UNITED NATIONS
GEORGIA

COUNTRY ANALYSIS SUMMARY REPORT 2025

A PEOPLE-CENTERED APPROACH TO INCLUSIVE GROWTH, SUSTAINABILITY AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT IN GEORGIA

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FOREWORD

FOREWORD BY UN RESIDENT COORDINATOR

It is a pleasure to present this Country Analysis Summary Report, which is the result of the collective efforts of the UN Country Team, drawing on resources from the regional and global UN System, and offering an analytical contribution to the sustainable development agenda in Georgia. The report provides insights to inform UN priorities and strategic positioning, our programmatic offer, as well as our advocacy and partnership building, and serves to guide strategic decision-making for inclusive, rights-based sustainable development. A key purpose is to inform the 2026-2030 UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework, which is developed together with the Government of Georgia and in consultation with key stakeholders, including development partners, academia, the private sector, the youth community, and civil society. As highlighted recently by UN Secretary-General António Guterres, the world is not on track to reaching the Goals by 2030, and sustained multilateral engagement is essential in order to keep them within reach. Georgia is, however, well positioned to leverage its strong economic performance in recent years to create opportunities for transformative change.

A central theme of this report is the urgent need to overcome the urban–rural divide, which remains a persistent barrier to inclusive and equitable development in Georgia. Disparities in access to education, healthcare, infrastructure, and economic opportunity continue to affect rural communities disproportionately. Addressing these divides is essential to ensuring that no one is left behind. The analysis also underscores the risks of the middle-income trap and the need for a shift toward inclusive growth. This encompasses investing in human capital, expanding decent work opportunities, and modernizing education and vocational training to meet the demands of a green and digital economy. Hence one of the key recommendations emphasizes the importance of youth engagement. These efforts are also crucial to strengthening demographic resilience in Georgia, as the population is projected to decrease in the coming decades. The report also emphasizes the importance of innovative and collaborative financing mechanisms, such as blended finance and pooled funding, to sustain development momentum as the landscape of development cooperation is shifting.

Climate resilience, the green transition, and environmental protection are also central to Georgia's future. The ambition to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050 requires significant investments, as well as strengthening disaster risk reduction systems, promoting circular economic practices, and ensuring that the educational system can meet the demand for new skills. These efforts must be inclusive, ensuring that rural and vulnerable populations benefit from the transition. Finally, the report underscores the importance of good governance, human rights, and social cohesion in building a peaceful and inclusive society. The UN remains committed to supporting Georgia's sustainable development aspirations through principled engagement and partnership. Together, we can accelerate progress toward the SDGs and ensure a more inclusive, resilient, and sustainable future for all people in Georgia.

Mr. Didier Trebucq
UN Resident Coordinator in Georgia

1. INTRODUCTION: INCLUSIVE GROWTH FOR RIGHTS-BASED SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

This Country Analysis represents the UN's independent, impartial and collective analysis of the sustainable development context in Georgia. The report has been developed jointly by the UN Country Team in Georgia, under the leadership of the UN Resident Coordinator, and with support from the wider regional and global UN system.

1.1. GEORGIA'S NATIONAL VISION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

1 The normative and human-rights-based institutional framework to which Georgia has committed through its membership in international organizations and by signing various treaties and conventions includes the traditional UN human rights mechanisms and other instruments of the wider UN system; an overview is presented in Annex A (human rights) and Annex B (environment). In 2016, Georgia was among the first countries to present its Voluntary National Review (VNR) on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development at the UN High-Level Political Forum. This was followed by a second VNR in 2020 and a third in 2024. The government's development strategy Vision 2030 sets the strategic direction for a wide range of policy areas and is complemented by short- and medium term programmes – the most recent one covering 2025-2028. The broad scope of Vision 2030 sets out an ambition for inclusive and sustainable development, focusing on economic growth. The 2024 VNR elaborates on how to align development in Georgia with the key principle of leaving no one behind (LNOB). It also calls for further governance and public administration reform, with transparent, efficient and accountable institutions (see Annex C for a list of all 34 policy documents referenced in the VNR). Sustainable industrialization is discussed in the VNR as a key priority, driven by developments in information technology and renewable energy, not least through the ongoing efforts to integrate the electricity grid with Europe via the Black Sea Submarine Cable. On social policy, the VNR highlights education and healthcare as key priorities, and notes that recent pension reforms represent an important achievement. The concluding discussion emphasizes the need to strengthen data collection and management to ensure the promise of leaving no on behind. It is notable that the VNR puts a strong emphasis on SDG localization at the municipal level, and that all municipalities are expected to be involved in this process by the end of 2025. The VNR also highlights the adoption of the 2022-2030 National Human Rights Strategy as a key milestone, although the discussion focuses on specific issues like gender inequality and persons with disabilities, and not on others such as the LGBTQI+ community. Unresolved conflict is acknowledged as a major impediment, with policies rooted in the dual conflict-resolution strategy based on 1) the Georgian government's concept of 'de-occupation' (by Russia), and 2) 'reconciliation and engagement' with the Abkhaz and South Ossetian populations. With reference to rulings by the International Criminal Court (ICC) and the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR), the VNR assigns full responsibility to Russia for all human rights violations in Abkhazia and South Ossetia/Tskhinvali region.[1]

1.2. SDG PROGRESS AND KEY CHARACTERISTICS OF GEORGIA'S DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES

Georgia has achieved significant success over the past decades, but 2
evidence shows that this progress has not benefited all Georgian society equally. The present analysis emphasizes the urban-rural divide as a fundamental structural barrier to equitable development which is deeply embedded in Georgia's socio-economic and political

1 For readability, the present report will refer to 'South Ossetia' as a shorthand for 'South Ossetia/Tskhinvali region'.

challenges. It manifests itself in persistent disparities concerning access to economic opportunities and infrastructure between urban and rural areas, and in different patterns of poverty and economic participation, not least for women and girls. It also relates to education, healthcare, digital connectivity, trade, infrastructure and public service, as well as migration and demographic resilience. Addressing the urban-rural divide systematically is essential for achieving inclusive growth, poverty reduction, democratic governance and sustainable development. This structural barrier is contingent on decades of structural shifts, policy choices and decisions which require a unified vision to overcome.

3 The availability and use of knowledge, data and information stands out as a cross-cutting theme that affects a wide range of policy areas. This issue is broader than only the availability of appropriately disaggregated data: in many policy areas, data is indeed available, but not put to the most efficient use in decision-making or policy discussions through vertical and horizontal coordination. Conceptually, this challenge around the societal organization of data, information and knowledge can be linked to the so-called middle-income trap. This term was developed by the World Bank to describe the pattern where rapid development is sustained by capital accumulation and investment, until it goes into a slowdown because middle-income countries have more information deficits than low- and high-income countries relative to their economic complexity. Growth continues, but not at the pace needed to catch up with advanced economies.[2] Coordinated efforts are needed to harmonize data collection and enhance data access. Vulnerable groups are often excluded – by design even if not necessarily on purpose – not only from regular surveys but also from administrative data collection systems, and even when data are available, they are rarely analyzed or disaggregated by vulnerability criteria like age, disability, or ethnicity.

4 There is no comprehensive, public data set systematically aggregating and tracking SDG progress in Georgia with the most recent, disaggregated, official data. There are, however, several tools that draw on official statistics to give a general estimate, all of which paint a similar picture of Georgia having made important progress on sustainable development, but – as most other countries – not at the pace required to achieve the goals by 2030. These patterns are illustrated in Annex D, which has a diagram with a snapshot of SDG progress in Georgia.

5 The fact that Georgia has become a fast-growing upper middle-income country raises important questions about how to position the UN Development System to promote sustainable development, inclusive growth, human rights, and women's empowerment at a scale that can achieve transformative change. Georgia is well-placed over the coming decades to achieve the elusive goal of becoming a high-income country and avoiding the middle-income trap, but this will require continued reform efforts. The ambition to join the EU and the formal pathway offered by the EU candidacy status granted to Georgia at the end of 2023 have the potential to serve as a credible reform anchor and offer a roadmap that can help the country on that path. The World Bank

2 World Bank (2024). *World Development Report*. https://www.worldbank.org/en/publication/wdr2024.

has pointed out that some of the rare success stories of countries that have recently made the jump from upper-middle-income to high-income countries have indeed been EU candidate countries. The mix of policies required to sustain a further transition must focus on other growth drivers than traditional factors like investments and capital accumulation, with a greater emphasis on economic freedom, social mobility, livable cities, and an innovation-friendly environment. In short, inclusive growth must serve as the anchor of all development strategies, ensuring that economic gains translate into shared prosperity for all.

1.3. STRUCTURE AND ORGANIZATION OF THE ANALYSIS

6 The analysis has been organized along four broad categories describing the root causes of vulnerability, inequality and exclusion. Firstly, there are important *structural* factors that impede human development, such as spatial and geographic differences, governance and institutional frameworks, and demographic pressures. Secondly, there are important *social* factors, such as attitudes, policies and practices stemming from conceptions of religion, sex, language and ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation and gender identity. Thirdly, *political factors* and the legacy of *unresolved conflict* create additional layers of exclusion and vulnerability in Georgia, which disproportionately impacts those living in territories outside the effective control of the Georgian government, the forcibly displaced, and communities near the administrative boundary line (ABL) with Abkhazia and South Ossetia, but also makes the whole country susceptible to geopolitical tension. Finally, there are *environmental* factors, including the impact of climate change. These four categories often intersect in ways that emphasize the urban-rural divide as a critical and interconnected dimension of Georgia's development challenges. The analysis draws on a review of a wider range of sources, including official statistics from Geostat, and original research by UN entities. The insights and conclusions from the analysis were discussed and validated in a series of workshops in May and June 2025 with participation from the Georgian government, development partners, academia, the private sector, and civil society, including Georgia's youth community.

7 The framing of the analysis through the lens of the UN normative standards ensures that it builds on and leverages the unique value proposition of the UN. These are embedded in the six guiding principles which derive from the foundational documents of the UN and underpin all aspects of its work to support sustainable development globally: *Leaving No One Behind* (LNOB); A *Human Rights-Based Approach* (HRBA); *Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment* (GEWE); *Resilience* to shocks such as natural disasters, conflict, pandemics, and price fluctuations; *Sustainability* through the strengthening of capacities of national and sub-national institutions; and *Accountability* for achieving the goals. In Georgia, the existence of unresolved conflict also implies that the analysis must consider the *humanitarian principles* as well as the *do-no-harm* and *conflict-sensitivity* principles as laid out in UN General Assembly resolutions and the Recommendation on the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus of the OECD Development Assistance Committee.

2. THE URBAN-RURAL DIVIDE AS A BARRIER TO INCLUSIVE GROWTH

2.1. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND REGIONAL CONNECTIVITY

8 Georgia's strong economic growth has been impressive and created opportunities for further reform and development. To build on this achievement, it is necessary for Georgia to address the urban-rural divide by linking regional development to inclusive growth strategies in policy areas such as labour markets, agri-food systems, poverty reduction, climate action and decentralization, as discussed further below. Despite years of sustained growth, the creation of quality jobs has been limited. The stated ambition to join the EU serves as a reform anchor that can support economic convergence, help the country avoid the middle-income trap and transition to a high-income economy in the coming decades. Relations with the EU have, however, been strained in recent years, raising questions about the reform ambitions. Georgia remains dependent on external capital to sustain growth, and investments from advanced economies have a crucial role to play in creating high-quality jobs. Infrastructure investment has been focused on road networks, municipal services, water supply, education, agriculture, and tourism, but needs remain significant. Investments in renewable energy infrastructure could reduce the dependence on energy imports, mainly from Russia (petroleum and electricity) Azerbaijan (natural gas). The adoption of the Eurocodes framework for the construction sector is underway, while in current practice Soviet-era norms are mixed with various international codes. Regulatory gaps exist in mechanical and electrical construction, plumbing, fire safety, and accessibility.

9 International trade through Georgia is increasing and has accelerated after Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022. Upgrading transport and energy corridors has emerged as one of the central themes of development in the South Caucasus. One of the biggest potentials concerns east-west trade through the Middle Corridor. At the same time, the full realization of regional trade and connectivity is constrained by unresolved conflict and geopolitical tension. Energy connectivity is another major priority, which is closely linked to the strategy of expanding renewable energy production. Key challenges include the lack of a unified power market in the region, as well as the need to strengthen capacity and research around renewable energy and cross-border interconnections.[3] Georgia endorsed the Green Energy Zones and Corridors Pledge at COP29, which promotes institutional, regulatory, and infrastructure harmonization. Several high voltage transmission lines and related infrastructure are scheduled for development in the coming decade, including new connections with Armenia, Russia and Türkiye. The most ambitious project is the Black Sea Submarine Cable which would link Georgia to European electricity markets. If realized, this would create the world's longest submarine electricity cable, and strengthen the export capacity of the electricity system.[4]

3 Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia (2025): *National perspectives on challenges and solutions for enhancing regional energy integration.* ESCAP/UNECE Stakeholder Workshop on Energy Connectivity and Sustainable Energy, Tbilisi 2-3 April 2025. https://www.unescap.org/events/2025/stakeholder-workshop-energy-connectivity-and-sustainable-energy.

4 ESCAP (2024): *Energy Connectivity for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific. Implementing the Regional Road Map on Power System Connectivity.* https://repository.unescap.org/handle/20.500.12870/7535.

2.2 POVERTY AND INEQUALITY

10 The share of the population in poverty decreased from 37% to 9.4% between 2010 and 2024. This decrease has been sustained in both urban and rural areas, although the decrease in urban areas has been more pronounced over time. In times of negative GDP growth, poverty has increased disproportionately for the rural population (see Fig. 1). The share of children in poverty is around 10 percentage points higher than for pensioners at any given point in time, a result of the universal coverage of pensions (see section 3.1 on social protection). The share of the population in extreme poverty also dropped significantly from 23.6 in 2010 to 5.8% in 2023. This measures is based on the World Bank's definition of extreme poverty (revised in June 2025), which was developed for international comparisons across low-income countries. For lower-middle- and upper-middle-income countries, alternative measures exist. By any of these measures, poverty has decreased steadily over the past decades, but it remains higher than the average for upper-middle-income countries, and has decreased at a slower rate than some peer countries. Poverty as measured by Geostat is closer to the international measure for lower-middle-income countries. In other words, raising the ambition on poverty reduction would also require a shift in perceptions about poverty and well-being. Inequality as measured by the Gini coefficient is on a long-term downward trend towards greater equality, although it ticked up somewhat in 2022-2024, to around 35%, which is five percentage points higher than the EU average and similar to Bulgaria (the EU maximum).

11 The preceding discussion focuses on basic needs and minimum subsistence levels. Broader definitions of poverty include also non-monetary aspects and provide a fuller picture of the potential of individuals to fulfil their potential. The World Bank has developed a multidimensional poverty measure to provide a broader perspective, but such data is currently not comprehensively published by Geostat. For child poverty, however, some additional insights are available: One study found that 38% of children in Georgia were materially and socially deprived, including children who are not captured by strictly monetary measures of poverty.[5]

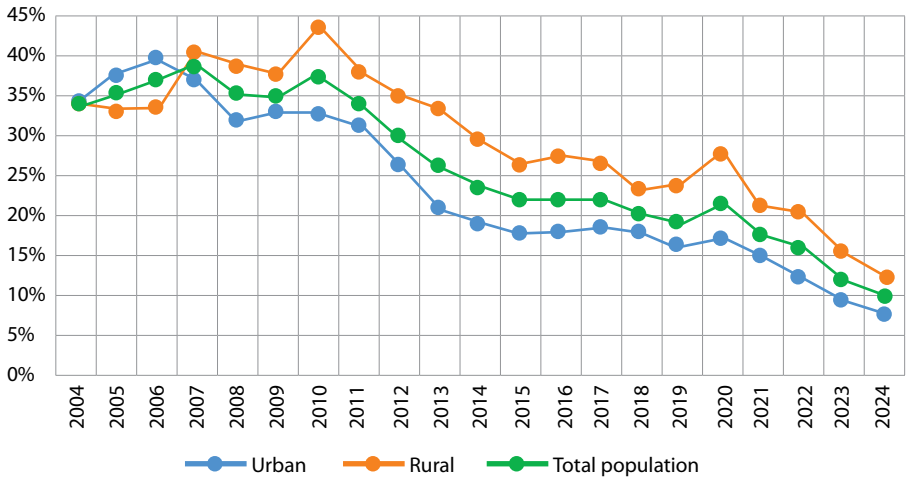


Figure 1. Share of population below absolute poverty line.
Source: Geostat.

5 UNICEF Georgia (2023): *Child wellbeing in Georgia.* https://www.unicef.org/georgia/media/8221/file/Child Welfare Survey (CWS).pdf

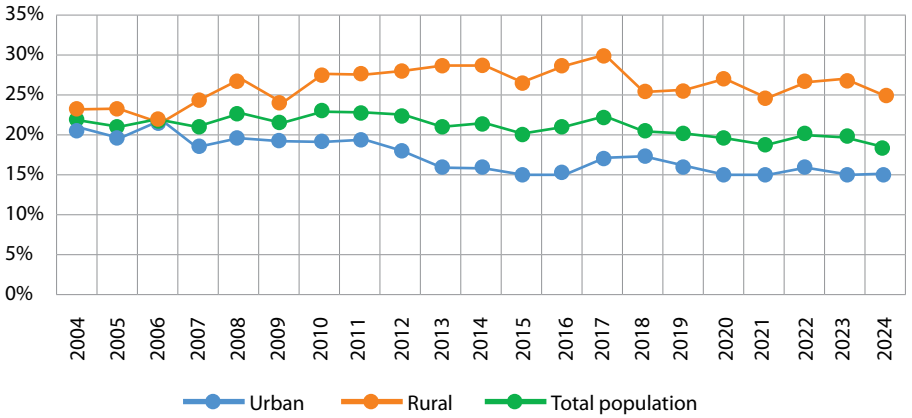


Figure 2. Relative poverty: share of population below 60% of median consumption. *Source: Geostat.*

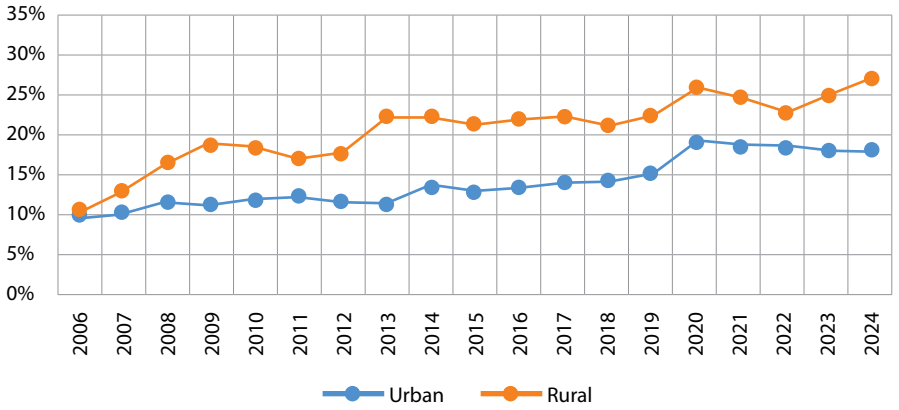


Figure 3. Pensions, social assistance as share of monthly household income. *Source: Geostat.*

12 While absolute poverty has decreased, no such trend is visible in the data on *relative* poverty measured as the share of the population under 60% of the median consumption. This measure has remained largely unchanged around 20% since the early 2000s and is close to the 18% of respondents in a 2023 poll who agreed with the statement "I have trouble feeding myself and my family and buying even the most essential things for survival".[6] This number is also close to the share of the population receiving cash benefits through the Targeted Social Assistance (TSA) programme designed to reduce poverty (section 3.1). The largely constant share of relative poverty over time reflects a relatively small share of income redistribution via the fiscal system. This, in turn, reflects the principles of small government and low taxes laid out in the 2011 law "On Economic Freedom", which also outlaws both tax increases (unless first subject to a referendum) and tax progressivity. Relative poverty in rural areas has actually increased despite the overall decrease in poverty. In this regard, it is noteworthy that the total monthly household income of an average rural household is only marginally smaller than that of an urban household over time. The main difference concerns the composition of total income, with rural households more reliant on non-cash income, pensions and social transfers. At the same time, since data are collected at the household level, poor individuals may be 'hidden' within non-poor households, which creates a gap in gender-sensitive poverty data.

6 International Republican Institute (2023): *Georgian Survey of Public Opinion. September - October 2023.* https://www.iri.org/resources/georgian-survey-of-public-opinion-september-october-2023/.

2.3. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES RELATED TO INCLUSIVE GROWTH

DEMOGRAPHIC RESILIENCE

13 Demographic change has far-reaching implications for Georgia, manifested in an ongoing population decline, rapid ageing, rural-urban migration, high youth unemployment, as well as health- and gender disparities. The total fertility rate declined below the replacement level of 2.1 births per woman since the beginning of the 1990s and has remained under this value, but survey data on fertility preferences show that women would actually like to have more children. The population decreased by almost 1.7 million from 1990 to 2024, driven largely by migration. Georgia has undertaken several steps to strengthen demographic resilience, but these policies require more coordination and integration. Rather than viewing demographic changes as risks, Georgia can turn these challenges into strategic opportunities for sustainable and inclusive development by focusing on a comprehensive, human rights-based policy response. Importantly, there is currently a demographic 'window' in the coming ten years before the ageing population structure will make reforms more costly and difficult to implement.

MIGRATION

14 As of 2020, UN DESA estimated the total stock of Georgian emigrants worldwide at over 860,000, mostly in Russia and other countries of the former Soviet Union. Since 2017, Georgian emigration has trended upward: from an average around 60,000, it culminated at over 163,000 emigrants leaving Georgia in 2023. With more families with young children emigrating, this can impact on the long-term demographic and social landscape. Women account for 62% of the Georgian emigrant population in OECD Member countries, which makes the Georgian diaspora the second most feminized diaspora among Caucasian and Central Asian countries.[7] The main push factors for the feminization of the diaspora are economic, while the pull factor, on the other hand, is the growing demand for female labour in the domestic work and care markets, which has increased the opportunities available to women.

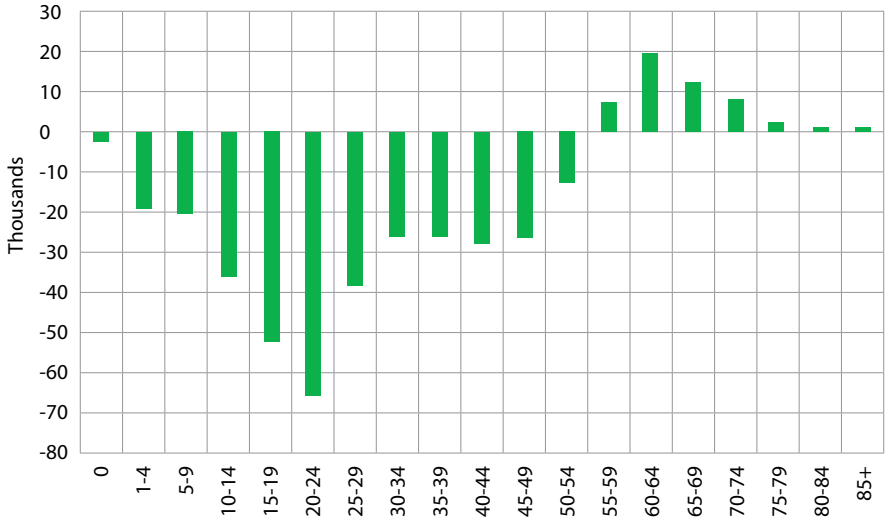


Figure 4. Total net migration by age group, 2002-2023.
Source: Geostat.

7 OECD. (2022). *A review of Georgian Emigrants*.

15 There is a steady flow of returning migrants in need of reintegration support, but this support remains insufficient, leading to vulnerabilities among returnees that increase the likelihood of their re-migration. As of 2022, there were also 31,000 internal displacements due to natural hazards. A common pattern among this group is the seasonal irregular migration to Türkiye, where male migrants work in the agricultural sector without proper documents. There are also reports of child labour migration to Türkiye and Iraq, where children as young as 13 work in harsh conditions, while schools and teachers fail to report their absence.[8]

16 Over the past decade, Georgia has also gradually developed into a transit and destination country for migration, including migrant workers, asylum seekers, and students. As surrogacy is legal, Georgia has become a destination for reproductive tourism, but the sector is underregulated and there is a significant knowledge gap about this phenomenon. Other vulnerable categories include women exploited in prostitution, and children from Azerbaijan who are smuggled into Georgia for exploitation in street begging.

DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

17 Georgia ranks well ahead of the world average in telecommunication and internet access,[9] which was highlighted in the 2024 VNR as a key strength. The Agency for Innovation and Technology (GITA) has a leading role, while Enterprise Georgia also has a central role in promoting digital services for small enterprises. COVID-19 spurred advancements in telemedicine and distance teaching methods. The urban-rural divide is evident in the access to digital infrastructure, with the highest penetration recorded in the urban centers of Tbilisi and Batumi. However, important developments have also been undertaken to improve digital access in remote areas, for example the Login Georgia initiative which 1,000 settlements with access to electronic healthcare, education, and governance services. Georgia has a sizeable ICT workforce, including immigrants who come to Georgia as 'digital nomads'. Georgia's 2025-2030 National Strategy for the Development of the Digital Economy and Information Society identifies several key priorities, including enhanced broadband connectivity, expansion of digital services, digital entrepreneurship, and digital financial services.

INCLUSIVE MARKETS: COMPETITION AND CONSUMER PROTECTION

18 In 2024, Georgia adopted a strategy for the protection of consumer rights and initiated a dialogue with the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) to explore the possibilities for a legal and policy review, linking competition and consumer protection to poverty reduction. There is a knowledge gap concerning the degree to which the legal and regulatory framework facing firms is conducive towards sustainable practices and better working conditions. The health sector is a case in point where the largely privatized market for inpatient care exhibits a high degree of fragmentation while the pharmaceutical market, in contrast, is highly concentrated among a few large firms:

8 Public Defender's Office and UNICEF (2021). *Special report. Child labour during the new coronavirus pandemic and beyond*.

9 International Telecommunications Union (2022): *Georgia - Digital Development Country Profile*, https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Regional-Presence/Europe/Documents/Publications/2022/Digital Development/Digital Development Country Profile_Georgia_final_02.22.pdf.

a 2022 study found that consumers could save 25-30% of costs if legislation were introduced to promote the use of cheaper, generic medicines.[10]

DECENT WORK AND INCLUSIVE LABOUR MARKETS

19 Growth-oriented reforms enacted in the early 2000s contributed to kick-starting investments and strengthening the economy, but left Georgia's labour market with a weak governance system. Large portions of the workforce are employed in the informal economy, especially rural workers and women. Approximately one in five young people (15-24 years) in Georgia are not in education, employment or training, while employers are increasingly constrained by a lack of skilled labour. Notable gender disparities in Georgia's labour market include lower labour force participation among women (44% vs. 66% for men in 2023), especially in the 25–34 age group. In 2022, the gender gap in employment in all working age groups reached 16%, while the adjusted monthly pay gap was 23%. Women in informal employment face unfavorable working environments, limited legal protection, low awareness of their rights, and are exposed to abuse, exploitation and unfair remuneration.[11] Recent remarks from the ILO Committee of Experts emphasized the importance of increasing awareness among judges, labour inspectors, and other authorities, to recognize and address pay inequalities. Similar recommendations were expressed by the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. In recent years, however, there has been noteworthy progress positioning Georgia for reform. Georgia has ratified 8 of the 10 Fundamental ILO Conventions on Human Rights (see Annex A for references). The 2022-2030 Human Rights Strategy makes the link between active labour market policies and social protection explicit. In August 2024, Georgia's first Decent Work Country Programme was adopted. It is important to emphasize that labour rights are an integral part of human rights. Key principles include participation in decision-making, accountability to labour rights violations, and the empowerment of workers.

AGRI-FOOD SYSTEMS AND RURAL VALUE CHAINS

20 The role of agri-food systems has been acknowledged in key government documents, such as Vision 2030 and the 2021-2027 Agriculture and Rural Development Strategy, with a view towards enhanced productivity through land consolidation and aligning with EU standards. A key reform area in this regard concerns the lack of fit-for-purpose legislation, inefficiencies due to fragmented land ownership, and uncertainties around agricultural property and usage rights. Over 94% of the 550,000 agricultural holdings manage less than 1.5 hectares of land (FAO & GCF, 2024).[12] As much as 28% of agricultural land is unregistered. Despite discussions over several

10 Georgian Competition and Consumer Agency (2022): *The pharmaceutical market is highly concentrated and characterized by a lack of regulations*, https://gcca.gov.ge/index.php?m=370&news_id=222&lng=eng.

11 UN Women (2024): *Invisible Hands: Formalization of Domestic Work in Georgia*, https://georgia.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2024/08/invisible-hands-formalization-of-domestic-work-in-georgia.

12 FAO & GCF (2024): *Prioritization of agricultural commodity-chains for the climate resilient agriculture roadmap*.

years, Georgia does not yet have the necessary legal environment to enable interventions on public pasture lands. The issue is politically sensitive as it affects significant parts of the rural population. The 2014 agricultural census showed that only 20% of approximately 400,000 livestock-owning households possessed formal usage rights. The legal ambiguity around usage rights is visible in declining productivity and negative environmental externalities, and prevents effective investments in rural value chains (Kereselidze, 2024).[13] On a related note, Georgian legislation has reduced food testing requirements, with fewer food safety tests being mandatory. The range of contaminants and residues analyzed by laboratories is limited, covering only 80 of an estimated 1,000 pesticides currently in use. Samples are often tested only according to the GOST standards of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) rather than the Euronorm and other standards that govern the common European market, reflecting the fact that CIS countries constitute a significantly larger export market with a 52% share of total Georgian exports on average between 2019-2023 (with Armenia and Azerbaijan jointly accounting for around half of that number) compared to 17% for EU countries, thus limiting incentives for producers to invest in quality controls that are not aligned with their main markets.

13 Kereselidze, N (2024): *Maximizing Sustainable Pasture Management in Georgia: A Holistic Policy Perspective*. IFAD Policy Brief. https://www.ifad.org/en/w/publications/maximizing-sustainable-pasture-management-in-georgia-a-holistic-policy-perspective.

3. BARRIERS TO INCLUSIVE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

3.1. SOCIAL PROTECTION

21 Georgia's social protection system includes universal life-cycle programmes like health, old age, and disability benefits, but lacks key provisions for the working-age population like unemployment benefits or employment injury insurance. There are also tax exemptions on incomes for some categories, including single mothers. In 2023, social protection as a share of government general expenditure amounted to 7.5% of GDP, which is close to the world average, but half of the average for the richer OECD countries. Social protection has a central role in Vision 2030 while the 2022-2030 Human Rights Strategy emphasizes support to poor families as a priority linked to more active labour-market policies. For example, stronger social protection schemes can support women's economic participation. Some responsibilities are devolved to municipalities, but common standards remain undefined. The Social Service Agency also implements an Ultra Poor Graduation model in partnership with non-governmental organizations, but this is a time-limited, donor-funded project. It offers participants a gradual path to self-sufficiency through various forms of support. There have been discussions about reforming the Targeted Social Assistance (TSA) programme to adopt a similar approach. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the government was able to respond by increasing cash transfers, but the episode also showed that the system needs to be made more flexible to expand coverage to new beneficiaries who are at risk of poverty because of external shocks.

22 A defined-contribution pensions system was launched in 2018, under which workers, employers and the state contribute to an individual's personal pension account, complementing the universal, flat-rate pension financed through the general budget. The universal pension effectively functions as a social protection floor for all retirees, and because multigenerational households are common, it also serves to mitigate poverty more broadly, including for children. There are significant gaps in the social protection for pregnancy, childbirth and childcare, although the concept of parental leave was introduced in the Labour Code in 2020. Mothers and fathers have a legally protected right to go on leave to care for a child, but of the 604 calendar days, only 57 come with reimbursable income protection. Maternity benefits fall short of ILO standards and the limited benefits that exist are only available to those who are formally employed.

23 Persons with disabilities are eligible for cash benefits under the TSA programme, but coverage for pension-age persons with disabilities is limited: upon retirement, beneficiaries typically switch to old-age pensions due to the slightly larger amount they can receive. The 7% of the population who receive disability cash benefits is significantly lower than the worldwide estimate of 15% of the population living with a disability, or the 18% who indicated in the 2014 census that they were living with some functional limitation. Importantly, Georgia has made significant progress – including with UN support – in reforming policy and legislation around disability, which has shifted norms and expectations in a profound way. The medicalized model is being replaced by the biopsychosocial model of disability, in which the problem is centered on how society responds to disability; the challenge now is to implement this new model. Internally displaced persons are eligible for status-based benefits, and this status is

inherited, meaning that numbers are constantly growing. The UN has advocated for a shift from a status- to a needs-based model of protection. Residents of Abkhazia and South Ossetia are eligible in principle to access Georgian social protection and healthcare benefits but face considerable barriers in practice.

3.2. HEALTH AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

24 Georgia's health-care system has undergone fundamental reforms since the late 1990s, including mass privatization of healthcare. Since 2012, public spending on health has increased but remains relatively low (7% of GDP in 2022). The Universal Healthcare Programme (UHCP) has improved access and made healthcare more needs-based and socially equitable. At the same time, the lack of trust in primary healthcare (PHC) services leads to an irrational use of expensive specialized care and inefficient use of resources. The urban-rural divide is apparent in the availability of healthcare services: while the number of hospital beds in Tbilisi (9,000) is similar to that of the regions, hospital visits in Tbilisi are 10 times higher.

25 Outpatient medicines are the main factor behind out-of-pocket health spending in Georgia, and can drive households into poverty.[14] In 2022 a price regulation framework for essential medicines and mandatory e-prescription were introduced. So far there is no policy to encourage the use of cheaper, generic medicines. Noncommunicable diseases such as cancers, type-2 diabetes, and cardiovascular diseases account for most of the disease burden and 94% of all deaths. Public health policies are needed to address key risk factors such as unhealthy diets, physical inactivity, and the use of alcohol and tobacco. Air pollution is among the most acute risk factors for death and disability. Improvements are needed also in mental health: the 2023 report of the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities called on Georgia to develop a human rights-based, non-coercive framework on mental health (see Annex A for references).

26 Despite Georgia being classified as a low-hunger country, as much as 32% experience moderate or severe food insecurity. Undernourishment and malnutrition persist, and significant disparities exist in food quality and consumption. The prevalence of obesity is rising, especially among boys, where 34% are overweight or obese.[15] Only 30% of schools have canteens.

27 The infant mortality rate fell by as much as 70% between 2000 and 2024, and the routine childhood vaccination rate is high at around 94%. The maternal mortality rate remains comparatively high, driven by poor antenatal, perinatal, and postnatal care exacerbated by regional disparities. Family planning services have not been fully integrated into the primary healthcare level. The school curriculum does not teach students about sexuality, sexual identity, sexually transmitted diseases or gender-based violence. The regulatory framework on abortion

14 Goginashvili, K., Nadareisvhili, M., & Habicht, T. (2021): *Can people afford to pay for health care? New evidence on financial protection in Georgia*. Barcelona: WHO Office for Health Systems Financing. https://iris.who.int/handle/10665/342815.

15 FAO & UNICEF (2022): *Transforming Food Systems through Sustainable Development Goals: Promoting Nutrition at Georgian Schools*.

imposes several requirements that contradict WHO guidelines, such as mandatory waiting periods, multi-actor counselling, and ultrasound examinations.

28 Georgia has made important advances in the prevention and management of infectious diseases. In early 2025, a key milestone was reached as Georgia was declared malaria-free by WHO. Georgia has also been recognized internationally for its hepatitis-C elimination programme. Significant improvement has been noted in multidrug resistant tuberculosis management. The HIV prevalence remains low (0.4%), but recent data indicate ongoing transmission and risk of a worsening of the HIV epidemic in risk groups.

3.3. EDUCATION AND HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT

29 The quality of education needs to be strengthened at all levels in Georgia, and the 2024 VNR acknowledges that this is a central challenge; the 2022-2030 Education and Science Strategy represents a comprehensive attempt to address the issue, not least through large-scale school rehabilitation project to renovate 800 schools by 2026. Georgia is also working on the alignment of education with European standards. Public spending on education and training comprised 3.8% of GDP in 2022, behind the EU average of 5%. The 2022-2030 strategy sets the goal at 6% of GDP. The PISA tests show that Georgian children are well below the OECD average on key metrics. Alarmingly, a majority of 15 year-olds failed to demonstrate basic proficiency in mathematics, reading and science. Urban-rural disparities are clearly apparent in education, but in some respects interregional differences are more important.

30 Georgia provides near-universal access to primary and secondary general education, with only minimal disparities among boys and girls on average, although important inequalities exist in some subgroups. Among children to mothers with only primary or lower-secondary education, as many as 30% were out of school at the upper-secondary level, with boys in this group significantly more likely to be out of school than girls. As many as 39% of girls of Azerbaijani ethnicity are out of school at the upper-secondary level compared to 6% for ethnic Georgian girls. Absence from school is linked to domestic work and the harmful practice of child marriage. Girls from the Roma community are also disproportionately affected by this phenomenon.

31 The early childhood (preschool) education and care system is decentralized, with municipalities responsible for the implementation of national standards, leading to significant regional differences. Public early childhood education and care do not exist for children under the age of two. Limited access to preschool education has been identified as a key gap in the social protection of children,[16] and is a major impediment to women's economic participation.

32 Since 2021, significant structural and policy reforms have been implemented in vocational education and training (VET), with the Vocational Skills Agency playing a lead role. While the green transition

16 UNICEF Georgia (2024: *Social protection of children in Georgia: Challenges and recommendations. Analytical report*.

can create a significant number of employment opportunities in a variety of sectors such as transportation, energy-efficiency, renewable energy, and climate-smart agriculture, the Georgian labour market is not yet prepared to take advantage of these opportunities and support the private sector with enough qualified personnel, which contributes to a significant skills mismatch. For example, the VET system could do more to equip workers with skills relevant for the emerging market of renewable energy, including solar and wind. A recent assessment showed that Georgia performs well in terms of attractiveness and accessibility of VET programmes for those who transition from school to VET, while access for working adults seeking to develop their skills was more limited, which points towards a need to strengthen professional development opportunities and life-long learning as part of the efforts to address unemployment, employability and activation.[17] Higher education is also in need of reform to improve learning outcomes, reduce the skills mismatch and promote long-term growth. About 35% of the working-age population have completed tertiary education, but many graduates end up in low-skilled jobs. As many as 40% of the unemployed have a higher education degree.

3.4. GENDER EQUALITY AND THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN

Despite visible progress in recent years, gender inequality remains a barrier to sustainable and inclusive development in Georgia. Gender stereotypes remain prevalent in the society, and gender norms are reinforced through family structures, religious practices, and societal expectations, which limits women's economic empowerment, involvement in public life and in decision-making processes. For example, every second person believes that men should have the final say in the family and that responsibilities related to childcare are solely the mother's responsibility. Women spend almost five times more time on unpaid domestic and care work than men, limiting their access to education, training, and jobs. In rural areas, as many as 64% of women are classified as not economically active, with the largest disparity in the 25-34 age group. One in five believes that inheritance should only be given to a son.[18,19] In February 2025, the term 'gender' was removed from several laws, replacing 'gender equality' with 'equality between women and men'. The enactment of a gender quota mechanism by parliament in 2020 improved women's participation by raising the share of female parliamentarians from 14% to 19% after the 2020 parliamentary elections, although this number remains below the global average of 26.5%. In local self-governance, the share increased from 14% to 24% between 2017 and 2021. A 2023 report by the UN Committee on the

17 European Training Foundation (2023): *Torino Process System Monitoring Report: Georgia*. https://www.etf.europa.eu/en/TRP-Georgia-2023.

18 UN Women (2025): *Gender Equality Attitudes Study (GEAS) in Georgia*. https://georgia.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2025/03/gender-equality-attitudes-study-in-georgia.

19 UNDP & UNFPA (2025): *Men, Women, and Gender Relations in Georgia: Public Perceptions and Attitudes. 2024*. https://www.undp.org/georgia/publications/gender-equality-research-2024.

Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) recommended that Georgia introduce additional quota mechanisms at all levels of government, and other spheres of public life.[20] However, in 2024, the quotas were abolished.

34 Every fourth woman in Georgia has experienced sexual harassment at some point in her life. CEDAW has called on Georgia to undertake several measures to address this problem. The harmful practice of child marriage remains a serious concern, although the prevalence halved from 14% in 2018 to 7% in 2024. Coordinated action is needed to completely eradicate this practice, as recommended in a recent report by the Public Defender.[21] Furthermore, violence against women and girls is prevalent in Georgia: 50% of women aged 15-69 report having experienced violence in their lifetime. One in four has experienced intimate partner violence. On a positive note, attitudes towards intimate-partner violence have undergone a transformation, partly thanks to awareness raising campaigns.

3.5. THE ROLE OF RELIGION AND ETHNICITY

35 In 2018, Georgia ranked third in Europe in an index over self-reported religiosity. The Georgian Orthodox Church enjoys high level of public trust and is able to exercise considerable political power, not least through its exclusive position based on a constitutional agreement with the state. Based on the 2014 census, 86% of the population are ethnic Georgians and around 83% Orthodox Christians (excluding Abkhazia and South Ossetia). The largest national minorities are Azerbaijanis in Kvemo Kartli (6%), and Armenians in Samtskhe-Javakheti (4.5%), with smaller groups of Ossetians, Kurds (Yazidis), Kists, Abkhaz, Greeks and Assyrians, as well as several even smaller groups. Refugees and stateless individuals face similar barriers as ethnic minorities, and comprehensive policies for their integration are lacking. Religious minorities include Muslims in Kvemo Kartli, Kakheti and Adjara (11%), the Armenian Apostolic Church among the Armenians of Tbilisi (3%), and smaller denominations like Catholics (including Armenian Catholics in Javakheti), Jehovah's Witnesses, Yazidis, Protestants and Jews. In 2022, the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination welcomed several legislative, policy and institutional measures taken by Georgia, including the adoption in 2021 of a 10-year Strategy for Civic Equality and Integration, while expressing concern that discriminatory attitudes persisted towards ethnic minorities. The Committee noted in particular the heightened vulnerability of Roma children, especially in accessing education (see Annex A for references).

20 See Annex A for references to relevant CEDAW reports.

21 Public Defender's Office of Georgia (2022): *Harmful Practices of Early/Child Marriage in Georgia: Existing Challenges and Solutions*. https://ombudsman.ge/geo/spetsialuri-angarishebi.

4. GOVERNANCE FOR INCLUSIVE GROWTH AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

4.1. DECENTRALIZATION, POLARIZATION, AND DEMOCRACY

36 Georgia emerged from the tumultuous 1990s and the transition from a planned to a market economy with a high concentration of wealth through various privatization schemes and with centralized political power after several violent conflicts. Fiscal and political power is concentrated with the central authorities in Tbilisi, while many communities in rural areas are locked in a dependency on the state for their livelihoods, which serves to underline the importance of including governance decentralization in efforts to address the urban-rural divide. In advancing the decentralization agenda and empowering local government, civil society organizations become important stakeholders through service delivery, as well as by providing representation and acting as watchdogs to promote accountability at the local level.

37 Since independence, Georgia has seen a gradual consolidation of democratic principles, and a deeper integration with western partners, as symbolized by the constitutionally enshrined ambition to join the EU and NATO, although this trend was reversed with the suspension of Georgia's EU accession process in late 2024. Political parties tend to be organized around one or a few dominating individuals, concentrating power within a small elite. Polarization has become more entrenched in recent years, fueled by Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Polarization has also become socially entrenched down to the community and family level, with one side emphasizing Georgia's European identity and the other prioritizing traditional values and sovereignty. Polarization hampers the ability of democratic institutions to function as intended, making it difficult to achieve consensus or compromise, and politicizing other important debates.

38 The 2024 parliamentary elections were the first with a fully proportional electoral system. The official election results gave the Georgian Dream ruling party a majority win, but were rejected by the opposition and challenged in numerous appeals by civil society groups. The OSCE Election Observation Mission noted that the elections were well administered, but that "they unfolded amid entrenched polarization" and among "reports of pressure on voters."[22] The announcement in late 2024 to suspend EU accession talks became a catalyst for mass rallies and sustained nationwide protests. Initially the demonstrations were met by a heavy-handed response from law enforcement, causing public anger and raising concerns about human rights abuses.[23] The opposition boycotted the new parliament and is calling for new elections.

39 Starting in 2024, several new laws have been introduced which have been met by large-scale protests and raised concerns about potential negative consequences for human rights and civic space in Georgia. This included the law "On the Transparency of Foreign Influence," the law "On Protection of Family Values and Minors,""On Assemblies and Manifestations", the "Foreign Agents Registration Act" (FARA), and the "Law on Grants", and

22 OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (2024) *Georgia. Parliamentary Elections 26 October 2024. ODIHR Election Observation Mission Final Report*. https://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/georgia/584029.

23 OHCHR (2024): *Georgia: UN experts concerned by widespread human rights violations amid ongoing protests.* https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/12/georgia-un-experts-concerned-widespread-human-rights-violations-amid-ongoing.

others. Consultations with civil society organizations were limited in these legislative processes. Additional legislative changes adopted in the first months of 2025 further limit the space for civic actors and their contribution to public decision-making processes.

4.2. GOVERNANCE FOR INCLUSION AND HUMAN RIGHTS

40 The 2022-2030 National Strategy for Human Rights provides direction and focus for the combined national efforts to protect and promote human rights. Georgia has generally cooperated with international human rights mechanisms, including the UN instruments. In 2010, Georgia issued a standing invitation to the Special Procedures Mandate Holders of the UN Human Rights Council. During the third cycle of the Universal Periodic Review in January 2021, Georgia accepted a number of recommendations, including continuation of the work to submit overdue reports to relevant UN Treaty Bodies, and to allocate all necessary human, technical and financial resources to the institutions in charge of monitoring the implementation of the law "On the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination." An overview of Georgia's commitments under the various UN Human Rights mechanisms is provided in Annex A.

41 Georgia has undertaken reforms to strengthen its legal institutions, improve transparency, combat corruption, and enhance the independence of the judiciary. Legal aid services have improved access to justice, but disparities still exist, especially in rural areas. The criminal justice system has faced criticism regarding due process and the treatment of defendants. Reforms have sought to align practices with EU standards, but the process has not been fully effective. The UN Human Rights Committee also expressed concern about the persistent protection gap in the Code of Administrative Offences, noting insufficient safeguards guaranteed to administrative detainees, including the right to promptly access legal counsel and to be brought before the judge in a timely manner; the lack of clarity about the standards of proof, which often results in the burden of proof resting with detainees; and the absence of the meaningful right to appeal detention decisions.

42 The Gender Impact Assessment (GIA) methodology is being introduced and piloted with the help of international development partners. In 2022, parliament adopted legislative amendments to the Law "On Normative Acts" introducing GIA as part of the lawmaking cycle, but without making it mandatory. The 2023-2026 Strategy on Public Administration Reform (PAR) integrates several commitments under the Beijing Platform for Action on promoting women's leadership in public service and integrating gender analysis into the planning process. In April 2024, legislative changes to the Election Code were adopted that repealed the gender quotas in parliamentary and municipal elections introduced with the 2020 gender quota reform. It remains to be seen how gender mainstreaming in governance will be impacted by the initiative in early 2025 to remove the term 'gender' from Georgian legislation (see section 3.4).

4.3. UNRESOLVED CONFLICT AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

43 Armed conflicts in the 1990s and again in 2008 left Georgia with the loss of effective control over Abkhazia and South Ossetia. While Georgia's territorial integrity is still widely recognized in the international community, Moscow's recognition in 2008 of these entities as independent states and the deployment of Russian troops created a new level of tension. An estimated 250,000 ethnic Georgians were expelled from Abkhazia in the

1992-1993 war and over 10,000 from South Ossetia in the 2008 war. Since IDP status is inherited, the current number of IDPs is estimated to be around 292,000, amounting to almost 8% of the population. Georgian legislation defines these two regions as occupied by Russia, and Georgian policy only acknowledges one Georgia-Russian conflict, not two separate Georgian-Abkhaz or Georgian-South Ossetian conflicts. In contrast, Abkhazia and South Ossetia view the conflicts as a contestation with the Georgian state over their aspirations for self-determination. This contradiction surrounding who is in conflict with whom, alongside the failure to find credible security guarantees for all stakeholders, and deeply rooted legacies of history and identity, all contribute to the lack of conflict resolution.

44 The UN has been engaged in peacekeeping, mediation and the humanitarian response since Georgia became a UN member state, notably through UNOMIG, a military observation mission which operated in the Abkhazia conflict zone until 2009. During the same period, an OSCE mission was tasked with observing the situation in the South Ossetia conflict zone. New mechanisms were established on the basis of the six-point plan of 12 August 2008 and the implementing measures of 8 September 2008, agreed between Georgia and Russia, in the form of the European Union Monitoring Mission (EUMM) and the Geneva International Discussions (GID). In its resolution 1866, adopted unanimously in February 2009, the UN Security Council welcomed the start of the discussions and requested the Secretary-General to support the process.

45 In the absence of conflict resolution, efforts toward transforming the conflict and building confidence and trust within and across societies have become the centerpiece for both the Georgian government and civil society organizations, as well as international organizations. The Georgian policy toward these territories can be summarized as engagement with non-recognition. The Georgian government has made efforts to increase people-to-people engagement across the ABL through service provisions and support to residents of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. While these efforts have been important, they have not yet led to any fundamental transformation of conflict dynamics. As time has passes, the collective memory of a shared history for communities divided by conflict diminishes. At the same time, a 2023 study revealed that only 24% of internally displaced women were aware of conflict transformation and peacebuilding initiatives and that many lacked trust in the groups engaged such processes. An equal share reported that displaced women are rarely asked for their opinion on conflict transformation.[24]

46 In a broad sense, all people in Georgia are directly affected by the lack of conflict resolution. In a narrower sense, the most directly conflict-affected communities include 1) people living in Abkhazia and South Ossetia, 2) internally displaced persons living in Tbilisi-administered territory, and 3) communities on Tbilisi-administered territory adjacent to Abkhazia and South Ossetia. These communities receive different degrees of humanitarian and development services by the government, international organizations, as well as national and international NGOs. The UN and a few international NGOs have access to and operate in Abkhazia, but not South Ossetia. UNHCR has a special role when it comes to the humanitarian and social protection of the Georgian community in eastern Abkhazia.

24 UN Women (2023). *The study on Views and Attitudes of IDP Women on Conflict Transformation, Reconciliation and Peacebuilding*.

5. GREEN AND JUST TRANSITION FOR INCLUSIVE GROWTH

5.1. CARBON NEUTRALITY, RENEWABLE ENERGY, AND CIRCULARITY

47 Georgia has adopted a long-term target of achieving carbon neutrality by 2050, aligning with the European Green Deal. The challenge comes down to implementation, access to climate finance, capacity building and the transfer of skills; the strategy is contingent on international support. Updated Nationally Determined Contributions under the Paris Agreement are forthcoming in 2025. An important milestone was the Greenhouse Gas Inventory for the period 2018-2022. A comprehensive overview of commitments, policies, data and targets is presented in Georgia's First Biennial Transparency Report to UNFCCC, released in 2024. The Long-Term Low-Emissions Development Strategy estimated the total amount of required investment until 2050 to $50bn, with the potential to create 200,000 new jobs. The shortage of qualified technical personnel and the inadequate training and certification system have been identified as bottlenecks and a priority area for vocational education and training (VET), as discussed above. In 2022, the energy sector – including generation and transmission, transport, and heating of buildings – accounted for around 65% of Georgia's total greenhouse gas emissions. Georgia has a significant potential to increase the carbon-capture capacity of its sizeable forests. Expanding hydropower is also central to the carbon neutrality strategy, but his will require engagement with local communities in line with the Aarhus Convention (Annex B), as Georgia has a history of local resistance to new hydropower projects.

48 Georgia has made remarkable progress in harmonizing its legislative energy framework with EU regulations. It has also entered into bilateral agreements on emissions trading with Switzerland and Japan, and negotiations are ongoing with South Korea. Legislation has been aligned with the European Building Performance Directive, requiring all buildings constructed after 2022 to meet minimum performance standards. To nurture the transition to electric vehicles, the strategy envisages a range of measures, including regulation, tax credits, subsidies, and grants to incentivize consumers. Georgia subsidizes gas prices – so-called 'social gas' – to households and gas-powered utilities under the terms of the South Caucasus Pipeline which brings gas from Azerbaijan to Europe.

49 Many rural households are dependent on unsustainably harvested firewood. While the importance of firewood has come down in recent years, it still accounted for 5% of total energy consumption in 2019.[25] In rural parts of Georgia, however, as much as 80% of households have been estimated to be dependent on firewood for heating and cooking, spending up to 30% of their income on firewood while being exposed to hazardous indoor pollution.

50 Improving waste management and strengthening circularity is mentioned as a goal in key policy documents. Recently a National Roadmap to a Circular Economy was elaborated. There is an opportunity to strengthen Georgian value chains by fostering eco-friendly and circular practices that can help companies to be more competitive

25 International Energy Agency (2023): *Georgia Energy Profile*, https://www.iea.org/reports/georgia-energy-profile/overview.

in international markets. In 2020, 93% of plastic in Georgia ended up as waste. Efforts to address this challenge will require investments in waste management infrastructure, stronger government support, a more favorable environment for startups and private investments in the circular sector, and a promotion of awareness of and incentives for circularity among firms and consumers.

5.2. RESILIENCE, DISASTER RISK REDUCTION AND ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE

51 Georgia has made significant progress in reforming the disaster risk reduction system, including by strengthening monitoring, modelling and mapping of natural and climate-related hazards, improving the use of climate data and forecasting, and by establishing early warning systems. Important investments have been made in infrastructure, flood protection structures, and to raise awareness. Nevertheless, a lot of work remains to further develop the system. The process of developing a National Adaptation Plan is ongoing. The national vision for disaster management is also currently under review, with a focus on adaptation and prevention.

52 By the end of the century, average temperatures are projected to rise by between 1.4°C and 4.9°C relative to the preindustrial level in Georgia.[26] The country is prone to environmental and climate-induced disasters like floods, flash floods, avalanches, earthquakes, landslides, hailstorms, extreme rain and mudflows. These risks present a high complexity and a broad range of impacts. Glaciers in the Caucasus region are particularly sensitive to additional warming and are retreating rapidly, which is expected to impact hydrology, increase flood risks, alter ecosystems, and threaten livelihoods, infrastructure, and economic activities. Highlands are warming faster than lowlands, and mountain communities tend to be isolated with limited economic development and inadequate infrastructure. Women engaged in small-scale agriculture, especially older women, are particularly vulnerable to the impact of climate change.

53 Outdated water supply systems increase the risk of natural hazards. Early-warning systems for agriculture remain underdeveloped, and the agricultural insurance sector is weak. The role of social protection in emergencies is not clearly defined in legislation. The system has a limited capacity to respond to shocks by enrolling new beneficiaries, linking social protection to early warning systems, or involving municipalities as first responders to smaller-scale hazards.[27]

26 The World Bank Group and the Asian Development Banks (2021) *Climate Risk Country Profile: Georgia*.
27 UNICEF Georgia (2024): *Social protection of children in Georgia: Challenges and recommendations. Analytical report*.

5.3. NATURAL RESOURCES, ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND BIODIVERSITY

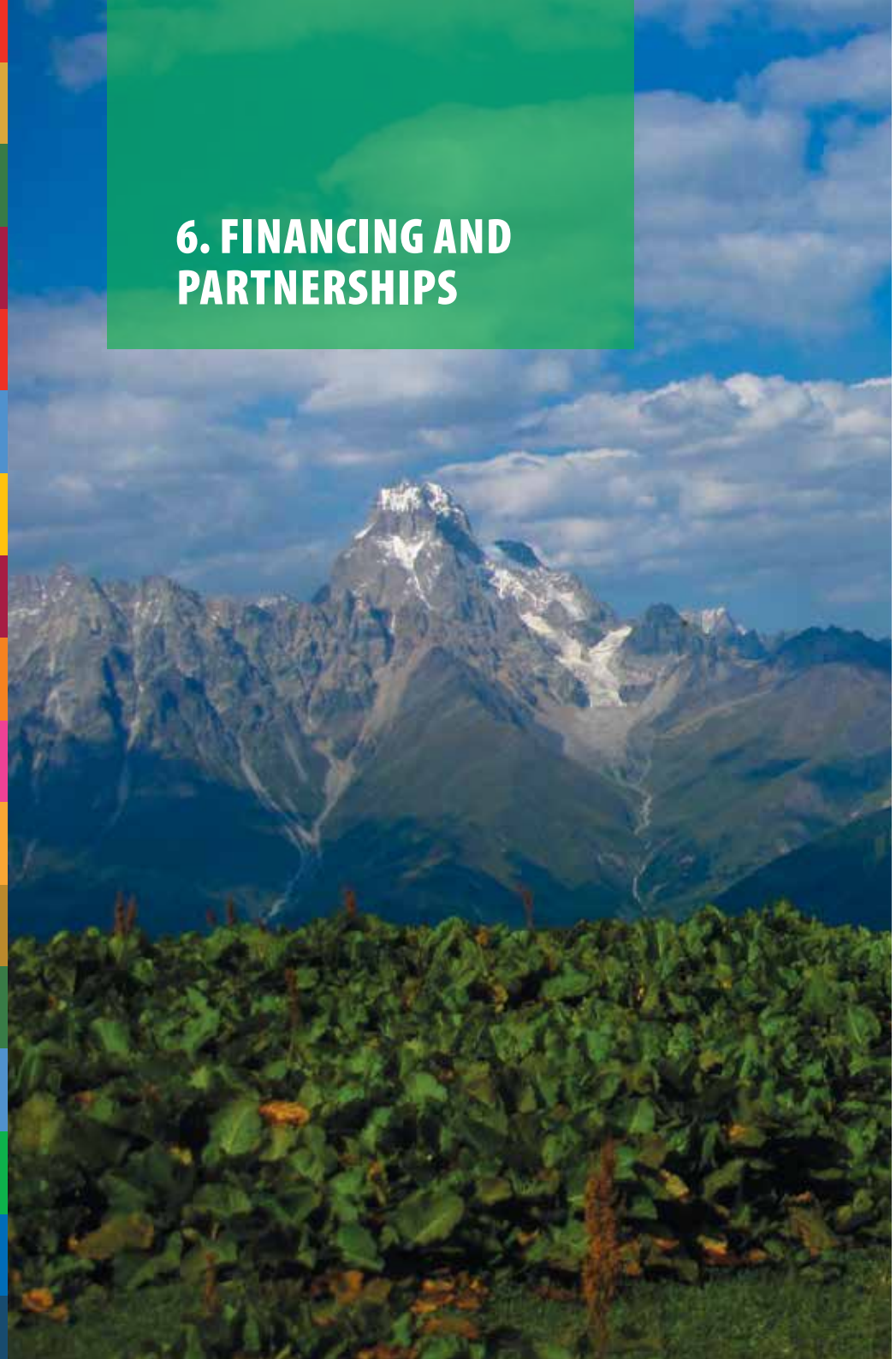
54 Georgia's geography is diverse, with mountains, plains, glaciers, swamps, semideserts, lakes and rivers. Over half the territory is at an altitude over 1,000 meters above sea level. Forests represent the predominant ecosystem and contain unique endemic tree species and some of the oldest pristine forests in Europe. Georgia is a global biodiversity hotspot, home to over 5,600 animal species and 4,300 vascular plants, many of them endemic. However, around 60% of endemic plants are threatened by habitat loss, pollution, and overexploitation. In response, Georgia expanded its protected areas to over 13% of its territory and aims for 30% by 2030. The Colchic rainforests and wetlands were recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2021. A national biodiversity monitoring system was launched in 2020 and conservation funding increased under the 2019 Biodiversity Financing Plan.

55 Georgia is also endowed with an abundance of freshwater, but water-use efficiency is relatively low due to outdated infrastructure. Losses of irrigation and drinking water reach 30-50%. In urban areas, 92% have access to water through pipes, compared to 64% in rural areas. For sewage systems the share is 84% in urban areas and only 20% in rural areas. The practice of river basin management was enshrined in legislation in 2023. Georgia's rivers are fed largely by glacial waters, but over the past five decades, the number of glaciers decreased from 541 to 383, a process that is expected to increase the flow of water in the coming decades, and then decrease when the glaciers have disappeared. Georgia has committed to aligning its water legislation with the EU framework, and a new water law will come into force in 2026. A new Forest Code was adopted in 2020.

56 Air pollution is a significant problem for Georgia, and is caused by vehicle emissions, outdated infrastructure, industrial pollutants, poor fuel quality, household wood burning, construction activities, and dust from deserts in Sahara, Central Asia and the Arabian Peninsula. In most places where air quality is measured, concentrations of the most harmful pollutant – fine particulate matter – systematically exceed air quality limits. The new law "On Industrial Emissions" is set to prevent, reduce and control emissions from polluting industrial activities.

57 Pesticide use is lower than in the early 2000s, but is on an increasing trend again since 2015, and usage is higher than other countries in the region.[28] There is insufficient regulatory enforcement in the management of pesticides and fertilizers and a gap in monitoring and regulating the application of agrochemicals, leading to soil and water contamination.

28 UN Environmental Programme (2024): *Caucasus Environment Outlook. Second Edition:* https://www.unep.org/resources/report/caucasus-environment-outlook-second-edition.



6. FINANCING AND PARTNERSHIPS

58 Annual net official development assistance (ODA) per capita to Georgia was 157 USD on average over the decade 2013-2022, which is almost 25 times higher than the average for upper-middle-income countries, and more than three times higher than the average of the peers in Europe and Central Asia. As a share of gross national income, ODA averaged 3.5% of GNI over the same period, compared to only 0.8% for the regional peers, and 0.1% for upper-middle-income countries. As major donors have announced suspensions or reductions in aid to Georgia, this funding flow is expected to decrease, especially so-called tightly earmarked funding, which has traditionally accounted for a significant share of UN programming, and which can contribute to a more fragmented approach. This takes place against the backdrop of a globally decreasing trend in ODA, as major donors have announced new priorities.[29] Meanwhile, around 75% of Georgia's external public debt, which in the spring of 2025 stood at around $8.5bn (25% of GDP), was provided by international financial institutions (IFIs), most notably the Asian Development Bank, the World Bank Group, and the European Investment Bank. At the same time, strong economic growth has significantly expanded the fiscal resources available to the Georgian government, as well as to the private sector, which opens possibilities for new forms of partnerships and innovative financing solutions for sustainable development.

59 The changing landscape of official development assistance and Georgia's transition to a high-growth, upper-middle-income country heightens the need to explore innovative finance solutions such as pooled funding, blended finance, and government co-funding. This

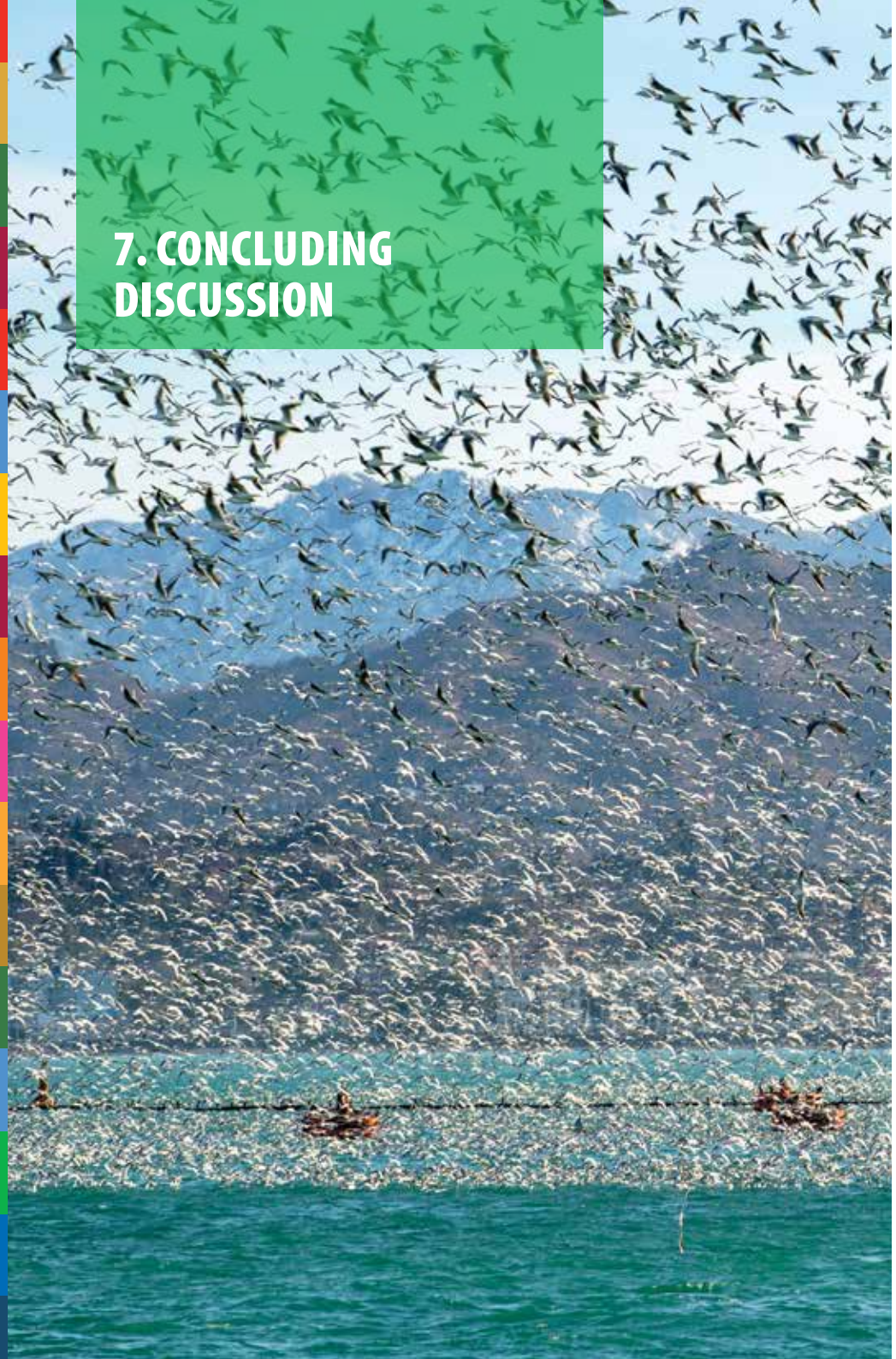
29 OECD: https://www.oecd.org/en/topics/official-development-assistance-oda.html.

approach is fully aligned with the UN Funding Compact for the SDGs, which seeks to make funding less earmarked and more strategic and flexible.[30] Pooled funding can help reduce the impact of aid fragmentation by combining resources from multiple donors. Blended finance, which involves the combination of development finance and other funding sources, such as philanthropic and private capital, can also play role in accelerating sustainable development in an upper-middle-income country like Georgia. Sustainable development can be further accelerated through the integration of development assistance with the government's regular budget, to achieve synergies and strategic impact. There are also opportunities to mobilize additional resources through the growing ecosystem of funding mechanisms for climate finance, not least the financial mechanism of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

60 Georgia's banking system has developed dynamically over the past two decades, but domestic capital markets remain underdeveloped. Georgia's Capital Markets Development Strategy for 2021-2028 (CMDS) contains a comprehensive analysis of the situation and discusses Georgia's commitments under the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement but notes that sustainable finance is not yet well established in the country. One of the recommendations of the strategy has already been addressed, as the National Bank of Georgia adopted a Sustainable Finance Taxonomy in 2022. Deeper and more sophisticated capital markets can play a crucial role in Georgia's transition to a more innovation-oriented economy.

30 UN Sustainable Development Group: https://unsdg.un.org/funding-compact.

61 In this changing environment characterized by political and financial uncertainties as well as Georgia's ongoing economic transformation, it is essential for the UN to strengthen existing and new partnerships with key stakeholders to advance the agenda for sustainable development. One way to achieve this is by establishing regular dialogue platforms that bring together representatives from national and local government, civil society, academia, youth, development partners, IFIs, the private sector, and other relevant actors. These platforms can facilitate the exchange of ideas, foster mutual understanding, identify common goals, and contribute to joint resource mobilization. Joint working groups focused on specific thematic areas can enhance collaboration and inclusive decision-making, while promoting a culture of transparency and accountability. By leveraging its unique role and the key guiding principles to strengthen partnerships, the UN can contribute to transformative progress for SDG acceleration.



7. CONCLUDING DISCUSSION

7.1. INCLUSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AS A DRIVER FOR HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

As Georgia has become firmly established as an upper-middle-income country and achieved strong economic growth, it is well positioned to make further advances in reducing poverty and inequality. The goal of eradicating extreme poverty in Georgia is within reach. Poverty and inequality have decreased significantly, although not as quickly as the average for upper-middle-income countries, and with discrepancies between urban and rural communities. Even though inequality has declined as measured by the Gini coefficient, poverty has not decreased in relative terms, and for the poorest rural households relative poverty has actually increased. The national poverty line used in Georgia is similar to the international benchmark for lower-middle-income countries. The understanding of poverty in Georgia, including from a gender-equality perspective, would be strengthened by a systematic and comprehensive multidimensional poverty analysis and more granular data collection. 62

Demographic change in Georgia is marked by population decline, rapid ageing, international as well as rural-urban migration, and high youth unemployment. Out-migration reduces the country's reproductive-age population and contributes to a skills mismatch and labour shortages that constrain economic prospects. Importantly, there is a demographic 'window' in the coming ten years before the ageing population structure will make reforms more costly and difficult to implement. Policies to tackle this challenge should be rooted in human rights and include the activation of women in the labour force, stronger protection for workers, an expansion of preschool education, as well as quicker and better integration 63

of young people into the labour force, and the retention of older workers. Social protection could be reconceptualized as a comprehensive, lifelong and rights-based system that provides protection for workers and individuals and serves as an enabler for human development and sustained productivity growth, while reducing spatial divides. Reforming the means-tested child benefits – expanding on the success of the universal pensions system – could reduce administrative costs, close the age-based poverty gap, and transform opportunities for women to join the labour force. The Targeted Social Assistance programme could be reformed to remove incentives for poor workers to remain outside the formal sector.

64 There is an opportunity for transformative change in making labour markets more inclusive and supportive of long-term productivity growth and private sector competitiveness. Achieving inclusive growth in Georgia will require investments in education, training, and healthcare and a conducive business environment for micro-, small- and medium-size enterprises. A central challenge is to improve quality education at the preschool and school levels, in post-secondary education, and in vocational education and training – both for children and youth who are entering the labour market, as well as through life-long learning opportunities for the entire workforce. The creation of decent jobs, not least in lower-skilled occupations and female-dominated social care services, is a key aspect of inclusive economic development and an integral part of human capital development, which could also reduce incentives to emigrate. Successful reform in this area has the potential to sustain Georgia's transition in the coming decades from an upper-middle-income to a high-income country, based on an economic model where growth is driven primarily by inclusive participation, human capital development, and innovation, rather than the traditional model emphasizing capital accumulation. Success will require comprehensive policies and interventions based on the systematic use of disaggregated, quality data, and firmly rooted in human rights and the principle of leaving no one behind.

7.2. OVERCOMING THE URBAN-RURAL DIVIDE TO PROMOTE INCLUSIVE GROWTH

By anchoring development priorities in inclusive growth, reforms 65
and interventions can be specifically designed to overcome the urban-rural divide, and directly address some of the root causes behind the patterns of poverty and inequality. The strong emphasis on SDG localization in Georgia's 2024 VNR and the goal of including all municipalities in this process by 2025 provide an entry point for strategic engagement. Key challenges include the expansion of social protection and access to quality services in education and healthcare, especially in rural communities and remote areas. Further investments in primary healthcare reform, telemedicine and related skills have the potential to deliver transformative change in this regard. The low attractiveness of professions in public service, including teachers, health professionals, and social workers can be at least partly explained by low salaries and weak incentives for attracting young people into these professions. A related issue concerns social norms that limit the participation of women as well as ethnic and religious minorities, which are partly embedded in the urban-rural divide; these can be addressed by ensuring that reforms and interventions are firmly rooted in human rights, and that key groups are actively engaged in policy design.

66 The transition to more sustainable agri-food systems has the potential to comprehensively address poverty and inequality while promoting women's empowerment, more sustainable and circular patterns of production and consumption, healthier ecosystems, and stronger resilience. It can also create synergies with the transition to a carbon-neutral economy. The role of agri-food systems has been acknowledged in key government documents and aligns with the strategy for SDG localization. The fragmentation of land ownership, uncertainties around agricultural property and usage rights, and structural inequalities currently hinder the development of a more productive, competitive, and sustainable agricultural sector. Successful governance reform of pasture and agricultural land has the potential to mobilize both donor funding and private capital for investments in value chains that can accelerate rural poverty reduction. By uniting private and public stakeholders in the digital ecosystem around a national vision for digital transformation, and through investments in digital and financial literacy, Georgia can reduce barriers that perpetuate the urban-rural divide.

7.3. GOOD GOVERNANCE AND HUMAN RIGHTS FOR A PEACEFUL AND INCLUSIVE SOCIETY

67 Well-functioning institutions are central for modern economies and societies, and their further development will be instrumental in Georgia's long-term journey towards a more inclusive society and innovative economy. Risks have emerged due to deepening domestic polarization and the geopolitics of the wider region, including the legacy of unresolved conflict in Georgia. The protests following the 2024 parliamentary elections and the disruption of Georgia's EU candidacy process have heightened risks that political factors might disrupt sustainable development efforts. Sustainable development in Georgia would benefit from efforts to address polarization, continue public administration reform, promote trust and social cohesion, advance the capacity of the judicial system, and strengthen the normative standing of the international human rights frameworks across institutions at all levels. Comprehensive efforts to promote decentralization would align well with the strategy to promote SDG localization and the role of municipalities, and thereby help overcome the urban-rural divide. The shadow of unresolved conflict in Georgia adds an additional layer of challenges for achieving sustainable development, with conflict-affected communities being more likely to face intersecting sources of exclusion. Addressing these challenges requires social protection for conflict-affected people, promotion of long-term trust, confidence and social cohesion, and facilitation of an enabling environment for sustainable peace.

7.4. A GREEN AND JUST TRANSITION FOR CLIMATE ADAPTATION AND RESILIENCE

68 The policy framework for tackling climate change and plan for a green transition of the economy that has been developed over recent years to ensure Georgia's commitments under the Paris Agreement must be acknowledged for its comprehensive approach and ambitious goals. To navigate the impact of climate change, Georgia needs to strengthen its climate adaptation efforts and invest strategically in disaster risk reduction and resilience, through the involvement of local communities. Clear and quantifiable targets have been put in place with the goal – conditional on international support and global technological advances – to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050. There is an opportunity to combine strategies

for the green and just transition to promote the reduction of poverty and inequality, to strengthen agri-food systems and rural value chains, to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, improve biodiversity management and environmental protection, and create decent jobs at a larger scale. To successfully realize the ambitious plans, it will be necessary for Georgia's education and training system to increase the capacity to equip students, youth and workers with the skills required to enable the green transition, and ensure that labour markets are strengthened to promote human capital development, long-term productivity growth and life-long social protection, as discussed above. Efforts to promote decentralization reform and SDG localization can also link up with comprehensive investments in disaster risk reduction for stronger community resilience. Georgia's experience from the COVID-19 pandemic also revealed a need to make social protection systems more flexible and shock-responsive. Furthermore, a comprehensive plan for phasing out the dependence of rural households on firewood is needed to reduce rural poverty, and can also contribute to increasing the carbon absorption capacity of Georgia's forests. The phasing out of fossil-fuel subsidies could be combined with an expansion of social protection and universal health care schemes.

69 The scale of the resources needed for the green and just transition implies that new funding models will be necessary for capacity development, including private-public partnerships, and that governance reform must align institutions and incentives in ways that are conducive to a whole-of-society approach to sustainable development. The introduction of a sustainability taxonomy for financial institutions and budget tagging in fiscal planning have created new tools to integrate sustainable development planning into economic governance at a strategic level, but more can be done for a systematic SDG costing and the identification of financing gaps.

7.5. ENSURING A PROMISING FUTURE FOR GEORGIA'S YOUTH

The 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals represent a promise of a better future for all, and especially the young generations who in many ways bear the greatest costs associated with the lack of economic opportunity, climate change, and rapidly changing societies. Georgia's high share of youth unemployment, youth not in education, employment or training (NEETs), and rapidly ageing society create an imperative for solutions that proactively engage these generations and equip them with the skills and opportunities for the future, while supporting the creation of quality jobs. As seen throughout this analysis, children and youth are disadvantaged in several ways, including by being over-represented in the poverty and out-migration statistics, in suboptimal education outcomes, through a significant skills mismatch on the labour market, and through structural barriers and social norms that limit opportunities, especially for women and girls, ethnic minorities, and youth in rural communities. Significant potential can be unlocked by modernizing Georgia's education systems, and by leveraging the opportunities of the ongoing digital transformation. A comprehensive strategy for sustainable development could mainstream youth across all policy areas, and formulate a vision that inspires hope and creates long-term opportunities. The UN Development System is well positioned to support such an effort, in strong partnership with all relevant stakeholders. 70

ANNEXES

ANNEX A
UN HUMAN RIGHTS INSTRUMENTS IN GEORGIA

This annex includes references to Georgia's obligations and relevant information under several different human-rights mechanisms and instruments. The mechanisms of the Human Rights Council (Universal Period Reviews and special procedures) and the core international human rights treaties are monitored by the Office UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), which has collected information related to all instruments under its mandate in the Universal Human Rights Index (UHRI), available at https://uhri.ohchr.org/en. In 2018, the Public Defender of Georgia was accredited with A-status under the Paris Principles for national human rights institutions (enshrined in UN General Assembly resolution 48/134 of 1993). Additional resources on human rights are referenced in the sections below.

UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEWS

The Universal Periodic Review is a process under the UN Human Rights Council to review the human-rights records of all UN Member States and share best practices between countries. Country reviews are based on 1) information provided by the State under review; 2) information contained in reports of the special procedures, human rights treaty bodies, and other UN entities; and 3) information from other stakeholders including national human-rights institutions (Public Defender's Office) and non-governmental organizations. The table below gives the reference numbers to the key reports for Georgia in each UPR cycle. For details and documentation, see: https://www.ohchr.org/en/hr-bodies/upr/ge-index.

UPR Cycle	Year	Georgia's national report	Compilation of UN information	Working Group report with recommendations	Georgia's response to the recommendations
First	2011	A/HRC/WG.6/10/GEO/1 A/HRC/WG.6/10/GEO/1/Corr.1	A/HRC/WG.6/10/GEO/2	A/HRC/17/11	A/HRC/17/11/Add.1
Second	2015	A/HRC/WG.6/23/GEO/1	A/HRC/WG.6/23/GEO/2	A/HRC/31/15 A/HRC/31/15/Corr.1	A/HRC/31/15/Add.1
Third	2021	A/HRC/WG.6/37/GEO/1	A/HRC/WG.6/37/GEO/2	A/HRC/47/15	A/HRC/47/15/Add.1
Fourth	The fourth cycle was initiated in 2022 and is currently ongoing.				

SPECIAL PROCEDURES OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

The special procedures of the Human Rights Council are independent human-rights experts (or groups of experts) with mandates to report from a thematic or country-specific perspective. Governments can issue a standing invitation, announcing that they will always accept requests to visit from all thematic special procedures. Georgia issued a standing invitation on 30 March 2010. The table below summarizes all special procedure visits to Georgia since 2016. A comprehensive overview of different special procedures relevant for Georgia is available in the UN compilation reports for the Universal Period Review (see table above). Reports from specific missions to Georgia (including visits before 2016) are available on OHCHR's website: https://spinternet.ohchr.org/View-CountryVisits.aspx?&country=GEO.

Mandate	Date of visit to Georgia	Mission report(s)
SR on violence against women and girls	Feb 2016	A/HRC/32/42/Add.3
SR on sale of children	Apr 2016	A/HRC/34/55/Add.1
SR on internally displaced persons	Sep 2016	A/HRC/35/27/Add.2
IE on older persons	Mar 2018	A/HRC/39/50/Add.1
IE on sexual orientation and gender identity	Sep-Oct 2018	A/HRC/41/45/Add.1
WG on business and human rights	Apr 2019	A/HRC/44/43/Add.1
IE on democratic international order	Apr 2023	A/HRC/54/28/Add.1 A/HRC/54/28/Add.2
SR on disability	Sep 2023	A/HRC/55/56.Add.1
SR on human rights defenders	Oct-Nov 2023	A/HRC/55/50/Add.2

SR – Special rapporteur; IE – Independent expert; WG – Working group.

GEORGIA'S RATIFICATION OF CORE UN HUMAN RIGHTS INSTRUMENTS

The table below shows Georgia's ratification of the core UN human rights instruments. Each of these instruments is monitored by one of the human rights treaty bodies, as indicated in the third column. Each treaty body has its own web page accessible via https://www.ohchr.org/en/treaty-bodies. A comprehensive overview of Georgia-related information from the treaty bodies is available in the UN compilation reports for the Universal Period Review (see table above).

No.	Instrument	Treaty Body	Georgia's Accession
1	1969 International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination	Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD)	1999
2	1976 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights	Human Rights Committee (CCPR)	1994
2a	1976 Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights	CCPR	1994
2b	1991 Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty	CCPR	1999
3	1976 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights	Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR)	1994
3a	2013 Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights	CESCR	Not ratified
4	1981 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women	Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)	1994
4a	2000 Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women	CEDAW	2002
5	1987 Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment	Committee Against Torture (CAT)	1994
5a	2006 Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment	Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (SPT)	2005
6	1990 Convention on the Rights of the Child	Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC)	1994
6a	2002 Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict	CRC	2010
6b	2002 Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography	CRC	2005
6c	2011 Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure	CRC	2016
7	1990 International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families	Committee on Migrant Workers (CMW)	Not ratified
8	2006 Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities	Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)	2014
8a	2006 Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities	CRPD	2021
9	2010 International Convention for the Protection of all Persons from Enforced Disappearance	Committee on Enforced Disappearances (CED)	Not ratified

GEORGIA'S RATIFICATION OF ILO CONVENTIONS

Georgia has ratified 8 of the 10 fundamental human rights conventions of ILO, as summarized in the table below. The two non-ratified conventions relate to occupational safety and health. Based on the national context, priorities identified by the social partners, and the need for sound legislative development, ILO recommends that Georgia also ratifies instruments related to forced labor, maternity protection, workplace violence and harassment, and social security. The 2023 CEDAW report recommended Georgia to ratify the Convention on Workers with Family Responsibilities (No. 156), the Maternity Protection Convention (No. 183), the Convention on Domestic Workers (No. 189), and the Violence and Harassment Convention (190). See section 2.3 for a discussion. As with the human-rights treaty bodies and special procedures, Georgia-related information in relation to the ILO conventions is available in the UN compilation reports prepared for the Universal Period Review (see table above). For a full list of Georgia's ratification of ILO conventions and other legal instruments of ILO, see https://normlex.ilo.org/dyn/nrmlx_en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:11200:0::NO::P11200_COUNTRY_ID:102639.

No.	Instrument (the ten fundamental human rights conventions of ILO)	Georgia's Ratification
29	1930 Forced Labour Convention	1993
87	1948 Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize Convention	1993
98	1949 Right to Organize and Collective Bargaining Convention	1993
100	1951 Equal Remuneration Convention	1993
105	1957 Abolition of Forced Labour Convention	1996
111	1958 Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention	1993
138	1973 Minimum Age Convention	1996
155	1981 Occupational Safety and Health Convention	Not ratified
182	1999 Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention	2002
187	2006 Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention	Not ratified

GEORGIA'S RATIFICATION OF INSTRUMENTS ON REFUGEE LAW AND STATELESSNESS

Georgia has ratified the following binding international instruments on refugees and statelessness:

Instrument	Georgia's ratification
1951 Refugee Convention (Geneva Convention)	1999
1954 Convention Relating to the Status of Stateless Persons	2011
1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness	2014
1967 Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees	1999

The following non-binding instruments are also endorsed by or applied in Georgia:

Instrument	Georgia's endorsement
Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement	1998
Global Compact on Refugees	2018
Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration (GCM)	2018

Furthermore, Georgia is one of 50 countries where the UN Country Team participates in the UN Common Pledge 2.0 on Refugee Inclusion: https://globalcompactrefugees.org/un-common-pledge-20-concept-note.

ANNEX B
ENVIRONMENTAL AGREEMENTS AND MECHANISMS

UNECE MULTILATERAL ENVIRONMENTAL AGREEMENTS

Instrument	Georgia's ratification
1979 Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution (Air Convention)	1999
Protocol on Long-term Financing of the Cooperative Programme for Monitoring and Evaluation of the Long-range Transmission of Air Pollutants (EMEP)	2013
Protocol to Abate Acidification, Eutrophication and Ground-level Ozone (Gothenburg Protocol)	Not ratified
Protocol on Heavy Metals and the Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)	Not ratified
1992 Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention)	Not ratified
1999 Protocol on Water and Health	Not ratified
1998 Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention)	2000
Amendment on genetically modified organisms	Not ratified
Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers	Signed in 2003 but did not ratify
1991 Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context (Espoo Convention)	Not ratified
Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment	Signed in 2003 but did not ratify
1992 Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents	Not ratified

See section 5.3 for a discussion about these agreements. For further information, see https://unece.org/environment-policy/conventions-and-protocols.

CLIMATE CHANGE INSTRUMENTS

Instrument	Georgia's ratification/ acceptance
1992 UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)	1994
1997 Kyoto Protocol to UNFCCC	1999
2012 Doha amendment to Kyoto Protocol	2020
2016 Paris Agreement	2017

For a discussion about Georgia's commitments and efforts on climate change, see section 5.1.

OTHER MULTILATERAL ENVIRONMENTAL AGREEMENTS ADOPTED BY GEORGIA

Instrument	Date of approval/ accession/ ratification
1971 Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitat (Ramsar Convention)	1997
1973 Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora	1996
1979 Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (Bonn Convention)	2000
1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea	1996
1985 Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer	1999
1987 Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer	1996
1990 London amendment	2000
1992 Copenhagen amendment	2000
1997 Montreal amendment	2000
1999 Beijing amendment	2011
2016 Kigali amendment	2023
1989 Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal (Basel Convention)	1999
1992 Convention on Biological Diversity (Biodiversity Convention)	1994
1994 United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification	1999
1995 Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds	2001
1998 Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade (Rotterdam Convention)	2007
2000 Protocol on Biosafety to the Convention on Biological Diversity (Cartagena Protocol)	2008
2001 Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (Stockholm Convention)	2006
2001 International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture	2019
2013 Minamata Convention on Mercury	2023

Source: UN Information Portal on Multilateral Environmental Agreements, https://www.informea.org/en/countries/ge/party-status.

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ANNEX C
KEY POLICY DOCUMENTS OF THE GEORGIAN GOVERNMENT

This list includes strategies, action plans and concepts listed as key policy documents in Georgia's 2024 National Voluntary Review. The original document contains a mapping of how these policy documents relate to specific Sustainable Development Goals (AoG, 2024, p. 13). The list is not exhaustive, as additional strategies and action plans exist which are not mentioned in the VNR. Further references are available in Vision 2030 and the Government Programme for 2025-2028. The 2025-2030 National Strategy for the Development of the Digital Economy and Information Society, adopted in February 2025, should also be mentioned here.

1. Vision 2030 – Development Strategy of Georgia
2. 2022-2030 Strategy of Education and Science
3. 2023-2026 State Youth Strategy
4. 2021-2030 Climate Change Strategy
5. Fourth National Program of Environmental Protection Actions 2022-2026
6. Long-Term Low-Emission Development Concept
7. 2016-2030 National Waste Management Strategy
8. National Strategy on Chemical, Biological, Radiation and Nuclear Threat Reduction
9. Electricity Market Concept Model
10. 2022-2030 National Healthcare Strategy
11. 2023-2030 National Non-Communicable Disease Prevention and Control Strategy
12. 2017-2030 National Maternal and Newborn Health Strategy
13. 2022-2030 Mental Health Strategy
14. Strategy for Ensuring Access to Sources of Livelihood for IDPs and Eco-Migrants
15. 2021-2025 State Tobacco Control Strategy
16. 2021-2027 Agriculture and Rural Development Strategy
17. 2021-2025 SME Development Strategy
18. 2023-2026 Comprehensive Reform Strategy for State Enterprises
19. 2021-2024 Public Internal Financial Control System Development Strategy
20. 2020-2025 National Strategy for the Development of Broadband Networks
21. 2023-2030 National Transport and Logistics Strategy
22. Maritime Transport Strategic Development Concept
23. 2022-2025 National Road Safety Strategy
24. 2023-2028 Capital Market Development Strategy
25. 2021-2030 State Strategy for Civic Equality and Integration
26. 2022-2030 National Human Rights Protection Strategy
27. 2022-2024 National Action Plan for the Implementation of UNSC Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security
28. 2022-2024 National Action Plan on Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence and Measures to Implemented for the Protection of Victims (Survivors)
29. 2022-2025 Public Services Development Strategy
30. 2020-2025 Decentralization Strategy
31. 2023-2026 Public Administration Reform Strategy
32. 2024-2025 Open Government Action Plan
33. 2021-2024 National Strategy for Combating Organized Crime
34. 2021-2030 Migration Strategy

ANNEX D
TRACKING SDG PROGRESS IN GEORGIA

This diagram gives a snapshot on SDG progress in Georgia based on data compiled by ESCAP for comparative purposes, and does not reflect the most recent official data available from Geostat. Nevertheless, it shows clearly that much progress remains in order to achieve the SDGs. Other databases tracking SDG progress at the global and national level present a similar picture.

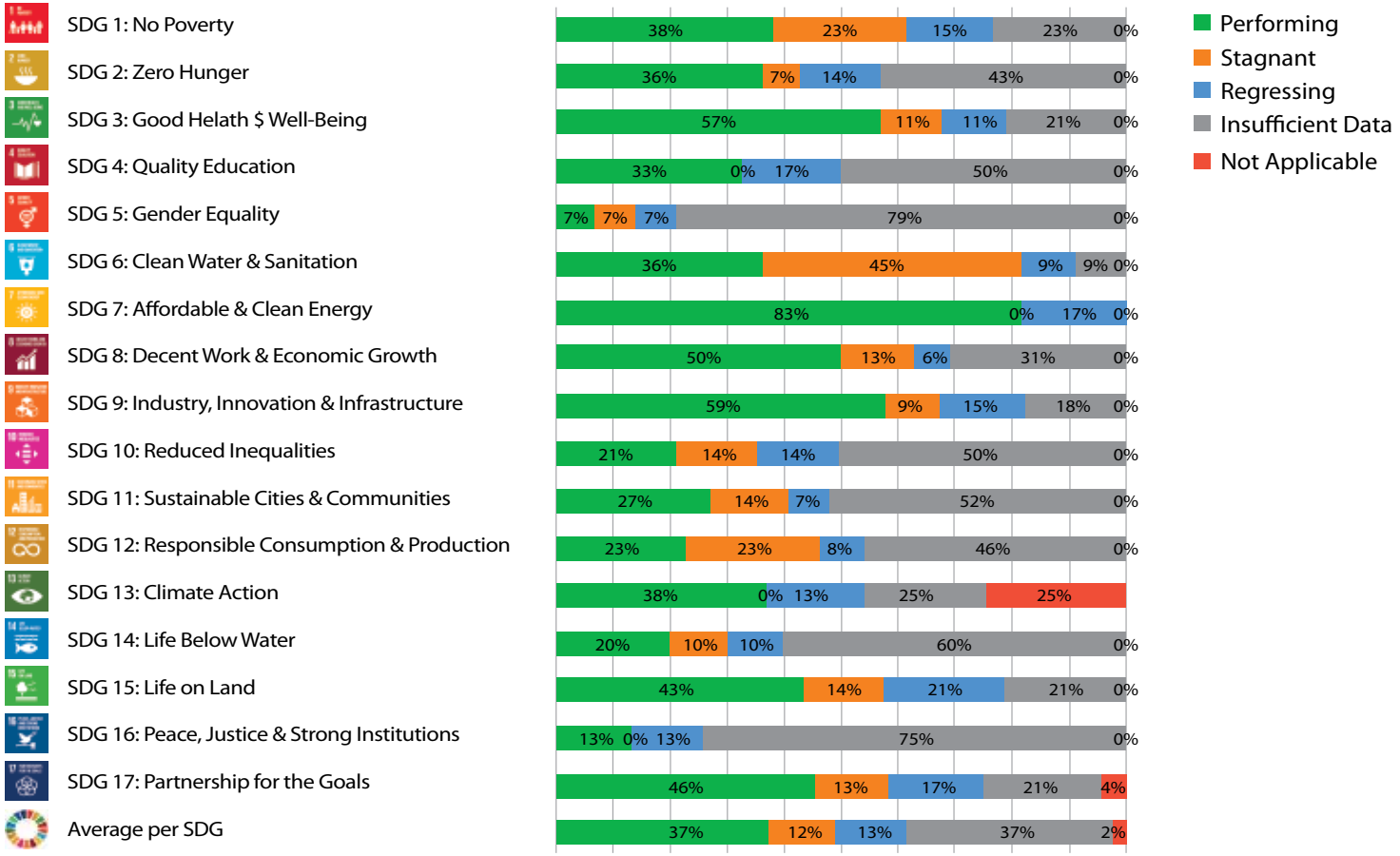

Figure A 1. Snapshot of SDG progress in Georgia (percentage of indicators in each category).
Source: Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), SDG Gateway, https://data.unescap.org/national-analysis?tab=overview&country=GEO.

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UNITED NATIONS COUNTRY TEAM
UN HOUSE, 9 R. ERISTAVI ST., TBILISI 0179, GEORGIA
WWW.GEORGIA.UN.ORG