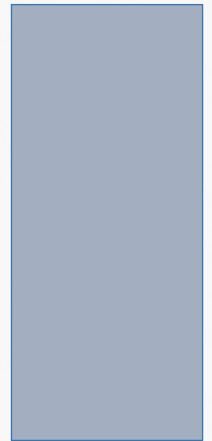




Office of the State Minister of Georgia on European and Euro-Atlantic Integration

**IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GEORGIA – EU  
ASSOCIATION AGREEMENT AND THE  
ASSOCIATION AGENDA**

2014-2015



# THE ASSOCIATION AGREEMENT



June 2014: Georgia signed **Association Agreement (AA)** including **Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA)** with **the EU**: Georgia commits itself to gradual establishment of the European political, economic, social and legislative standards that as expected will bring prosperity, welfare and stability to the population.

June 2014: the **Georgia-EU Association Agenda** was adopted and a set of jointly agreed priorities was established for the period 2014-2016.

**Note:** The Association Agenda replaces the European Neighbourhood Policy Action Plan (ENP AP).

July 2014: The Parliament of Georgia ratified the AA/DCFTA Agreement.

September 2014: **the Association Agreement entered into force provisionally**, whereby about 80% of the Association Agreement came into force, including the **Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area**.

To date: the **European Parliament and 24 EU member states** have ratified Association Agreement between Georgia and the EU: Republic of Bulgaria; Republic of Latvia; Republic of Lithuania; Romania; Republic of Malta; Slovak Republic; Sweden; Hungary; Republic of Estonia; Kingdom of Denmark; Republic of Croatia; Republic of Ireland; United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland; Republic of Finland; Federal Republic of Germany; Grand Duchy of Luxembourg; Republic of Poland; Czech Republic; Portuguese Republic; Republic of Slovenia; Republic of Cyprus; Republic of Austria; Kingdom of the Netherlands and Kingdom of Spain.

# MONITORING IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ASSOCIATION AGREEMENT



**Prime Minister:** The Prime Minister of Georgia is personally supervising the EU-integration related activities of the Government including by chairing the meetings of the Governmental Commission on European Integration.

**Internal coordination mechanisms:** the Government of Georgia has strengthened internal coordination mechanisms, as well as, coordination capacities of the Office of the State Minister of Georgia on European and Euro-Atlantic Integration and line ministries.

**Policy Papers:** In order to ensure long-term planning, as well as effective implementation of the EU-Georgia AA and sustainability of corresponding reforms Office of the State Minister of Georgia on European and Euro-Atlantic Integration has started elaboration of sectorial Policy Papers.

**Electronic monitoring system:** Office of the State Minister of Georgia on European and Euro-Atlantic Integration has started working on the development of an electronic monitoring system for the implementation of the EU-Georgia Association Agreement, allowing effective monitoring of the information related to the implementation of the AA obligations.

Georgia successfully implemented 2014 National Action Plan “For the Implementation of the Association Agreement and the Association Agenda”. The process is continued by implementation of the 2015 AP approved on 15 January, 2015 by the Government of Georgia.

# POLITICAL DIALOGUE AND REFORM



## Human Rights

- The **National Strategy on Human Rights for 2014-2020**, and the **Human Rights Action Plan of the Government of Georgia for 2014-2015** was adopted and is implementing successfully;
- The **Law of Georgia on Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination** was adopted on 2 May 2014 is implementing successfully;
- The amendments of the **Law of Georgia on Elimination of Domestic Violence, Protection and Support of Victims of Domestic Violence** was adopted;
- The **Juvenile Justice Code** was approved by Parliament of Georgia in June 2015;
- Legislative amendments to the **Imprisonment Code** entered into force in May 2015, bringing the living space entitlements for prisoners in line with the International Standards;
- The Parliament of Georgia ratified **protocols №15 and №16 of the Convention of Council of Europe for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms** on 4 March 2015.

## Judiciary

- Amendments in the **procedure of the selection of candidates of judges** were adopted: selection criteria was improved; a system of collecting information on candidates was elaborated. Selection process has become more transparent and objective;
- Amendments have been made to the **Law on Common Courts** in August 2014, setting criteria of 'good faith' and 'competence'. The Law also established a new chamber of the Supreme Court;
- The **legislative package** was approved by the Parliament of Georgia on first reading in July 2015, **introducing automatic distribution of cases in common courts** under the framework of the third stage of the Judiciary reform;
- **Package of legal amendments** was elaborated with regards to the **Arbitration Reform**;
- **Standing Committee on Early conditional release** was abolished and its functions were transferred to the local councils;
- Trough the **search programme of the decisions of the European Court of Human Rights**, which was launched by the Human Rights Center of the Supreme Court of Georgia in 2014-2015, 800 cases have been translated into Georgian;
- The **package of legislative amendments** to the Georgian **Law on Prosecutor's Office** was approved by the Government;
- Under the framework of the Criminal Justice Reform, **amendments to the Criminal Code** were adopted by the Parliament of Georgia.

# POLITICAL DIALOGUE AND REFORM



## Good Governance

- The **Civil Service Reform Concept** was elaborated and approved by the Government in line with the EU practices, providing a solid basis for development of a new **Law on Civil Service**. On 23 July 2015, the **draft law of Georgia on Civil Service** was approved by the Parliament on first reading;
- Governmental Decrees **on the Approval of the Rules for Conducting Attestation of Civil Servants and on the Approval of Competition Procedures specified under the Law of Georgia on Civil Service** was elaborated. The Decrees determine a transparency of recruitment procedures and ensure an effective and flexible nature of the rule for public institutions;
- The **rules for bonus amount determination in public institutions**, was elaborated to establish transparent pay system in the civil service of Georgia;

- Georgia was elected as a **Open Government Partnership Steering Committee** member for two years term, in August 2014;
- **Anti-Corruption Council** has approved the **revised Anti-Corruption Strategy, 2015-2016 Action Plan and the new Monitoring and Evaluation Methodology**;
- The **process of harmonisation of by-laws** of the stemming from the amendments to the law of Georgia on **Facilitating the Prevention of Illicit Income Legalisation** is ongoing;
- On 23 July 2015, the **draft law of Georgia on the amendments to the law of Georgia on the Conflict of Interests and Corruption in Public Service** was approved by the Parliament of Georgia on first reading;
- The **Law of Georgia on the State Security Service** was adopted by the Parliament of Georgia.

## Media Freedom and Elections

- The Parliament of Georgia adopted the **Law on Broadcasting** based on an NGO initiative, ensuring more democratic composition of the Board and increasing the transparency of financing of the television companies;
- According to International Assessments **Municipal Elections/Local Self Government Elections** were successfully held in 2014;



# JUSTICE, FREEDOM AND SECURITY



## PDP and Freedom of Information

- **Georgian Personal Data Protection Law towards the private sector was fully enacted** on 1 November 2014;
- **The law on the 2015 State Budget of Georgia** foresees an **increase in the number of staff of the Inspector's Office** - up to 40 employees, as well as the budget of the Office of the PDP Inspector was increased; Several activities and trainings were held in order to increase public awareness on data protection related issues;
- In 2015 Office of the Personal Data Protection Inspector checked **4 state institutions and 18 private companies**;
- The draft Law on **Freedom of Information** is in the process of elaboration under the direct supervision and participation of the Ministry of Justice.

## Migration

- **The Concept of the Migration Strategy 2016-2020** has been prepared by the State Commission on Migration Issues;
- **Asylum seekers, along with the grantees of humanitarian and refugee status, became beneficiaries of the Vertical healthcare programmes**, since 1 January 2015;
- According to the new **law on Legal Status for Foreigners and Stateless Persons** Temporary Identification Cards to Asylum Seekers became legally equal to the identity document and also represents a residence permit for a one-year period;
- The **Procedure for Removing Aliens from Georgia** was approved by the Government of Georgia, determining the forms and procedures for the expulsion of illegally aliens in Georgia on 1 September 2014;
- The package of amendments to the **Law on the Refugees and Humanitarian Status** was adopted by the Parliament on 17 July 2015;
- Visa module of **Consular Service Management Electronic System** is available in all Georgian Diplomatic Missions;
- **A Temporary Accommodation Centre** for foreigners staying in Georgia without proper legal grounds is operational since 1 September 2014;
- The **Unified Immigration Database** was elaborated in order to improve the migration monitoring;
- Georgia is broadly in line with **second phase benchmarks of the VLAP**, as stated in 3rd progress report published by the European Commission;
- The **Law on Registration of Citizens of Georgia and Aliens Living in Georgia, Issuance of Identity (Residence) Card and Passport of Citizen of Georgia** was amended and entered into force on 28 July 2014.

# JUSTICE, FREEDOM AND SECURITY



## Border Management

- **The State Border Management Strategy for 2014-2018 and corresponding Action Plan** were adopted;
- **Container Control Programme** was implemented;
- **The Maritime Joint Operations Management Centre** was established on 24 June 2014, equipped with joint command, control, communications and maritime surveillance technologies;
- **Border Management multilateral and Risk Analysis systems** are in the process of elaboration. **The Common Integrated Risk Analysis Model methodology, developed by FRONTEX**, has been translated in Georgian language.

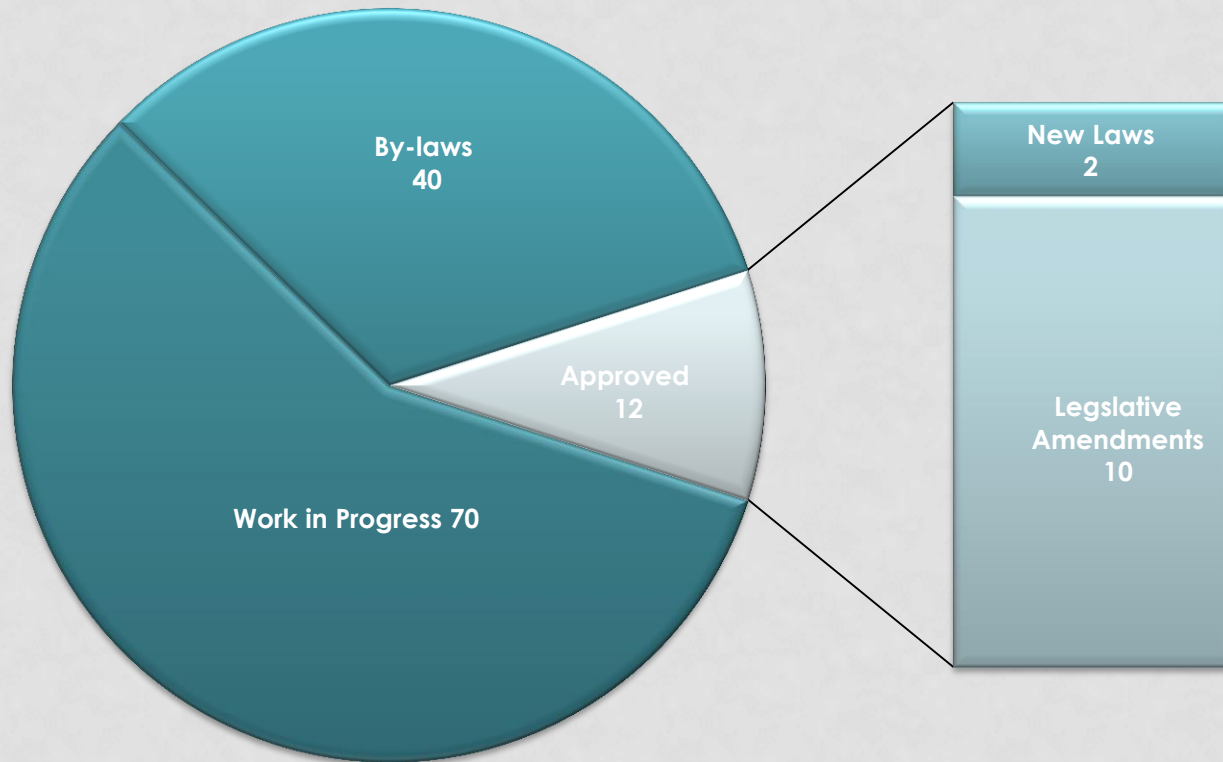
## Organised Crime Trafficking in Human Beings

- The Georgian counterterrorist legislation was further enhanced in 2014. The **crimes of theft, extortion, or falsification of documents in relation to supporting terrorist acts became separately punishable under the terrorist chapter of the criminal code**, with significant criminal penalties;
- The **Cyber Security Bureau** was established under the Ministry of Defence as a Legal Entity of the Public Law in February 2014;
- Relevant legislative amendments to the **Law on Facilitating the Prevention of Illicit Income Legalisation** entered into force on 31 December 2014;
- **2015-2018 National Strategy and 2015-2016 Action Plan to combat organized crime** was elaborated;
- **The Common Informational Strategy on Combating Trafficking** was approved in February 2014, for the purpose to keep society systematically informed on the issue of trafficking;
- **The new Law on Police** was adopted and entered into the force on 1 January 2014;
- **The law on Prevention of the Money Laundering** was approved by the Parliament on first hearing in July 2015.

## International Cooperation

- **The Package of amendments to the Act of Georgia on International Cooperation in Criminal Matters** were elaborated;
- In the framework of the **Common Security and Defence Policy** Georgia submitted 7 candidates to the advisory mission established by EU in Ukraine (EUAM-Ukraine) among those 1 candidate was accepted;
- In 2014-2015 units of Georgian armed forces participated in **peace-keeping mission of the EU to Central Africa (EUFOR RCA)**;
- In 2015 Georgia aligned with **94 statements made by the EU**;
- In 2015 the Government of Georgia signed **agreements on Cooperation in Fight Against Crime** with the governments of Belarus and Spain;
- Since January, 2015 Georgia is on the **priority list of countries with which Eurojust is cooperating**.

# 2015 LEGISLATIVE AMENDMENTS





# HEALTHCARE, SOCIAL WELFARE AND LABOR RIGHTS



- ✓ the Government of Georgia launched its **State Universal Health Care program** that has ensured **every citizen of the country** with a basic package of in- and out-patient services;
- ✓ Unprecedented program for **elimination of Hepatitis C** is being launched by the Government;
- ✓ **The Labor Code** of Georgia was amended in line with the International Labor standards, including establishment of mediation mechanism and creation of labor inspection departments;
- ✓ The **Law on Occupational Safety and Health** was drafted;
- ✓ Parliament of Georgia approved amendments to **the Law of Georgia on Insurance**;
- ✓ **HIV/AIDS and TB management national strategies for 2016-2018** were elaborated.

# ECONOMIC COOPERATION



- ✓ The Government is taking steps to break up **monopolies and cartels**, especially in the energy and pharmaceutical sectors. These moves include amendments to the **(antimonopoly) Law on Competition and Free Trade and the creation of independent Competition Agency**, and brings regulations in line with the EU standards;
- ✓ Two agencies, **the Georgian Enterprise Development Agency** and **the Georgian Innovation and Technology Agency**, have been established to help the development of **Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises** as well as **IT and innovations** in Georgia, through financial and tech support;
- ✓ Georgia is investing in its **railway infrastructure in order to facilitate trade between Asia and Europe**;
- ✓ In framework of **regional development and rural support programs more than thousands of infrastructural projects** were carried out throughout the country;
- ✓ The Action Plan on Implementation of the commitments envisaged by the **Common Aviation Area Agreement between Georgia, the EU and EU Member States** was adopted by the Government of Georgia;
- ✓ **Amendments to the Tax Code** of Georgia were elaborated in line with Council Directive 2006/112/EC on the common system of value added tax;
- ✓ **Amendments to the Decree №996 of Finance Minister of Georgia** on excise duty, was elaborated in line with Council Directive 2011/64/EU on the structure and rates of excise duty applied to manufactured tobacco.

# STATISTICS



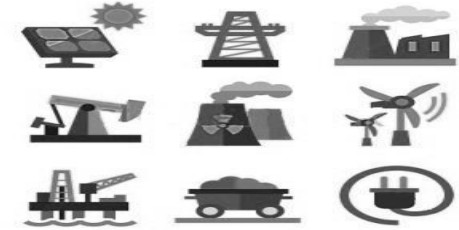
- ✓ In January 2015, the quality control and processing of special customs declarations data were completed and information was reflected in external merchandise trade statistics database in order to improve the coverage and quality of **foreign trade statistics** data. The import database of 2011-2014 was also updated;
- ✓ In April 2015, the National Statistics Office published the preliminary results of **2014 General Population Census** of Georgia including the agricultural component. The final results will be available no later than April 2016;
- ✓ The Parliament of Georgia adopted amendments to the Law of Georgia on “**the Official Statistics**”, which entered into force on 1 June 2015;

# INFORMATION SOCIETY & INNOVATION



- ✓ The **Digital Terrestrial TV Broadcasting Switchover Action Plan and Recommendations** were adopted;
- ✓ **Innovation Laboratories** have been founded to foster an environment of technological innovation and commercialization in Georgia;
- ✓ **A High Technologies and Innovations Development Center (Technological Park)** is planned to be built in Tbilisi. The Technological Park will include modern high tech and agricultural innovation laboratories.

# ENERGY SECTOR



Georgia continues upgrading and enhancement of the energy system including designing, rehabilitation, construction and exploratory works. Particular attention is paid to improvement of legal and regulatory framework as well to adjustment to regional energy markets and, at the same, time gradual approximation to the EU standards.

- ✓ Promoting the **development of local renewable potential and supporting international energy transit projects** within the scope of the Southern Gas Corridor (SCPX expansion project, TANAP, TAP, AGRI and EAOTC):
  - Feasibility Study for the **Azerbaijan-Georgia-Romania Interconnector (AGRI)** Project was conducted and approved by the Board of Directors;
  - The **construction of the Black Sea Energy Transmission Line** connecting Georgian and Turkish power systems has been launched. In July 2014, GSE (Georgian State Electrosystem) started transmission of electricity to Turkey;
  - **The Trans - Anatolian Natural Gas Pipeline Project (TANAP)** foundation was formally laid by three presidents (Georgia, Turkey, Azerbaijan) on 17 March 2015;
  - **The Agreement on cooperation in the Energy sector** was signed between the Government of Georgia and Turkey on 9 April 2015.



# ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES



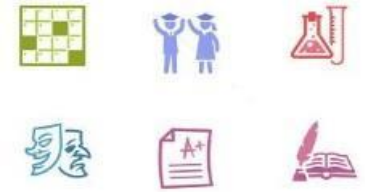
- ✓ The **Waste Management Code of Georgia** was adopted by the Parliament of Georgia on 26 December, 2014;
- ✓ **Review of the Georgian legislation on Environmental Impact Assessment** has been completed;
- ✓ The elaboration of precise **Road Maps for the implementation of the EU-Georgia Association Agreement** in the fields of environment and climate action;
- ✓ **The law on Import, Export and Transit of Waste** is being drafted;
- ✓ The laws on **Nuclear and Radiation Safety, on Licences and Permits and on Radioactive Waste Management** were amended;
- ✓ Draft version of the Governmental Decree on the draft resolution **On Import and Export of Certain Hazardous Chemical Substances and Pesticides** has been developed and will be submitted to the Government in spring 2015;
- ✓ Draft law on **Water Resources Management** was revised;
- ✓ First version of a new **Forest Code** was drafted and the forest area of Georgia was mapped;
- ✓ The establishment of **import quota for Ozone Depleting Substances** on 6 February, 2015.

# AGRICULTURE



- ✓ The Government launched **Preferential Agro Credit Project** and the **Small Farmers Assistance** to support farmers;
- ✓ **The Strategy for Agricultural Development in Georgia for 2015-2020** was elaborated fully in line with the Association Agreement requirements;
- ✓ The **Legislative Approximation Program on food safety, veterinary and phytosanitary spheres** was elaborated, which envisages the harmonization and amendments of Food Safety, Veterinary and Plant Protection legislation of Georgia. The **rules for state control of the approval of the special rules of food of animal origin** was approved.

# CULTURE & EDUCATION



- ✓ Georgia became the member of **Creative Europe** programme
  - ✓ **(first country among the EaP which joined the programme);**
  - ✓ Georgia received official approval of the EU to participate in **the Horizon 2020** programme as an associated member;
  - ✓ Ministry of Education and Science has joined **the Elsevier's scientific database** to strengthen Georgian science and research potential. **As a result of inclusive Growth in the scale of vocational education, 154 pupils** with special educational needs were enrolled in almost all vocational education institutions;
  - ✓ Georgia actively participates in **Erasmus + programme;**
- 
- ✓ With a view to implement the concept of **education continuity and lifelong learning** the bill was elaborated aiming at introducing a secondary component into vocational education;
  - ✓ With a view to ensure equal access to the higher education the **social programmes** were elaborated for the **undergraduate and graduate students** for 2015-2016 academic year.



# SPORT & YOUTH



## The State's Sport Policy:

- ✓ Under the auspice of the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs of Georgia (MSY) **The State's Sport Policy document (2014-2020) and action plan was adopted and being implemented**; strategies on mass sport, physical education, sports infrastructure, management of sports related data and distribution of public funds in sport are being drafted in line with the best practices of the EU member states.

## The State's Youth Policy:

- ✓ **The state's youth policy document and the action plan for 2015-2020** were adopted by the Government of Georgia. In the scope of the plan more than 200 youth projects and activities will be implemented. Based on the EU member states' good practices, the Georgian side has drafted **Document on framework for non-formal education basic competences and national standards of youth workers**.

## Sport Integrity, fight against global threats in sport:

- ✓ Experts working group on elaborating **national anti-doping policy and setting legal regulations for efficient implementation of the Council of Europe Anti-Doping Convention and UNESCO International Convention against doping in sport** was established by MSY. **The Strategy document and draft bill on anti-doping** will be drafted by the end of 2015;
- ✓ Following the signature of **the CoE Convention on Manipulation of Sports Competitions** the Government of Georgia established (the Interagency Commission in February 2015, which is responsible for development and implementation of policies to fight manipulations of sports competitions on national level. **The Interagency Commission** presents a national platform which is responsible for efficient implementation of the Convention as well.

**13<sup>th</sup> European Youth Olympic Festival was held in July, in Tbilisi.  
In August 2015, Tbilisi hosted UEFA Super Cup Final.**



# INTERNATIONAL RANKINGS



- ✓ For 2015 Georgia's overall **Ease of Doing Business** ranking was **15th among 189 countries**;
- ✓ **In the Global Competitiveness Index**, Georgia has improved its position by **19 places and** moved to 69th position among 144 countries;
- ✓ **Fitch** has changed the outlook on Georgia's **long-term Foreign and Local Issuer Default Ratings (IDR) to positive from stable and affirmed the IDRs at BB-**;
- ✓ **Georgia has the highest degree of media freedom among the Eastern Partnership countries** in 2014, according to the survey *Media Freedom Index of the Eastern Partnership countries*;
- ✓ According to **Corruption Perceptions Index 2014 of Transparency International**, Georgia is ranked 50 among 175 states, and 1 in the Region.
- ✓ Georgia is ranked **#69 out in 180 countries in 2015 World Press Freedom Index**.

*For more information please visit : <http://eu-nato.gov.ge>*