

## State Inspector's Service issues recommendations on the protection of personal data during the election process

By KHATIA BZHALAVA

The State Inspector's Service published a document that aims to protect personal data during the election process and prevent the unlawful processing of the data. The document includes recommendations for the voters, election entities, and all individuals involved in the election process.

According to the document, protecting the rights of voters, including the protection of their data is a crucial component for the conduction of free and democratic elections. As it is noted, during the elections, 'ordinary' as well as 'special category' data are being processed. Information that refers to the political views of an individual is a data of 'special category' and requires special protections. The list of voters requires proper caution as well, and "should be used only for legitimate purposes provided by the law."

The State Inspector's Service calls on voters, every person involved in the election process, election entities to fairly process personal data in their possession, not to use them for unlawful purposes, to process data of only adequate and proportional volume, and to delete or destroy collected data after the goal of processing is achieved.

To assure the protection of voters' data and prevent possible violations in the 2020 Parliamentary Election, State Inspection's Service is actively carrying



State Inspector's Service

out various measures. SIS has already trained the representatives and employees of the Central Election Commission and District Election Commission on the

issues of protecting personal data and has assigned a group that will consult the employees of the Central Administration Commission on personal data protection

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External merchandise trade in Georgia Jan-Aug 2020

The party 'Reformer' demands the postponement of loans

The Reformer Party is taking the initiative and calling on the government to delay the loans.

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A tel-day training was implemented with the assistance of the Council of Europe project Supporting Freedom of Media and Internet in Georgia.

issues. An information document has been developed as well, which will assist voters and individuals/subjects involved in electoral processes on the above-mentioned topics.

In parallel with the mentioned measures, the State Inspection's Service will also react to the violation of legislation, responsible for regulating personal data.

As the statement published by State Inspections Service informs, in cooperation with the Council of Europe, employees of the SIS underwent a 2-day training regarding the European standards of data protection. The course included the decisions and approaches of the European Court of Human Rights in respect of the 8th convention. The training included discussion on the following matters: processing of personal data during photo-video shooting while conducting secret operations while requesting data from the law enforcement agencies and issuing public information.

The training was implemented with the assistance of the Council of Europe project Supporting Freedom of Media and Internet in Georgia and was led by an expert invited by the Council of Europe, Nana Mchedlidze. Within the frame of the training, the State Inspector, Londa Toloraia, and Vahag Muradian, deputy head at the Council of Europe in Tbilisi delivered a speech to the participants.



# DRI on the amendments to the Law of Georgia on Information Security



Democracy Research Institute believes that the amendments pose a threat of unrestricted control.

By KHATIA BZHALAVA

Democracy Research Institute publishes a statement responding to the amendments to the Law of Georgia on Information Security and believes that the law uncontrollably increases the powers of the State Security Service and its operative-technical agency, a legal entity of public law, “which may lead to the total control of state bodies, local self-governments, judicial and legislative branches of government, electronic communications companies.”

The statement reads that the proposed amendments immeasurably increases the circle of state and private sectors, which fall within the scope of the law. According to the draft law, “the list of critical information system subjects and the criticality classification for the respective subjects shall be approved by an ordinance of the Government of Georgia.”

As the statement reads, when the legislative definition of critical information subjects is notably general and clear criteria for criticality classification does not exist, there is a real risk of

abuse of power and arbitrariness. According to the statement, the spread of practically indefinite control of the executive government over the information systems and information assets of local self-governments, courts, and parliament is also an equally important issue.

“The agency is granted the right to uncontrolled inspection of information assets on the ground of inspection of information-technological infrastructure... Therefore, in the absence of proper control mechanisms over the State Security Service and its subordinate operative-

technical agency, the risks of uncontrolled access to personal communication, records, and personal information of the people employed in these institutions increase,” reads the statement.

DRI reports that the appointment of information security

managers to all critical information entities is required according to the draft law. In particular, information security managers may be defined as persons who have access to state secrets. The statement notes that according to the Law of Georgia on State Secrets, the decision on access to the information is made based on the consent of the eligible subdivision of the State Security Service of Georgia.

The statement reads that the mentioned regulation enables The State Security Service to solely establish the list of persons who, in turn, will later define whether the agency should have access to the subject’s information asset, in case alleged information security incident occurs.

DRI finds it uncertain why three different bodies are equipped with a similar mandate to achieve the same goal, which, according to the institute, may cause irrational spending of state resources.

Democracy Research Institute believes that the amendments to the Law of Georgia on Information Security include the risks of total control and mass violation of human rights. DRI also remarks that the amendments grant the State Security Service an unjustifiably broad mandate to access information assets of private and state agencies.



According to the statement, the law grants the State Security Service an unjustifiably broad mandate to access information assets of private and state agencies.

## Weather

Tuesday, September 22

Day Cloudy  
High: 23°C  
Night Partly Cloudy  
Low: 18°C

Wednesday, September 23

Day Mostly Cloudy  
High: 23°C  
Night Partly Cloudy  
Low: 17°C

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43, Chovelidze st., Tbilisi,  
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Founded by Prof.  
**Zaza Gachechiladze**  
**Tamar Gachechiladze**  
Publisher

Mob.: +995 599 565621; +995 577 760000  
E-mail: messenger@messenger.com.ge  
http://www.messenger.com.ge/

**Nino Metreveli**  
Commercial Director

**Mariam Mchedlidze**  
Editor-in-Chief

**Khatuna Gogichaishvili**  
Layout Designer, Photographer

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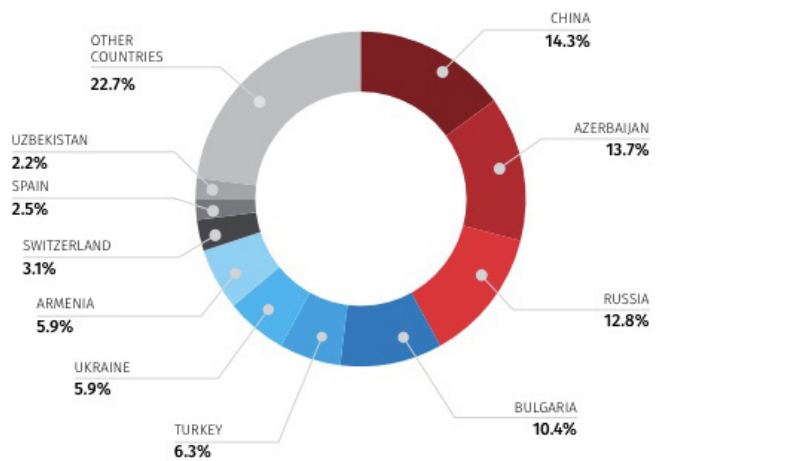
**The Messenger** preserves the style of a source written in English where possible.



Exchange Rates: US Dollar - 3.2295; Euro - 3.8050; GBP - 4.1502; 100 Russian Ruble - 4.2349; Swiss Franc - 3.5314

# External merchandise trade in Georgia Jan-Aug 2020

SHARE OF THE TOP TRADING PARTNERS IN TOTAL EXPORTS IN JANUARY-AUGUST 2020\*



\*Preliminary data.



www.geostat.ge info@geostat.ge

The share of Turkey in total imports was 17%, whilst the share of Russia was 11.2% and China - 8.9%.

BY NATALIA KOCHIASHVILI

The National Statistics Office (Geostat) released the preliminary data for the foreign trade turnover in the first 8 months of 2020. According to the information, in January-August 2020 the external merchandise trade of Georgia amounted to \$7 022.8 million, 16.7 %

lower to the same period of 2019. The exports equaled \$2 071.4 million (14.7 % lower), while the imports stood at \$4 951.4 million (17.5 % lower). The negative trade balance was \$2 880 million in January-August 2020 and its share in external trade turnover constituted 41%.

The share of the top 10 trading partners by exports in the total exports of

Georgia amounted to 77.3%. The top partners were China (\$ 296.6 million), Azerbaijan (\$ 284.3 million), and Russia (\$ 266 million).

As for the imports, the share of the top trading partners in the total imports of Georgia amounted to 69.9%. The top partners were Turkey (\$ 840.7 million), Russia (\$ 554.6 million), China (\$ 440.9 million), the United States (\$345.4 million), and Azerbaijan (\$309.5 million).

Turkey remains Georgia's largest trading partner with \$970.3 million in January-August 2020, followed by Russia, China, Azerbaijan, and Armenia with \$820.6 million, \$737.4 million, \$593.8 million, and \$385.6 million, respectively.

China tops the list of largest trading partners by exports with \$296.5 million, followed by Azerbaijan, Russia, Bulgaria, and Turkey with \$284.2 million, \$266

million, \$216.3 million, and \$129.6 million, respectively.

In January-August 2020 copper ores and concentrates reclaimed the first place in the list of top export items, equaling \$462.1 million or 22.3 % of total exports. The exports of motor cars totaled \$260.1 million and their share in the total exports amounted to 12.6%. The Ferro-alloys exports are in third place with \$145.5 million and constituting 7% of the total exports.

The top import commodities in January-August 2020 were motor cars whose imports equaled \$481.6 million (9.7 % of the total imports). The petroleum and petroleum oils followed in the list with \$325.1 million or 6.6 % of imports. The Copper ores and concentrates were third in the top import commodity list with \$312.1 million (6.3 % of imports).



Copper ores and concentrates are on top of the list of export commodities.

# The party 'Reformer' demands the postponement of loans



Maia Kukava explains why the deferral of loans is necessary.

BY ANASTASIA SOKHADZE

According to the Reformer, the government should take into account the difficult economic situation of the population, stressful social background, national currency exchange rate, inflationary processes and the grace period for citizens should continue until the end of 2020.

Individuals and legal entities should benefit from the additional grace period. The deferral should apply to both consumer and mortgage loans, as well as car loans, credit cards, overdrafts, and standard business loans. Concessional loan terms should be used by all business operators who have suffered huge losses in recent months and are not able to

“Due to the dire economic situation in the country, the reformer has come up with an initiative to postpone loans for three months again,” stated Maia Kukava, Member of the Party Reformer, Vake Majoritarian MP Candidate.

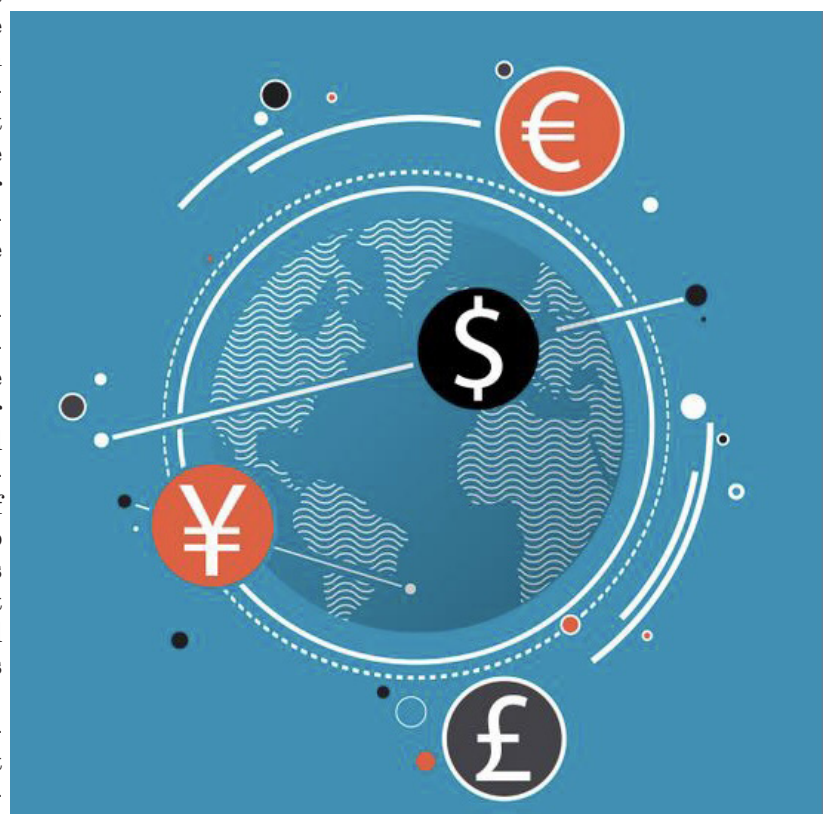
According to the party, the government should take measures with financial institutions so as not to harm the banking sector and the interests of private business.

At the initiative of the reformer, the grace period for citizens should be extended until the end of 2020 and also apply to citizens who have not been identified by the state as victims.

“Both individuals and legal entities should benefit from the additional grace period. The deferral should apply to both consumer and mortgage loans, as well as car loans, credit cards, overdrafts, and standard business loans. Concessional loan terms should be used by all business operators who have suffered huge losses in recent months and are not able to

make loan contributions in the near future,” said Kukava.

The party Reformer was registered with the Central Election Commission on August 10<sup>th</sup>. Prior to its establishment as a political party, the Reformer was a youth platform and implemented various social, educational, and cultural projects for young people living in the regions. These projects were aimed at developing the country's strategically important areas and creating a stable economic environment.



The difficult economic situation in the country and the stressful background should be enough for the government to extend the grace period until the end of 2020.