

# FACTS AND FIGURES ABOUT EU-GEORGIA RELATIONS

#easternpartnership



The European Union and Georgia enjoy an excellent relationship. Relations are based on the EU Georgia Association Agreement including a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA), which entered into force in July 2016 and strives for political association and economic integration. The implementation of the outcomes of the High-level meeting between members of the European Commission and of the Government of Georgia on 21 November 2018, where more than 25 concrete actions were agreed, further reinforcing EU-Georgia cooperation. Through its cooperation and assistance programmes, the EU remains committed to supporting a strong, independent and prosperous Georgia.

## STRONGER ECONOMY

✓ Economic development and job creation are key priorities for the EU in Georgia. As Georgia's **main trading partner**, with a **27% share of its total trade**, ties are very close, and the ongoing opening of the EU market to more Georgian products continually offers Georgians new export and income opportunities.

✓ **Small and medium enterprises (SMEs)** are the backbone of the Georgian economy. To support their development, the EU provides funding, training, and export support through its EU4Business initiative. Since 2009, **40,000 SMEs, microenterprises and farmers have received loans**. In addition, a total of **€130 million** in loans are made available for **innovative SMEs and small midcap companies** under Horizon 2020.

✓ Through its ENPARD programme, the EU is **modernising Georgian agriculture** by supporting the roll out the agriculture cooperative model and providing **1,600 cooperatives** with financial and technical support. EU support has also helped establish **59 information and consultation centres** around the country, which have trained over **250,000 farmers** to date.

✓ To help stabilise the Government's macro-economic policies, the EU provides **macrofinancial assistance** to Georgia – a third operation for up to **€45 million** was initiated in 2018.

## STRONGER CONNECTIVITY

✓ The EU provides large grants to Georgia for the development of its **transport connections, electricity and water infrastructure**, including the East-West highway; large scale water infrastructure in Adjara, Kakheti, or Imereti; and the modernisation of the Enguri dam and other electricity infrastructure across the country.

✓ The EU also supports large programmes on the **environment, green economy, renewable energy and energy efficiency** to tackle challenges in Georgia and other neighbouring countries. For example, the EU's Black Sea Basin Cross-Border Cooperation Programme, brings together municipalities in neighbouring countries to face common challenges such as marine litter.

## STRONGER GOVERNANCE

✓ The EU works with the Georgian government to establish an **efficient, accessible, and fair state that safeguards citizens' rights** and makes it easier for them to pursue their lives and ambitions.

✓ To ensure **equal access to justice** for all citizens regardless of their income, the EU supported the establishment of the **Government Legal Aid Service**. With over 20 offices across the country, the service has offered **free assistance to over 330,000 people**, including court representation in more than **123,000 cases**. In many cases, these were citizens unable to afford a lawyer otherwise.

✓ The EU has trained over **5,000 judges, prosecutors, prison and probation staff, police investigators, public defenders, and lawyers** to increase their skills and efficiency and further protect Georgians' rights.

✓ To facilitate access to Government services, the EU has supported the establishment of **44 Government Community Centres** in smaller towns and villages across the country. These centres bring 200 public and banking services, as well as free internet and libraries to over 90,000 Georgians living in remote areas.

## STRONGER SOCIETY

✓ Since the entry into force of **visa liberalisation** for Georgians in 28 March 2017, according to Georgian authorities, more than **300,000 Georgian citizens** have travelled to the EU without a visa.

✓ Under Erasmus+, over **5,500 students and academic staff exchanges** have taken place between Georgia and the EU. Over **9,300 young people and youth workers** from Georgia have been involved in joint exchanges, training and volunteering projects.

✓ Since 2018, Georgia hosts the **European School in Tbilisi**, bringing together students from across the Eastern Partnership region, who receive a high quality education inspired by European and international teaching standards and will have the chance to engage in European values.

## IN FIGURES

The EU is Georgia's largest trading partner and provides over

**€120 million**

to Georgia annually in grant assistance.

More than

**300,000**

Georgian citizens have benefitted from visa-free travel to the Schengen area since March 2017.

## STANDING BY GEORGIA ON SECURITY

The EU remains firmly committed to its policy of supporting Georgia's territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders as well as engagement with the breakaway regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia in support of longer-term conflict resolution.

Immediately in the wake of the August 2008 hostilities, the EU deployed the EU Monitoring Mission (EUMM) to Georgia, which has been patrolling areas adjacent to the Administrative Boundary Lines with Abkhazia and South Ossetia day and night. This has reduced tensions and potential risks of escalation and contributed to stability throughout Georgia and in the surrounding region. Currently, EUMM has around 200 monitors working on the ground, and a 24/7 hotline, allowing the parties to the conflict to communicate on security-related issues in order to defuse tensions.

The EU also welcomes Georgia's support on EU security issues. A Framework Agreement on Georgia's participation in the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy operations entered into force in March 2014, and Georgia has since made remarkable contributions to several operations. Its biggest contribution so far was a company of around 156 staff deployed to the European Union Force in the Central African Republic. Currently, Georgia is involved in the EU Military Training Mission in the Central African Republic and the EU Training Mission in Mali.



**EaP** | Eastern Partnership

