending criminal cases increased to 7 841 in 2024 (7 079 in 2023) at first instance and was 716 (823 in 2023) at second instance courts of appeal. For civil and commercial cases, the number of pending cases at first instance increased to 97 899 in 2024 (88 764 in 2023) and to 4 337 (4 097 in 2023) at second instance courts.



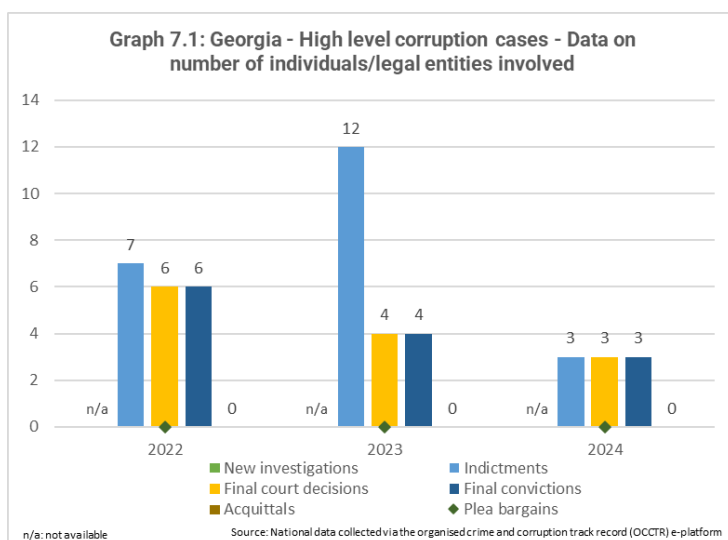
The number of judges increased from 332 in 2023 to 367 in 2024, with the majority of them assigned to courts of first instance (from 218 in 2023 to 251 in 2024). The number of second instance judges increased to 89 in 2024 (from 87 in 2023).



The number of decisions delivered by the Constitutional Court decreased to 18 in 2024 (from 19 in 2023). The high number of vacancies in judicial positions remains a challenge for the efficiency of the judicial system. The backlogs are declining but remain high overall.

The modernisation of court management needs to be addressed, including through implementation of new IT justice tools and full application of the court case management system for automatic/randomised case allocation. The number of cases allocated by the system remains high (95-100%). More efforts are needed to digitalise the justice system. There is

still a need to improve the interoperability of IT platforms across the penal chain.



While the total budget allocated to the judiciary has been steadily increasing in recent years, it is still below the EU average as a proportion of the total state budget. The overall budget of the Georgian judiciary increased by 5,2% between 2024 and 2023.

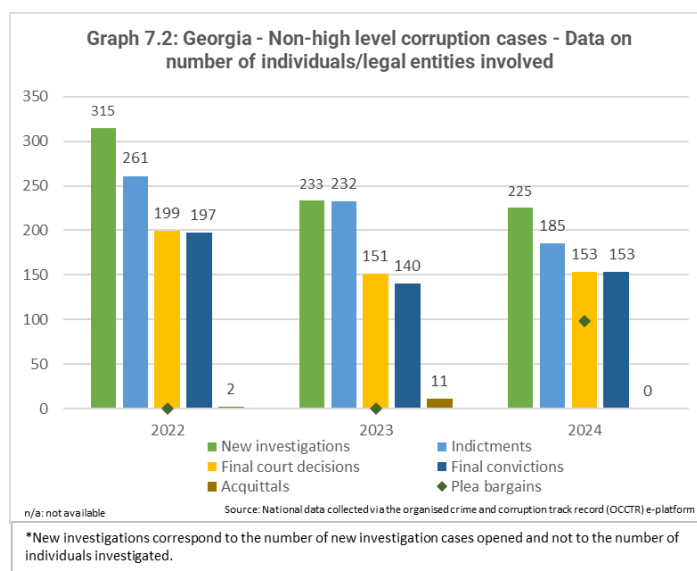
Fight against corruption

Track record

The fight against corruption track record has weakened for public sector including for high-level corruption cases.

The investigation, prosecution and final conviction of high-level corruption cases declined overall in 2024. Three high-level

officials were prosecuted (12 in 2023) and three officials were convicted for corruption in the public sector (four in 2023). The number of investigated non-high-level corruption cases declined to 225 in 2024 (from 233 in 2023); the number of prosecuted cases fell to 185 (from 232 in 2023), while the number of final convictions increased to 153 (up from 140 in 2023).



The recommendations from the fifth evaluation round of the Council of Europe Group of States against Corruption (GRECO) still need to be fully implemented. This includes adoption of a targeted anti-corruption strategy, a code of conduct for those with top executive functions and an independent oversight mechanism to ensure the proper implementation of transparency laws.

There has been no progress in public communication and accountability as regards cases of alleged high-level corruption. Detailed statistics on the detection, investigation, prosecution and adjudication of corruption cases, especially high-level corruption cases, are still not publicly available.

Legal framework

The legal framework on the fight against corruption is not adequate in terms of preventive measures and needs to be improved regarding law enforcement.

There was no progress in revising the Law on the fight against corruption in order to provide the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) with a legal framework to ensure operational independence. Venice Commission recommendations, in particular related to the ACB's independence, political neutrality, the transparent verification of officials' assets and interest declarations, and investigative functions in high-level corruption cases still need to be addressed. The ACB's mandate was extended to monitor and enforce the Foreign Agents Registration Act (FARA) and the legislative amendments to the Law on grants in April 2025 and the ACB has been vested with wide discretion in applying these laws. The additional extensive investigatory and enforcement powers of the ACB include inspections, issuing of fines, questioning individuals, and initiating criminal proceedings with investigative bodies. These

additional tasks contribute to increasing the ACB's lack of independence and an increased politicisation of the institution. The selective implementation of its extended mandate, and in particular the enforcement of FARA legislation and the revised Law on grants, has raised serious concerns about the legal grounds of the court-approved information orders issued to a large number of CSOs.

The legal framework does not provide for an independent advisory institution on anti-corruption since the advisory Anti-Corruption Council was abolished in May 2024.

Further alignment is needed on whistle-blower protection. Procedures and reporting mechanisms related to whistleblower protection are integrated into an online platform.

Strategic documents

Strategic documents are not in place. No anti-corruption strategy and action plan have been developed since 2020, and no updated anti-corruption sectoral risk assessment was developed in the reporting period. Georgia needs to adopt a comprehensive anti-corruption strategy and action plan that aligns with recommendations from GRECO, with particular focus on integrity checks, conflicts of interest, lobbying and asset declaration systems.

Georgia should follow up on all recommendations in GRECO's fifth evaluation round, including on a targeted anti-corruption strategy for those with top executive functions, a code of conduct for top executive functions, the extension of the list of people subject to asset declarations and the investigation of corruption crimes. Strategic documents on risk assessment and the prevention of conflicts of interest, an anti-corruption strategy for the police and a targeted corruption risk approach for law enforcement agencies need to be prepared.

There has been no progress on implementation of the de-oligarchisation action plan adopted in November 2023. Venice Commission recommendations still need to be followed up. Recommendations in GRECO's fifth evaluation round still need to be fully implemented.

Institutional framework

The institutional framework on the fight against corruption is in place but is not adequate in terms of preventive measures and needs to be improved regarding law enforcement.

There was no progress on the ACB's institutional set-up and strategic framework, and key Venice Commission recommendations have yet to be addressed. The ACB's mandate was substantially extended based on repressive legislation, including the amendments to the Law on grants and the Foreign Agents Registration Act. Legislation adopted in April 2025 removed the mandatory participation and consultation of civil society in public decision-making processes. This excluded civil society from the selection commission for appointing the head of the ACB.

The number of asset declarations checked by the ACB increased in 2024. It checked the asset declarations of 353 officials; in 319 cases, monitoring was concluded with no shortcomings; violations were found in 34 cases (220 officials in 2023, of which 23 cases of incompatibility of duties and conflicts of interest).

More efforts are needed to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the relevant law enforcement investigation units. They still lack autonomous powers and safeguards for their independence and to prevent risks of undue political influence.

Transparency and public access to asset declarations on the ACB website was problematic. In 2025, public access to the system of monitoring asset declarations was not consistently ensured.

Georgia continues to lack dedicated and autonomous entities in law enforcement, the prosecution services or specialised courts to fight corruption, and stand-alone specialised bodies for investigating and prosecuting high-level corruption. The investigation of corruption-related cases remains shared between different institutions, resulting in a fragmented approach and repercussions for enforcement.

Georgia should rejoin the OECD anti-corruption monitoring network for Eastern Europe and Central Asia and follow up on the recommendations of the Fourth Round of Monitoring of the Istanbul Anti-

Corruption Action Plan.

Fundamental rights

General framework

The general framework for fundamental rights was severely weakened by legislative actions and needs to be fundamentally revised against international standards. The new legislation, including the Foreign Agents Registration Act, amendments to the Law on assemblies and demonstrations, the Code of administrative offences and the Criminal Code, was adopted without due public consultations. These measures contradict Georgia's obligations under human rights law and infringe in particular on the rights to freedom of association and expression. There are significant gaps in the national strategy on the protection of human rights 2022-2030 and its action plan 2024-2026.

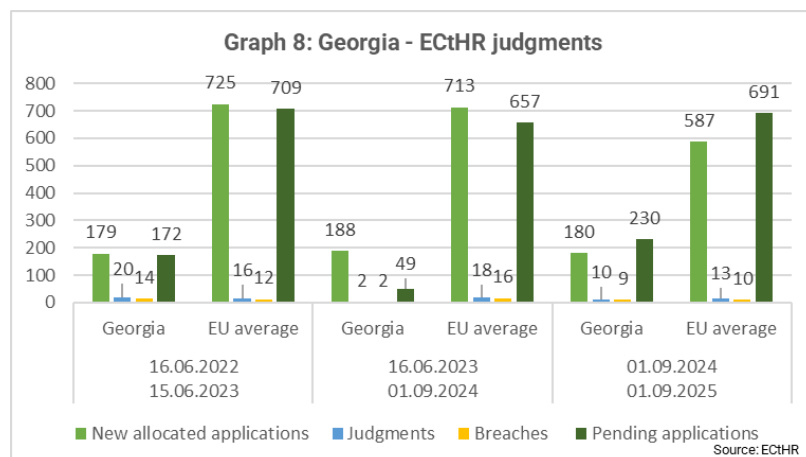
The implementation and enforcement of fundamental rights was overshadowed by the disproportionate, unlawful and excessive use of force, in some cases amounting to ill-treatment and torture, against protesters during the reporting period.

International human rights instruments

Cooperation with international human rights monitoring bodies and the follow-up to their recommendations needs to be improved. Georgia has ratified most main European and international human rights instruments. It has not signed the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance.

European Court of Human Rights

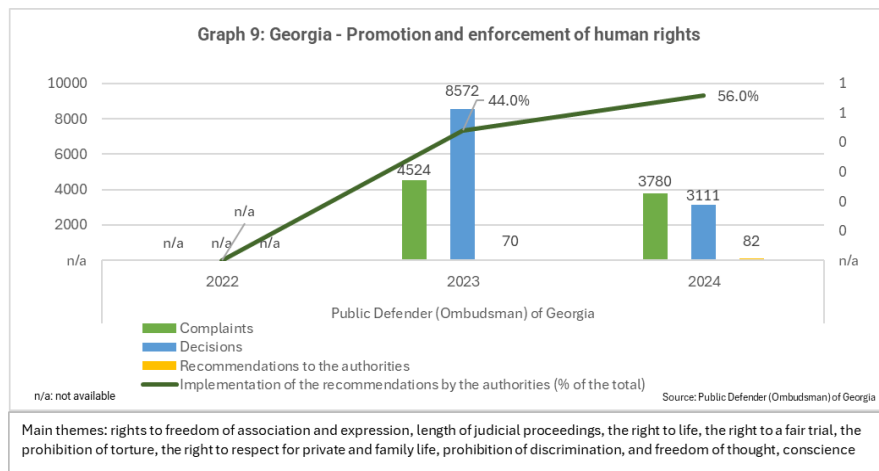
The cooperation with the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) and the implementation of its judgements is inadequate. During the reporting period, the ECtHR delivered eight judgements against Georgia. The ECtHR found Georgia in breach of the European Convention on Human Rights in cases relating mainly to the length of judicial proceedings, the right to life, the right to a fair trial, the prohibition of torture, the right to respect for private and family life, the prohibition of discrimination as well as freedom of thought, conscience and religion. Currently, there are 45 cases under enhanced supervision by the Committee



of Ministers. Georgia needs to address the systemic and structural issues raised by the Court, in particular regarding the justice system, penitentiary and law enforcement systems and the protection from discrimination, and to ensure systematic enforcement of ECtHR judgements.

Promotion and enforcement of human rights

The legal and institutional framework for the promotion, protection and enforcement of human rights is incomplete and needs to be improved. The implementation of the action plan 2024-2026 for the national strategy on the protection of human rights has still not started. The process for monitoring its implementation has not been defined.

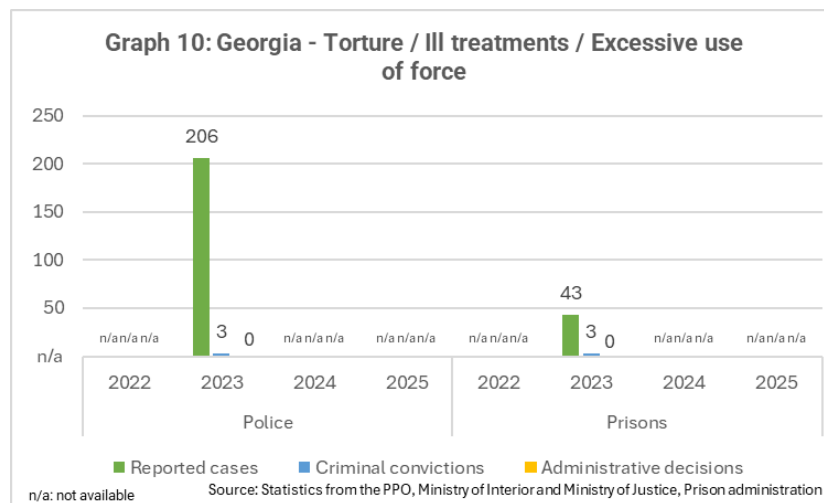
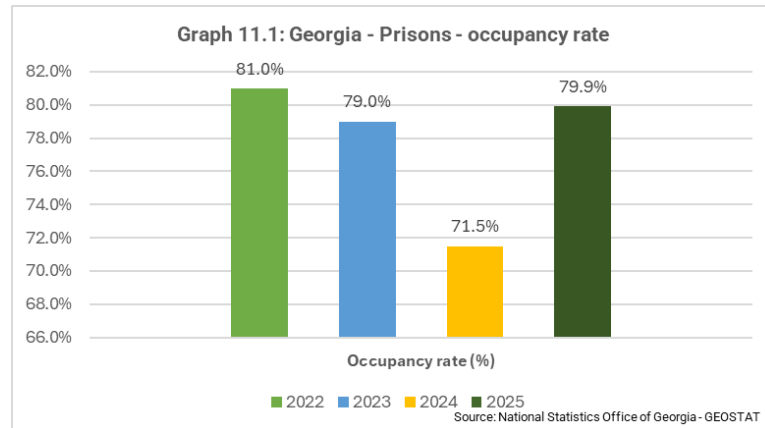


Main themes: rights to freedom of association and expression, length of judicial proceedings, the right to life, the right to a fair trial, the prohibition of torture, the right to respect for private and family life, prohibition of discrimination, and freedom of thought, conscience

The Public Defender’s Office (PDO) remains a key institution for supervising the protection and implementation of Georgia’s human rights obligations. The PDO continues to carry out its mandate satisfactorily, albeit selectively. In 2024, the PDO issued 82 recommendations, 16 special reports and several communications to the authorities. However, the implementation of its recommendations to state authorities remains limited – only 56% were taken into account.

Prevention of torture and ill-treatment

Georgia has an inadequate legal framework for the prevention of torture and ill-treatment, and the follow-up to cases is insufficient. Participants in peaceful assemblies, detainees and journalists reportedly faced torture and other ill-treatment by law enforcement officers. Based on interviews conducted by the PDO representatives, between 28 November 2024 and 1 March 2025, 60% of visited detainees reported ill-treatment, highlighting systematic and widespread character of violence against protesters. Victims were subjected to severe beatings and other forms of ill-treatment, in some cases amounting to torture and inhuman and degrading treatment. This occurred during the dispersal or encirclement of protesters, at the time of arrest, and later during police transport. According to the PDO, a consistent pattern of methods, techniques and forms of ill-treatment may indicate that the uniform methods of ill-treatment had been pre-planned. Between 28 November 2024 and 28 January 2025, the PDO identified a total of 282 alleged ill-treatment cases. No law enforcement officers have been held accountable.



The follow-up to the recommendations of the National Preventive Mechanism (NPM) remains inadequate. In 2024, the NPM conducted 92 preventive visits in 65 institutions. Patients in psychiatric institutions are still not fully protected from violence and inhumane or degrading treatment. The NPM received reports of both physical and psychological violence at the

hands of members of staff. In 2024, the now-abolished Special Investigation Service received reports of 175 allegations of physical and psychological violence against prisoners by employees of the Special Penitentiary Service and initiated investigations into 16 criminal cases.

Protection gaps in the Code of administrative offences, including with respect to the legal safeguards, the lack of clarity about standards of proof and the absence of a meaningful right to appeal against detention decisions, remain unaddressed. Furthermore, 18 judgments of the ECtHR concerning various substantive and procedural violations of Articles 2 and 3 on account of torture and other forms of ill treatment are pending execution.

Efforts to reduce the prison population need to be increased as Georgia ranks second on the incarceration rate (256 per 100 000) among the Council of Europe countries. The occupancy rate stood at 82.1% in December 2024. The use of de-escalation and safety rooms for punitive purposes, as well as prolonged placement in such rooms, continue to be a concern. The Public Defender qualified these practices as ill-treatment. The use of excessive force and physical and psychological violence by law enforcement officers needs to be addressed.

Execution of criminal sanctions

The excessive resort to pre-trial detention and disproportionate application of sentencing deeply affect the right to a fair trial. The continued violation of the right to a fair trial affected in particular court proceedings of individuals detained during protests.

The system for executing criminal sanctions, including probation, needs to be improved. Data on the average duration of pre-trial detentions is not collected. Individuals detained during the November 2024 demonstrations have been subject to numerous violations, including the disproportionate and often unlawful application of pre-trial detention – commonly imposed immediately upon arrest without adequate justification or individualised assessment.

Protection of personal data

The legal framework for the protection of personal data is insufficient and the capacities of the Data Protection Agency need to be improved. The Law on personal data protection is not fully aligned with the General Data Protection Regulation and the Law Enforcement Directive. Georgia has not signed the Council of Europe Convention 108+. Key recommendations of the Venice Commission on institutional independence, impartiality and powers of the Personal Data Protection Service have still not been addressed.

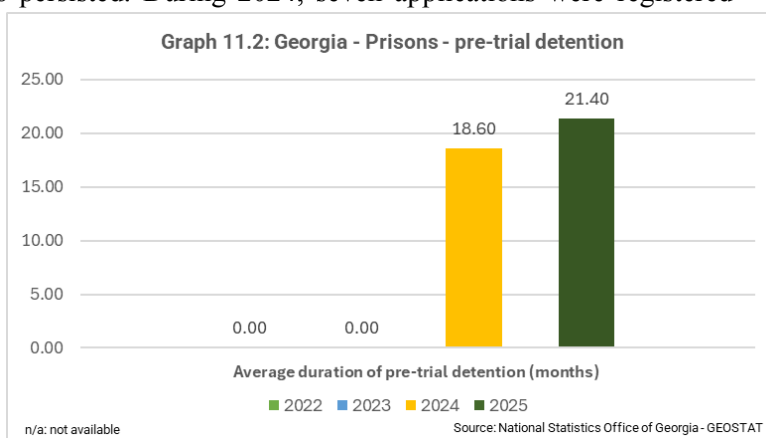
Freedom of religion or belief

Freedom of thought, conscience and religion is generally upheld. The ECtHR judgment (Georgian Muslim Relations and Others v. Georgia), which found that Georgia violated the European Convention on Human Rights regarding freedom of religion, has not been implemented. In July 2025, the Kutaisi Court of Appeals upheld the Municipality’s appeal against the construction of a new mosque in Batumi, overturning the lower court decision. This case raises concerns about religious freedom and potential discrimination against the Muslim community. Hate speech and alleged hate crimes committed on religious grounds persisted. During 2024, seven applications were registered with the PDO regarding allegations of discrimination on religious grounds, two of which concerned crimes motivated by intolerance.

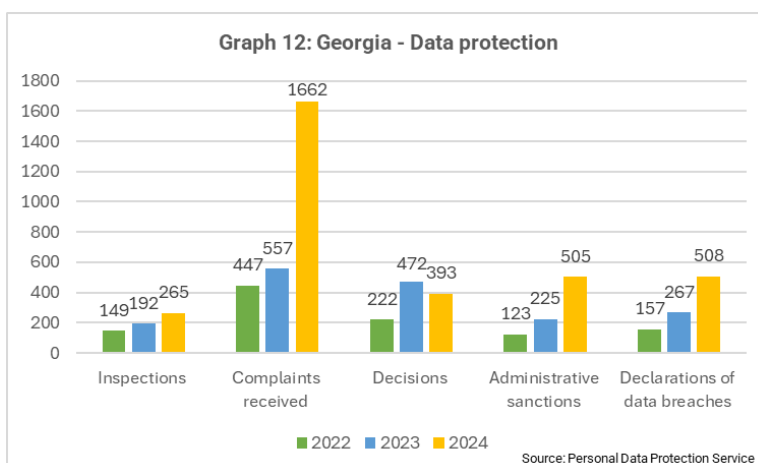
Freedom of expression

Intimidation of journalists

The safety of journalists deteriorated significantly with a growing number of intimidation, hate speech, violence, legal pressure and detention, preventing them from carrying out their professional duties freely. Since 29 November 2024 and 4 June 2025, more than 150 cases of interference in journalistic activities were reported. Despite reports of violence against journalists by the special forces and police, including physical assaults and destruction of their equipment, none of these incidents have led to any charges or convictions, leaving the perpetrators unpunished. Numerous journalists and media workers received disproportionate administrative fines or were arbitrarily detained while carrying out their work. The founder and director of online media outlet



more than 150 cases of interference in journalistic activities



Batumelebi was arrested during protests and sentenced to two years in prison. The use of strategic lawsuits against public participation (SLAPPs) continues. Alignment with the EU Anti-SLAPP Directive and Recommendation needs to be ensured.

Legislative environment

The adoption of the Foreign Agents Registration Act places additional pressure on the media sector and undermines press freedom, given that non-compliance with its requirements may result in imprisonment up to five years. Extending the definition of ‘agents’ to individuals is likely to affect the independence of journalists.

In April 2025, Parliament adopted amendments to the Law on broadcasting, prohibiting the direct or indirect funding of audio-visual broadcasters by ‘foreign entities. The restrictions apply to various forms of support, including direct financial assistance, equipment transfers, staff training and media development programmes. These amendments, combined with amendments to the Law on grants introducing an *ex ante* authorisation requirement for each foreign-funded grant, drastically limit media outlets’ access to funding and undermine media pluralism. The amended Law on broadcasting also gave the Communications Commission (ComCom) more control over broadcasting content amidst newly introduced requirements on factual accuracy, fairness and impartiality.

In June 2025, Parliament adopted amendments to the Law on freedom of speech and expression. The amendments abolished important guarantees related to freedom of expression, in particular qualified privilege, shifted the burden of proof for defamation from the plaintiff to the defendant, and weakened the standard for protecting confidential sources and professional secrecy. Earlier this year, amendments to the Code of administrative offences adopted in February 2025 significantly reduced the possibility of expressing critical views of government officials, contradicting the standards of legitimate interference with freedom of expression. The adoption of the legislative package on family values and the protection of minors in September 2024 restricted freedom of expression on LGBTIQ-related content as it prohibits the distribution of information aimed at promoting LGBTIQ identities.

Implementation of legislation/institutions

The Law on transparency of foreign influence continued to have a chilling effect on the media, stigmatising outlets that receive foreign funding.

There are concerns about the effective independence and impartiality of ComCom, which is responsible for licensing and broadcast media oversight. ComCom has been criticised for its selective and arbitrary interpretation of laws, making legal compliance difficult for media outlets. In June 2025, the ruling party filed complaints with ComCom against the opposition-aligned TV channels Formula, Mtavari and TV Pirveli, accusing them of coverage standards violations. In its decision of 10 July 2025, ComCom recognised the violation of the “fairness and impartiality” provision by the three broadcasters but freed them from an administrative liability. Russian-style disinformation, primarily targeting the EU and EU ambassador, via television and various media outlets is widespread.

The April amendments to the Code of administrative offences served as a legal basis for complaints that the ruling party filed with the Ministry of Internal Affairs against activists, journalists and politicians. Based on these complaints, courts applied the highest fines possible in the majority of the cases (GEL 4 000). There were also two cases of administrative detention.

Public service broadcaster

The Georgian Public Broadcaster lacks independence, has biased editorial policy and contributed to the promotion of anti-EU rhetoric. Ahead of the October 2024 parliamentary elections, it allocated airtime unproportionately, with most of the campaign coverage (61%) focused on Georgian Dream. In April 2025, a former high-ranking Georgian Dream politician was re-elected as Chair of the Board in the absence of any other candidate. Complaints were filed against the Board and management for failing to serve public interest and failing to reflect the diversity of views by refusing to air coverage of protests. Several journalists were dismissed following their criticism of the public broadcaster’s decision to terminate a talk show critical of the authorities.

Economic factors

Although political parties are prohibited from owning media, concerns persist with regards to the independence and impartiality of the big media networks as political affiliations influence media ownership. The advertising market is underdeveloped, and many media outlets, in particular independent online outlets, remain highly dependent on donor funding. The shrinking media market, restrictive government policies and increasing risks associated with receiving donor support make it increasingly difficult to secure sustainable funding.

Internet

Internet provision generally functions without undue restrictions.

Professional organisations and working conditions

Georgian journalists and media outlets are represented by several membership-based professional associations and organisations. There is no dialogue between the government and media professional bodies. Downsizing and delays in salary payments are frequent. Staff turnover is high across newsrooms, especially among regional media.

Freedom of assembly and association

Georgia provides insufficient legal guarantees for freedom of assembly and association, and the regulation of assemblies is restrictive. In December 2024, in February 2025 and in October 2025, Parliament adopted numerous amendments to the laws governing the right to assembly, including the Law on assemblies and demonstrations and the Code of administrative offences and the Criminal code. These amendments impose arbitrary restrictions on demonstrators, expand law enforcement powers, and broaden the grounds for administrative arrest, search and seizure and criminal liability. The amendments substantially and disproportionately increase penalties including administrative detention and imprisonment for the infringements related to the exercise of freedom of assembly and impose unreasonably strict liabilities for new violations.

Peaceful protests during the reporting period were met with disproportionate, unlawful and excessive use of force. Beyond reported physical violence, law enforcement forces resorted to the disproportionate use of aggressive crowd control measures, such as water cannon, tear gas and rubber bullets. The PDO reported violations of protesters' rights, including of their liberty and security of person, and of the prohibition of torture and other forms of ill treatment. Several hundred protesters were detained. Criminal investigations were launched into over 60 people. The use of arbitrary administrative fines was widespread.

Freedom of association has been seriously curtailed by the introduction of multiple restrictive laws and amendments as tools to suppress dissent. The cumulative effect of the new legislation, combined with widespread disinformation, stigmatisation and an attack on the financial resources of CSOs, threatens freedom of association.

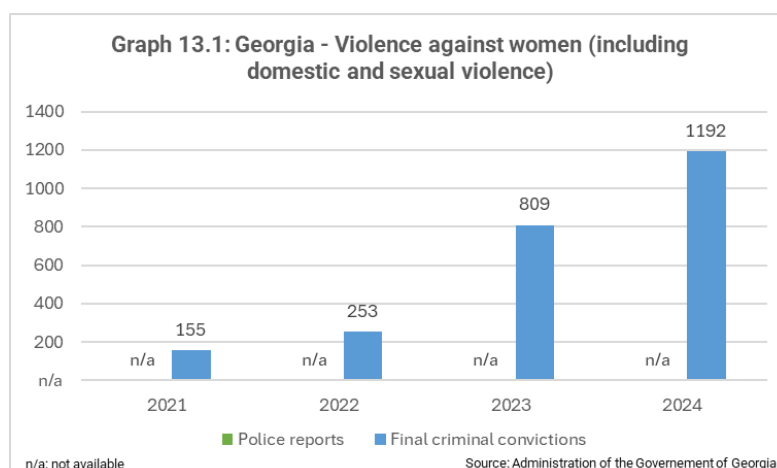
Labour and trade union rights are covered in *Chapter 19 – Social policy and employment*.

Property rights

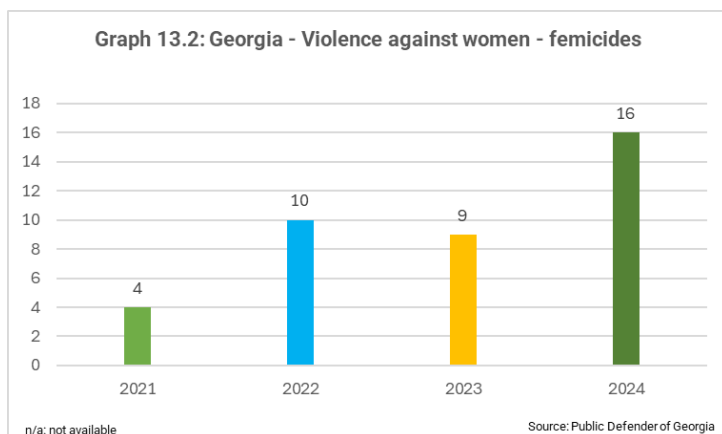
Legislative guarantees on property rights are in place. The process for the initial registration of land through the cadastral system has not been completed.

Non-discrimination

The legal and institutional framework on non-discrimination, hate crime and hate speech is incomplete, and the capacities of equality bodies are insufficient. This legal and



institutional framework remains to be fully aligned with the EU *acquis*, including *inter alia* as regards the Racial Equality Directive (Directive 2000/78/EC) and the Directives on standards for equality bodies (Directive (EU) 2024/1499 and Directive (EU) 2024/1500). Legislation on hate crime and hate speech is not in line with the EU *acquis* and European standards. Better enforcement of the Law on the elimination of all forms of discrimination and more tangible actions to improve the conditions of persons in vulnerable situations are needed. Hate offences, including from politicians, are widespread and remain largely unaddressed. Cases of hate crime are not investigated and not prosecuted effectively.



Gender equality

The legal and institutional framework on gender equality and combating gender-based violence is incomplete, and implementation and enforcement is insufficient. Recent developments constitute backsliding in gender equality and in efforts to combat sexual and gender-based violence. In April 2025, Parliament adopted amendments to remove the terms ‘gender’ and ‘gender equality’ from all Georgian legislation, replacing the

terms with ‘equality between women and men’. Gender focal points were replaced by women’s rights focal points. This shift marks a significant departure from previous efforts to align Georgia’s legal framework with international human rights standards and the EU gender equality *acquis*. Local human rights organisations reported instances of physical assaults, sexual harassment, and threats of rape or death by law enforcement officials directed at women participating in demonstrations.

The national action plans on combating violence against women and domestic violence and protecting victims expired. There was backsliding on the alignment with the Istanbul Convention and on efforts to address the 2022 recommendations by the Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO). In 2024, the Prosecutor’s Office identified 16 cases of femicide and 13 cases of attempted femicide. Various forms of gender-based violence against participants of protests were reported.

Georgia made no progress in encouraging municipalities to sign and implement the European Charter for Equality of Women and Men in Local Life. The legislative amendments removing the words ‘gender’ and ‘gender equality’ from the national legal framework have created additional barriers to adopting the Charter at local level.

Rights of the child

The legal and institutional framework on the rights of the child is in place, but its implementation and enforcement need to be improved. Although the Permanent Council on the Protection of the Rights of the Child was set up already in 2019, its work has not yet started. Implementation of the Code of the rights of the child remains a challenge. Implementation of a child-friendly justice reform, in accordance with the Juvenile Justice Code and the Code on the rights of the child, is still outstanding.

Implementation efforts in children’s rights protection should also be in line with the EU *acquis* and draw guidance from key European Commission recommendations, in particular as concerns integrated child protection systems, as there was still no progress on an integrated child protection system. Comprehensive data on violence against children is lacking, making it difficult to assess the scale of the problem. According to State Care Agency data, there were 2 055 cases of violence against children in 2024 compared with 1 564 in 2023.

The elimination of child marriage remains a challenge. Due to insufficient legislative regulation, cases of child marriage initiated by parents often go unrecorded in statistics with no proper response. In 2024, the official data reported 427 underage pregnant girls and 365 child parents. The Ministry of

Internal Affairs launched 184 investigations into possible crimes motivated by child marriage and issued 74 restraining orders.

Persons with disabilities

The legal and institutional framework on the rights of persons with disabilities needs to be further aligned with the EU *acquis* and its implementation and enforcement needs to be improved. Georgia has ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and its Optional Protocol, but persons with disabilities continue to face systemic barriers to the enjoyment of their rights. In contravention of the CRPD convention, Georgia relies on the medical model for determining disability status. The implementation of the biopsychosocial model is experiencing considerable delays, raising concerns about the timely introduction of the new system. The closure of a large institution in Martkopi at the end of 2024 marks progress in deinstitutionalisation, but further efforts are needed to ensure the full and effective implementation. The 2024 report by the PDO highlighted gaps in the provision of inclusive education for children with disabilities.

LGBTIQ persons

The legal protection of the rights of LGBTIQ persons is largely insufficient and LGBTIQ persons face serious discrimination, intolerance and systemic violence. Homophobic and transphobic rhetoric, including messages incited and amplified by high-level officials, continued.

The adoption of a legislative package on family values and the protection of minors in September 2024 reinforced a hostile environment for sections of the Georgian population and fuelled stigmatisation and discrimination, in addition to very adverse legal consequences for LGBTIQ persons. Its provisions include, among others, enshrining the prohibition for non-heterosexual persons to adopt children, preventing LGBTIQ persons from changing their gender marker on identification documents, and outlawing public gatherings and the distribution of information aimed at promoting LGBTIQ identities in educational settings and in the media. The Venice Commission considers the legislation to be incompatible with relevant European and international standards. Its adoption contributed to a surge in hate crimes and increased barriers for LGBTIQ persons in enjoying their rights related to healthcare, education, and employment.

The authorities not only fail to recognise and address the systemic nature of discrimination against LGBTIQ persons but amplify discrimination, intolerance and systemic violence. The national strategy for the protection of human rights and its action plan for 2024-26 omit considerations for the rights of LGBTIQ persons. Georgia has systematically failed in implementing ECtHR rulings, including in the *A.D and others v. Georgia* case. The impunity of instigators and organisers of violence that target LGBTIQ persons, including at Tbilisi Pride in 2021 and 2023, continues.

Procedural rights and victims' rights

The legal framework on procedural rights is incomplete, and its protection of victims' rights is insufficient. Violations of the right to a fair trial persist. The annual report by the PDO highlights cases of convictions solely on police testimonies, a lawyer's participation in investigative actions was denied, an obligation was imposed on the defence to maintain the confidentiality of case material without specific justification or scope, and there were delays in expert examinations. Violations of fair trial standards and due process guarantees were also reported during court proceedings of individuals detained during mass protests. In 2024, the ECtHR found violations of the right to a fair trial in six cases against Georgia. These mainly concerned delays in proceedings, and in two cases the issue of recusal of judges.

Protection of minorities

The legal and institutional framework for the protection of persons belonging to minorities is incomplete, and they face serious discrimination. Ethnic minorities continue to struggle with access to quality education and public services, participating in civic activities and finding employment in the civil service. Language and information barriers persist, in particular affecting political participation. Although minorities make up 13% of the population, only 5% of candidates in the 2024 elections belong to minority communities. The continued lack of regular consultative bodies at both national

and local levels limits the political representation of minorities. Significant gaps in the strategic framework, including the national strategy for the protection of human rights 2022-2030 and the state strategy for civic equality and integration 2021-2030, remain. The amendments to the Law on broadcasting risk restricting minority-language media access to funding.

Roma

There is no specific legislative framework to ensure the rights of Roma² people. The Roma communities continue to face discrimination, including with respect to access to housing, education and other government services.

Citizenship rights

Georgian citizenship can be acquired by birth, naturalisation, Presidential decision, restoration of citizenship, adoption or derivation. Georgia generally does not allow dual citizenship, but the President may grant permission to retain dual citizenship in special cases. The State Services Development Agency (SSDA) handles applications for citizenship. Georgia does not currently offer a formal, guaranteed citizenship-by-investment or “golden passport” programme, however, the country allows foreigners to acquire temporary or permanent residence permits via investment. In 2024, 3 587 persons, mostly from Russia (2 361), Germany (251) and Ukraine (175) were granted Georgian citizenship, 476 more than in 2023, while 1 592 lost their citizenship mostly due to their acquisition of Russian citizenship (802 cases).

2.2.2 Chapter 24: Justice, freedom and security

The EU has common rules for border and migration management, visa policy, and asylum. Schengen cooperation entails the lifting of border controls inside the EU. There is also cooperation in the fight against serious and organised crime and terrorism, and judicial, police and customs cooperation, all with the support of the EU justice and home affairs agencies.

Fight against serious and organised crime

The legal framework on serious and organised crime is partially aligned with the EU *acquis*. The capacity to fight against serious and organised crime needs to be improved.

Legal alignment, strategic and institutional frameworks

Further alignment is needed in the areas of fighting trafficking in human beings and the smuggling of migrants, confiscation of criminal assets, legislation on the interception of communications and legislation on the fight against financial crime and money laundering.

The separation of powers between criminal prosecution and investigation bodies has not yet been addressed.

Human resources management and professional development in law enforcement agencies should be strengthened in line with transparent, professional and merit-based criteria. In December 2024, legislation was adopted to lower recruitment standards for police officers. The percentage of female police officers in the police force fell to 14.7%. Further efforts are needed to ensure a higher gender balance in law enforcement agencies.

As part of the strategy for combating organized crime 2025-2028, approved by the Interagency Coordination Council for combating organized crime in August 2025, Georgia should further develop and implement a comprehensive and intelligence-led approach to combating serious and organised crime, by forming a better intelligence picture on high-risk criminal networks and supporting community-oriented policing, in line with the European Union Serious and Organised Crime Threat Assessment of March 2025. Georgia has not updated the 2021 assessment.

An effective and dedicated asset recovery office in line with European standards and an assets

² In line with the terminology of European institutions, the umbrella term ‘Roma’ is used here to refer to a number of different groups, without denying the specificities of these groups.

management office need to be established. The International Relations and Legal Department of the Prosecutor General’s Office manages the cooperation with asset recovery offices.

Georgia should establish the use of extended confiscation and confiscation of equivalent value as the norm in all cases involving income-generating serious crimes as well as the financing of terrorism.

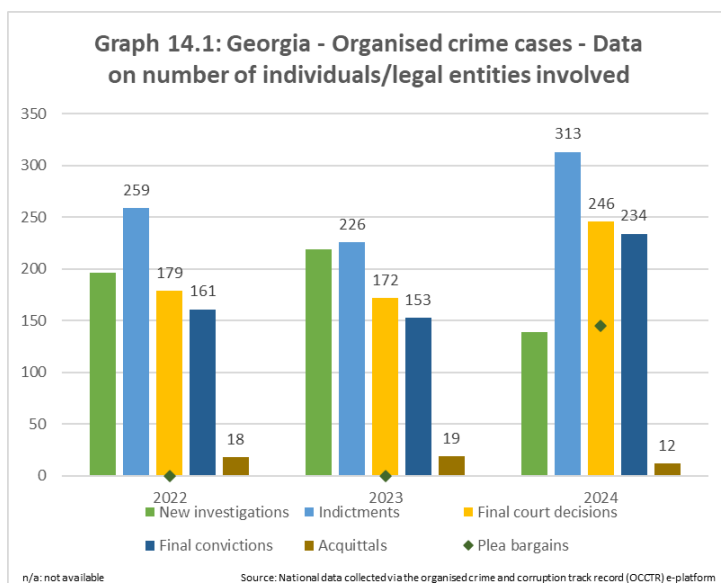
In July 2025, a division for combating organised criminal groups was established in the Central Criminal Police Department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

On **child sexual abuse online**, Georgia still needs to develop a national action plan for combating violence against children in the digital environment, aligned with the Lanzarote Convention.

Legislation on **trafficking in human beings** should be further aligned with Directive 2011/26/EU on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims.

Implementation and enforcement capacity

The number of criminal investigations decreased overall. The number of prosecutions and convictions increased for organised crime cases but decreased for serious crime cases. Efforts to combat the smuggling of goods and illicit substances need to be stepped up.

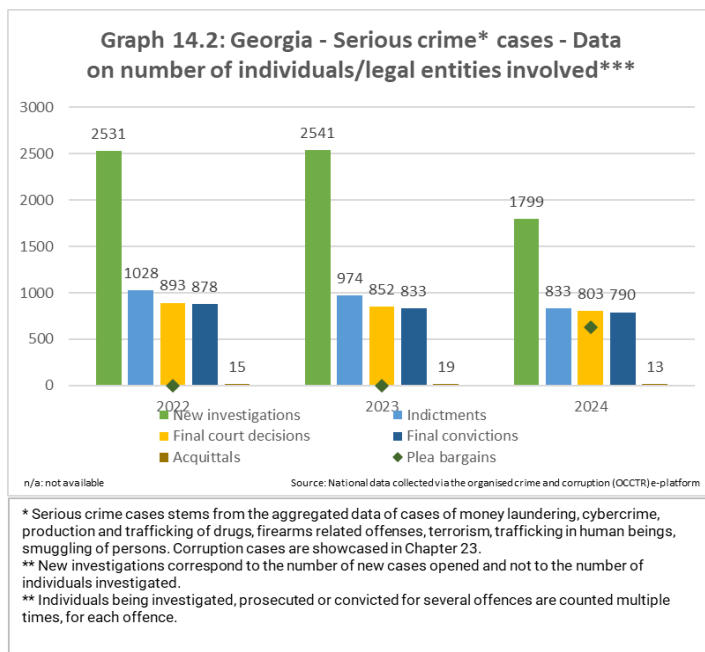


implementation of counter-trafficking action.

Efforts to strengthen community-oriented policing as an integral part of a long-term response to combating organised crime have continued. The Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) set up a working group on the development of community-oriented policing (COP) tasked with monitoring the implementation of the COP 2024-2027 strategy following its adoption in July 2024. COP efforts are severely undermined by the lack of accountability of law enforcement officers for repressive actions and the brutal crackdown on peaceful protesters since 28 November 2024.

Progress has been made in the forensic inspection field related to the crime scene with the international ISO accreditation of the forensic-criminalistics division of the MIA as well as the establishment of a DNA database created at the National Forensics Bureau.

Law enforcement agencies (police investigators and prosecutors) apply the ‘double rail’ method of



n/a: not available Source: National data collected via the organised crime and corruption (OCCTR) e-platform

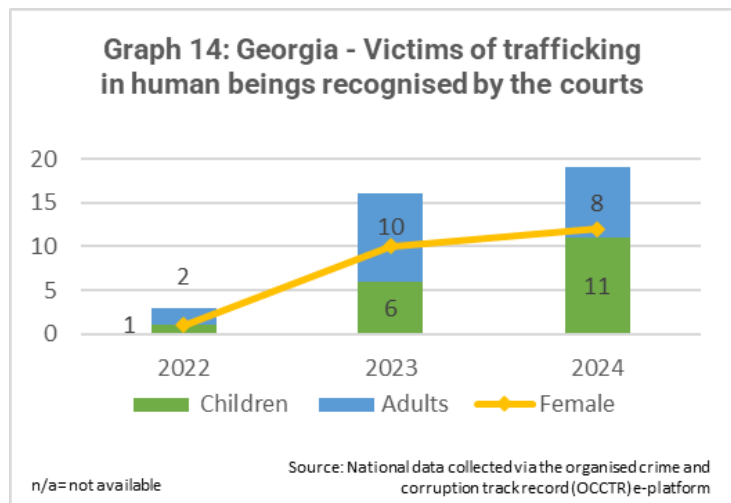
* Serious crime cases stems from the aggregated data of cases of money laundering, cybercrime, production and trafficking of drugs, firearms related offenses, terrorism, trafficking in human beings, smuggling of persons. Corruption cases are showcased in Chapter 23.
 ** New investigations correspond to the number of new cases opened and not to the number of individuals investigated.
 *** Individuals being investigated, prosecuted or convicted for several offences are counted multiple times, for each offence.

No progress was made on increasing the possibilities for law enforcement agencies to conduct independent investigations without the prior authorisation of the Prosecutor’s Office for the initial investigative steps. Prosecutors and investigators need to collaborate better at operational level.

Effective implementation of intelligence-led policing practices is still constrained by a lack of technical infrastructure to support analytical practices and institutional barriers that limit evidence-based practices. This also negatively impacts the

conducting criminal and financial investigations in parallel.

The amount of **seized and confiscated assets**, especially in relation to money laundering, has seen a substantial increase. Confiscated assets still remain low at less than EUR 14.3 million. In 2024, there was a fall in the number of registered investigations into **money laundering** crimes, while the number of solved cases remained low. The level of **cooperation with EU Member States'** law enforcement bodies is good. Georgia should increase participation in international police cooperation on drug trafficking and high-risk organised criminal networks. The number of pieces of operative information the MIA exchanged with Europol members and partner countries through the Secure Information Exchange Network Application (SIENA) increased since 2023 with 800 pieces of operative information exchanged between January and June 2025 and 1 400 in 2024. At the same time, Georgia increased its participation in Europol analytical projects.



The MIA continued cooperation with Interpol, and Georgia was actively involved in seven working groups. Georgia continued its cooperation with CEPOL, the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training (mainly through its Eastern Partnership regional project 'TOPCOP' (Training and Operational Partnership against Organised Crime).

The MIA deployed 19 police officers to partner countries (including 12 EU Member States) covering 38 countries (including 26 EU/Schengen countries).

Georgia increased its participation in the European Multidisciplinary Platform against Criminal Threats (EMPACT). In 2024-2025, the MIA participated in 10 operational action plans, taking on the role of co-leader in one, and 136 operational actions.

Georgia needs to strengthen its capacities to address **cybercrime**, in particular by further training agency employees involved in fighting cybercrime, including cybercrime on the dark net. Fewer cybercrime cases were resolved in 2024 (317) compared with 2023 (505), while fewer cases were registered (749 in 2024 compared to 999 in 2023).

Child sexual abuse cases that were prosecuted and resulted in convictions fell in 2024, with 143 cases prosecuted (191 in 2023) and 94 convictions secured (114 in 2023). National legislation on sexual violence against children remains substantially inconsistent with international standards, and institutional capacities need to be strengthened.

On **trafficking in human beings**, gaps persist in the implementation of protection measures, proactive investigations and intelligence-led policing. Georgia needs to further improve the effectiveness of criminal investigation capacities and strengthen institutional cooperation on effective investigations. In 2024, 19 statutory victims were recognised.

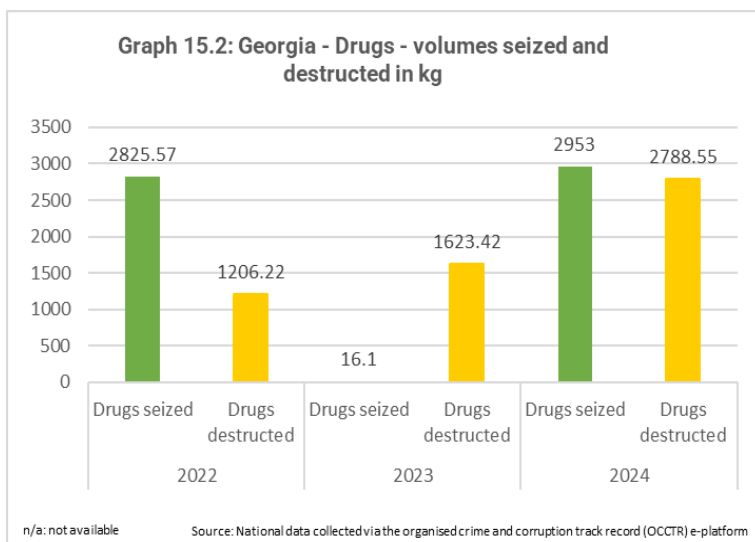
On **arms control**, 797 crimes were registered in 2024 (1 003 in 2023), of which 688 were solved.

Despite an increased legal response to cases of femicide, there are still gaps in investigation, prosecution and judicial review. Proper criminal legal qualification of cases remains challenging, demonstrated by the accusation of a less strict crime when legal and factual circumstances indicate a more severe crime.

Cooperation in the field of drugs

The legal framework for cooperation in the field of drugs needs to be improved.

Legal alignment, strategic and institutional frameworks



The national drug strategy 2023-2030 and the 2022-2026 national action plan are largely in line with the 2021-2025 EU drugs strategy. Amendments adopted in April and June 2025 tighten penalties for drug use and trafficking, including the rules on minimum sentences and penalties for drug-related criminal offences. Cooperation between the National Drugs Observatory and civil society has been severely limited against the background of repressive legislation on CSOs. The national early warning system on new psychoactive substances needs to be further strengthened, in particular as regards information exchange.

Implementation and enforcement capacity

Georgia remains a transit country along the Caucasus drugs route, which is increasingly used for smuggling heroin from Iran and Afghanistan to Türkiye and further into the EU. The number of investigations and final convictions of cases related to production and trafficking of drugs decreased in 2024. The volumes of drugs seized and destroyed increased in 2024. Enforcement and institutional capacity need to be strengthened, and international police cooperation on drug trafficking prevention increased.

Fight against terrorism and prevention of radicalisation and violent extremism

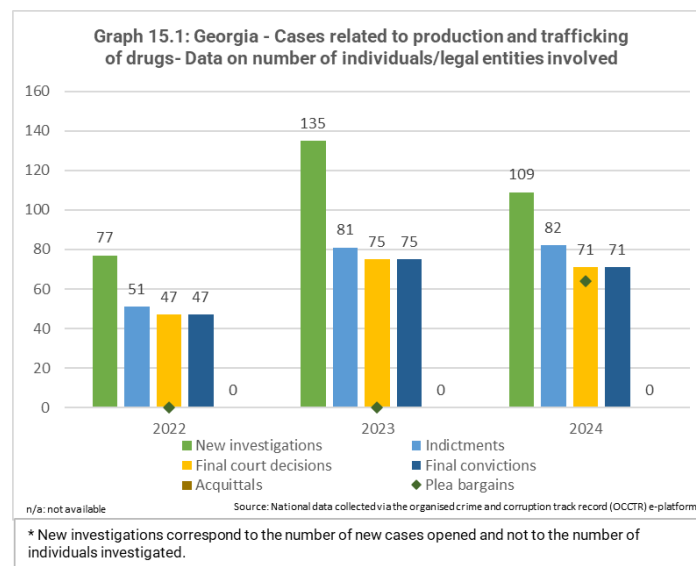
The fight against terrorism and violent extremism is broadly satisfactory.

Legal alignment, strategic and institutional frameworks

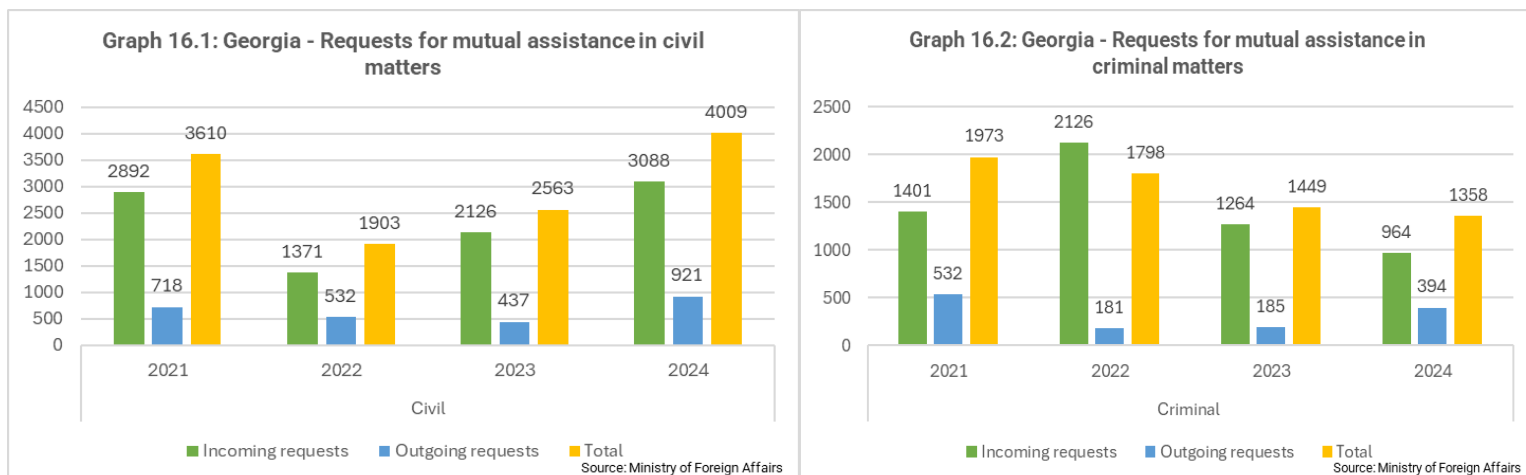
The legal framework for the fight against terrorism and for countering violent extremism is largely aligned with the EU *acquis*. The legal framework for critical infrastructure protection on cybersecurity is partially aligned with the EU *acquis*. The legal framework on the protection of critical infrastructure and the resilience of critical entities needs to be aligned with the Directive on the resilience of critical entities as well as with the Terrorist Content Online regulation.

Implementation and enforcement capacity

The national counterterrorism strategy for 2022-2026 and the corresponding action plan are being implemented and monitored by the Permanent Interagency Commission.



The terrorist threat level remains low and no incidents took place during the reporting period. The government undertook preventive counter-terrorism measures leading to arrests and convictions. Georgia continued to cooperate actively on counter-terrorism activities with Europol and Interpol and further participated in preventive counter-terrorism activities with international organisations including NATO and the UN.



Judicial cooperation in criminal, civil and commercial matters

Judicial cooperation in civil and criminal matters is broadly satisfactory. Georgia has yet to accede to two key instruments under the Hague conference on private international law: the 2000 Hague Convention on the International Protection of Adults and the 2019 Hague Convention on the Recognition and Enforcement of Foreign Judgments in Civil or Commercial Matters.

The number of incoming and outgoing requests for mutual legal assistance in criminal matters under the responsibility of the Prosecutor General’s Office increased in 2024. Georgia has also been participating in the negotiations on a new Council of Europe instrument that promises to strengthen judicial cooperation in matters of criminal asset recovery. The number of incoming and outgoing requests in civil matters under the responsibility of the Ministry of Justice increased substantially in 2024. Nevertheless, the execution of judicial cooperation requests in criminal matters experiences significant delays.

Cooperation with Eurojust, the European Union Agency for Criminal Justice Cooperation, continued. In 2025, Georgia participated in 88 new cases at Eurojust, including five Joint Investigation Teams coordinated by Eurojust (three in 2023) related to money laundering, fraud and cybercrime; the vast of majority of these cases (59) were opened at the request of the Liaison Prosecutor. The European Public Prosecutor’s Office (the EPPO) and the Prosecution Service of Georgia signed a working arrangement in September 2022, although there were no requests for mutual legal assistance exchanges in 2024 (one in 2023).

Legal and irregular migration

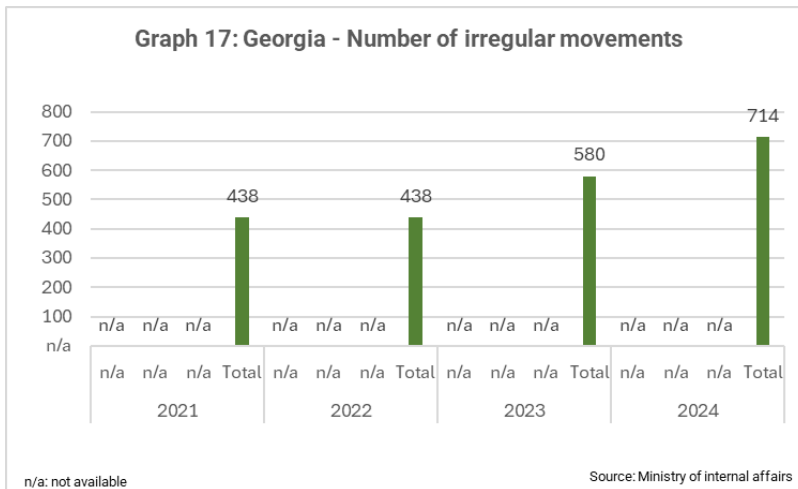
The legal framework for the management of legal and irregular migration is partially aligned with the EU *acquis*. The management of legal and irregular migration needs to be improved.

Legal alignment, strategic and institutional frameworks

Legal amendments on the Law on labour migration were adopted in June 2025.

The migration strategy 2021-2030 and integrated border management strategy 2023-2027 are being implemented. The annual action plan for 2025 was adopted in December 2024, complementing the 2021-2030 migration strategy. Further efforts are needed to achieve the set targets and improve data collection, analyses and evidence-based policymaking.

The institutional framework for migration and border management remains well established. The migration policy coordination framework is overall in line with effective international practice, and



the State Commission on Migration Issues continues to efficiently fulfil its role. The institutional set-up of migration management needs capacity strengthening and increased budgetary resources.

Georgia has readmission agreements with the EU, and bilaterally with Denmark, as well as with the UK, Iceland, Norway, Switzerland, Montenegro, Moldova, Belarus, Armenia and Ukraine. It also

has implementing protocols with 13 EU Member States.

Implementation and enforcement capacity

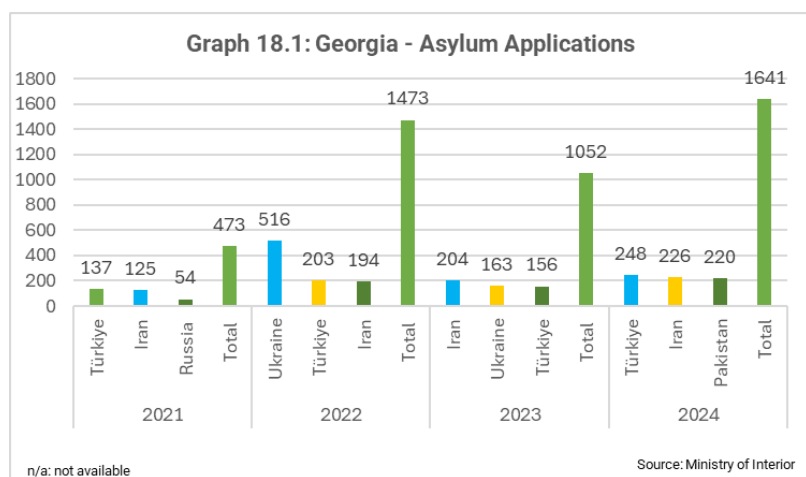
The number of Georgians applying for asylum in EU Member States declined by 40% in 2024 (14 765 applications). Despite this significant reduction, Georgia remains among the top 30 countries for asylum applications despite the recognition rate staying low. Health-driven migration is still on the rise and the overall rates of outward migration including irregular migration remain high.

The implementation of the readmission agreement with the EU is very good. In 2024, 11 525 Georgians effectively returned following an order to leave the territory (10 195 in 2023).

In 2024, 75% of the total number of returnees from Georgia did not receive any reintegration support by sending European countries (88% in 2023). Georgia needs to increase return support and delegate more functions and resources on reintegration to local government.

Georgia is increasingly a destination country for migration. In 2024, 363 return decisions were issued by the MIA, with the top three nationalities being Azerbaijan (71), Iran (54) and India (33).

Service capacities connected to Georgia's increased migration flows need to be strengthened. There is only one temporary accommodation centre in Tbilisi, which mainly functions as a migration detention centre with a capacity of around 80 people at a time. Between 1 January 2023 and 31 March 2025, 57 minors were placed in the temporary accommodation centre. The Public Defender raised concerns about the detention of minors, in particular on allegations of torture and inhuman or degrading treatment, which have been referred to the now-abolished Special Investigation Service.



Asylum

The legal framework on asylum is partially aligned with the EU *acquis*. The management of asylum needs to be improved.

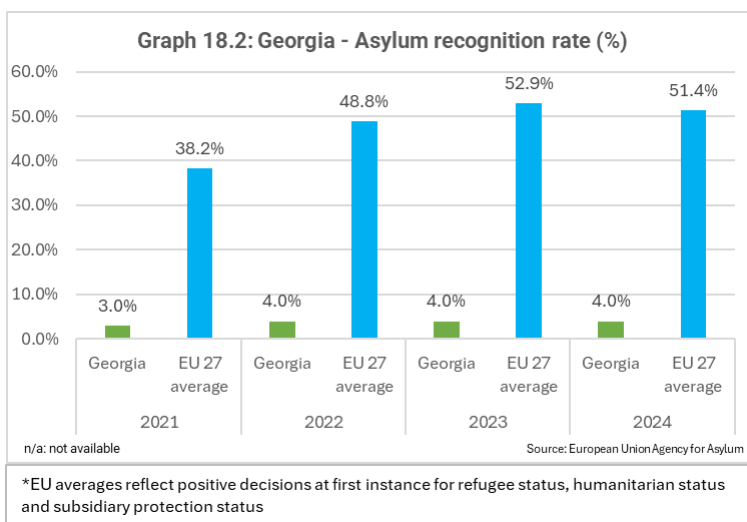
Legal alignment, strategic and institutional frameworks

Legal amendments to the asylum system included in a package of 18 laws on foreign citizens were adopted in June 2025. The amendments fail to provide a mechanism for detecting and addressing

cases of refoulement. The right of applicants to international protection must be guaranteed through procedural safeguards.

Implementation and enforcement capacity

In 2024, 1 641 individuals applied for asylum in Georgia (compared to 1 052 in 2023), the majority from Türkiye (248), Iran (226) and Pakistan (220). The total recognition rate in 2024 was 4% for Geneva convention refugees. 1 418 applications for asylum were rejected, 11 people were granted refugee status and 104 humanitarian status. There are currently an estimated 30 000 Ukrainian citizens in Georgia.



In March 2025, the visa-free stay of Ukrainian citizens who entered Georgia after 24 February 2022 was extended by one year. However, the maximum duration of visa-free stays was reduced from three years to one year. Asylum decisions are issued within 11.7 months on average.

Visa policy

Georgia is not complying with and departed further from the recommendations of the seventh visa suspension mechanism report. These still need to be addressed for continued compliance with visa liberalisation requirements.

Georgia continues to pursue a visa policy that diverges substantially from the EU *acquis*, particularly by granting entry to nationals of visa-required countries on the basis of a visa or residence permit issued by a third country. To combat irregular migration, as of May 2025 the conditions for visa-free travel have been restricted for nationals of 17 countries with a visa and/or residence permit valid for less than one year issued by the Gulf countries (United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait or Oman).

The list of third countries with which Georgia maintains visa-free regimes is not fully aligned with the list of third countries whose nationals are subject to a visa for short stays in the EU. Georgia now has a visa-free regime with 26 countries that are subject to a visa for short stays in the EU.

Security features of visas and travel documents are broadly aligned with EU standards.

Due to Georgia's breach of the fundamental principles on which the EU-Georgia Visa Facilitation Agreement was concluded, the Commission adopted a proposal for a Council decision for a partial suspension of the Agreement in December 2024. The adopted partial suspension provides for the suspension of the visa exemption for Georgian diplomats and visa facilitations for Georgian diplomats and officials. In January 2025, the Council adopted the Commission proposal. Following this decision, the Member States will no longer need to exempt Georgian diplomats from the visa requirement and to facilitate the issuance of visas to Georgian holders of diplomatic and service passports. By September 2025, 19 EU Member States had adopted the necessary internal measures to implement the Council decision on suspending visa facilitation and stopped exempting Georgian holders of diplomatic and service passports from visa requirements,

The seventh visa suspension mechanism report contained recommendations, including to ensure the protection of fundamental rights, to repeal any legislation that may restrict fundamental rights and freedoms, to align Georgia's visa policy with the EU list of visa-required third countries. and to ensure the Anti-Corruption Bureau's effective independence, political neutrality and functions.

Schengen governance and external borders

The legislative and strategic framework for the management of external borders is partially aligned with the EU *acquis*. The management of borders is broadly satisfactory.

Legal alignment, strategic and institutional frameworks

Georgia continued strategic engagement under the integrated border management (IBM) framework. The IBM strategy and its five-year action plan (2023-2027) are broadly based on the EU concept of IBM. The 2025 action plan for the implementation of the integrated risk analysis model of the State border of Georgia was approved in December 2024. Strategic decision-making remains a challenge, and the implementation of key reforms continues to be constrained by institutional fragmentation, lack of coordination and limited resources. Institutional and human resource capacity needs to be strengthened.

Implementation and enforcement capacity

The IBM strategy and the annual action plan are being implemented. Some infrastructure improvements were recorded in 2024, including the renovation and partial upgrade of border crossing points, border sectors and posts. In 2024, a new patrol police incident recording system was developed. The previous system has been in operation since 2019. In December 2024, Georgia joined the European Common Transit Convention and began using the new computerised transit system. It facilitates the secure and paperless cross-border movement of goods.

Substantial further investments are still required to address critical gaps in surveillance and control, particularly along green and blue borders. The border management information system needs upgrading.

Institutional and inter-agency coordination remains weak. The capacities of the border guard services and border police need further strengthening.

Cooperation with the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex) was decreased in the context of EU measures taken in response to the country's democratic backsliding but continues to be effective, particularly in the field of returns. Georgia cooperated with Frontex on a joint operation, capacity building, combating document fraud and returns. A Frontex contingent is present at selected border crossing points in an advisory capacity.

Cross-border cooperation with neighbouring countries remains satisfactory. Measures to fight corruption need to be strengthened.

Counterfeiting of the euro (criminal law aspects)

The relevant legislation on the suppression of counterfeit currency is partially aligned with the EU *acquis*. No progress was made in aligning legislation with the *acquis* in the reporting period.

All aspects of customs cooperation are covered in Chapter 29 – Customs Union.

2.3. ECONOMIC CRITERIA

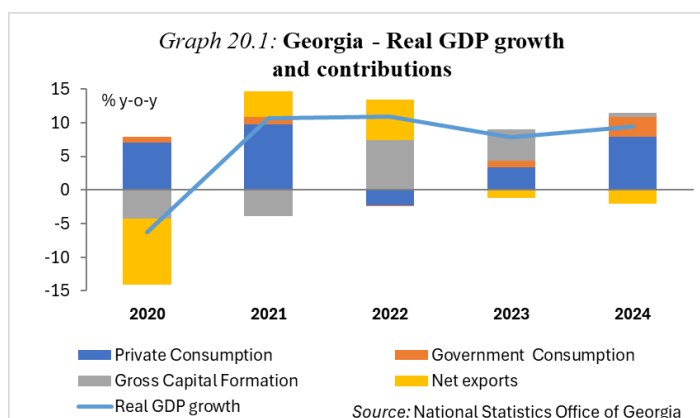
Table 19:

Georgia - Key economic figures

- GDP per capita (% of EU-27 in PPS)
- Real GDP growth
- Economic activity rate of the population
- Unemployment rate of the population
- Employment of the population aged 2
- Nominal wages (annual growth %)
- Consumer price index (annual growth %)
- Exchange rate against EUR
- Current account balance (% of GDP)
- Net foreign direct investment, FDI (% of GDP)
- General government balance (% of GDP)
- General government debt (% of GDP)

Notes:

Sources: National Statistics Office of Georgia, IMF, National Bank of Georgia, Ministry of Finance of Georgia, own calculations



2.3.1 The existence of a functioning market economy

Economic governance

The authorities' course of action and the decision not to pursue EU accession negotiations until 2028 has created considerable uncertainty. Progress on economic reforms was limited and concerns about central bank independence remain. The authorities advanced with selected public finance reforms, for instance by publishing the medium-term revenue strategy, albeit with a limited scope of planned reforms and without their quantification and timeline. They also started a new phase of modernisation of the Revenue Service and published a report assessing the economic impact of existing tax expenditures in agriculture. The implementation of the 2023-2026 Public Finance Management strategy based on the public expenditure and financial accountability (PEFA) assessment continued, with some specific dimensions considered as requiring further efforts, such as annual financial consolidated reporting, public asset management, and municipal finances. No progress was made on strengthening the legislation related to independence of the central bank, although the vacancies at the NBG board were filled. The three-year stand-by arrangement with the IMF had been suspended since mid-2023 and expired in June 2025.

Macroeconomic stability

Georgia recorded strong growth, driven by private and government consumption, continuing to benefit from the recovery in tourism, high- skilled migrants from Russia and the reallocation of certain services and trade routes away from Russia following its full-scale war of aggression against Ukraine. GDP growth reached 9.4% in 2024. Private and government consumption were the most important growth factors, stimulated by strong wage increases, employment growth and fast-growing consumer loans. Investment also continued to rise in the same period, supported by higher business lending, good financial results of enterprises and strong public investment. The contributions of net exports of goods and services and of inventories to growth were negative. On the supply side, the value added increased most in ICT, construction, tourism, transport, education and other services.

Growth appeared resilient, but it is subject to downside risks, reflecting in particular the heightened political instability and uncertain international environment. According to preliminary figures, growth continued in the first half of 2025, reaching 8% year-on-year in the first

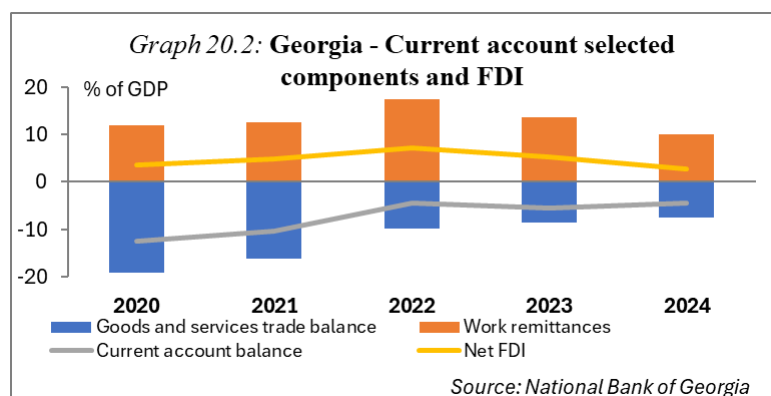
seven months of the year. However, Georgia's economy is subject to a high degree of uncertainty. The deterioration of the domestic political situation and the *de facto* halt of the EU accession process may adversely affect the confidence of investors and consumers, discourage tourism and put renewed pressure on the Georgian currency, the lari.

The current account deficit narrowed to 4.4% of GDP in 2024 from 5.6% of GDP in 2023. Goods exports increased by 6% in USD terms, thanks to a rebound in demand for metallurgical products and re-exported cars. Imports increased by 7%, due to higher domestic demand for investment and consumer goods and despite lower prices of imported oil. The merchandise trade deficit deteriorated in 2024. A stronger surplus in services, especially in tourism which benefited mainly from arrivals from Russia, Türkiye and the EU, and a lower net outflow of investment income have helped reduce the current account deficit. On the other hand, lower inflow of remittances reflecting the reduction in money transfers from Russia, had the opposite effect.

Foreign direct investment (FDI) inflows and international reserves decreased in 2024. FDI inflows decreased from 6.3% of GDP in 2023 to 4.6% of GDP in 2024. The drop was particularly noticeable in equity investment. Georgia has a strongly negative net international investment position and relatively high external debt. However, both decreased in the last three years, mainly due to nominal GDP growing faster than external debt. As of December 2024, they stood at -89% and 75% of GDP respectively. The level of gross official foreign reserves dropped from USD 5 billion at the end of 2023 to USD 4.1 billion in November 2024, which was caused by foreign exchange interventions of the central bank, aimed at stabilising the lari in view of domestic uncertainty. Since then, the central bank has replenished its reserves to USD 5.2 billion in August 2025, which is still

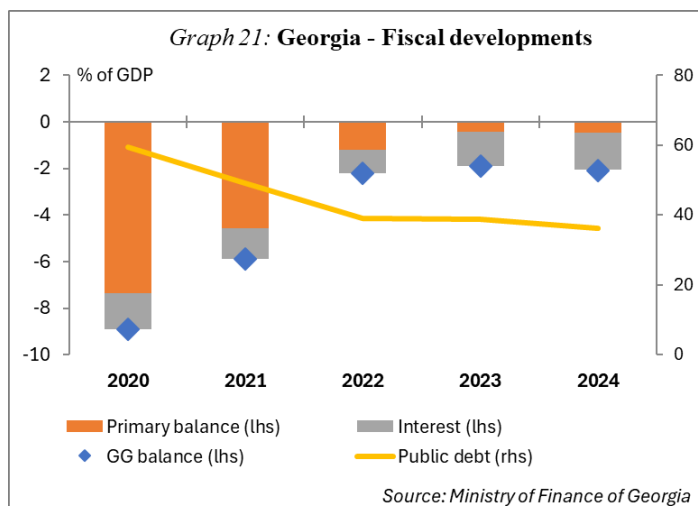
below the authorities' desirable range of 120-130% of the IMF's Assessing Reserve Adequacy metrics.

Average consumer price inflation slowed to 1.1% in 2024 thanks to low imported inflation and the central bank's prudent monetary policy, but in 2025 it gradually picked up to 4.6% in August. The acceleration of consumer prices can be attributed



to the pass-through from wage increases and rising food prices, as well as to base effects. Core inflation, excluding food and energy, reached 3% in August. The central bank has kept its policy rate unchanged at 8% since May 2024.

General government revenue in 2024 was much stronger than expected, although current expenditure grew even faster. Public revenue increased by 18% compared to 2023, boosted by economic expansion, in particular wage increases stimulating personal income tax revenues, as well as by discretionary measures, such as increases in gambling fees and a tax reform in the banking sector. Current expenditure increased by 20% in the same period, mainly due to rising public sector salaries and interest expenditure. The already high capital expenditure rose by 10%. The general government deficit stood at 2.1% of GDP in 2024, below the initially planned 2.5% of GDP. General government debt fell from 38.9% of GDP in 2023 to 36.1% of GDP in 2024, largely due to the debt-reducing effect of high nominal GDP growth.



The macroeconomic policy mix was broadly appropriate. While the rise in current expenditures by 20%, and especially of public sector salaries by 30% over the previous year, was high, this one-off adjustment could help public sector compete with private sector for qualified staff. The monetary policy of the central bank was sufficiently tight to anchor inflation expectations in the situation of high domestic and global uncertainty. The key risks to macroeconomic stability include, among others, domestic political developments, which may adversely affect business and consumer sentiment, the developments regarding Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, as well as the slowdown in global trade.

Functioning of product markets

Georgia has a fairly dynamic business fabric, but many structural weaknesses still hamper the business environment, and there was very limited progress in addressing them last year.

Georgia's business environment has been liberalised and the barriers to market entry are low. Georgia has one of the highest firm birth rates and one of the lowest company survival rates in Europe. There is evidence of weak productivity growth in individual companies and a continued reliance on low-sophisticated markets, while companies face high costs to enter the EU market (including lack of standardisation and the associated infrastructure). The main obstacles for businesses include political instability, an inadequately educated workforce, court inefficiency and exchange rates fluctuations.

There is scope to further reduce the share of the informal economy. Informality in Georgia is closely linked to the country's economic structure which is dominated by agriculture, construction and tourism, a lack of unemployment benefits, a large share of self-employment and a high share of cash payments. In October 2024, the authorities established an inter-ministerial working group to prepare a programme for reducing the informal economy in a holistic, government-wide manner. The working group launched cooperation with the International Labour Organisation (ILO) with a request to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the informal economy in Georgia, including its size and structure, to serve as a basis for the further analysis of employment, revenue generation, and other key issues related to informal economy. areas. The working group and the ILO organised workshops with employers' and workers' organisations to gather their insights on the root causes of informality.

Progress on the reform of state-owned enterprises (SOEs) has been slow, while the financial oversight has improved. The state footprint in the economy remains limited: SOEs accounted for 4.2% of Georgia value added and 8% of employment in 2024. The authorities piloted a shared ownership of three SOEs by ministries of economy and finance, appointed independent supervisory boards at several SOEs, established SOE performance targets. However, no agreement on strengthening the exercise of the ownership function has been found yet. The Ministry of Finance continues to gradually enhance financial oversight by bringing the accounts of 114 SOEs into the single treasury account to better monitor contingent fiscal risks. The revenues from privatisation and sales of state property amounted to 0.26% of GDP in 2024. The total amount of state aid issued by public bodies in Georgia was very low at 0.01% of GDP but the reporting methodology is not aligned with the EU *acquis* requirements. The extent of price regulations remains very limited in Georgia. Public funds for business development have increased in the last few years, especially those provided by the agency Enterprise Georgia in three areas: co-financing of business loans, investment promotion and export support.

Functioning of the financial market

The Georgian banking sector remains sound, although it is exposed to foreign exchange risks. According to data from the National Bank of Georgia, the banking system's capital adequacy ratio stood at 23% in July 2025. Most lenders remained very profitable, reaching an aggregate 22.1% return on equity. The asset quality of the sector as a whole remains strong, with the ratio of non-performing loans to total loans broadly unchanged at a low 2.6%. The high dollarisation of both assets and liabilities remains a structural weakness of the banking system although, from a financial stability perspective, banks have ample foreign exchange buffers. The share of loans in foreign currencies remained broadly stable in the reporting period and amounted to 40% in July 2025. The level of dollarisation for deposits is higher compared to loans and slightly increased in the last months of 2024 to 51.5% reflecting the heightened uncertainty, before decreasing to 50.0% in July 2025. Credit

growth remained strong at 14.9% in July 2025 (excluding the effect of exchange-rate fluctuations) for both corporate and retail loans. Access to finance is still perceived as a major obstacle for many small businesses, although the situation has improved in the recent period.

The insurance sector and the capital market are still underdeveloped. The local securities market is characterised by its small size, low liquidity and dominance of government securities, as well as an inactive secondary market. Some improvements have been achieved thanks to the implementation of the 2023-2028 capital market development strategy. For instance, the Capital Market Support State Programme was significantly revised in September 2024 to co-finance the costs of issuance of bonds by Georgian companies and of their credit ratings, with a view to improving businesses' access to finance. In June 2025, amendments were made to the law on investment funds.

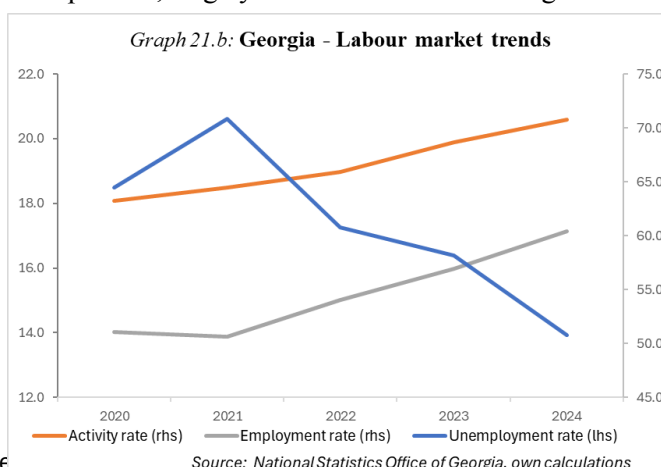
Functioning of the labour market

The situation on the labour market has further improved, supported by the economic expansion, but weaknesses remain. The employment rate among the population aged 20-64³ rose from 56.9% in 2023 to 60.4% in 2024, but is still well below the Member States with the lowest employment rate (67%). The unemployment rate among the population aged over 15 decreased from 16.4% in 2023 to 13.9% in 2024. The capacities of the State Employment Support Agency continued to develop, with an extension of its network in municipalities. A new national strategy of labour and employment policy still needs to be adopted. Some structural labour market weaknesses persist, including the persistent mismatch between labour skills and business needs, high youth unemployment, significant gender disparities and regional differences. Following a dynamic rise in 2023, real wages increased strongly again in 2024, by 15%. This reflects several factors: the spillover effects from wages of high-skilled migrants from Russia, in particular in the IT sector, strong demand allowing Georgian companies to compensate rising living costs, especially of housing rents in the main cities, labour shortages in some production sectors.

2.3.2. The capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union

Education and innovation

Georgia continued to upgrade its education framework but the mismatch between skills and business needs remains an issue. Government expenditure on education in 2024 increased to 3.9% of GDP but was still below the EU average; there is also potential to enhance spending efficiency of current education resources. Reform efforts focused on the vocational education and training (VET) system, which included the adoption of the VET strategy in September 2024, the development of occupational and educational standards for VET, the upgrading of teachers' qualifications and the development of their networks. The compulsory general education age was increased from 15 to 16 years and a reform of pre-school education was implemented. Despite the ongoing reforms, the mismatch between skills and private sector needs persists, largely due to outdated teaching methods, insufficient cooperation between businesses and educational institutions, and a lack of clearly defined skill requirements from businesses. The private sector's participation in skills development programmes is low despite significant external support. Sectoral skills organisations are being developed as a way to bridge the gap between industry and education, although they face challenges like limited sectoral cooperation and



³ Eurostat's employment indicators are calculated based on International Labour Organisation definitions covering the population aged 15 years or older. Therefore, according to Geostat definitions, the employment rate in Georgia was 47.1% in 2024.

capacity.

Georgia is making efforts to improve its innovation environment but spending on research and development is still very low, at 0.3% of GDP. Georgia ranked 57th (out of 133 economies) in the 2024 Global Innovation Index, an improvement from 63rd in 2022. The Georgia Innovation and Technology Agency continued to support innovative start-ups and training, with a focus on the ICT sector. The authorities also decided to build a Technology Hub in Kutaisi, including a technology park, industrial innovation laboratory, an IT and technology school and other facilities.

Physical capital and quality of infrastructure

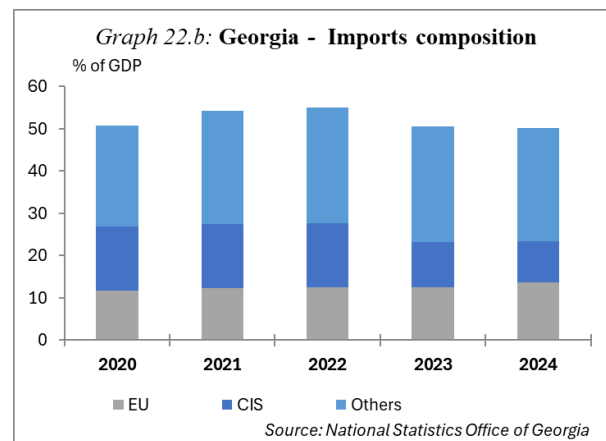
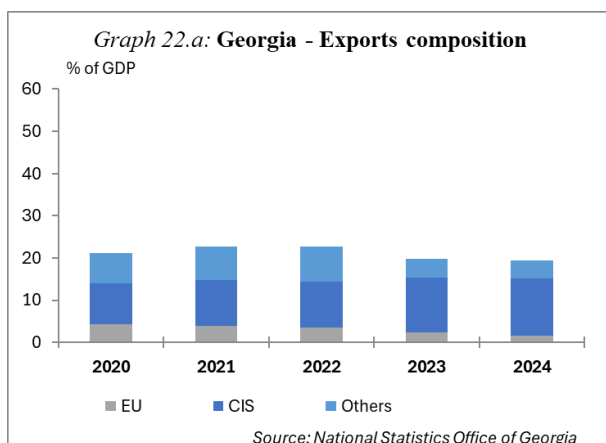
Public investment has remained high (over 8.5% of GDP in 2024), with a focus on transport infrastructure. In line with Public Investment Management (PIM) reform, all new larger investment projects are selected in accordance with the new PIM methodology before being included in the relevant budget. In the reporting period, significant progress was made with the completion of several sections of the East-West Highway, as well as with upgrading of the secondary road network. The recent railway modernisation project is nearing completion, but large parts of the rail network and rolling stock are still obsolete. The development of a new deep-water port in Anaklia started in 2024 as part of the Middle Corridor connecting China and Central Asia with Europe, bypassing Russia. A Chinese consortium was selected as an investor in this port, but an investment agreement has not been finalised yet. In October 2024, the construction of a new runway at Kutaisi airport also began. In the energy sector, the government is focused on expanding the transmission network and on securing private investment for new wind, solar and hydropower plants. Following two big auctions for renewable power generation in 2024, the authorities assessed the applications received for further renewable projects, to be granted via direct contracting. Preparatory activities continued for the Black Sea Submarine Cable project, intended to link Georgia with Romania by electricity and fibre-optic submarine cable interconnections. In the area of information and communications technology, the penetration of fixed broadband internet subscribers among households increased and reached 99%. The authorities continued to invest in fibre networks in more remote regions. However, issues such as relatively high prices of high-speed fixed broadband, insufficient digital skills and weak international digital connectivity persist.

Sectoral and enterprise structure

The economy is increasingly based on services, with a diminishing role of agriculture and manufacturing. Services increased their share in GDP to 71.9% in 2024, with the biggest gains recorded last year by the information and communication technology, education and tourism sectors. The share of construction is relatively high at 8.4%, thanks to a residential construction boom in big cities and substantial investment in public infrastructure. The share of manufacturing, at 9.3%, is relatively low in Georgia compared to peer countries and diminishing. Agriculture, a traditionally important sector but characterised by low productivity, declined to 6.2% of GDP in 2024, but still accounts for 16% of total employment. SMEs accounted for 54% of the value added of the enterprise sector and the same share in employment.

Economic integration with the EU and price competitiveness

Economic integration with the EU is limited. The EU share in Georgia's exports fell from 11.6% in 2023 to 8.7% in 2024. This reflected a decline in the value of exports to the EU by 19%, but also a surge in re-exports of cars from Georgia to Central Asia. Georgia's imports from the EU rose in 2024 by 2.7 percentage points to 27.2% of the total. As a result, Georgia's trade deficit with the EU increased to over USD 4 billion, or 12% of GDP. In contrast, Georgia had a positive, albeit much smaller, balance in trade services with the EU (equal to 1% of GDP). In 2024, the EU remained the biggest source of remittances to Georgia (43% of the total, or 4.5% of GDP) and the second source of foreign direct investment after the UK (23% of the total, 1% of GDP).



The real effective exchange rate of the lari depreciated by 4% in twelve months until July 2025. The real exchange rate of the Georgian currency weakened especially against the euro and Turkish lira, while it strengthened against the US dollar and Russian ruble. As regards nominal exchange rates, the effective rate of lari remained broadly stable over the last twelve months, while it weakened against the euro, strengthened against the lira and remained stable against the US dollar.

2.4. PUBLIC PROCUREMENT, STATISTICS, FINANCIAL CONTROL

Chapter 5 - Public procurement

EU rules ensure that the public procurement of goods, services and works in any Member State is transparent and open to all EU companies on the basis of non-discrimination and equal treatment.

Institutional set-up and legal alignment

The **legal framework** is partially aligned with the EU *acquis* on public procurement. The entry into force of the new Law on public procurement was postponed to January 2027 on the grounds that it requires significant adjustments to align with EU legislation. Georgia's rules in the area of defence and sensitive security procurement are not fully aligned with Directive 2009/81/EC, and its legislation remains not aligned with the EU *acquis* on utilities, and concessions and public-private partnerships.

The current legislation safeguards the independence of the Procurement Dispute Resolution Council (PDRC). The Council is independent, and its members are selected through public competitive procedure and later appointed by the Prime Minister.

Implementation and enforcement capacity

On the **public procurement market**, in 2024, 30 014 open electronic tenders were announced through the unified electronic system for state procurement (6.43% less than in 2023). Of these, approximately 88.6% were NAT (tender with no auction) tenders, 6.4% - SPA (with auction) tenders and 5% were all other electronic procurement procedures. In 3 623 cases, procuring entities used direct award procedure. The total volume of public procurement transactions carried out dropped from 13.1% of the country's GDP in 2023 to 9% in 2024.

The State Procurement Agency (SPA) continues to provide training sessions on procurement procedures and practice to line ministries, municipalities and SOEs (273 officials in 2024). Works on setting up an online contracting process monitoring system have not been completed.

Overall, the legal and institutional framework regarding **integrity and management of conflicts of interest** is in place. However, risk assessments within the contracting authorities, internal and external controls remain weak. SPA regularly monitors public procurement procedures applied by procuring entities. In case of irregularities, SPA can issue administrative orders or take cases to court. Monitoring statistics results are reported annually. In 2024, five consolidated tenders were appealed by SPA, of which two were terminated based on the petition, and three are under review.

Efficient remedy system

Georgia made no progress in aligning the legislation with the EU *acquis* on the **right to legal remedy**. In 2024, the PDRC dealt with 1 164 complaints compared to 1 006 complaints in 2023. Of these, 63% of complaints were decided in favour of businesses.

Chapter 18 - Statistics

European statistics are developed, produced and disseminated by EU Member States, guided by the principles and quality criteria elaborated in the Regulation on European statistic, such as professional independence, impartiality, reliability, accessibility and statistical confidentiality. Common rules are provided for the methodology, production and dissemination of statistical information, which are further specified in sectoral legislation that constitute the EU acquis on statistics.

Statistical infrastructure

Regarding the **statistical infrastructure**, Georgia's legal framework remains partially aligned with European standards and principles laid down in the European Statistics Code of Practice. An Inter-Agency Coordination Council was established in March 2025 to strengthen coordination. The institutional framework needs further strengthening, including human resources and technical capacity of the National Statistics Office.

On **registers and classifications** there has been no progress in agreeing on NUTS-equivalent statistical regions. The updated international classifications for economic activities, products, occupations and education should be adopted and put into use. The production and dissemination of timely and high-quality data improved. Georgia started to transmit data to Eurostat for the national statistical business register, but further development of the register is needed as a quarter of the mandatory variables required by regulations on European Business Statistics are missing or incomplete.

Regarding **macroeconomic statistics**, Georgia prepares national accounts in line with international methodology from 2008, calculating GDP by production, expenditure and income and based on the relevant classification of activities, but data are not transmitted to Eurostat.

As regards **social and agricultural statistics**, a population and agricultural census was conducted at the end of 2024 after previous delays.

Despite a slight increase over the period the level of compliance for many statistical domains cannot be assessed because Georgia's data and metadata reporting and transmission of data to Eurostat is very limited. Georgia has increased transmission and its compliance level for **education, transport, business, energy efficiency and environmental** statistics.

The National Statistics Office of Georgia (Geostat) increased accessibility of official statistics for its users through the introduction of a new interactive energy portal in June 2025. Furthermore, in December 2024, Geostat introduced 37 new indicators to the regional and municipal statistics portal, which now features 161 indicators at municipal level, covering a wide range of sectors including population and demographics, health, education, culture, construction, tourism, business register and business.

Chapter 32 - Financial control

The EU promotes the reform of national governance systems to improve managerial accountability, sound financial management of income and expenditure, and external audit of public funds. The financial control rules further protect the EU's financial interests against fraud in the management of EU funds and the Euro against counterfeiting.

Public internal financial control

The practical implementation of **financial management and control system** remains at an early stage of development. The new 2025-2028 Strategy for the development of the public internal financial control system (PIFC) was adopted in May 2025. The focus remains on improving methodologies and promoting awareness and accountability in central ministries as well as on implementing a pilot in three selected ministries.

As of 2024, in eight central ministries, coordinators for the risk management process have been appointed, and the corresponding training has been provided. Additionally, risk registers have been developed in collaboration with sectoral departments.

In the field of **internal audit**, the new global standard set by the Institute of Internal Auditors was approved and entered into force in January 2025. 19 auditors from ministries and municipalities received qualification certificates.

The **central harmonisation unit**, set up in the Ministry of Finance, remains understaffed and lacks a suitable mandate to support effectively PIFC reform implementation.

External audit

The implementation rate of the State Audit Office (SAO) recommendations by the executive remains low (below 50%). The constitution includes guarantees for the independence of the SAO and the SAO Law guarantees the independence of the Auditor General (AG). However, the independence of the decision-making power of the AG is not mentioned explicitly in the Constitution.

The mandate for auditing tax revenues is not clearly defined and large SOEs are not being audited. In addition, the head of the SAO is not given an appointment with sufficiently long and fixed terms to allow them to carry out their mandates independently.

Since 2025, the SAO conducts a financial audit of the government's consolidated financial statements, replacing the previous practice of auditing individual ministries. As a result, the coverage of the consolidated budget will increase significantly to 96% (compared to 88% in 2023). This shift will ensure full compliance with international standards and assessments, such as the supreme audit institution performance measurement framework, the IMF fiscal transparency evaluation, and the public expenditure and financial accountability programme.

Protection of the EU's financial interests

Georgia started the legal approximation with EU *acquis* requirements and in particular the Directive on the fight against fraud against the EU's financial interests by means of criminal law. No **anti-fraud coordination service** has been officially designated but the Prosecution Service of Georgia acts as focal point for cooperation with the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) and the European Public Prosecution Office. There were no requests by the latter in 2024 (one in 2023).

In 2025, the Financial Investigations Unit further strengthened its institutional structure by establishing a Strategic Analysis Department. This new unit represents a shift toward a more intelligence-led and proactive approach to financial supervision and national risk assessment. The department is mandated to conduct thematic, forward-looking analyses on money laundering and terrorism financing trends and typologies.

Protection of the Euro against counterfeiting

No developments were reported regarding further alignment with the EU *acquis*. In 2000, Georgia acceded to the 1929 International (Geneva) Convention for the Suppression of Counterfeiting Currency but has not yet ratified it.

3. GOOD NEIGHBOURLY RELATIONS AND REGIONAL COOPERATION

Georgia participates in various **regional cooperation** platforms, including the Eastern Partnership, the Central European Initiative, the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation, the Organization for Democracy and Economic Development, the South-East European Cooperation Process and the Regional Cooperation Council.

Georgia generally maintains good **bilateral relations** with its neighbours and other enlargement countries. In 2024, it strengthened its engagement with **Serbia**. In particular, Georgia has a

memorandum of understanding with Serbia on cooperation in the field of European integration. Georgia does not recognise **Kosovo*** as an independent state.

Georgia and **Türkiye** enjoy a strategic partnership with high-level contacts, including as part of a High-Level Strategic Cooperation Council. Türkiye is Georgia's largest trading partner after the EU, and the two cooperate on major energy projects such as the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline, the Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum gas pipeline and the Southern Gas Corridor. Active cooperation also takes place on the development of the Middle Corridor, notably by resuming traffic on the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway line. In 2024, Türkiye and Georgia signed a cultural cooperation programme for 2024-2028. The strategic trilateral cooperation format between Georgia, Türkiye and Azerbaijan continues at a high level in view of enhanced regional energy and transport connectivity as well as security cooperation.

Georgia and **Ukraine** have implemented a strategic partnership since 2017. While Georgia supports Ukraine's territorial integrity and sovereignty, Ukraine has expressed concerns about the non-alignment of Georgia with EU sanctions against Russia and the absence of military-technical cooperation. Relations deteriorated in the reporting period – in December 2024, Ukraine imposed sanctions on Georgian Dream honorary chairman Bidzina Ivanishvili and 19 other officials. In March 2025, the visa-free stay of Ukrainian citizens who entered Georgia after 24 February 2022 was extended by one year, while the maximum duration of visa-free stays was reduced from three years to one year.

Georgia and **Moldova** traditionally enjoy good bilateral relations based on mutual support for each other's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

4. ABILITY TO ASSUME OBLIGATIONS OF MEMBERSHIP

CLUSTER 2: INTERNAL MARKET

This cluster covers: free movement of goods (Chapter 1); freedom of movement for workers (Chapter 2); right of establishment and freedom to provide services (Chapter 3); free movement of capital (Chapter 4); company law (Chapter 6); intellectual property law (Chapter 7); competition policy (Chapter 8); financial services (Chapter 9); and consumer and health protection (Chapter 28).

Chapter 1 - Free movement of goods

The free movement of goods ensures that many products can be traded freely across the EU based on common rules and procedures. Where products are governed by national rules, the principle of the free movement of goods prevents these rules from creating unjustified barriers to trade.

General principles

Some elements of the EU legislative and institutional framework for the free movement of goods are in place. Under the Association Agreement and the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area, Georgia has committed to align with the EU *acquis* in the harmonised area.

Non-harmonised areas

Georgia did not take further steps to ensure that legislation and administrative practices are in accordance with Articles 34-36 Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and relevant case law of the Court of Justice of the European Union.

Harmonised area: quality infrastructure

On **standardisation**, Georgia's National Standards Organisation has now met the technical requirements defined in the guide on the organisational structure and processes for the assessment of

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

the membership criteria of the European Committee for Standardisation and the European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardisation (CEN/CENELEC Guide), making it eligible for full membership to these organisations.

Georgia's 'pre-notification' system of **market surveillance** is not aligned with the EU *acquis*. Amendments to the Law on product safety and free movement entered into force in January 2025, clarifying the liabilities of economic operators, updating existing penalties and introducing new penalties for infringements of general product safety requirements by economic operators. The Market Surveillance Agency ensured 452 market surveillance controls in the reporting period and imposed penalties on 80 economic operators.

Georgia made no progress on **conformity assessment, accreditation and metrology**.

Harmonised area: sectoral legislation

On the EU **new and global approach** product *acquis*, 14 technical regulations were adopted to align with Regulation (EU) 2017/1369 on energy labelling. There was no progress on the EU **old approach** product *acquis* and **procedural measures**.

The Georgian market surveillance provision does not provide for measures related to anti-corruption.

Chapter 2 - Freedom of movement for workers

Citizens of one Member State have the right to work in another Member State and must be given the same working and social conditions as other workers.

Regarding **access to the labour market**, Parliament adopted in June 2025 amendments to the Law on labour migration introducing a work permit as of 1 March 2026. EU citizens and other visa-free foreigners are no longer exempted. The amendments reflect the Georgian authorities' intention to better control and monitor labour migration in the country. Georgia's legal framework is not aligned with the EU *acquis* and there is no designated body dealing with free movement of workers.

Georgia did not carry out any preparatory work to join the **European Network of Employment Services** and the **European Labour Authority**.

There was no progress on the **coordination of social security systems**. No new agreements for bilateral **coordination of social security systems** were concluded. Georgia has three bilateral agreements with EU Member States (Germany, Bulgaria and France).

Georgia has not implemented a national health insurance card and there have been no developments on the introduction of the **European Health Insurance Card** over the reporting period.

Chapter 3 - Right of establishment and freedom to provide services

EU natural and legal persons have the right to establish themselves in any Member State and to provide cross-border services. For certain regulated professions, there are rules on the mutual recognition of qualifications. EU rules on postal services focus on improving the quality of universal service, gradual market opening to competition, and the establishment of an independent regulator.

There was no progress on the **right of establishment**, the **freedom to provide services** and on **postal services**. Work on the update of the Association Agreement / Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area annex on the rules applicable to postal and courier services is currently on hold. Georgia is not fully aligned with the EU *acquis* on the **mutual recognition of professional qualifications**. The sectoral benchmark defining minimum competencies for qualified nurses was approved in December 2024 to align with Directive 2005/36/EC on the recognition of professional qualifications.

Chapter 4 - Free movement of capital

In the EU, capital and investments must be able to move without restrictions, with common rules for cross-border payments. Banks and other economic operators apply certain rules to support the fight against money laundering and terrorist financing.

There was no progress on **capital movements and payments**. Restrictions on the acquisition of agricultural land by EU nationals remain in place. On **payment services**, Georgia took no further

steps to align with the EU *acquis*.

Concerning the **fight against money laundering and terrorism financing**, alignment of Georgia's framework with the EU *acquis* remains incomplete. In October 2024, MONEYVAL reclassified Georgia's technical compliance with two of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) recommendations to largely compliant: Recommendation 1 – Assessing risks and applying a risk-based approach and Recommendation 15 (R.15) – New Technologies. In 2025, the Financial Monitoring Service, serving as financial intelligence unit, established a strategic analytical department based on MONEYVAL's identified areas for improvement. Georgia needs to strengthen IT capacity for data processing to address increasing challenges such as the circulation of cryptocurrencies. Georgia still has several FATF recommendations to implement, including the establishment of a beneficial ownership register.

Chapter 6 - Company law

The EU has common rules on the formation, registration and disclosure requirements of a company, with complementary rules for accounting and financial reporting, and statutory audit.

There was no progress on **company law and corporate governance**. Georgia is partially aligned with the EU *acquis*. Further alignment with the *acquis* in this area and strengthening of the National Agency of Public Registry's administrative capacity are needed.

On **company reporting**, by-law amendments entered into force in October 2024 aiming to align with the requirements on size criteria as regards small and medium-size companies.

On **statutory audit**, Georgia's Service for Accounting, Reporting and Auditing Supervision (SARAS) Management Reporting Guide was updated as a non-binding document to provide entities with information on the requirements of the EU Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive and the European Sustainability Reporting Standards. Two orders of the Head of SARAS entered into force in May 2025, approving the rules for preparing and publishing the annual transparency report by audit firms conducting audits of the financial statements of Public Interest Entities and the rules for preparing and submitting an additional report by audit firms to audit committees. Updated regulatory standards for auditing entered into force during the reporting period.

Chapter 7 - Intellectual property law

The EU has to a large extent harmonised rules for the legal protection and enforcement of intellectual property rights (IPR), covering notably patents, biotechnological inventions and pharmaceuticals, including supplementary protection certificates (SPCs), trade marks, designs, geographical indications (GIs), including craft and industrial GIs, as well as copyright and related rights.

Georgia made no progress on **copyright and related rights**.

Regarding **industrial property rights**, amendments to the Law on trade marks were adopted in September 2024, expanding the authority of the Chamber of Appeal of the National Intellectual Property Centre of Georgia (Sakpatenti). Under the Agreement on the Validation of European Patents between Georgia and the European Patent Organisation, Sakpatenti received nine applications for patent validation since January 2024, three of which were granted by February 2025. The electronic filing system of Sakpatenti was updated so it can receive and publish applications. In 2025, Georgia acceded to the Geneva Act of the Lisbon Agreement.

In the area of **enforcement**, no progress can be reported.

Chapter 8 - Competition policy

EU rules protect free competition. They include antitrust rules on restrictive agreements between companies and abuse of a dominant position, and also include rules on concentrations between companies which would significantly impede effective competition. EU rules also set out a system of State aid control. Governments are only allowed to grant State aid if restrictive conditions are met, with a view to preventing distortion of competition.

Antitrust and mergers

Georgia's **legislative framework** is partially aligned with the EU *acquis* on antitrust and mergers. Amendments were made to regulations on block exemptions and on control and notification forms of mergers to align them with EU rules. As regards the **institutional framework**, the Georgian Competition and Consumer Agency (GCCA) adopted its institutional development strategy for 2025–2027, which outlines the Agency's mission, current challenges, and strategic priorities. On **implementation**, the GCCA concluded investigating two **antitrust** cases concerning excessive pricing in the automotive resale and pharmaceutical sectors. These resulted from complaints related to abuse of a dominant position, anti-competitive agreements, distortion of competition by the State, and unfair competition. The GCCA launched an investigation on its own initiative (alleged abuse of a dominant position by a commercial bank in the e-commerce sector). The GCCA assessed 14 **merger (concentration) notifications**. All mergers were approved, in two cases with remedies. This is the first time that the GCCA has imposed remedies as a condition for merger approval. The GCCA proactively monitors completed mergers in cooperation with the National Agency of Public Registry and the Revenue Service.

State aid

The **legal framework** on State aid is not in line with the EU *acquis*. No progress was made in the reporting period. The **institutional framework** and enforcement capacity of the GCCA needs to be strengthened. On **implementation**, no decisions were taken during the reporting period on State aid issues, only information on *de minimis* State aid was collected.

Liberalisation

Georgia's competition and State aid legislation is applicable to public undertakings and those with special or exclusive rights. No progress was made on aligning the rules on financing services of general economic interest with the EU *acquis*.

Chapter 9 - Financial services

EU rules aim at ensuring fair competition among financial institutions and the stability and integrity of financial markets, namely in the field of banking, insurance, supplementary pensions, investment services and securities. They include rules on the authorisation, operation and supervision of these institutions.

As regards **banks and financial conglomerates**, the Counterparty Credit Risk Management Regulation was approved and entered into force in February 2025 to manage the risks arising from the increased volume of derivatives in the Georgian banking sector. The existing rules-based supervision approach was replaced by a risk-based approach. An updated regulation on the rule on defining systemically important commercial banks and determining the systemic buffer rate was approved in December 2024. The decree covering the publication of information on sanctions imposed by the National Bank of Georgia came into force in January 2025. Further work is needed to align with the EU *acquis* on deposit insurance and bank recovery and resolution.

As regards **insurance and occupational pensions**, a decree aiming to align with the Directive on the activities and supervision of institutions for occupational retirement provision (IORP II) was adopted and entered into force in January 2025. Several pieces of legislation on voluntary private pensions and depositories entered into force during the reporting period: on the governance of the pension fund; expansion of the supervisory mandate of the National Bank of Georgia (NBG); regulation of the activities of the pension fund; and for financial institutions wishing to act as specialised depositories, as well as for asset managers intending to undertake private pension scheme management. For both insurers and reinsurance undertakings, the current supervisory regime in Georgia remains based on the Solvency I regulatory framework. Georgia should work towards aligning with the Solvency II framework. The adoption and implementation of legislation on domestic motor third party liability insurance is still pending.

There was no progress on aligning Georgia's **financial market infrastructure** legislation and **securities markets and investment services** legislation with the EU *acquis*.

Concerning **sustainable and digital finance**, the NBG published its first assessment of climate-

related and other environmental, social and governance risks in September 2024 and completed its first climate stress test in December 2024, evaluating the potential impact of climate-related risks on Georgia's financial sector. In March 2025, the NBG launched the second sustainable finance roadmap for Georgia.

Chapter 28 - Consumer and health protection

EU rules protect consumers' economic interests and also ensure product safety, prevent dangerous imitations and establish liability for defective products. The EU also guarantees a high level of protection of public health and in particular also ensures high common standards for tobacco control, blood, tissues, cells and organs, and human and veterinary medicinal products. The EU also has rules for upholding patients' rights in cross-border healthcare and in preparing for and responding to serious cross-border health threats, including communicable diseases.

Consumer protection

On **horizontal aspects** and **non-safety related issues**, consumer protection laws are only partially in line with the EU *acquis*. The institutional framework on consumer protection is in place. With regard to enforcement and redress, the main consumer protection authority, the Georgian Competition and Consumer Agency (GCCA) strengthened its enforcement capacity and took an active role in the International Consumer Protection and Enforcement Network. In December 2024, the Agency developed guidelines on price indication for goods and services, based on Directive 2019/2161 of the European Parliament and of the Council.

During the reporting period, the Agency processed 1 158 applications (320 between September and December 2024, and 838 between January and August 2025). Almost 90% of cases were resolved in favour of consumers (39% in the previous reporting period).

There was no further progress in aligning Georgia's legal framework on **product safety related issues** with the EU *acquis*. National market surveillance legislation and processes are not aligned with the EU *acquis*.

Public health

As regards **public health**, there was no further alignment of national health protection legislation with the EU *acquis*. Georgia continues to implement its national health strategy for 2022-2030 with an aim to achieve universal health coverage. In December 2024, the 2025-2027 communication action plan for early cancer detection and screening was adopted.

There were no developments on **eHealth** during the reporting period.

On **blood, tissues, cells and organs** the legal framework was further aligned with the EU *acquis* with the adoption of amendments to the Law on quality and safety of blood and its components in December 2024, which is expected to enter into force in April 2026. Georgia should consider preparing for harmonisation with the latest Regulation on standards of quality and safety for substances of human origin intended for human application (EU) 2024/1938.

Georgia is partly aligned with the EU *acquis* on **tobacco control** and with the World Health Organization (WHO) Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC). Starting from April 2025, the regulation on standardised packaging of tobacco products entered into force. The sale and/or distribution of certain tobacco products in Georgia is allowed only in standardised (plain) packaging. Georgia needs to revise its national legislation to ensure compliance with the EU-Georgia Association Agreement and its FCTC obligations.

Access to **cancer treatment** for adults and children, including access to treatment and medicines, was significantly improved in 2024.

Regarding **non-communicable diseases**, Georgia was certified malaria-free by the WHO in January 2025. Georgia made progress on antimicrobial resistance on integrating bacteriophage therapy and implementing a 'One Health' approach. Georgia needs to continue to bolster its efforts on antimicrobial resistance.

There has been no progress on **medical devices**, on **serious cross-border health threats, communicable diseases**, on **patients' rights in cross-border healthcare**, on **human and veterinary medicinal products**, on health technology assessment, on **drug abuse prevention and harm reduction**, on **health inequalities**, on **mental health**, on **rare diseases**, or on **cosmetics**.

The Ministry of the Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Health, Labour and Social Affairs should strengthen **anti-corruption measures** based on the Ministry's strategy on fighting corruption implemented by the Department of Internal Audit, Monitoring and Inspection.

CLUSTER 3: COMPETITIVENESS AND INCLUSIVE GROWTH

This cluster covers: digital transformation and media (Chapter 10); taxation (Chapter 16); economic and monetary policy (Chapter 17); social policy and employment (Chapter 19); industrial policy (Chapter 20), science and research (Chapter 25); education and culture (Chapter 26); and the customs union (Chapter 29).

Chapter 10 - Digital transformation and media

The EU supports the smooth functioning of the internal market for electronic communications, electronic commerce and audiovisual services. The rules protect consumers and support the 83 universal availability of modern services.

On **the digital transformation strategy**, the 2025-2030 strategy for the development of Georgia's digital economy and information society, and its 2025-2027 action plan were adopted in February 2025.

On **electronic communications**, Georgia has not aligned with the Regulation on geo-blocking and the platform-to-business relations Regulation. Georgia is yet to align with the European Electronic Communications Code. On **5G**, the Georgian Communications Commission (ComCom) awarded Magticom the licence for the implementation of 5G Internet. Georgia needs to align with the 5G Cybersecurity Toolbox to ensure that roll-out is not based on high-risk suppliers.

In the field of **digital services**, the new digital governance strategy outlines key objectives, including expanding access to digital services, enhancing processes and components that support digital governance, fostering the development of opportunities and competencies in digital governance. Furthermore, Georgia signed the Council of Europe's Framework Convention on Artificial Intelligence and Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law in September 2024.

On **digital trust and cybersecurity**, Georgia should establish a national interoperability framework, in alignment with the European Interoperability Framework and aim at aligning with the provisions of the Interoperable Europe Act.

On **media regulation**, amendments to the law on broadcasting adopted in April 2025 introduced a ban for broadcasters and their online platforms to receiving financial and material support from foreign sources, with limited exceptions for commercial advertising, sponsorship deals, or product placement arrangements.

In addition, the amendments empowered the media regulator ComCom to impose financial penalties and suspend broadcasting licences for content-related violations. Complaints regarding factual errors, privacy breaches, impartiality and other issues that were previously handled by internal media bodies can now also be filed directly with ComCom, considerably increasing its power in disputes over journalistic ethics, the truthfulness of reporting, and alleged defamation and effectively abolishing self-regulation bodies (*see section on freedom of expression under 2.2.1. Chapter 23: Judiciary and fundamental rights*).

Georgia needs to align with the EU Artificial Intelligence Act and to create the necessary governance structures.

Chapter 16 - Taxation

EU rules on taxation cover value added tax, excise duties and aspects of corporate taxation. They also cover cooperation between tax administrations, including the exchange of information to prevent tax evasion.

Concerning **indirect taxation**, the Georgian Tax Code is partially aligned with the EU *acquis* on value added tax. In January 2025, excise duties on tobacco products were increased to further gradual harmonisation with EU duty levels. There was no progress on alignment on excise duties on alcohol and alcoholic beverages and energy products. An effective system to control and monitor the movement of excisable products is not in place.

On **direct taxation**, rules on retained or reinvested profits, mergers, subsidiaries, interest and royalties remain not fully aligned with the EU *acquis*. The tax rate on income from gambling activities increased from 15% to 20% in January 2025.

Concerning **administrative cooperation and mutual assistance**, Georgia implemented the Automatic Exchange of Information in line with the common reporting standard. In January 2025, Georgia started sharing its country-by-country reports with partner jurisdictions.

As regards **operational capacity and computerisation**, the Revenue Service adopted its 2025-2030 strategy. The strategic goals cover digital transformation and improvement of compliance, modernisation of IT systems and strengthening of analytical capabilities, development of the institutional capacity of the organisation, and international cooperation. The pre-filled income tax declaration for small businesses was launched for non-VAT taxpayers.

Chapter 17 - Economic and monetary policy

EU rules require the independence of central banks and prohibit them from directly financing the public sector. Member States coordinate their economic policies and are subject to fiscal, economic and financial surveillance.

The NBG's primary objective is to ensure price stability, which is in line with the EU **monetary policy** legislative framework. In February 2025, the Georgian Parliament approved four new members to the Board of the NBG and confirmed the governor. With these appointments, the Board is now fully constituted with a majority of non-executive members. The provision allowing the first vice-president to assume the role of acting governor for an undetermined period of time remains in place. This provision, as well as that the legal grounds for dismissal of the governor and members of the NBG bodies, are not in line with the EU *acquis*. The National Bank's independence needs to be strengthened, including by strengthening the qualification criteria for board members.

On **economic policy**, the budgetary framework is considered overall strong and transparent. Weaknesses remain in the comparability of the main fiscal aggregates published in various government's fiscal reports, reconciliation of government's net financing and the change in the stock of debt, and external oversight of the government's financial position. The Parliamentary Budget Office's independence needs to be further strengthened, in particular, by clarifying its mandate, qualification criteria and financial autonomy. The fiscal oversight over the general government sector continued to improve, in particular, over non-commercial SOEs by gradually bringing their cash management under the single treasury account (STA). As of September 2025, 114 SOEs were covered under the STA.

Chapter 19 - Social policy and employment

EU rules in the social field include minimum standards for labour law, equality and non-discrimination, health and safety at work. They also promote social inclusion, social protection, and social dialogue at EU level.

On **labour law**, major gaps remain in the alignment of the legal framework with the EU *acquis*. The institutional framework is in place but needs further strengthening. Georgia has still not ratified several ILO conventions, including those on labour inspections, occupational safety and health at work, maternity protection, minimum wage, social security and violence and harassment at work.

Several labour rights provisions under the European Charter of Social Rights are yet to be accepted by Georgia. The December 2024 amendments to the Law on public service significantly weaken the labour rights of civil servants and are inconsistent with the principles of ILO Convention no 158, particularly regarding arbitrary dismissal, job security and procedural fairness.

On occupational **health and safety at work**, there was no progress to further align with the EU occupational safety and health *acquis*. 19 out of 25 directives are yet to be aligned with. Georgia needs to ensure that the rules are enforced, specifically as regards the most recent directives on occupational safety and health. The Labour Inspection Office's capacities – both institutional and human resources – were further strengthened. The budget of the office was increased by 16% in 2025 compared to 2024.

During 2024, 33 people died (34 in 2023) and 260 were injured (347 in 2023) as a result of accidents in the workplace. Although there is a steady decrease in the number of occupational accidents the average incidence of fatal occupational accidents remains higher than in the EU.

On **social dialogue**, the tripartite dialogue is functioning at national level, but is largely absent in the regions. There was no progress related to collective bargaining. The ILO Convention on Collective Bargaining has not been ratified by Georgia.

On **employment policy**, the capacities of the State Employment Support Agency were developed and strengthened. Further work is needed in particular to improve access to its services in the regions and a new national strategy of labour and employment policy remains to be adopted. The overall labour force participation rate in 2024 was 54.8% (53.3% in 2023), with women's labour force participation rate being 44.8% (43.1% in 2023) and that of men 66.2% (65.1% in 2023). In 2024, 15 609 supported jobseekers were employed on the open labour market (15 899 in 2023). In order to increase the availability of employment promotion services, representative offices of the State Employment Support Agency were expanded in five municipalities (Khelvachauri, Samtredia, Kharagauli, Sighnaghi, Chokhatauri) in 2024.

The unemployment rate in 2024 in Georgia was 13.9%, down from 16.4% in 2023. The unemployment rate in 2024 among men was higher than among women (16.1% vs 11.1%) as well as the employment rate (55.6% vs 39.8%). However, the gender pay gap remains a problem, with the average wage of women constituting 67.9% of men's wage. No cases of gender-based wage discrimination have been prosecuted. The share of NEETs (young people aged 15-29 not in employment, education or training) decreased to 24.1% in 2024 (from 26.9%) but remains high compared to the EU average (11% in 2024). Georgia needs to address high youth unemployment and align with the Council Recommendations on the Youth Guarantee and the long-term unemployment.

Undeclared work remains a challenge, with a substantial proportion of the population of working age being engaged in non-agricultural undeclared work in 2024 (29.1%). More men were engaged than women (34.2% vs 23.3%) and more in rural than in urban areas (34.4% vs 26.8%).

On **social protection and inclusion**, Georgia still lacks a comprehensive and targeted social protection system that supports employment policies. In 2024, the share of the population under the absolute poverty line reached its lowest level on record at 9.4% (down from 11.8% in 2023). The GINI coefficient remained stable, indicating inequalities remain high. A national strategy on the deinstitutionalisation of children and provision of alternative care is not in place. The deinstitutionalisation of large-scale boarding homes for persons with disabilities is ongoing. Construction and renovation of four new houses for people with psychosocial needs were in progress throughout 2024. In 2024, one major institution for persons with disabilities was closed.

There are important and expanding gaps in the legal, policy and strategic frameworks on **non-discrimination in employment and social policy**. Amendments to the anti-discrimination law, the gender equality law and Labour Code adopted in April 2025 remove the terms gender and gender equality, departing from earlier steps to align with the EU non-discrimination and gender equality *acquis*. There is no alignment with the Employment Equality Directive nor the Racial Equality Directive. Moreover, the enforcement of the national Law on the elimination of all forms of discrimination remains weak. The participation of persons with disabilities in the labour market remains a challenge. An agreement on the facilitation of employment opportunities for persons with disabilities was signed between government agencies in February 2025.

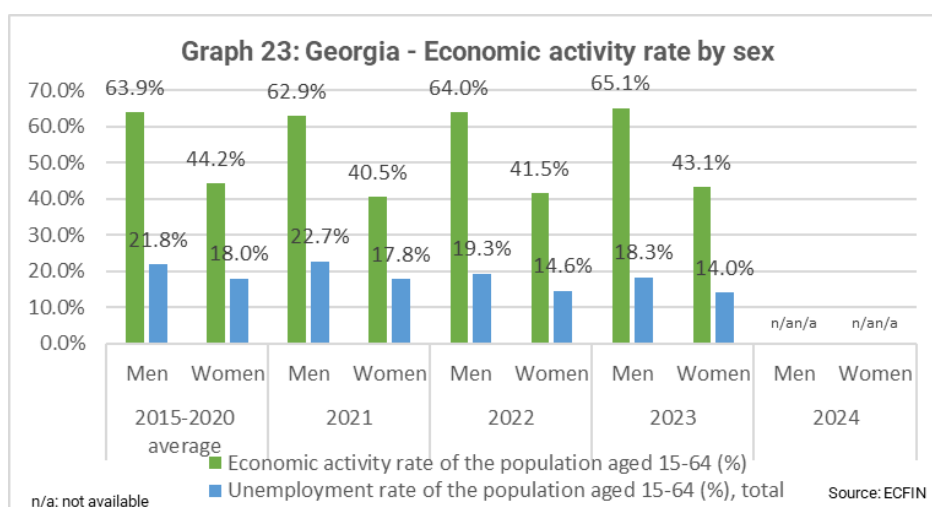
As regards **equality between women and men in employment and social policy** only the basic principles and general provisions exist in current legislation. Georgia has to adopt targeted provisions to align its legislation with the gender equality *acquis*, including inter alia The Work-Life Balance Directive, The Pay Transparency Directive and the Women on Boards Directive. Legal amendments in April 2025 removed references to gender equality in legislation replacing it with equality between men and women. Women’s segregation by industry, occupation and degree concentration in humanities, education and healthcare confines them to economic activity with lower earnings. Unpaid household and care work by women is five times higher than that by men, mainly due to prevailing stereotypes and limited availability and accessibility of care services and local transportation, which are also the main reasons for women’s limited participation in the labour market. Women are more likely to be the beneficiaries of state social assistance than men, and the gender pay gap shows women earn 32.1% less than men.

As regards the **European Social Fund (ESF)**, Georgia is not a participant or beneficiary of the ESF. (See also Chapter 22 - Regional policy and coordination of structural instruments).

Chapter 20 - Enterprise and industrial policy

EU industrial policy strengthens competitiveness, facilitates structural change, and encourages a business-friendly environment that stimulates small and medium-sized enterprises.

Regarding **enterprise and industrial policy principles**, the industrial policy of Georgia is outlined in the development strategy “Georgia-Vision 2030” and substantiated in the annual government programmes instead of a separate industrial strategy. An SME Development Strategy 2021-2025 is in place. A strategy to reform state-owned enterprises is in place and acknowledges the importance of separating the state’s shareholder, regulatory and policy functions.



On **enterprise policy and instruments**, there was no progress on aligning with Directive 2011/7/EU on combating late payment in commercial transactions. In September 2024, Enterprise Georgia introduced a loan/lease co-financing component aiming at boosting the competitiveness of the private sector in the area of waste collection, treatment and disposal to their business support programme. In 2024, the programme supported 560 beneficiaries and approved EUR 154 million in loans and leases. In addition, during the reporting period, three new regional consulting centres (Growth Hubs) started operating bringing their total number to six, and diagnostic centres were launched in those regions where Growth Hubs are not yet operational. The Innovation and Technology Agency initiated the setting-up of an innovative startup acceleration programme in Spring 2025.

In September 2024, significant changes were introduced to the capital market support programme, increasing the total revenue limit for beneficiaries and expanding the list of eligible activities and sectors. In April 2025, a new action plan 2025-2026 for the capital market development strategy 2023-2028 was adopted. In June 2025, amendments to the Law on investment funds were adopted, whereby the share of equity participation of state authorities and/or of state-owned enterprises in investment funds has been increased from 25% to 40%.

There were no new developments concerning **sectoral policies**.

Chapter 25 - Science and research

The EU provides significant support for research and innovation. All Member States can participate in the EU's research and innovation programmes and benefit from them, especially where there is scientific excellence and solid investment in research and innovation.

Georgia took some actions to modernise its **research and innovation policy** and to align with the EU *acquis*. The Ministry of Education, Science and Youth integrated Open Science principles into its 2022-2030 unified education and science strategy. Training and capacity building initiatives supported Georgian institutions to align with European standards on open science. A growing number of researchers are publishing in open access journals or depositing scientific publications in national repositories. The use of open access resources in the country is estimated at 60%, which is in line with the EU average.

A draft sectoral action plan 2025-2027 for the development of the science, research, technology, and innovation system aiming to implement the unified national strategy for education and science 2022-2030 was prepared and published in April 2025 for public consultations. The action plan should serve as a national European Research Area (ERA) roadmap and include the priority areas of ERA.

There has been no progress to promote innovation in line with the five flagships of the new European innovation agenda and cooperation between research and industry remains difficult due to the lack of collaborative culture among research organisations, universities and private companies. There remain challenges in establishing university-business cooperation including with regard to insufficient human and financial capacities at the universities. On smart specialisation, the government approved the smart specialisation strategy 2024-2030 for the pilot region of Imereti and adopted an action plan for 2024-2026. The setting up of the Kutaisi Technological Hub, a planned innovation centre for the region is still in preparation.

As regards the European Innovation Scoreboard, in the absence of the necessary statistical indicators Georgia has not been included in the European Innovation Scoreboard for 2024.

As regards the EU **framework programmes for research and innovation**, Georgia is associated to Horizon Europe since 2021 and there has been increased participation of universities and research centres in Horizon Europe.

Gross domestic spending on R&D (GERD) as a share of GDP has not changed since 2020 and remains at around 0.24%, which is below the EU-27 average 2.24% and the EU target of 3% of GDP.

Chapter 26 - Education and culture

The EU supports cooperation in education and culture by funding programmes and the coordination of Member State policy through the open method of coordination. The EU and its Member States must

also prevent discrimination and ensure quality education for children of migrant workers, including those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

In **education and training**, government expenditure on education in 2024 amounted to 3.93% of GDP, which is a slight increase from last year, but still below the EU average (4.6% in 2022).

Access to pre-school education remains a challenge. The enrolment, including women and girls, in primary education slightly decreased, while it increased for secondary education in 2024 compared to the previous year. Georgia is participating to PISA 2025. Moreover, Georgia has enrolled to take part to the international tests “Progress in international reading literacy study” (PIRLS) 2026, “Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study” (TIMSS) 2027 and the “International civic and citizenship education study” (ICCS) 2027.

The Vocational Education Training (VET) 2024-2030 strategy was adopted in September 2024 and access to vocational education increased in 2024 with the implementation of integrated vocational education and training programmes. The number of admitted VET students increased in 2024 to 17 083 (from 15 494 in 2023).

On **higher education**, enrolment increased in 2024 compared to 2023. Georgia has been a full member of the European Higher Education Area (Bologna Process). According to the 2024 Bologna Process implementation report, Georgia still needs to work on the full implementation of the key commitments, such as the Bologna degree structure and automatic recognition. There are 3 higher education institutions from Georgia which participate in the European Universities Alliances as associated partners.

There was significant backsliding in quality assurance in higher education. In November 2024, the membership of the National Centre for Educational Quality Enhancement in the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) was suspended with regard to the institution’s independence and its interpretation and application of authorisation and accreditation standards. Distance education and e-learning in higher and vocational education are part of the curriculum.

Regarding **inclusive education**, in April 2025, the Ministry of Education’s department of inclusive education was abolished and its functions were transferred to the strategic planning and international relations department, de-prioritising the approach to inclusive education. On a more positive note, amendments were made to the rules and conditions of enrolment in the vocational educational programmes facilitating the enrolment of ethnic minorities in VET programmes. As a result, 494 persons were enrolled in vocational educational programmes in 2024. The enrolment of socially vulnerable people was supported through social scholarships. Moreover, in 2025, the Skills Agency prepared a short-term vocational training programme for assistants to persons with disabilities for providing high-quality support services to children and persons with disabilities. Access of vocational education for women in particular in rural areas remains limited.

Digital citizenship and green skills are reflected as pervasive skills in the national curriculum at primary, basic and secondary and VET levels. Further efforts are needed to align digital education with the EU Digital Education Action Plan 2021-2027. Georgia takes part in the international dimension of the 2021-2027 Erasmus+ programme.

The National Council of **Youth** Organisations of Georgia, a non-governmental organisation which was a full member of the European Youth Forum, ceased its activities due to restrictive legislation regarding CSOs adopted in 2024 and 2025.

In 2025 the Ministry of **Sport** was established as an independent state entity. Georgia continues to take part in the European Week of Sport.

The dialogue on **cultural** policy between the government and civil society was halted against the background of amendments to 14 laws removing mandatory NGO participation in public decision-making. Georgia has not yet joined the 2005 UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions. Georgia continues to participate fully in the Culture and Cross-Sectoral strands of the Creative Europe Programme and partially in the MEDIA strand.

Chapter 29 - Customs union

All EU Member States are part of the EU customs union and follow the same customs rules and procedures. This requires legislative alignment, as well as adequate implementing and enforcement capacity, and access to and interoperability with the EU electronic customs environment.

Georgia took some steps to align its **customs legislation** with the Union Customs Code. In February 2025, Georgia joined the Common Transit Convention and the Convention on the Simplification of Formalities in Trade in Goods and integrated two conventions into its legal structure. As a result, all transit movements to and from Convention member countries are conducted through the New Computerised Transit System.

Georgia needs to increase the **administrative and operational capacity** of the customs service. Smuggling of tobacco products and other illicit activities in the regions close to the occupied breakaway regions remains a problem. There was little reported progress on strengthening measures to combat customs fraud and on acceding to the WHO FCTC Protocol to Eliminate Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products.

Concerning the Authorised Economic Operator (AEO) system, as of September 2025, 28 companies have AEO status. Out of that number, 22 have been granted the AEO-S authorisation, making them eligible for mutual recognition once the related agreement is concluded with the EU. Work on the mutual recognition of authorised economic operators is currently on hold.

CLUSTER 4: THE GREEN AGENDA AND SUSTAINABLE CONNECTIVITY

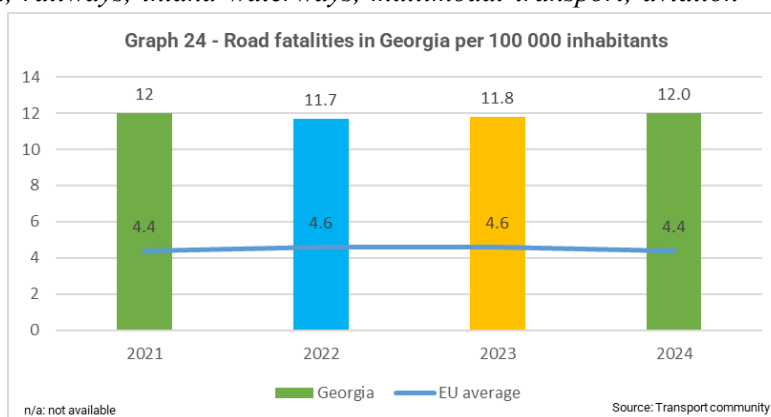
The cluster on Green Agenda and sustainable connectivity covers: transport policy (Chapter 14); energy (Chapter 15); trans-European networks (Chapter 21); and environment and climate change (Chapter 27).

Chapter 14 - Transport policy

The EU has common rules on technical and safety standards, security, social standards, State aid and market liberalisation in road transport, railways, inland waterways, multimodal transport, aviation and maritime transport.

On **general transport**, the national transport and logistics strategy is in force. The action plan 2025-2026 was adopted during the reporting period.

Regarding **road transport**, **road safety** remains a concern with a higher fatality rate than the EU average. In 2024, there were 5 866 crashes with 444 fatalities (compared to 5 594 crashes with 442 fatalities in 2023). The first half of 2025 saw a 20% increase in road accidents.



Georgian legislation is not fully aligned with the main *acquis* related to social legislation in road transport such as the Regulation on driving and rest times. On the transport of dangerous goods, the rules for roadside inspection and determination of degrees of violations in the roadside zone were adopted in January 2025. Inspections will check compliance with rules on transporting dangerous good and with the driver's work and rest regime. Georgia started to align with the environmental *acquis* applicable to the transport sector.

On **rail transport**, the Transport Safety Investigation Bureau was established in January 2025 and acts as the national accident investigating body. The railway safety rules were established in January 2025, requiring owners of access tracks to obtain safety authorisation to manage and operate railway infrastructure. The legal framework on transport of dangerous goods, certification of train drivers,

interoperability of the rail system and safety on railways is partially aligned with the relevant EU *acquis*. There were no developments during the report period.

On **maritime transport**, the maritime single window system is operational across all ports since October 2024. Implementing legislation was further adopted in November 2024 on the procedure for registering and authorising users in the system.

On **inland waterway transport**, the government adopted several core legislative acts to improve safety rules, registration rules and inspection rules. In addition, the Internal Waterway Transport Department was created under the Maritime Transport Agency to strengthen regulatory oversight of the sector.

No progress was made on **civil aviation** and **multimodal transport**. Georgia has not yet aligned with the Combined Transport Directive.

Chapter 15 - Energy

EU energy policy covers energy supply, infrastructure, the internal energy market, consumers, renewable energy, energy efficiency, nuclear energy, nuclear safety, radiation protection and nuclear safeguards.

Regarding **security of supply**, Georgia aligned with most of the provisions of the Risk-preparedness Regulation into its electricity security of supply rules. Georgia made steps to align with the Gas Security of Supply Regulation concerning measures to safeguard the security of gas supply, by submitting the natural gas risk assessment. In addition, Georgia submitted to the Energy Community Secretariat its Security of Supply Statement for natural gas in October 2024.

Regarding **internal energy market**, alignment with and implementation of the Electricity Integration Package has not progressed further during the reporting period. Provisions on unbundling and market opening have only been partially applied (e.g. changing managing entities of several energy companies). Amendments to the Law on State property, which are necessary for unbundling the transmission system operator of electricity and gas (TSO), entered in force in December 2024, but they need to be strengthened by secondary legislation and corporate reforms. The Georgian regulatory framework is not aligned with the Electricity Integration Package. In the **electricity** sector, through amendments to the Electricity Market Concept Design, the launch of a balancing and ancillary services market was postponed to 1 July 2027. Georgia closely cooperates with the Turkish TSO to sign inter-TSO operating agreements for the future opening of the balancing and ancillary services market in July 2027.

Electricity production is still largely regulated with the deregulation schedule until 2027 for hydro power plants with a capacity below 120 MW.

On **renewable energy**, the 2030 renewable targets in the national energy and climate plan are in line with Georgia's legal obligations under the Energy Community Treaty. Amendments to the renewable energy law, to implement the second Renewable Energy Directive (REDII), have not been adopted. Provisions related to the sustainability and greenhouse gas emission saving criteria for biofuels, bioliquids, and biomass from REDII are needed.

As of February 2025, the total installed capacity of the renewable electricity producers benefiting from the net metering scheme reached 160.8 MW. Few by-laws regarding the heating and cooling sectors were adopted.

No progress was made regarding **energy efficiency**, including in the area of energy performance of buildings.

All 14 implementing legislations to transpose the EU *acquis* on **energy labelling** were adopted at the end of 2024 and will enter into force end of 2025. In addition, Georgia has established the minimum legal framework for setting mandatory ecological (i.e. eco-design) requirements for all energy-using and energy-related products.

On **governance**, the introduction of the national energy and climate plan complies with the Regulation on the Governance of the energy union and climate action.

On **nuclear safeguards**, Georgia aligned partially with the safeguards provisions (*See Chapter 7 – Intellectual property law*) of the Euratom Treaty through the adoption in March 2025 of the technical regulations on radiation protection provisions and fundamental requirements for the management of sources of ionising radiation.

Chapter 21 - Trans-European networks

The EU promotes trans-European networks (TENs) in the areas of transport, telecommunications and energy to strengthen the internal market and contribute to growth and employment.

The Trans-European **Transport Networks** (TEN-T) are extended to Georgia. The Georgian indicative network consists of 714 km of railways (of which 585 km are on the core network), 855 km of motorways (of which 768 km are on the core network), three ports (one of which is core) and one core airport.

Georgia continued to upgrade its road infrastructure in line with TEN-T compliance standards. The road infrastructure quality of the core network is satisfactory with 58% rated as very good or good in 2024 (52% in 2023). Together with the extensive network, only 25% complies with TEN-T standards (20% in 2023). Construction of the Grigoleti - Kobuleti Road Section of the E-70 Highway is not yet finalised.

On railways, authorities are addressing bottlenecks that have been identified on the core network via the railway modernisation project which is currently 99% completed. No progress was made during the reporting period with regard to the TEN-T railway compliance indicators on line speed, train length or track gauge. Georgian Railways has not implemented the European Rail Traffic Management System.

A new railway section (Senaki – Khamiskuri) was added to the comprehensive network. A memorandum of understanding on the development of transport corridors for the China-Europe Railway Express, Trans-Caspian International Transport Route (Middle Corridor) was signed between Georgia and China end of 2024.

The construction of the Anaklia Deep Sea Port started with dredging works.

Georgia has not transposed the old **TEN-E Regulation** (EU) 347/2013. The revised TEN-E is currently not applicable to Georgia.

Chapter 27 - Environment and climate change

The EU promotes strong climate action, sustainable development and protection of the environment. EU rules contain provisions addressing climate change, water and air quality, waste management, nature protection, industrial pollution, chemicals, noise and civil protection.

Environment

On **horizontal legislation**, Georgia is partially aligned with the *acquis* regarding with EU. Environmental policy **implementation, monitoring and enforcement** remain a challenge, notably due to limited and unstable administrative capacity. There was no progress during the reporting period to ensure the quality of the preparation and implementation of environmental investments – including the transparency of procedures, compliance with the environment impact assessment/strategic environment assessment and other elements of the horizontal *acquis*. The country has not yet ratified the Espoo Convention Protocol on strategic environmental assessment.

On **air quality**, Georgia approved the air quality plan for Tbilisi in September 2024. In January 2025, the Law on vehicle emissions and EURO-5/V vehicle emission standards entered fully into force and now also applies to M3 and N category vehicles. As of 2025, 35 industrial plants have implemented a self-monitoring system and continuously provide information on emissions to the supervisory authority. Self-monitoring devices have been installed by another six large plants.

Alignment with the EU **waste management** and circular economy legislation is at an early stage. 54 (out of 69) municipalities have developed waste management plans.

In the area of **water quality**, implementing legislation on the boundaries of river basins and river basin districts as well as the establishment and operation of River Basin Management Advisory and Coordination Councils has been adopted respectively in March and February 2025. All river basin management plans have been finalised except for the Kura river. The monitoring network for surface water and groundwater has been further expanded.

Georgia's legislation on **nature protection** is partially aligned with the *acquis*. The current Emerald Network covers 18% of national territory which is on track to reach the 30.8% target by 2030. Georgia should identify and pre-designate sites that will be covered by the Natura 2000 network. Protected areas currently cover 13.34% of the national territory. Georgia needs to update its national biodiversity strategy and action plan. The draft law on biodiversity needs to be improved before adoption. The national forestry inventory covers 55% of forests.

On the EU *acquis* on **industrial pollution control and risk management**, no progress was made during the reporting period. Work towards the creation of a single national pollutant release and transfer register needs to be accelerated.

The level of transposition of the **chemicals** *acquis* remains limited with no progress recorded in the reporting period.

Georgia is at an early stage of alignment with the EU **noise** legislation. Amendments laying down the noise norms were adopted in November 2023 but have not been implemented. Strategic noise maps and action plans have not been prepared.

Georgia continued to build the capacity of its **civil protection and disaster risk management** system at central and local levels. Nationwide floods risk maps have been developed in accordance with the EU Floods Directive. Flood risk management plans have been completed for four river basins (Khobistskali, Natanebi, Kintrishi, and Supsa), while the development of plans for the remaining basins was ongoing. The hydro meteorological network was expanded by 50 new monitoring stations, bringing the total to 255.

The Emergency Management Service developed five additional emergency management plans for five municipalities; bringing the total to 16.

Climate change

On climate change, some progress was registered over the reporting period. Georgia is still working on a climate change law that is not yet adopted.

Georgia has made efforts to introduce the monitoring, reporting, verification and accreditation framework for greenhouse gas emissions during the reporting period by amending the Law on environmental protection, the objective being to start operating the Monitoring, Reporting, Verification and Accreditation (MRV-A) system in January 2026.

A climate stress test framework was developed in December 2024 and integrates multiple analytical modules to assess the economic and financial impacts of climate risks.

A national greenhouse gas inventory and a biennial transparency report were published in May 2025 and submitted to United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Georgia is preparing a new Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) under the Paris Agreement; this new NDC must be in line with the efforts to limit global warming to 1.5°C.

Despite some streamlining and rationalising efforts, administrative capacities remain low affecting Georgia's ability to implement the climate *acquis*. The administrative capacities in this area need to be strengthened in terms of human and financial resources.

CLUSTER 5: RESOURCES, AGRICULTURE AND COHESION

Cluster 5 on resources, agriculture and cohesion covers: agriculture and rural development (Chapter 11); food safety, veterinary and phytosanitary policy (Chapter 12); fisheries and aquaculture (Chapter 13); regional policy and coordination of structural instruments (Chapter 22); financial and budgetary

provisions (Chapter 33).

Chapter 11 - Agriculture and rural development

The EU's common agricultural policy supports farmers and ensures Europe's food security. It helps tackle climate change and the sustainable management of national resources; maintains rural areas and landscapes across the EU; and keeps the rural economy alive by promoting jobs in farming, agri-food industries and associated sectors. This requires strong management and control systems. There are also common EU rules for marketing standards, quality policy and organic farming.

On **horizontal issues**, the Rural Development Agency (RDA) was designated as a paying agency. The RDA implements state support programmes to the sector. An action plan was approved in December 2024 to establish a farm sustainability data network (FSDN). As an initial step to set up a Land Parcel Identification System, land use and land cover for Georgia (except the occupied breakaway regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia) were mapped during the reporting period using the most recent orthophoto imagery.

On **common market organisation**, alignment with the EU *acquis* remains limited and is mostly related to certain marketing standards. A 2025 action plan was approved to align progressively with relevant EU legislation on a common organisation of the markets in agricultural products. As an initial step, Georgia should recognise producer organisations as provided for in the action plan, encouraging farmers to strengthen their market position.

On **rural development**, the implementation of the 2024-2027 action plan of the agriculture and rural development strategy mobilised in 2024 a budget of EUR 387 million (up 23% compared with the previous year). The RDA implements a portfolio of 14 rural development programmes.

As regards **quality policy**, legislation on protection and use of protected designations of origin and geographical indications, aligning with the EU *acquis*, entered into force in November 2024.

On **organic farming**, no progress was made during the reporting period.

On **the fight against corruption**, the Law on the prevention of corruption is the legal basis for all sectors. The RDA reports on observed irregularities and provide subsequent information. The institution has an Irregularity Officer, and the Manual of Procedures of the authority prescribes the handling of irregularities whose implementation with transparency and accountability is challenging.

Chapter 12 - Food safety, veterinary and phytosanitary policy

The EU food acquis including hygiene rules for foodstuff production ensures a high level of food and feed safety and a high level of protection of consumers' interests. Animal health and welfare and the safety of food of animal origin are safeguarded together with quality of seeds, plant reproductive material, protection against harmful organisms, animal nutrition and the use of plant protection products.

In the area of **general food safety, food safety rules** and its **specific rules for feed**, Georgia adopted legislation in January 2025 harmonising with the EU *acquis*, notably Regulation (EU) 625/2017 on official control, which will enter into force in January 2027. In June 2025, the food safety strategy for 2025-2028 was approved. The strategy includes six strategic objectives covering the legislative framework, the national food control system, crisis response, risk analysis, sustainability and digitalisation. The competent authorities' certification for the Quality Management System (ISO 9001:2015) were extended to the veterinary control system in October 2024.

Additional provisions to the control system of the country are needed for its implementation. Notably, regular training requirements of the staff of the competent authorities; capacity building for staff of the Scientific Research Centre of Agriculture (SRCA), which is the competent authority for risk assessment in food safety, veterinary and plant protection, and emergency preparedness.

Georgia's animal health legislation is not yet aligned with the EU's animal health policy and *acquis*.

Georgia's animal welfare practices and legislation are not yet aligned with the EU's **animal welfare policy and acquis**.

As regards **placing on the market of food, feed and animal by-products**, the National Food Agency continued to carry out risk-based official checks. The traceability system engaging the primary responsibility of Food Business Operators (FBO) for food safety and quality is to be strengthened to ensure comprehensive coverage of registered FBOs throughout the food chains, including small-scale producers and family production entities. Further efforts are necessary to improve private sector awareness and self-control of food safety.

A comprehensive range of food safety laboratory analysis is not yet in place. Some operational issues persist on issuing TRACES electronic certificates. Five out of ten border inspection posts need to be upgraded with infrastructure and equipment and a risk-based evaluation system for food importers is yet to be developed.

Based on a risk assessment performed by the competent authority (SRCA), recommendations were issued in 2025 for the risk management of aflatoxin M1 in milk and risk management of contaminated fish with malachite green.

An EU compliant system of collection, storage and processing of animal by-products (ABPs) is not yet in place.

No progress was reported on **genetically modified organisms** risk assessment and market authorisation processes.

On **phytosanitary policy**, a certification system was put in place for professional users of plant protection products and for pesticide application equipment to implement EU Directive 2009/128 on plant protection. This action aims at a sustainable use of pesticides and also includes the promotion of integrated pest management and organic production. As regards **plant health** legislation, Georgia has not yet provided any information on their level of alignment with the EU *acquis*.

Chapter 13 - Fisheries and aquaculture

The common fisheries policy lays down rules on fisheries management, protects living resources of the sea and limits the environmental impact of fisheries. This includes setting catch quotas, managing fleet capacity, rules on control and inspection, rules on markets and aquaculture and support for fisheries and coastal communities. Further, it promotes a sustainable aquaculture.

Existing legislation sets out basic requirements such as the obligation of the flag state, coastal state, port state and market state.

On **fisheries resources**, the National Environment Agency (NEA) actively participates in the BlackSea4Fish research programme of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean and the Black Sea to align with standardised methods for data collection such as demersal trawl survey for stock assessment of the commercial species. NEA participated in awareness campaigns on sensitive and protected species and contributed to a socio-economic study of the small-scale coastal fishermen. Catch certificates required to export to the EU are not issued by the competent authority as relevant fisheries products (fish oil and fish mill) from authorised processing establishments are not yet meant to be exported to the EU.

A **fleet management** system is in place with a fishing vessel register and monitoring of fishing activities. Five anchovy licence holders are closely monitored under a licensing agreement.

A comprehensive **inspection and control** system is in place for vessels operating under the anchovy licensing agreement, with online video surveillance, inspections at sea and on landing areas. The fisheries control system does not result from a risk-based management methodology. The Coast Guard monitors the territorial waters and the exclusive economic zone. Traceability of the catches and monitoring of the fishing activities of the small-scale coastal fleet is not ensured. As advised by the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) Compliance Committee, Georgia needs to step up its efforts to implement the GFCM recommendations on compliance and to fulfil its international obligations, in particular developing a legislative framework to regulate small-scale fishing and aquaculture activities.

Georgia has no specific **structural action** for fisheries. There were no developments on **state aid** providing preferential credit loans to modernise the fleet.

On **market policy**, no progress was made during the reporting period.

On **aquaculture**, the strategy for sustainable development of aquaculture 2024-2028 was approved in September 2024. The management plan for eight allocated zones for marine aquaculture was approved in March 2025. A first auction procedure was launched in April 2025 for one allocated zone. A permit, initially issued in May 2025 for a period of 20 years, will facilitate an investment estimated at USD 55 million over the next 10 years, aiming to achieve an annual production of about 18 000 tons of fish. Challenges persist in enforcing the Law on aquaculture, especially in ensuring that small-scale producers comply with permit procedures.

On **international agreements**, Georgia continued to participate in GFCM meetings and should aim for full membership. The allocated zones for marine aquaculture have been delimited as part of **maritime spatial planning**.

Chapter 22 - Regional policy and coordination of structural instruments

Regional policy is the EU's main tool for reducing regional disparities and investing in sustainable and inclusive socio-economic growth. It is operating through shared management between the Commission and EU Member States. The implementation of cohesion policy programmes requires appropriate administrative capacity on programme and project level, the establishment of systems of sound financial management and control and also the fulfilment of other EU acquis elements such as environmental or public procurement legislation.

Georgia does not have a **legislative framework** on regional development nor on cohesion. The government approved the high mountain settlements development strategy 2024-2030 and its accompanying action plan 2024-2026 in September 2024. The strategy aims at enhancing the attractiveness of mountainous settlements for living and working, while reducing socio-economic and territorial disparities between mountainous and non-mountainous municipalities.

On **institutional framework**, in April 2025, the government split the Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure (MRDI) into two separate entities (Ministry of Regional Development and Ministry of Infrastructure) to improve the coordination between regional and local authorities.

On **administrative capacity**, the Ministry of Regional Development and state representatives in regions have sufficient financial and administrative resources to coordinate and monitor the policy implementation.

On **programming**, the MRDI continued working on a smart specialisation strategy to be developed for West Georgia in line with the Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics (NUTS) 2 level.

Georgia remains a participating country in the Interreg NEXT 2021-2027 Black Sea programme. However, the recent reorganisation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, acting as the national authority, has weakened the effectiveness of the management and control system required for proper functioning of the programme.

As of end 2024, under the framework of the decentralisation strategy and its action plan, nearly 1 300 (1 254) units of properties (buildings, land, roads) were transferred from central government to municipalities.

On **monitoring and evaluation**, the consolidated monitoring report for 2024 was published by MRDI in January 2025, in accordance with the existing “Manual for Monitoring the Implementation of the Harmonisation Plan” for introducing NUTS in Georgia.

On **financial management, control and audit**, no progress was recorded in the reporting period.

On **the fight against corruption**, the Law on the prevention of corruption is the legal basis for all sectors. The RDA reports on observed irregularities and provides subsequent information. The

institution has an Irregularity Officer, and the Manual of Procedures of the authority prescribes the handling of irregularities.

Chapter 33 - Financial and budgetary provisions

This chapter covers the rules governing the funding of the EU budget ('own resources'). These resources mainly consist of: (i) contributions based on the gross national income of each Member State; (ii) customs duties; (iii) the non-recycled plastic resource and (iv) a resource based on value added tax. EU Member States must have the appropriate administrative capacity to adequately coordinate and ensure the correct calculation, collection, payment and control of own resources.

As regards **traditional own resources**, Georgia has structures in place to levy customs duties at the point of import. It operates a national VAT system (*Information on Revenue Administration and taxes is provided in Chapter 16*). Georgia needs to align further its 2019 Law on customs with the Union Customs Code.

As regards **administrative infrastructure**, the Ministry of Finance has the overall responsibility for financial and budgetary issues. The Revenue Service, in charge of tax and customs issues, is a legal entity of public law under the Ministry of Finance. The Revenue Service needs to strengthen its operational capacity and computerise its key business processes.

CLUSTER 6: EXTERNAL RELATIONS

There are two chapters in this cluster: external relations (Chapter 30); foreign, security and defence policy (Chapter 31).

Chapter 30 - External relations

The EU has a common commercial policy towards third countries, based on multilateral and bilateral agreements and autonomous measures. There are also EU rules in the field of humanitarian aid and development policy.

On the **common commercial policy**, Georgia continued to demonstrate good administrative capacity to manage its commitments in external commercial relations, as a World Trade Organization member. Georgia is party to the Ministerial Declaration on the Investment Facilitation for Development. Georgia ratified the WTO Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies in May 2025. The new disciplines of the WTO's Services Domestic Regulation Reference Paper are close to adoption.

The country should remove regulatory constraints to improve the investment climate including the wider legal framework and institutions, policies to promote responsible business conduct, and impediments to growth of priority sectors.

On **dual-use items**, export controls on dual-use goods are applied in accordance with the 2013 Law on the control of military and dual-use goods that was amended in 2019. Georgia is yet to develop its legislation covering export controls on goods that could be used for capital punishment, torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment in line with the EU *acquis* on anti-torture, namely Regulation (EU) 2019/125. Georgia is a member of the Alliance for Torture-Free Trade. Georgia is not a member of multilateral export control regimes such as the Wassenaar arrangement, the Nuclear Suppliers Group, and the Missile Technology Control Regime.

As regards **bilateral trade agreements with third countries**, Georgia is a party to 16 free trade agreements, including with the European Free Trade Association (EFTA), Türkiye, and the United Kingdom. Preferential agreements are in place with some countries with whom the EU does not have preferential agreements: Azerbaijan, China, the Russian Federation, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. A new generation free trade agreement (Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement) between Georgia and the United Arab Emirates is in force since June 2024. In November 2024 Georgia and the Republic of Korea concluded an Economic Partnership Agreement, which will enter into force following national ratification processes.

The Georgia – Hungary Bilateral Investment Treaty entered into force in January 2025, bringing the

number of **bilateral investment treaties** with third countries to 35, out of which 16 with EU Member States.

Georgia should align its (future) national legislation on the screening of foreign investments with the EU Foreign Direct Investment Screening Regulation 2019/452.

As regards **development policy and humanitarian aid**, Georgia remains primarily a recipient of aid programmes rather than a donor. Repressive legislation adopted in the reporting period including amendments to the Law on grants and the Foreign Agents Registration Act severely undermine the enabling financial environment for CSOs. A legislative framework on humanitarian aid and the allocation of dedicated funds remain to be set up. Dedicated administrative structures are still not in place. Georgia has still not developed legislation on development policy nor an administrative structure for it.

Chapter 31 - Foreign, security and defence policy

Member States must be able to conduct political dialogue under the EU foreign, security and defence policy, align with EU statements, take part in EU action, and apply agreed sanctions and restrictive measures.

There was no **political dialogue** between the EU and Georgia on common foreign and security policy (CFSP) during the reporting period due to downgraded political contacts by the EU in response to the serious democratic backsliding undertaken by the Georgian authorities.

Georgia's alignment with statements by the High Representative on behalf of the EU and Council decisions on sanctions decreased during the reporting period and remains low, with an alignment rate of 40% as of 24 October 2025, compared to 53% in 2024.

Cases of non-alignment included statements and sanctions related to Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, as well as those related for example to Hong Kong, Syria, terrorism or LGBTIQ rights. Georgia did not systematically align itself with international and EU initiatives in support of Ukraine, including on resolutions adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations, the Human Rights Council, and the Council of Europe. In June 2025, Georgia abstained from supporting the creation of the Special Tribunal for the Crime of Aggression against Ukraine set up within the framework of the Council of Europe. Georgia abstained from the UN General Assembly Resolution Advancing a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine, marking the third anniversary of the Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, after having co-sponsored it.

The re-export of common high priority and economically critical goods is still of concern. Georgia should step up cooperation efforts to prevent that its territory and/or legal entities registered in Georgia are used to circumvent **EU restrictive measures**. The number of direct flights to various destinations in Russia continued to significantly increase.

Georgia is a member of various **international organisations**, including the United Nations, the Council of Europe, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Organisation of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation. In January 2025, Georgia withdrew its delegation from the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe following the Assembly's vote to conditionally ratify the delegation's credentials while significantly limiting its rights. Georgia is a member of the Human Rights Council until the end of 2025. While cooperation has been partially reduced, Georgia continues to aspire to North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) membership and has been contributing to NATO-led operations.

Georgia is actively engaged in supporting **disarmament and non-proliferation** at international, regional and bilateral levels. Georgia is fulfilling all its commitments to the International Atomic Energy Agency, the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and the Biological Weapons Convention. As regards **small arms and light weapons (SALW)** control, Georgia committed itself to the UN Programme of Action on SALW, which contains a wide array of measures to combat the illicit proliferation of SALW.

On **security measures**, the agreement on security procedures for the exchange and protection of

classified information signed in 2016 is being revised.

As regards the **common security and defence policy**, Georgia has not offered any new contributions to **EU crisis management missions and operations**. Security and defence cooperation has not progressed, due to the political developments in the country.

On **hybrid threats**, the cooperation with the EU in this area is currently limited. Dialogue and cooperation on countering foreign information manipulation and interference (FIMI), with the authorities is constrained, while EU cooperation with civil society on countering FIMI continues. The Georgian authorities are actively spreading disinformation narratives and conspiracy theories, often targeting the EU and EU accession.

ANNEX I – RELATIONS BETWEEN THE EU AND GEORGIA

Georgia applied for EU membership on 3 March 2022. The European Council recognised the European perspective for Georgia in June 2022. Georgia was granted candidate status in December 2023, on the understanding that it takes the relevant steps set out in the Commission recommendation of 8 November 2023. On 27 June 2024, the European Council concluded that the Georgian government's course of action jeopardised Georgia's EU path, de facto leading to a halt of the accession process. This was reiterated by the European Council on 17 October 2024.

There was no political dialogue between the EU and Georgia during the reporting period due to the serious democratic backsliding by the Georgian authorities.

The EU and Georgia signed an **Association Agreement (AA)** in June 2014, which entered into force in July 2016. The **Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA)** is an integral part of the Agreement. The Agreement provides the foundations for political association and economic integration. Yearly political and economic dialogue between the EU and Georgia, as well as subcommittee meetings under the AA/DCFTA structure, have been for the most part halted. The Association Council last met in February 2024, the Association Committee in Trade Configuration in December 2023, and the Association Committee in July 2023. The Parliamentary Association Committee last met in June 2023.

In addition to the AA/DCFTA structures, a Human Rights Dialogue with Georgia has been in place since 2009 and usually convenes annually. The Human Rights Dialogue was not held in the reporting period. The High-Level Strategic and Security Dialogue, taking forward cooperation on foreign and security policy, was last held in January 2024.

The Georgian government does not exercise effective control over the occupied breakaway regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. The EU supports Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders and has been engaged since 2008 in peaceful conflict resolution efforts, including through the EU Monitoring Mission and the work of the EU Special Representative for the South Caucasus and the crisis in Georgia. The EU Monitoring Mission is the only international presence on the ground, counting more than 300 personnel.

Citizens of Georgia have enjoyed **visa-free travel to the Schengen** since March 2017. As part of the visa liberalisation monitoring mechanism, the Commission has been regularly assessing the progress made by the country in implementing reforms introduced under the visa roadmap. In its Report under the Visa Suspension Mechanism, published in December 2024, the Commission urged Georgia to take urgent action to address its recommendations, particularly related to fundamental rights, anti-discrimination and anti-corruption, in order to avoid the possible activation of the visa suspension mechanism. On 27 January 2025, the Council suspended parts of the EU-Georgia visa facilitation agreement to end visa-free travel for holders of service and diplomatic passports in response to Georgia's democratic backsliding. A readmission agreement between the European Union and Georgia has been in place since 2011.

Bilateral financial assistance was reviewed following the latest political developments. The EU has withheld EUR 121.3 million of bilateral funds directly benefiting the Georgian authorities (i.e. budget support, technical assistance, NIP investment grants) under the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation instrument – Global Europe 2021-2027 (NDICI-GE). Since its launch in 2009, Georgia has participated in the **Eastern Partnership (EaP)**. This overarching framework has further boosted bilateral and regional relations with the EU.

The EU's support through the European Peace Facility (EPF) in 2021-2023 totalled EUR 62.75 million (only for non-lethal equipment). The adoption of the 2024 EPF assistance measure has been suspended as a result of the deteriorating situation observed in the country in 2024. No new EPF assistance was provided to Georgia in 2025.

Since 2014, Georgia has **participated in EU programmes**. It currently takes part in Horizon Europe, Creative Europe, EU4Youth, the Customs Programme Fiscalis and the transnational cooperation

Interreg programme Black Sea Basin. Organisations and individuals from Georgia can also benefit from certain actions of the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps Programme.

ANNEX II – STATISTICAL DATA

STATISTICAL DATA (as of 11/09/2025)

Basic data	Note	2012	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Population (thousand)		4 498 i	3 717 i	3 729 i	3 689 i	3 736 i	3 695 i
Total area of the country (km ²)		69 700 w	69 700 w	69 700 w	69 700 w	69 700 w	69 700 w

National accounts	Note	2012	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Gross domestic product (GDP) (million national currency)	1)	27 897 w	49 789 w	60 724 w	72 860 w	80 883 w	91 892 w
Gross domestic product (GDP) (million euro)	1)	13 139 w	14 017 w	15 921 w	23 662 w	28 464 w	31 213 w
GDP per capita (euro)	1)	3 524 w	3 765 w	4 293 w	6 374 w	7 661 w	8 448 w
GDP per capita (in purchasing power standards (PPS))		:	:	:	:	:	:
GDP per capita (in PPS), relative to the EU average (EU-27 = 100)		:	:	:	:	:	:
Real GDP growth rate: change on previous year of GDP volume (%)	1)	6.6 w	- 6.3 w	10.6 w	11.0 w	7.8 w	9.4 w
Employment growth (national accounts data), relative to the previous year (%)		2 iw	- 4 iw	- 2 iw	5 iw	4 iw	5 iw
Labour productivity growth: growth in GDP (in volume) per person employed, relative to the previous year (%)	1)	4 w	- 2 w	13 w	5 w	4 w	4 w
Unit labour cost growth, relative to the previous year (%)	1)	4 w	0 w	- 3 w	2 w	4 w	- 6 w
*3 year change (T/T-3) in the nominal unit labour cost growth index (2015 = 100)	1)	:	121.4 iw	122.4 iw	123.2 iw	128.2 iw	115.8 iw
Labour productivity per person employed: GDP (in PPS) per person employed relative to EU average (EU-27 = 100)		:	:	:	:	:	:
Gross value added by main sectors							
Agriculture, forestry and fisheries (%)	1) 2)	9.6 w	9.5 w	8.3 w	7.6 w	6.9 w	6.2 w
Industry (%)	1) 2)	14.4 w	15.4 w	16.9 w	16.5 w	14.1 w	13.5 w
Construction (%)	1) 2)	6.8 w	8.7 w	7.3 w	8.0 w	7.6 w	8.4 w
Services (%)	1) 2)	69.2 w	66.3 w	67.5 w	67.9 w	71.4 w	71.9 w
Final consumption expenditure, as a share of GDP (%)	1)	92.4 w	94.5 w	95.6 w	85.7 w	83.6 w	84.8 w
Gross fixed capital formation, as a share of GDP (%)	1)	21.6 w	22.2 w	20.8 w	19.8 w	21.5 w	22.0 w
Exports of goods and services, relative to GDP (%)	1)	35.6 w	36.9 w	42.7 w	52.5 w	49.3 w	48.4 w
Imports of goods and services, relative to GDP (%)	1)	54.1 w	56.0 w	58.9 w	62.2 w	57.9 w	56.0 w
Gross fixed capital formation by the general government sector, as a percentage of GDP (%)	1)	5 w	7 w	6 w	6 w	7 w	:

Business	Note	2012	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Industrial production volume index (2015 = 100)		98.1 w	110.8 w	128.6 w	147.2 w	148.7 w	149.8 w
Number of active enterprises (number)		54 626 w	129 659 w	139 741 w	149 110 w	162 891 w	:
Birth rate: number of enterprise births in the reference period (t) divided by the number of enterprises active in t (%)	3)	26.1 w	17.5 w	21.2 w	29.5 w	25.2 w	:
Death rate: number of enterprise deaths in the reference period (t) divided by the number of enterprises active in t (%)	3)	:	17.4 w	17.5 w	17.9 w	12.8 w	:
People employed in SMEs as a share of all persons employed (within the non-financial business economy) (%)		68.7 iw	63.7 iw	63.4 iw	61.9 iw	61.4 iw	:

Value added by SMEs (in the non-financial business economy) (EUR million)		3 192 iw	4 205 iw	4 647 iw	7 199 iw	8 866 iw	:
Total value added (in the non-financial business economy) (EUR million)		5 271 w	6 268 w	7 300 w	11 741 w	14 016 w	:

Inflation rate and house prices	Note	2012	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Consumer price index (CPI), change relative to the previous year (%)		:	:	:	11.8 w	2.1 w	1.7 w

Balance of payments	Note	2012	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Balance of payments: current account total (million euro)		- 1 467.0 w	- 1 737.7 w	- 1 645.6 w	- 1 012.9 w	- 1 582.8 w	- 1 388.3 w
Balance of payments current account: trade balance (million euro)		- 3 292.1 w	- 2 771.0 w	- 3 211.4 w	- 4 873.7 w	- 5 620.1 w	- 5 982.6 w
Balance of payments current account: net services (million euro)		864.7 w	120.4 w	615.9 w	2 593.5 w	3 172.0 w	3 575.4 w
Balance of payments current account: net balance for primary income (million euro)		- 133.4 w	- 662.1 w	- 1 002.0 w	- 1 656.5 w	- 2 212.2 w	- 2 035.8 w
Balance of payments current account: net balance for secondary income (million euro)		1 093.8 w	1 575.0 w	1 952.0 w	2 924.0 w	3 077.5 w	3 054.6 w
Net balance for primary and secondary income: of which government transfers (million euro)		818.7 w	709.2 w	816.6 w	1 144.9 w	767.5 w	966.5 w
*3 year backward moving average of the current account balance relative to GDP (%)		- 10.9 iw	- 8.4 iw	- 9.6 iw	- 9.1 iw	- 6.8 iw	- 4.8 iw
*Five year change in share of world exports of goods and services (%)		45.2 w	- 8.7 w	- 3.0 w	27.7 w	5.1 w	:
Net balance (inward - outward) of foreign direct investment (FDI) (million euro)		582.9 w	493.6 w	786.5 w	1 837.9 w	1 493.1 w	841.6 w
Foreign direct investment (FDI) abroad (million euro)		230.8 w	30.1 w	271.7 w	312.4 w	267.6 w	394.9 w
of which FDI of the reporting economy in the EU-27 countries (million euro)		137.2 w	120.8 w	110.1 w	179.0 w	143.0 w	147.1 w
Foreign direct investment (FDI) in the reporting economy (million euro)		813.8 w	523.7 w	1 058.2 w	2 150.4 w	1 760.7 w	1 236.5 w
of which FDI of the EU-27 countries in the reporting economy (million euro)		285.7 w	299.1 w	302.9 w	800.4 w	632.9 w	289.2 w
*Net international investment position, relative to GDP (%)		- 94.8 w	- 157.5 w	- 141.2 w	- 113.6 w	- 98.0 w	- 89.0 w
Year on year rate of change in gross inflow of remittances (in national currency) from migrant workers (%)	1)	4.2 iw	7.3 iw	8.5 iw	9.2 iw	7.9 iw	6.3 iw

Public finance	Note	2012	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
General government deficit / surplus, relative to GDP (%)	1)	- 0.6 w	- 9.2 w	- 6.2 pw	- 2.4 pw	- 2.3 w	:
General government gross debt relative to GDP (%)	1)	30.5 w	59.5 w	49.0 pw	39.1 pw	38.8 w	:
Total government revenues, as a percentage of GDP (%)	1)	27.1 w	24.9 w	24.9 pw	26.6 pw	27.4 w	:
Total government expenditure, as a percentage of GDP (%)	1)	23.3 w	26.9 w	25.3 pw	23.0 pw	22.9 w	:

Financial indicators	Note	2012	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Gross external debt of the whole economy, relative to GDP (%)	1)	77.5 iw	122.0 iw	122.8 iw	94.9 iw	77.8 iw	77.2 iw
Gross external debt of the whole economy, relative to total exports (%)		222.8 w	354.3 w	273.5 w	181.0 w	161.4 w	154.2 w
Money supply: M1 (banknotes, coins, overnight deposits, million euro)		1 529.0 w	2 825.9 w	2 970.3 w	4 346.1 w	6 175.0 w	5 957.0 w
Total credit by monetary financial institutions to residents (consolidated) (million euro)		3 979.2 w	:	:	:	:	:
*Annual change in financial sector liabilities (%)		:	:	:	:	:	:
*Private debt, consolidated, relative to GDP (%)	1)	32.6 w	77.7 w	71.5 pw	61.9 pw	65.0 w	:
Interest rates: day-to-day money rate, per annum (%)	4)	7.44 w	8.45 w	9.50 w	10.89 w	10.43 w	8.27 w
Euro exchange rates: average of period (1 euro = ... national currency)		2.124	3.553	3.814	3.080	2.842	2.945
Trade-weighted effective exchange rate index, 42 countries (2015 = 100)		97.9 w	97.8 w	97.3 w	123.7 w	152.6 w	159.5 w

*3 year change (T/T-3) in the trade-weighted effective exchange rate index, 42 countries (2015 = 100)		0.1 iw	- 0.1 iw	- 0.1 iw	0.2 iw	0.6 iw	0.6 iw
Value of reserve assets (including gold) (million euro)		2 180.8 w	3 184.9 w	3 777.0 w	4 591.6 w	4 528.2 w	4 260.6 w

External trade in goods	Note	2012	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Value of imports: all goods, all partners (million euro)		6 106 iw	7 047 iw	8 539 iw	12 866 iw	14 430 iw	15 657 iw
Value of exports: all goods, all partners (million euro)		1 801 iw	2 925 iw	3 587 iw	5 302 iw	5 629 iw	6 061 iw
Trade balance: all goods, all partners (million euro)		- 4 305 iw	- 4 122 iw	- 4 951 iw	- 7 563 iw	- 8 802 iw	- 9 597 iw
Terms of trade (export price index / import price index * 100) (number)		:	:	:	:	:	:
Share of exports to EU-27 countries in value of total exports (%)		14.0 iw	20.9 iw	16.9 iw	15.4 iw	11.6 iw	8.7 iw
Share of imports from EU-27 countries in value of total imports (%)		28.8 iw	22.9 iw	22.9 iw	22.6 iw	24.5 iw	27.2 iw

Demography	Note	2012	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Crude rate of natural change of population (natural growth rate): number of births minus deaths (per thousand inhabitants)		:	- 1.1	- 3.8	- 1.8	- 0.7	- 1.2
Infant mortality rate deaths of children under one year of age (per thousand live births)		:	7.9	:	7.6	8.2	:
Life expectancy at birth: male (years)		:	:	:	69.4	69.9	:
Life expectancy at birth: female (years)		:	:	:	78.1	77.5	:

Labour market	Note	2012	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Economic activity rate for persons aged 20–64: proportion of the population aged 20–64 that is economically active (%)		77.5 w	63.2 bw	64.5 w	65.9 w	68.7 w	:
Employment rate for persons aged 20–64: proportion of the population aged 20–64 that are in employment (%)		63.0 w	51.1 bw	50.6 w	54.0 w	56.9 w	:
Male employment rate for persons aged 20–64 (%)		72.4 w	58.7 bw	58.1 w	62.2 w	64.9 w	:
Female employment rate for persons aged 20–64 (%)		54.8 w	43.9 bw	43.5 w	46.4 w	49.4 w	:
Employment rate for persons aged 55–64: proportion of the population aged 55–64 that are in employment (%)		65.7 w	47.0 bw	47.3 w	50.6 w	52.3 w	:
Employment by main sectors							
Agriculture, forestry and fisheries (%)	5)	46.9 w	19.8 bw	18.9 w	17.9 w	16.5 w	:
Industry (%)	5)	7.2 w	11.4 bw	11.3 w	11.9 w	12.2 w	:
Construction (%)	5)	:	6.9 bw	7.8 w	8.5 w	8.8 w	:
Services (%)	5) 6)	45.8 w	61.9 bw	62.1 w	61.8 w	62.4 w	:
People employed in the public sector as a share of total employment, persons aged 20–64 (%)		18.5 w	23.5 bw	24.3 w	23.4 w	23.3 w	:
People employed in the private sector as a share of total employment, persons aged 20–64 (%)		81.5 w	76.5 bw	75.7 w	76.6 w	76.7 w	:
Unemployment rate: proportion of the labour force that is unemployed (%)	7)	17.2 w	18.5 bw	20.6 w	17.3 w	16.4 w	:
Male unemployment rate (%)	7)	18.2 w	20.2 bw	22.7 w	19.3 w	18.3 w	:
Female unemployment rate (%)	7)	16.1 w	16.2 bw	17.8 w	14.6 w	14.0 w	:
Youth unemployment rate: proportion of the labour force aged 15–24 that is unemployed (%)		36.1 w	39.4 bw	42.9 w	39.4 w	34.5 w	:
Long-term unemployment rate: proportion of the labour force that has been unemployed for 12 months or more (%)	7)	7.5 w	5.8 bw	7.2 w	6.6 w	6.5 w	:

Unemployment rate for persons (aged 25–64) having completed at most lower secondary education (ISCED levels 0-2) (%)	8)	6.2 w	25.0 bw	32.1 w	24.8 w	20.8 w	:
Unemployment rate for persons (aged 25–64) having completed tertiary education (ISCED levels 5-8) (%)		21.3 w	14.5 bw	15.3 w	13.0 w	13.1 w	:

Social cohesion	Note	2012	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Average nominal monthly wages and salaries (national currency)		713 w	1 191 w	1 305 w	1 543 w	1 767 w	:
Index of real wages and salaries (index of nominal wages and salaries divided by the inflation index) (2016 = 100)		:	106 w	106 w	112 w	125 w	:
Gini coefficient		44 w	37 w	36 w	36 w	36 w	:
Poverty gap	9)	6.8 w	5.5 w	5.5 w	5.8 w	5.6 w	:

Standard of living	Note	2012	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Number of passenger cars relative to population size (number per thousand population)		150.0 i	319.0	343.0	357.0	389.0	414.0
Number of mobile phone subscriptions relative to population size (number per thousand population)		1 088.3 w	1 273.7 w	1 343.6 w	1 388.5 w	1 480.6 w	:
Mobile broadband penetration (per 100 inhabitants)		:	:	:	:	:	:
Fixed broadband penetration (per 100 inhabitants)		:	:	:	:	:	:

Infrastructure	Note	2012	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Density of railway network (lines in operation per thousand km ²)		20.9 iw	16.0 iw	16.0 iw	16.0 iw	16.0 iw	:
Length of motorways (kilometres)		80 w	234	263	263 w	271 w	:

Education, Innovation and Research	Note	2012	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Percentage of persons aged 30-34 with a tertiary education level (ISCED 2011 levels 5 to 8)		42.4 w	38.2 w	35.5 w	35.2 w	35.6 w	:
Percentage of persons aged 30-34 with a tertiary education level (ISCED 2011 levels 5 to 8), males		42.6 w	33.6 w	32.3 w	30.4 w	31.2 w	:
Percentage of persons aged 30-34 with a tertiary education level (ISCED 2011 levels 5 to 8), females		42.2 w	42.7 w	38.9 w	40.1 w	40.3 w	:
Participation in early childhood education (children aged 3 and over)		:	158.1 w	154.5 w	148.7 w	141.3 w	:
Participation in early childhood education (children aged 3 and over), males		:	:	:	:	:	:
Participation in early childhood education (children aged 3 and over), females		:	:	:	:	:	:
Low achieving 15-year-olds in reading		:	:	:	:	:	:
Low achieving 15-year-olds in mathematics		:	:	:	:	:	:
Low achieving 15-year-olds in science		:	:	:	:	:	:
Early leavers from education and training: proportion of persons aged 18-24 with at most lower secondary education (at most ISCED 2011 level 2) who are not in further education or training		7.1 w	8.2 w	7.3 w	6.0 w	5.3 w	:
Early leavers from education and training: proportion of men aged 18-24 with at most lower secondary education (at most ISCED 2011 level 2) who are not in further education or training		8.6 w	8.8 w	7.6 w	6.1 w	5.1 w	:

Early leavers from education and training: proportion of women aged 18-24 with at most lower secondary education (at most ISCED 2011 level 2) who are not in further education or training		5.8 w	7.4 w	7.0 w	5.9 w	5.4 w	:
Proportion of persons aged 25-64 having participated in education and training (last 4 weeks)		:	1.1 w	1.2 w	1.6 w	1.7 w	:
Proportion of persons aged 25-64 having participated in education and training (last 4 weeks), men		:	0.9 w	1.1 w	1.3 w	1.6 w	:
Proportion of persons aged 25-64 having participated in education and training (last 4 weeks), women		:	1.2 w	1.3 w	1.8 w	1.8 w	:
Exposure of vocational education and training (VET) graduates to work-based learning (% of population aged 20-34)		:	:	:	:	:	:
Share of individuals having at least basic digital skills (% of population aged 16-74)		:	29.8 w	31.5 w	32.4 w	34.5 w	36.3 w
Share of individuals having at least basic digital skills (% of population aged 16-74), males		:	27.7 w	29.4 w	30.5 w	33.5 w	35.9 w
Share of individuals having at least basic digital skills (% of population aged 16-74), females		:	31.8 w	33.4 w	34.1 w	35.4 w	36.6 w
Public expenditure on education relative to GDP (%)	1)	2.7 iw	3.8 iw	3.6 iw	3.2 iw	3.7 iw	:
Gross domestic expenditure on R&D relative to GDP (%)	1)	0.13 iw	:	:	:	:	:
Government budget appropriations or outlays on R&D (GBAORD), as a percentage of GDP (%)	1)	0.20 w	0.23 w	0.20 pw	0.15 pw	0.18 pw	0.16 pw
Percentage of households who have internet access at home (%)	10)	31.1 w	83.8 w	86.1 w	88.4 w	89.0 w	91.5 w

Environment	Note	2012	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Index of greenhouse gas emissions, CO ₂ equivalent (1990 = 100)		43.7 w	:	:	:	:	:
Energy intensity of the economy (kg of oil equivalent per 1 000 euro GDP at 2015 constant prices)		:	445.9 w	463.1 w	365.1 w	309.4 w	:
Electricity generated from renewable sources relative to gross electricity consumption (%)		:	:	51.3	55.5	66.3	:
Road share of inland freight transport (based on tonne-km) (%)	11)	9.6 ew	19.6 ew	17.8 ew	14.8 ew	16.1 ew	:

Energy	Note	2012	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Primary production of all energy products (thousand TOE)		:	1 043	1 248	1 272	:	:
Primary production of crude oil (thousand TOE)		:	32	36	37	:	:
Primary production of solid fuels (thousand TOE)		:	40	60	59	:	:
Primary production of gas (thousand TOE)		:	8	14	13	:	:
Net imports of all energy products (thousand TOE)		:	3 984 i	4 133 i	4 561 i	:	:
Gross inland energy consumption (thousand TOE)		:	4 998	5 385	5 867	:	:
Gross electricity generation (GWh)		:	11 160	12 645	14 247	:	:

Agriculture	Note	2012	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Agricultural output volume index (at producer prices) (2015 = 100)		87.4 w	109.3 w	111.8 w	109.9 w	106.8 w	:
Utilised agricultural area (thousand hectares)		:	:	:	:	:	:
Livestock numbers: live bovine animals (thousand heads, end of period)		1 128.8 w	925.8 w	928.6 w	853.7 w	837.7 w	:
Livestock numbers: live swine (thousand heads, end of period)		204.3 w	165.7 w	152.9 w	150.2 w	141.6 w	:
Livestock numbers: live sheep and live goats (thousand heads, end of period)		742.6 iw	946.5 iw	956.8 iw	914.0 iw	761.7 iw	:
Raw milk available on farms (thousand tonnes)		589.5 w	569.0 w	587.9 w	564.8 w	584.3 w	:

Harvested crop production: cereals (including rice) (thousand tonnes)		370.0 iw	405.1 iw	430.2 iw	370.5 iw	392.5 iw	:
Harvested crop production: sugar beet (thousand tonnes)		:	:	:	:	:	:
Harvested crop production: vegetables (thousand tonnes)	12)	235.2 w	259.7 w	226.9 w	201.1 w	187.5 w	:

Source: Eurostat and/or the statistical authorities in Georgia

: = not available

b = break in series

d = definition differs

e = estimated value

n = not significant value

p = provisional

i = Eurostat estimate

w= data supplied by and under the responsibility of the national statistical authority and published on an "as is" basis and without any assurance as regards their quality and adherence to EU statistical methodology

* = Macroeconomic Imbalance Procedure (MIP) indicator

** = Data shown for Georgia exclude the regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia over which the government of Georgia does not exercise control.

Footnotes:

- 1) Based on 2008 SNA.
- 2) Calculations are made according to NACE Rev. 2.
- 3) Includes: limited liability companies, joint stock companies, joint liability companies, cooperatives, limited partnerships, individual enterprises, foreign enterprise branches.
Excludes: NACE Rev. 2 Sections K, O, T and U.
- 4) TIBR 1 Day.
- 5) Since 2020: NACE Rev.2; before 2020: NACE Rev.1.1.
- 6) Including construction.
- 7) Persons aged 15 years and older.
- 8) Persons without education are excluded.
- 9) Consumption based relative poverty.
- 10) Percentage of households having fixed internet connections at home (therefore excluding mobile phone network).
- 11) Does not follow the 'territorial principle'; including the performance of all resident carriers on the national territory and abroad.
- 12) Including kitchen gardens.