



## NEWS STORIES

# Georgia: EU-backed fashion house pioneers local clothing industry



In Georgia, EU support and a trade agreement are delivering local jobs and growth, as well as closer market integration.

EU High Representative Federica Mogherini will on 5 February welcome Prime Minister Giorgi Kvirikashvili to Brussels, to take stock of the good progress made on the Association Agreement between Georgia and the EU. A key point on their agenda will be the significant increase in Georgian exports to the EU over the last year, achieved thanks to the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area that is part of the Association Agreement.

Materia Fashion House, a key player in the local clothing industry, was one of the first Georgian companies to benefit from the EU4Business-EBRD credit line that opened up under to the new agreement.

EU funding helped Materia modernise their equipment and introduce best workplace health and safety practices for a newly built factory. This has allowed the company to expand, increase their exports and lead the evolution of the Georgian fashion scene.

“The EU credit line was the best fit for us. We focus on boosting our competitiveness, increasing the quality of our products, taking care of and creating better working conditions for our people,” said Lado Giorgadze, CEO of Fashion House Materia.

Clothing produced by Materia can be spotted on international fashion shows as well as in various public institutions in Georgia: the army, police, post office staff and many more. The company works closely with the Georgian rugby federation producing uniforms for the national team’s junior players and a wide range of rugby clubs.

Video of Georgia Fashion house - EU in Georgia

The EU4Business-EBRD credit line is a joint initiative between the European Union and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) targeting small and medium-sized enterprises in Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. All three countries are signatories to an Association Agreement and benefit from signing up to the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area with the EU.

Since 2009, the EU has contributed €35 million in Georgia triggering €711 million loans to local companies helping create more than 2,400 new jobs.

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