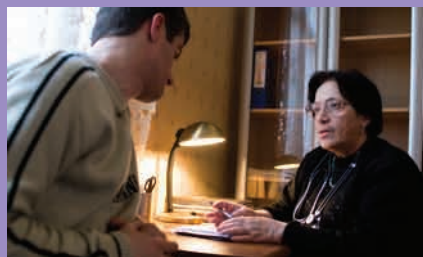




Georgian winner of the EU drawing competition on gender equality, 2007



€15 million of support to the government of Georgia and civil society

The European Union supports the key role of non-state actors in defence of people in need and vulnerable social groups

European Union

Supporting human rights protection, democratisation and civil society in Georgia

The European Union believes that democracy and human rights are universal values that should be vigorously promoted. They are fundamental to effective work on poverty alleviation, prevention of conflicts and their resolution. On this basis, the European Union delivers support to Georgia in these areas by employing a variety of approaches at central government, regional or local level, depending on which is most effective.

Human Rights

For human rights, the main source of funding comes through the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) which has financed a wide variety of projects in Georgia since 1998, both through large and micro-projects aiming at:

- combating torture in places of detention and rehabilitating victims of such mistreatment;
- protecting rights of minorities and vulnerable groups;
- enhancing public participation in local and national affairs;
- securing free and fair elections; and
- freedom of the media

Complementing the European Commission's strong intervention in the justice sector over the past ten years, funds totalling €15 million have been provided to sustain a common understanding with Georgian institutions and civil society actors to stimulate the creation of a legal framework allowing the application of such crucial principles.

The key role of the civil society

Another relatively new programme - *Non-State Actors and Local Authorities in Development Programme* - has been set up to develop the capacities of civil society actors for more effective interaction with the State. It aims also at improving local authorities' capacity in involving local communities in their affairs. This programme targets actions on the ground, especially in remote regions where non-state actors need to be strengthened, and also develop cooperation with local authorities to deliver basic services to people in need. For this task, the European Union spent €3.2 million on Georgia, over the years 2008-2009.

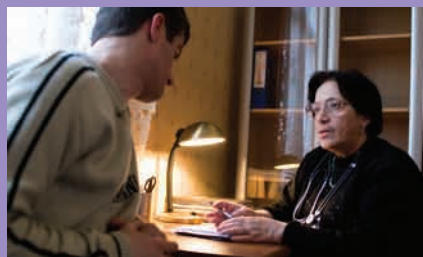
The Delegation of the European Union has recently awarded nine new contracts in such diverse sectors as agricultural development, environmental protection, juvenile justice and HIV prevention. The common theme running through all these projects is that they will focus on building the capacities of local people to help them meet everyday challenges.

The European Union continually emphasises the importance of dialogue and cooperation with non-governmental organisations and, as a result, is in regular contact with civil society actors. Civil society is both a partner and a beneficiary at the same time.



The European Commission is the European Union's executive body

"The European Union is made up of 27 Member States who have decided to gradually link together their know-how, resources and destinies. Together, during a period of enlargement of 50 years, they have built a zone of stability, democracy and sustainable development whilst maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance and individual freedoms. The European Union is committed to sharing its achievements and its values with countries and peoples beyond its borders".



Free media lead to a more reliable and accessible information. € 2.5 million of support from the European Union during the last three years

European Union ensures its constant support to a growing involvement of the civil society in delivering basic services to Georgians

Support to good governance and the crucial role of the media

On the central government level, the European Union seeks to strengthen key pillars of good governance.

Over the years, the Georgian Parliament has benefitted from a variety of actions, both in terms of material support in the shape of equipment and library resources, as well as in the reform of its administrative procedures. The Parliament's website was re-vamped with the European Commission assistance of € 2.2 million from 2005 to 2009.

All aspects of the electoral system have received intensive support from the European Commission supporting efforts to reform the legislative framework, working with the election administration officials, providing training for non-partisan election observers. This work continues in the run-up to the important local elections scheduled for 2010 with three new projects and a budget of €1.9 million.

The European Union funds programmes and projects seeking to raise awareness about freedom of the media, and the central role media can play in the social and political dialogue. Support, totalling € 2.5 million, for the development of independent media has been delivered through a number of projects such as training for the Georgian Public Broadcaster, creation of journalism networks, and strengthening the role of the media as a watchdog in the Georgian society. These projects aim to increase public access to high quality, professional, independent information, with particular emphasis on investigative journalism.

Rights of people in need

In 2008, the European Union funded the project *Young lawyers for effective access to Civil, Social and Economic Rights* carried out by the Georgian Young Lawyers' Association. It provides legal aid through centres in Tbilisi and seven regional offices in Telavi, Dusheti, Rustavi, Gori, Kutaisi, Ozugeti and Batumi. Through these centres, the Association assists citizens in the field of Administrative and Civil Law, in the preparation of lawsuits or administrative complaints. Between July-August 2009, 23 cases were successfully represented before the Georgian Civil Court. Basic rights of vulnerable people have been protected.

Lali and her three children were forced to leave their home due to frequent physical and verbal abuse from her husband. They had no source of income but material support from relatives. The Georgian Young Lawyers' Association helped them to recover a good part of a house and land they partially owned and that her husband prevented them from using. Lali says: "Thanks to the assistance given to us, I feel that my children and I have the right to live a normal life. Now we have a future".

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