

FACTS AND FIGURES ABOUT EU-GEORGIA RELATIONS

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The European Union and Georgia enjoy a very close and positive relationship. The EU-Georgia Association Agreement including a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA) entered into force in July 2016 and strives for political association and economic integration. The EU is Georgia's largest trading partner and provides over €120 million to Georgia annually in grant assistance. Georgian citizens have benefitted from visa-free travel to the Schengen area since 28 March 2017.

STRONGER ECONOMY

- ✓ In 2017, the EU was Georgia's key trading partner, with a **27% share of its total trade**.
- ✓ The EU provides Georgian companies with funding, training, and export support to new markets through the EU4Business initiative. Since 2009, more than **37,000 companies have received loans**, worth a total value of over €882 million, and **10,312 new jobs have been created** in Georgia as a result.
- ✓ EU support to agriculture is raising the income of Georgian farmers. Over **1,600 farmer cooperatives have been created** with the EU's assistance, with figures showing a more than 20% increase in incomes and a doubling of employment levels. EU support has helped establish 59 information and consultation centres around the country, allowing over **250,000 farmers to become more efficient**.

STRONGER CONNECTIVITY

- ✓ Georgia is a **key transit country between Europe and Asia**. Georgia takes part in large regional programmes on transport safety and transport connectivity, environment, climate change and green economy, energy security, renewable energy and energy efficiency, as well as Cross-Border Cooperation, specifically participating in the Black Sea Basin Programme which aims inter alia at reducing marine litter.

STRONGER GOVERNANCE

- ✓ The EU is working hard to ensure that Georgians have proper access to justice. It has helped establish a Government Legal Aid Service, which has provided **free legal services to over 90,000 people**, represented over 5,000 juveniles in criminal proceedings, and given over 150,000 free legal consultations to a number of citizens unable to afford a lawyer otherwise.
- ✓ Various EU-funded **training programmes for judges, prosecutors, prison and probation staff, police investigators, public defenders, and lawyers** have increased their skills and efficiency, further ensuring that Georgians' rights are effectively protected.
- ✓ With EU support, the Georgian Government has established 44 Community Centres in smaller towns and villages across the country. These centres **ease life for the 90,000 Georgians** living there by bringing 200 public and banking services, as well as free internet and libraries, directly to them.

STRONGER SOCIETY

- ✓ Visa liberalisation for Georgian citizens entered into force on 28 March 2017. According to Georgian authorities, close to **295,000 Georgian citizens** have already travelled to the EU without a visa.
- ✓ In the period 2015-2017, **2,504 students and academic staff** from Georgia have studied or taught in the EU as part of the Erasmus+ programme. More than 5,300 young people and youth workers are taking part in joint activities with their counterparts from the EU.

EU IS COMMITTED TO IMPROVING SECURITY IN GEORGIA

Immediately in the wake of the August 2008 hostilities, the EU deployed the EU Monitoring Mission (EUMM) to Georgia. Ever since its deployment, the mission has been patrolling day and night, particularly in the areas adjacent to the Administrative Boundary Lines with Abkhazia and South Ossetia. In doing so, it has reduced tensions and potential risks of escalation, contributing to stability throughout Georgia and in the surrounding region. In the 10 years since its deployment, over 1,700 EU nationals coming from all 28 EU Member States have served in the Mission. Currently, EUMM has around 200 monitors working on the ground. EUMM also has a 24/7 hotline, allowing the parties to the conflict to communicate on security related issues in order to diffuse tensions.

GEORGIA IS A CONTRIBUTOR TO EU CRISIS MANAGEMENT OPERATIONS

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 EUFOR RCA operation 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.

EU SUPPORT FOR CONFLICT RESOLUTION

The EU continues to support Georgia's efforts to overcome the consequences of internal conflicts in Georgia's breakaway regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia dating back to the early 1990s. It also assists Georgia in achieving more stability in the region following the outbreak of hostilities in August 2008. 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. The EU appointed in July 2003 an EU Special Representative for the South Caucasus.

Georgia is also benefitting from EU macro-financial assistance – a third operation for up to

€45 million

has been launched in 2018.