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## FOCUS

ON PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN  
DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES

UNDP and the Embassy of  
Denmark in Georgia work to  
enhance local development  
and citizen engagement

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## Jewelberry Glamping Hotel Tbilisi - A Luxurious Escape in Georgia's Majestic Wilderness

INTERVIEW BY MARIAM GORKHELASHVILI

**N**estled near the ancient city of Mtskheta, just a short 30-minute drive from Tbilisi, Jewelberry Glamping Hotel Tbilisi offers a one-of-a-kind experience for travelers seeking a luxurious escape in the heart of Georgia's picturesque wilderness. With its commitment to advanced technologies, respect for nature, energy-saving practices, and safe materials, Jewelberry aspires to be one of the pioneers in the development of a global network of glamping hotels.

Situated in a beautiful valley, Jewelberry Glamping Hotel Tbilisi boasts awe-inspiring views of the surrounding mountains and the enchanting Georgian landscape. With ten extraordinary dome houses perched atop the valley, each offering a unique charm, guests are treated to panoramic vistas through their expansive windows and terraces. The tranquility of the location allows visitors to reconnect with nature while immersing themselves in the comforts of modern glamping.

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# Ukraine Latest: Two Killed in Crimean Bridge Explosion, Russia Pulls out of Black Sea Grain Deal

COMPILED BY ANA DUMBADZE

**T**wo people from Russia's Belgorod region, a mother and father, were killed in an "emergency" on the Crimean Kerch Bridge on Monday, and their daughter was injured, the region's governor announced via Telegram.

"This morning, we heard about the emergency that happened on the Crimean bridge. We all saw a video on the internet of a damaged car with Belgorod number plates," Vyacheslav Gladkov wrote.

"The girl was injured, moderately injured ... The hardest thing is that both her parents died."

The blasts on the 12-mile Kerch bridge, a major supply artery for Russian troops fighting in Ukraine, left twisted metal barriers, debris and the damaged car.

It is the second major incident on the bridge in the past year. In October 2022, the bridge was partially closed following an explosion. It was fully reopened in February.

Moscow blames Ukraine for the attack, while in Kyiv, they are talking about Russian provocation.

The Bridge partially reopened to traffic Tuesday.

In other news, Russia has withdrawn from a deal that exports millions of tons of grain worldwide, in a move that could potentially jeopardize world food supplies.

The UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres has said that he "deeply regrets" Russia's decision to exit the Black Sea grain deal.

Speaking from UN offices in New York, he said: "Today's decision by the Russian Federation will strike a blow to people in need everywhere."

"Hundreds of millions of people face hunger and consumers are confronting a global cost-of-living crisis. They will pay the price."

He said that the pausing of the deal means a related pact between Moscow and the UN to help facilitate Russia's fertilizer and grain exports was also terminated. "Our main focus will be advancing global food security and global food price stability," he said.

President Volodymyr Zelensky said Monday that Ukraine is prepared to continue grain exports after Russia exited a landmark deal brokered with Turkey and the UN to unblock deliveries from the major producer.



Image source: RealPolitics

"Even without the Russian Federation, everything must be done so that we can use this Black Sea corridor. We are not afraid. We have been approached by companies that own ships. They said that they are ready to continue shipments," Zelensky said in comments distributed on social media by his spokesman Sergiy Nykyforov.

President of Türkiye, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, said he believes that Russian President Vladimir Putin actually wants to extend the so-called "grain deal" and intends to discuss it with him.

According to CNN Turk and Anadolu, Erdogan stated before heading to Saudi Arabia for an official visit, that the Black Sea grain initiative has already entered history as a significant diplomatic success and has allowed the transportation of over 33 million tons of grain, preventing food shortages in many countries.

"Despite the statement today, I believe that Russian President Putin wants this humanitarian bridge to continue," Erdogan said, adding that he might "take steps via a phone call with Putin without waiting until August" [when the Russian

leader is expected to make a personal visit to Türkiye].

## UKRAINE CARGO INSURANCE POLICY SUSPENDED AFTER RUSSIA QUILTS LANDMARK GRAIN DEAL

A cargo insurance facility providing cover for Ukraine grain shipments via a safe sea corridor has been suspended after Russia quit the United Nations-backed agreement, broker Marsh told Reuters.

Moscow has withdrawn from the year-old grain export deal in a move the United Nations said risked creating hunger around the world.

The marine cargo and war facility provided cover up to \$50 million per cargo and was led by Lloyd's of London insurer Ascot, together with other underwriters. "It is currently on pause," said David Roe, head of UK cargo at Marsh, which acted as the facility's broker. "It is suspended effectively due to the agreement not being extended."

"Without the corridor being in place, there is a greater degree of uncertainty attached to the risk."

Insurance has been vital to ensure shipments through the corridor.

## RUSSIAN BOMBING OF UKRAINE PORTS THREATENS THOSE WHO RELY ON UKRAINIAN FOOD EXPORTS, OFFICIAL SAYS

Southern Ukraine was the target of Russian airstrikes overnight Tuesday, as port cities Odesa and Mykolaiv came under attack from drones and missiles. Eastern regions Donetsk and Kharkiv were also targeted.

The attacks came a day after Russia pulled out of the Black Sea grain deal, a move that upset agricultural markets and saw the price of wheat, corn and other food commodities spike.

Russia's missile and drone strikes on Ukraine's grain ports threaten the millions of people around the world who rely on Ukrainian exports for their food, a top Ukrainian official said.

The overnight attacks are "further proof that the country-terrorist wants to endanger the lives of 400 million people in various countries that depend on Ukrainian food exports," Andriy Yermak, the

head of Ukraine's presidential staff, was cited by Reuters as saying.

On Tuesday morning, Moscow said it had carried out a "mass revenge strike" on two port cities in Ukraine after an attack on its Kerch Bridge that it blamed on Kyiv. Russia and Ukraine exported 25% of the world's grain before the war, and a large proportion of countries that rely on Ukrainian grain exports are in the Middle East and Africa.

Russia's withdrawal from a landmark UN-brokered grain deal Monday is "a blow to people in need," the UN said.

## SOUTH AFRICAN LEADER SAYS ARRESTING PUTIN IF HE COMES TO JOHANNESBURG NEXT MONTH WOULD MEAN 'WAR'

South Africa's president said Tuesday that arresting Russian President Vladimir Putin — should he show up at an economic summit next month in Johannesburg — would amount to a "declaration of war" by his country, according to the Associated Press.

The August summit is bringing together Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa — a bloc of developing economies known as BRICS. Officials have said that Putin wants to attend the gathering but they have been trying to persuade him to stay away to avoid the legal and diplomatic fallout over his international arrest warrant.

Putin is the subject of a warrant of arrest by the International Criminal Court related to alleged war crimes during Russia's invasion of Ukraine. As a signatory to the Rome Statute that established the ICC, South Africa would be obligated to arrest Putin if he visits the African nation.

South Africa's biggest political opposition party, the Democratic Alliance, has tried to compel President Cyril Ramaphosa's government to pledge to arrest Putin in an action before the High Court in Pretoria.

But in a strongly worded affidavit to the court, made public on Tuesday, Ramaphosa reiterated his past statement that such an action against Putin could also derail any efforts to end the war in Ukraine.

"I must highlight, for the sake of transparency, that South Africa has obvious problems with executing a request to arrest and surrender President Putin," he said. "Russia has made it clear that arresting its sitting president would be a declaration of war."

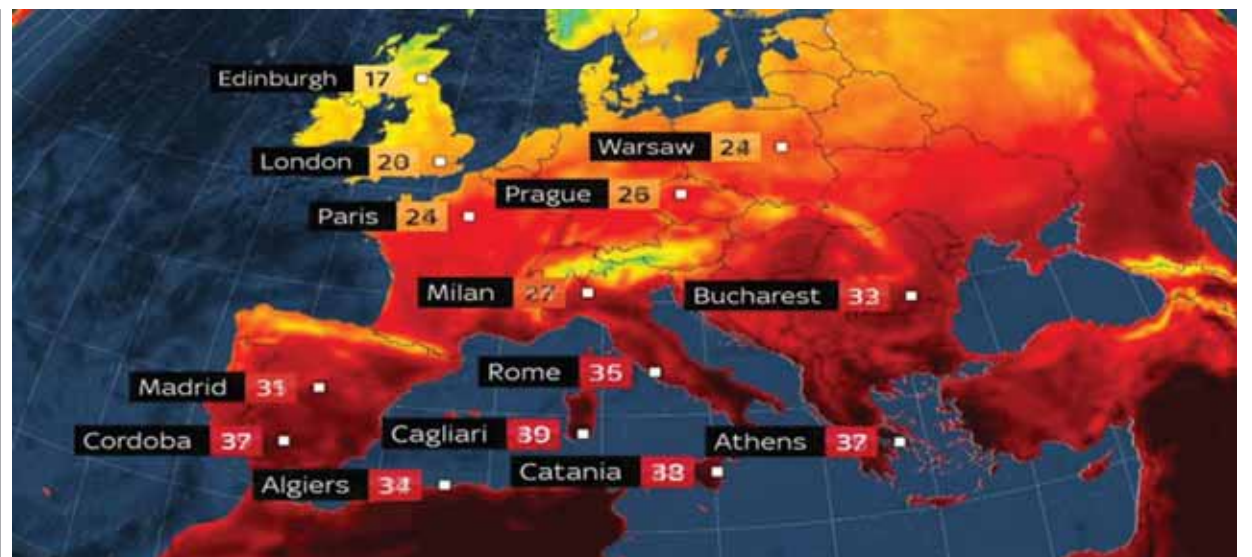
"It would be inconsistent with our Constitution to risk engaging in war with Russia," Ramaphosa added.

## Fitch Affirms Georgia at 'BB'; Outlook Positive

**F**itch Ratings has affirmed Georgia's long-term foreign-currency Issuer Default Rating (IDR) at 'BB' with a positive outlook.

According to the official statement,

"the rating is supported by Georgia's strong governance and economic development indicators relative to the 'BB' medians, its credible macro-fiscal policy framework, moderate level of public debt, and sound banking sector."



## Europeans Sweltering in "Emergency" Heatwave

BY TEAM GT

**L**arge swathes of southern Europe continue to swelter in record heat as wildfires rage across the continent. Fire crews battled blazes in Greece and the Swiss Alps. Scientists say climate

change is making heatwaves longer, more intense and more frequent. Extreme heat from a high-pressure system named Cerberus — after the three-headed hound from Dante's Inferno — is now bearing down on Italy, Greece and the Balkans. The Italian Ministry of Health warned of "emergency" heat wave conditions in 15 cities, including Rome, Florence and Bologna, over the next three days, with

temperatures expected to soar above 40°C (104°F).

CNN's Laura Paddison spoke to Hannah Cloke, a climate scientist and professor at the University of Reading.

"The hot air which pushed in from Africa is now staying put, with settled high pressure conditions meaning that heat in warm sea, land and air continues to build," Cloke explained.



# Water Quality in the Black Sea Remains Within Norms



BY MARIAM GORKHELASHVILI

According to information disseminated by the National Environment Agency, the water quality of the Black Sea continues to meet established norms. The agency conducted monitoring on July 6 and 10, analyzing 59 parameters in water samples from the region, and all values were found to be

within the Ministry's acceptable range.

The assessment included the examination of various chemical parameters, such as concentrations of 13 heavy metals, total petroleum hydrocarbons, 16 polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, and other physicochemical factors. To ensure accuracy and credibility, the collected samples were sent to the accredited laboratory of the National Agency for Analytical Environment of Atmospheric Air Water and Analysis.

The concern over water quality in the Black Sea arose after the Kakhovki hydro-

electric power station explosion in Ukraine on June 6, followed by subsequent flooding. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky declared the incident a global problem, expressing worries about the polluted water flowing into the Black Sea.

Despite these concerns, the recent monitoring results have indicated that the water quality in the Black Sea remains within acceptable limits, offering some reassurance amidst the aftermath of the disaster.



# Georgia-Armenia Visa-Free Agreement Enters into Force

The visa-free agreement between Georgia and Armenia entered into force on Thursday. The Prime Ministers of both nations signed it on January 12, 2023.

As explained by the Georgian Foreign Ministry, "the agreement seeks to introduce more favorable conditions for mutual traffic."

Citizens of Georgia and Armenia will be permitted to travel using a biometric ID, according to the deal.

Georgian Parliament Speaker Shalva Papuashvili praised the visa-free agree-

ment between Georgia and Armenia. The Speaker called it "a remarkable opportunity for two friendly nations to foster closer connections through hassle-free travel."

"Exciting news! Now, citizens from Georgia and Armenia can effortlessly travel between the two countries using their convenient ID cards, replacing the passport travel system and granting greater flexibility and freedom to explore. This is a remarkable opportunity for two friendly nations to foster closer connections through hassle-free travel," Papuashvili tweeted.

## p'auza spa and pool at Sheraton Grand Tbilisi Metechi Palace



There is a Georgian word, Ts'utisopeli, which means life is just a minute. Since time goes by so fast, we seldom fail to pause and nurture our physical and emotional health.

Once p'auza Spa is located at the prominent Sheraton Grand Tbilisi Metechi Palace, this 5-star hotel spa experience will make your stay even more memorable in Tbilisi. Dive deep into the range of spa treatments at P'auza. Enjoy an outdoor and indoor pool, jacuzzi, steam room, sauna, a relaxation area, and state-of-the-art gym facilities.

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# Keep Mum or Pay for Your Blunder!

OP-ED BY NUGZAR B. RUHADZE

Political Correctness and Cancel Culture are closely related ideological standards, both being precipitously politicized and weaponized. The left and the right both use them, each in their own way, to bludgeon one another. In a nutshell, the former could be taken as the predecessor and the latter as the successor. To make it easier to follow the thread, Political Correctness is intended to avoid offending certain groups in society, and Cancel Culture could be defined as an attempt to ostracize someone for violating social norms. For better or worse, Sakartvelo never lags behind when it comes to all those contemporary trends changing our old customs and habits into new ways and means. One can find such means in our virtual reality, be it trolling and botting, shadow banning or comment ghosting, blogging, blocking, silencing, black-listing, banishing, and what not, all being pivotal to the present-day fashion of debating.

It all started from minor person-to-person scuffles in social media, and ascended to the rank of a fierce political battle between those who are ready to double down to propel themselves to the decision-making elevation of "powerholder." Not very long ago, this new bunch of instruments, previously used merely in cultural conversations and grassroots-level sociopolitical skirmishes, was turned into serious a combat tool to grab the reins of influence. To wit, the current power struggle in this country



Image source: chiefexecutive.net

between various groups and forces is no longer imaginable without the smart and timely usage of these virtual devices, including the most familiar contemporary ethical phenomena like Political Correctness and Cancel Culture. The biggest joy killer, though, is that the preference is given to virtual weaponry instead of conventional wisdom; the battleground found all over the place – in media, academia, government, anecdotes, and in stories and tales.

Suffice to recollect the recent discourse on the 1695 fairy tale 'Donkey Skin' by

French genius Charles Perrault. The tale tells us of a widower king who is told he can only marry a woman more beautiful than his deceased wife. It turned out to be an impossible ask, and, finally, it occurred to the king to marry his beautiful daughter. This peculiar thought never came to anything, but the king made a very bad impression with his incestuous idea on a group of Georgian zealots, who rebelled against the publisher for offering books with immoral content to the younger generation. With this, we have a vivid sample of Cancel

Culture on the table. In turn, the venerated creators of classic literature and Charles Perrault sought to "cancel" the mob ideology that dared to offend the renowned author of Cinderella, Red Riding Hood, Puss in Boots, Bluebeard, and Sleeping Beauty.

How can one find a golden median between these two segments of our society, both deserving their share of attention? If Cancel Culture is acceptable, then any group of people should be allowed to cancel anything that contradicts their strongly-instilled dogmas. We

cannot be selective here, but on the other hand, we might be faced with the cancelling of anything that civilization has preserved for us up to date. To protect us from this severe choice, here comes to our rescue the famous Political Correctness and Cancel Culture to ostracize the breachers of the new standards of behavior, but even this might not help if the vested political interests of differing political bunches are hurt as a result. Values are confused so much, that one can no longer tell a liberal from a conservative.

A politically correct person, be they liberal or conservative, is ostensibly a carrier of the most upright moralistic opinion on very intricate issues, using the least offensive lexical material to articulate a thought. That said, they may still want to "cancel" something that goes against their grain. This is why I am saying that our value system is under threat no matter what ilk we belong in – liberal or conservative. Could we, for instance, use without a pang of conscience the phrase 'Western Culture' in a multicultural class, or mention Christ in the presence of the same audience? How about wearing a cross on a beach where Muslims are taking a dip next to us? Or teaching Oedipus Rex to our young? What are we going to do with the loudest human right Man has ever enjoyed in history – the right to speak up? Those twin notions – Political Correctness and Cancel Culture have imposed a bitter controversy on the world, and the world has no idea what to do with them – to silence people and hold them accountable for every word they utter and every move they make, or keep calm and carry on?

## BUSINESS

# Shifts and Challenges around the South Caucasus

ANALYSIS BY EMIL AVDALIANI

Amid the regional shifts and more broadly global reverberations caused by the war in Ukraine, the South Caucasus is experiencing radical changes in its position on the Eurasian map. Some shifts are more dramatic, others less so, but they nevertheless have been accelerated with the instability in the wider Black Sea region.

Like other important regions, the South Caucasus, in particular Georgia, are experiencing an emerging new order. In the South Caucasus, as in the Middle East, there is now an abundance of big players. It is difficult to remember any other such period in the history of Georgia or the Caucasus in general, when so many big players were simultaneously so actively involved in the struggle for influence.

Two periods can be taken from the history of the region when three powers (Arabs, Byzantium and Khazars in the 7th century, and Russia, Persia and the Ottomans at the beginning of the 19th century) competed for influence; today, there are six: the European Union (EU), Turkey, Iran, Russia, the US, and to a certain extent China. Such diversity, along with multiple challenges, also brings many geopolitical opportunities. Both the "middle powers" and small countries as Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia, now have more room to maneuver.

A second long-term trend should also be highlighted. The South Caucasus is increasingly considered in tandem with Central Asia. On the map, these two geographical spaces in the middle of Eurasia create a corridor that connects the EU and China (two big economic players). What happens in Central Asia directly affects the South Caucasus, and vice versa. This is well realized in the EU, China and Russia. The battle for the

heart of Eurasia, the so-called "Middle Corridor," or the New Silk Road, will become increasingly intense.

Yet the region is not only turning into an interconnection between east and west, but also a geography linking Russia to the Middle East, primarily Iran and more broadly the so-called Global South. The International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC), created as an ambitious project in the early 2000s, has, with Russia's invasion of Ukraine, quickly developed into a route through which massive trade flows, going from Russia to Iran and India, and vice versa. One of the branches of the INSTC runs through the western shore of the Caspian Sea.

The INSTC has not developed solely based on the current political context across Eurasia: For centuries, if not millennia, the Caspian Sea and both sides of its served as veritable corridors for connecting the steppe zones and rich Middle Eastern countries. Nowadays, it is Russia and the Middle East. Yet, despite modern technologies, geography persists, which makes the INSTC all the more interesting.

The South Caucasus is turning into a north-south and east-west connectivity hub. This is a continuation of a long-historic pattern, and is also an acceleration of it. Growing interlinkedness also invites multiple regional and non-regional powers to increase their influence in the South Caucasus.

Global connectivity changes run in parallel with attempts to revitalize long-abandoned railway links within the South Caucasus itself. Armenia and Azerbaijan have long been negotiating a comprehensive peace treaty. Success has only been partial, and there will likely be numerous rounds of negotiations until the two sides reach a consensus. But what is evident is the understanding by both sides that road and railway links must be restored, which in a broader picture will add another east-west connection line between Turkey and the



Image source: Byju's IAS

Caspian Sea.

Long-term geopolitical trends in Eurasia promise the South Caucasus the chance to become a region able to connect large economic centers of the continent. Never before has it been so well positioned to play such a role. In ancient or medieval times, for only short period of times was there prosperity and a high level of economic

connectivity with the outside world. The South Caucasus was mostly peripheral to the economies of empires. Today's increasing level of connectivity will help the economies of the South Caucasus countries. It will also increase the number of challenges. But one trend is obvious: when the region was dominated by one or two powers, it mostly suffered from

warfare and economic downturns. In contrast, now there is a tendency to have numerous actors involved in the South Caucasus, and with it, the welcome diversity of opportunities.

Emil Avdaliani is a professor at European University and the Director of Middle East Studies at the Georgian think-tank, Geocase.



# Georgia & Armenia Tech/AI Hub Summit & AI Workshop



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Date: **August 22, 2023**

10 AM to 2 PM including lunch

Lunch 2 PM at Parnas Restaurant

Location: Tbilisi Marriott Hotel, Grand Ballroom, 13 Rustaveli Avenue

free entry for first 40 delegates



Delegate Pre-Registration Open

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Organizers

The law firms KLEIN & PANTSULAIA and KLEIN & ISKANDARYAN - Pioneering Georgian & Armenian law firms that are the only firms on the market that join forces between an Expat lawyer and Georgian and Armenian lawyers.

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# Jewelberry Glamping Hotel Tbilisi - A Luxurious Escape in Georgia's Majestic Wilderness

Continued from page 1

Speaking to GEORGIA TODAY, the founder of the company Vitaly Yazvenko noted that "This land belongs to a friend and partner of ours, and when we visited for the first time and saw the beauty of the place, the space and freedom, we fell in love with it. The uniqueness of this place lies in the fresh air - when Tbilisi is melting in the heat, here, fresh air comes down from the mountains in the valley, and even in summer it's cool by the fire in the evenings."

We ask him to tell us more.

"Each tastefully furnished Jewelberry Glamping dome house is designed to create an inviting ambiance, with cozy beds, large desks, and terraces offering breathtaking mountain views. The private bathrooms have showers and complimentary toiletries for a relaxing and rejuvenating experience. For outdoor enthusiasts, we have BBQ braziers and a large open fire brazier where you can cook dishes from all over the world - from barbecue to pilaf and wok," he says.

## GIVE US AN EXAMPLE OF A TYPICAL DAY FOR GUESTS AT JEWELBERRY GLAMPING HOTEL TBILISI.

Guests can start their day with a delicious continental or vegetarian breakfast, prepared with care and served amidst the natural beauty of the glamping site. For relaxation and wellness, you can then immerse yourself in an invigorating Jacuzzi. We've also got a Japanese hot tub Furako and sauna for the perfect way to unwind. Those who love the outdoors can explore the surrounding wil-

derness - from hiking through the hills, taking a guided tour to nearby attractions, or enjoying a romantic picnic in nature. On-site, we offer a unique dining experience at our restaurant, which has a delicious menu of Georgian flavors - local delicacies prepared with fresh ingredients. Then, as the sun sets, guests can gather for a captivating magic-making movie screening under the open sky.

## DO YOU CATER FOR SPECIAL EVENTS?

Yes, Jewelberry Glamping Hotel Tbilisi can accommodate the dream of an unforgettable wedding in glamping style. From intimate ceremonies to grand celebrations, our experienced staff can curate a magical and personalized wedding experience in harmony with the stunning backdrop.

## WHAT MAKES JEWELBERRY STAND OUT FROM THE REST?

Jewelberry Georgia's distinctive feature is our approach to each guest and our unique combination of camping spirit and quality hotel service. We maintain a sense of freedom and closeness to nature while offering amenities such as Japanese hot tubs, jacuzzis, saunas, and the opportunity to order food directly from the restaurant.

We are committed to sustainability, state-of-the-art amenities, and exceptional service, setting the stage for an unforgettable escape in Georgia, as much for those looking for a peaceful retreat to those wanting an adventure in the great outdoors, or a romantic getaway.

We are currently launching a line of dedicated mini-spa relaxation and water

treatments with sauna and Jacuzzi.

We have also opened for our guests the direction of very interesting individual tours, within which guests can go during the day to interesting activities such as hiking, ATV and buggy rallies, horseback riding and rafting, and in the evening, tired and satisfied, return to the calm relaxing atmosphere of glamping.

## TELL US ABOUT THE LOCATION.

Immersed in the breathtaking Georgian landscape, Jewelberry Glamping Hotel Tbilisi offers a sanctuary away from bustling city life. It is close to Mtskheta, a city rich in history and culture, and gives guests the chance to explore ancient ruins, architectural marvels, and the vibrant local markets.

The hotel is within easy reach of Tbilisi, the capital city, where visitors can discover an exciting mix of old world charm and contemporary attractions.

## WE HEAR YOU PROMOTE ECO-FRIENDLY PRACTICES...

Yes. As a pioneer in sustainable hospitality, Jewelberry Glamping Hotel Tbilisi's use of renewable energy sources and energy-saving technologies ensures that guests can enjoy their luxurious stay guilt-free, knowing they are only minimally impacting the environment. Our commitment to safe materials promotes a healthy and eco-conscious environment for guests to unwind and rejuvenate in.

We need to ensure a balance between providing luxurious amenities and preserving the natural beauty of the environment. We strive to do everything in a way that does not harm nature, but on the contrary, fits into it.



## WHAT SERVICES DO YOU OFFER?

We have a dedicated 24-hour front desk, with attentive staff members always on hand to cater to guests' needs, ensuring a seamless and enjoyable stay. We can arrange airport transfers and assist with tour bookings and recommendations. Our staff's personalized approach guarantees a high level of service and a memorable experience for every guest.

## HOW HAS JEWELBERRY GLAMPING HOTEL TBILISI BEEN RECEIVED ON THE MARKET SO FAR?

"We've already garnered widespread acclaim, not only for our stunning location and luxurious accommodations but also for our popularity among travel enthusiasts and social media influencers," Vitaly tells us. "The glamping site's picturesque setting, unique dome houses,

and thoughtfully created experiences make it a favorite among those seeking a visually captivating and unforgettable escape. Our presence on popular booking platforms like Booking.com further attests to our reputation as a sought-after destination for luxury glamping in Georgia."

Jewelberry Glamping Hotel Tbilisi stands as a beacon of luxury and sustainability, offering a unique blend of comfort, adventure, and natural beauty. Whether you're seeking a serene retreat or an outdoor adventure, this glamping destination caters to all your desires. From the breathtaking surroundings and luxurious accommodations to the unforgettable experiences and exceptional service, Jewelberry Glamping Hotel Tbilisi invites you to embark on a journey that will leave you with cherished memories and a renewed appreciation for the wonders of nature.

# Developing Kutaisi International Airport: A Comprehensive Project Overview

BY MARIAM GORKHELASHVILI

The Union of Georgian Airports has recently announced a tender for the design services of a new runway and airport infrastructure at the Kutaisi International Airport, named after Davit Agmashenebeli. The project aims to prepare design documents for the future development and reconstruction of the airport's facilities, with a focus on accommodating E-coded aircraft, specifically the Boeing 747-400-800 type. The project involves several critical components and must adhere to Resolution N87 of the Government of Georgia.

**Runway Design:** The primary task is to design a new runway capable of handling E-coded aircraft. The chosen location should be justified, and the artificial cover material must be selected based on economic calculations. Compliance with Resolution N87 is mandatory to ensure safe and efficient operations.

**Three-Way Runways:** The existing



three-way runways, TWY-A and TWY-B, will be modified and adapted for E-coded aircraft. Additionally, a new three-way path may be required. These runways must be seamlessly connected to the main runway, facilitating smooth entry and exit for E-code aircraft.

**Reinforced Sides:** To accommodate

E-coded aircraft, the reinforced sides of the three-way runways must possess at least 1/3 of the strength of the main three-way tracks. A comprehensive scheme for aircraft movement on these runways, along with appropriate marking, should also be prepared.

**Drainage System:** Due to the potential

changes in the runway's location, the existing drainage system requires reconstruction. A new drainage system will be designed to cover the entire airport area within the red lines. Additionally, if the design involves diverting water flows from the airport territory, an appropriate solution must be provided.

**Resettlement Plan:** Should the project necessitate the resettlement of adjacent areas, a comprehensive documentation plan must be prepared. This includes topographical assessments of relevant territories, registration and separation of private plots, inventory of plots (including buildings and trees), evaluations, audit reports for redemption purposes, and the signing of agreements with owners.

The tender for the project's design services is open for submissions from July 19 to July 21. Interested companies are invited to participate and submit proposals outlining their capabilities in meeting the technical requirements and delivering the necessary design documents.

The successful implementation of this project will not only enhance Kutaisi International Airport's capacity and capabilities but also reinforce Georgia's position as a regional aviation hub. By preparing the airport to accommodate E-coded aircraft, the country can expect increased air traffic and improved connectivity, benefiting both the local and international aviation communities.



# Legal Insights with Klein Law: Dangers of Disguising Employees as Contractors Part 3 - Georgian Residency Permit Problems

This is the third article relating to Disguising Employees as Contractors from the desk of our Legal Columnist, American Intellectual Property expert Daniel Klein, who is based in Tbilisi and Armenia, - a follow up to our recent article relating to tax rates (See Legal Insights with Klein Law: Dangers of Disguising Employees as Contractors; The Blackmailer. Part 2).

## RESIDENCE PERMITS BASICS

Georgia has one of the most lax systems on the planet in terms of right to stay in the country, allowing visitors to stay a full year, leave for a day, and return to reset the right to stay for another year.

There is talk in the government that in order to comply with global norms in its efforts to become an EU member, that the standard of 90 cumulative days in 180 might at some point become the new reality.

RP permits can be obtained for many different reasons, but the most common is to do this either through an employer, meeting certain thresholds for income as an Individual Entrepreneur (IP) or through studies.

## EMPLOYMENT OF FOREIGN WORKERS; THE 20K\$ RULE

For every 50K Lari (about 20K USD) of income that a company has, it is allowed to apply for a foreign workers Work Permit (which is more or less the same as an RP). So, if a company has, say, 200K

USD of income, it is permitted to apply for up to 10 WPs.

## INDIVIDUAL ENTREPRENEURS WITH MORE THAN \$20K USD OF INCOME

Further, this 20K rule applies to those who have IP. And as our Part 1 article points out (The Dangers of Disguising Employees as Contractors - Part 1), Georgia is an incredibly attractive destination for Digital Nomads, especially when compared with Europe, which is generally a very strict destination for DMs, since they have a strict 90 day rule. Applying for DM status varies from country to country, but in no case is the tax the crazy low 1% it is in Georgia.

Turkiye, which is outside the EU, is a very popular destination for DMs, since the requirement is even more relaxed in that only a lease is required to obtain an RP. However, this is only a theoretical rule, as the Turkiyesh government is now rejecting most RP applications and these rejections often depend on the applicants' citizenship.

## COMPANIES UTILIZING THE \$20K QUOTA RULE

The tax consequences for companies is a lot less interesting, since the company is subject to 15% corporate income tax, and employee taxes are a bit north of 20%.

## STUDENTS

Students are also eligible for RP status. The problem is that when renewing or initially applying for RP status, recent



experience has shown that RP status is often denied. This can be a real hardship for students, who might have invested family savings to move to Georgia and then find they need to leave some time after arrival.

## REJECTION TRENDS

For all RP applications, the trend in

Georgia is that applications are frequently rejected. Rejections can be for national security reasons, prior visa violations, or often apparent arbitrary reasons.

## BUYING TIME

For rejections there is always hope that the court will be able to overturn a rejection. That process takes about 6 months. If the

court action is not successful, it is also possible to appeal, which could take up to another 6 months, or more. Again, it is almost guaranteed that the rejectee can extend their stay until the final decision is made. At the end of the day, it is absolutely imperative for those who have established ties to Georgia and are passionate about staying legally in the country to try.

# Georgia Today Sponsors Georgia & Armenia Tech Hub Summit 2023 in Armenia

BY GEORGIA TODAY

On July 18, the Marriott Armenia hosted the highly anticipated Georgia & Armenia Tech Hub Summit 2023, a collaborative effort between Georgia-based law firm Klein & Pantsulaia and Armenia-based law firm Klein & Iskandaryan. The Tech conference was sponsored again by GEORGIA TODAY, GT Business and the Marriott Hotels, more precisely the Marriott Armenia, which is on the main Yerevan square in a historical palatial Armenian building. This is the first time in the history of the conference that AmCham (Armenia) was a partner. Representatives from heavyweight IT companies Adobe and Siemens were panel speakers (according to Boston Consulting Group, Siemens is 10th most innovative company in the world and #1 in Europe), alongside Dataart.

Matena's co-founder and event speaker Ruben Hayrapetyan highlighted that in its first year of operation, Matena has managed to establish collaborative programs with the likes of Harvard and IMD business schools. That, coupled with a well-established tech culture and sector, Armenia means is aiming to position itself as a go-to country for Tech.

One of the take-aways was that Armenia's tech sector seems to be much further developed than Georgia's, which means that IT companies in Georgia are frequently required to employ innovative initiatives in order to find certain types



of tech workers, such as strong company-tech university collaboration. Another take-away was that, while in Armenia small local companies enjoy various government benefits and tax breaks, in contrast, the Georgian government has very impressive and impactful tax incentives (such as a 75% tax reduction on certain taxes) for multinationals (only) on the condition that they have no substantial

sales in Georgia. This does not encourage local start-ups as in Armenia.

In an effort to become more competitive, AmCham Armenia is lobbying to get more tax breaks for foreign investors.

Irina Dumanyan, Strategic Business Director/CEO Siemens Industry Software Armenia and also a AmCham Board Director, mentioned that, "In order to be more attractive as a country for for-

foreign companies, AmCham is lobbying to increase incentives for investors." One of the co-founders of the Georgia-Armenia Tech Trade Association indicated that a new lobbying trade organization was being formed called the Armenia Tech Trade Association, which would have only multinationals as members in order to lobby the Armenian government for more investment incen-

tives for foreign Tech companies.

One other important issue what was pointed out by Dataart's Arsen Bagdasaryan, who is VP, Head of the Armenia and Georgia Business Cluster, was that getting Georgian work permits for foreigners was a big concern in general, but that for companies with large numbers of workers needing work permits, the Georgian government was approving almost all applicants. Arsen also noted that of Dataart's 6000 global workforce, almost 1000 are based in Georgia and Armenia; underscoring Georgia and Armenia's deserved status of Tech Hub!

Other conference speakers and panelists included British Expatpro, Germany's Devexpert, and approximately 10 delegates who had travelled from other countries to participate.

The next event will be similar to past events, with a focus on artificial intelligence. The Georgia & Armenia Tech/AI Hub Summit & AI Workshop will be held at the Marriott Tbilisi on the 22nd of August in the historical Grand Ballroom. Early confirmations as panelists/speakers already included Dataart and Devexperts.

KLEIN  
&  
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# Berlin Fashion Week Roundup Plus Special Focus on Tbilisi Based Georgian Design Trends - Fashion Has No Borders



BY LILY FÜRSTENOW

**F**ashion is all about the statements that it communicates to societies. What we wear is about who we are. For all those concerned that LGBTQ+ rights and freedoms are threatened in Georgia, the good news is that at least fashion is the way to communicate the messages of tolerance and fairness. A good case in point is GOD ERA, a fashion brand based in Tbilisi, run by rising Georgian designer Nini Goderidze. The brand was first presented on Mercedes Benz Fashion Week Tbilisi in 2021. GOD ERA is a

non-binary slow fashion brand, sensitive to queer topics and critical of patriarchal society. Nini Goderidze graduated from Tbilisi Academy of Arts and is an active supporter of sustainable and ethical fashion. Her current activity also involves the work on the creation of biodegradable vegan leather. Her Tbilisi studio over the city roof-tops is a co-working space and an open lab where insights into her creative process are as fascinating to follow as her provocative outfits are ready to wear. The author has had the privilege of following the degradable leather development process, explained in detail by the designer personally during a studio visit. GOD ERA has been active in collaborations with

various artists, including a costume collaboration with the Berlin based artistic duo CROSSLUCID for their short movie 'First Date' in July 2019. She is also part of the Fungus project, which is a platform for queer-identifying people from the Caucasus region, expressing themselves in various artistic mediums. Known for her brilliantly weird creations, like corsets with fake rubber tits and chunky jewelry strewn with molded latex appendages like babydoll arms and jelly ears, GOD ERA is pretty much subversive, provocative and edgy. As well as regularly participating in the Mercedes Benz Fashion Week in Tbilisi, Goderidze runs a virtual look book Dress X digital collection.

Berlin Fashion Week, which took place 10-13 July, was once again a bright event in the city social life calendar, attracting huge crowds right before the summer break. The fact that Mercedes Benz is no longer Berlin Fashion Week's official sponsor has not affected the creativity and experimental character of Berlin designers. Diversity, inclusion, body positivity, sustainable and ethical practices have been celebrated by many new collections. In a city like Berlin, with its complex history, it all came at a price, therefore it's all the more important that the fashion created in Berlin focusses on these values.

Among the numerous destinations where young and established designers showed their new creations, PLATTE. Berlin stands out as the place to be for fashion without prejudices and conventional stereotypes. Situated in the very heart of the city, amidst the excessively hyped Berlin-Mitte, not far from Alexanderplatz, this location, as its name indicates, is harbored in the GDR style architectural complex constructed in the spirit of the bygone socialist esteems.

The term "platte," which actually stands for a negatively charged dwelling of lower standards for the masses, has been given by the team currently in charge a positive turn without covering up its past history, but attempting to evolve it into something better. Thus the PLATTE Award Runway Show that presented winner Melisa Minca's new collection was the absolute highlight of the Berlin Fashion Week. The temporarily constructed catwalk made up of used wood pieces commonly used for facade refurbishments set up in the courtyard surrounded by the bare concrete tower-like apartment units pierced with rectangular window slots was the most sustainable setting one would ever imagine in these times plagued with excessive waste and shortage of resources. The show concept was less elitist and exclusive as is often the case with fashion labels, as even the dwellers of the apartments could follow the show from their respective windows if curious enough.

Likewise, Melisa Minca's new collection was all about up-cycling, sustainability, re-use and moreover about the uniqueness of individuals from various backgrounds, cultures, ethnicities, genders, body types and empowerment. And although the outfits wouldn't suit each and every one of us, although we may need more time to get used to unconventional models walking down the catwalks, and maybe one would ask for more sophistication in certain details of garments and footwear, or less explicit language on what one wears, it was the idea that mattered. The idea that ethical fashion using up-cycled materials and outfits created for all irrespective of body-shape and size, gender identities and ethnicities is our rescue and our future.

Melisa Minca's show was more like a look inside a fashion lab, where there



are more open questions than ready solutions, more opportunities for development than dead-ends, which made it extremely exciting - especially the color palette of whites, beige and light browns making it all so agreeable to the eye.

The PLATTE show room went on presenting the top hits of season's sustainable fashion through a variety of designers, presenting a carefully selected array of up-cycled handbags, appropriating the motives of adidas football shoes, classy looking Bondy bags, deconstructed pieces of garments and more wearables to challenge and enrich traditional tastes.

Another outstanding highlight of the Berlin Fashion Week this season was unmistakably Esther Perbandt's new collection Concrete Jungle at the Acht Berlin. Rarely would the collection spirit - all in Perbandt's signature black - work so elegantly with the state of the art architectural austerity of Berlin Prenzlauer Berg's stylish new quarter in Schönhauser Allee 8. Apart from excellent catering and classic music played live to accompany the show, the event was a true meet-up of Berlin's creme de la creme of the fashion society with iconic Christiane Arp from Vogue, now the CEO of the Fashion Council Germany, attending in person.

Perbandt's 18 looks showcased by models standing within an atrium impressed by the designer's skill in combination of various fabrics: like jacquard, heavy cotton matched with light see-through cloths revealing alluringly and adding extra sexiness to austere aesthetics of sleeveless tops, gowns and cloaks. All varieties and shades of black amplified with the richness and diversity of contours with cut-outs, fabric applications, zipper details on dresses, floor-long skirts made the looks appear like sculpted out and brought to life by the designer's hand.

Perbandt's new jewellery collection focussing on golden clockwork wheel reminiscent details - chains, bracelets, earpieces is undoubtedly an opulent addition to any outfit. Needless to say, Esther Perbandt got extra publicity since the designer participated in Heidi Klum's controversial Germany's Next Topmodel TV show this season with all the participating GNTM model candidates wearing her outfits for millions of German TV audiences addicted to fashion. The designer had the honor to judge the model candidates side by side with phenomenal Heidi Klum and supermodel Karolina Kurkova.

Speaking of, Fashion Week would be nothing without models and its epic parties with models, especially when it hap-

pens in Berlin's notorious 'Torstrasse. Modelwerk X Kitty Cheng party has over the years set a tradition of its own in celebrating and partying with an exclusive guest list that we had the pleasure and privilege to attend. Kitty Cheng Bar is a unique location with Wilhelminian epoch interior, classy DJs playing hot hits and an exclusive ambience of Berlin signature trashy chick plus glamor. This season lavish give-aways were something extra special in terms of design and taste.

Last but not least, a short update about the upcoming generation of fashion school graduates of which Berlin has a huge number, fortunately. Neo.Fashion is the format specially developed to discover and support graduate students in their work by offering show possibilities for their creations and awarding a prize. This year was Neo.Fashion 2nd Edition, with the jury made up of fashion experts and experienced connoisseurs. According to our source Florian Mueller, a fashion expert, teacher, journalist and PR manager with an experience of working internationally from Paris Fashion Week to Berlin, Hong Kong and Taipei, being on the Neo.Fashion jury has been an exciting task with the current award winners being: Best Design: Fabia Meyer

Best Craftsmanship: Catharina Holtgrave, Best Sustainability Concept: Yan-nik Knorn. The names that we will hopefully come across more often in future. "Neo.Fashion. Letters - Fashion meets Art" on the other hand has been an extra initiative to bridge the link between contemporary artists that Berlin is teeming with and the city fashion community by inviting artists selected for this purpose to design 10 human-sized 3D letters spelling "Neo.Fashion" to visually decipher the DNA of the concept.





# Danish Ambassador and UNDP Resident Representative Visit Mtskheta and Dusheti Municipalities

BY EREKLE POLADISHVILI

After declaring independence from the USSR, finding ways back to Europe has become an aspiration of Georgian society, but the influence of the Soviet era hasn't disappeared in its entirety: Even after 30 years, our governments struggle to deal with the hindering factors it created, one of them a lack of community engagement. Many citizens are told that participating in elections is the only thing they need to worry about, and the rest is up to the elected candidates to take care of. There is no doubt that voting is a crucial instrument for people in democratic countries, but their engagement in the decision-making process is also vital. That's what the West is all about, and if Georgians see their future in Western alliances, they need to work on this factor. Thankfully, they are not alone - UNDP Georgia and the Embassy of Denmark in Georgia have become involved in a project specifically designed to enhance local development and citizen engagement.

On July 17, H.E. Anne Toft Sorensen, Ambassador of Denmark to Georgia and Armenia, Nick Beresford, UNDP Resident Representative in Georgia, and Mzia Giorgobiani, Deputy Minister of Regional Development and Infrastructure, visited the Mtskheta and Dusheti municipalities to assess the progress of local development projects supported by Denmark and UNDP. The visit aimed to strengthen local development initiatives and promote citizen engagement in decision-making processes.

Ambassador Sorensen told GEORGIA TODAY that public participation in decision-making processes is vitally important,



Photo: UNDP Georgia/Nino Zedginidze

which is one reason why Denmark has supported decentralization in Georgia for almost eight years. "When the public participates in decision-making processes, you move the local agency, the decision-making process closer to local communities that can be more flexible because they understand the challenges and know how to solve them. It also gives transparency and accountability to the electorate because they are much closer to those implementing the policies for the community," the Danish ambassador said.

Mtskheta and its newly established tourist information center was the first location they visited. At the center, they met Mayor Dimitri Zurabishvili, and with

him, they engaged in a discussion to uncover untapped potential and evaluate the impact of tourism development on the social and economic well-being of local communities. During their visit, the guests had the opportunity to experience innovative audio guides, a user-friendly tool developed with the support of Denmark and UNDP. It offers visitors an immersive exploration of Mtskheta's rich history spanning three millennia. Then the delegation explored the renowned Svetitskhoveli Cathedral, a significant historical and cultural monument in Georgia.

Meanwhile, Dusheti Municipality hosted its first-ever community forum,

organized by local civil society organizations, with delegation members in attendance. The forum provided a platform for dialogue between Mayor Manana Narimanidze and local residents, enabling a comprehensive assessment of the economic, social, and infrastructural challenges faced by the people of Dusheti. Collaborating with local authorities, the participants sought to identify effective municipal solutions and foster inclusive decision-making processes.

"This event in the town hall, with the population council, helps the mayor to reach out directly to the local community, to civil society. It creates a space for people to present their ideas about

what they think the investment should be at a local level," Nick Beresford, UNDP Resident Representative tells us. "This is democracy in action, this is human rights at the local level, but it also presents great opportunities to make smart investments that serve local needs and speak to the local context."

During her speech, Mayor Narimanidze competently addressed each topic the groups presented, and announced that the local government will start working with group members to deal with the issues Dusheti citizens face.

"Today, we hosted a truly successful forum. Members of all nine target groups perfectly set out the problems we face and the priorities our municipality should have," the Mayor said, speaking to GEORGIA TODAY. "When we receive their feedback, it is our duty to get back to them as soon as we start working on next year's budget."

She also thanked each and every person involved in the process and underlined the role of citizen engagement in hosting the forum. "I'd like to express my gratitude to our citizens, who understand what local self-governance is all about and how important their engagement is in making it work," the Mayor added.

The visit of the Danish Ambassador and the UNDP Resident Representative to Mtskheta and Dusheti municipalities highlighted the successful cooperation between Denmark, UNDP, and the Georgian Government in advancing local development and citizen engagement and fostering sustainable growth and inclusive societies. Denmark and UNDP are supporting a range of similar initiatives in 23 municipalities across Georgia, drawing on the resources of a \$4 million Danish-funded project for Decentralization and Good Governance.

# Ambrosiano Milan's Espresso Coffee since 1967

BY MARIAM MIVLISHVILI

The name of Restaurant Ambrosiano comes from the famous Milanese coffeehouse "Il caffè Ambrosiano". Ambrosiano Factory was founded in 1967 in Milan, with the construction of a Coffee House and a roasting plant inside.

For over fifty years, Ambrosiano Factory has been producing with passion to make the daily coffee ritual a pleasant break. The coffee company Ambrosiano brings together special boutique-style coffee varieties, while Restaurant Ambrosiano is the exclusive representative of this coffee.

The brands represented by this coffee company are blends of Arabica and Robusta in different ratios: 100% Arabica, the most expensive and outstanding coffee; a blend of 80% Arabica and 20% Robusta, popular in northern Italy; and 50% Arabica and 50% Robusta, which is mainly found in southern Italy. As we move further south into Italy, the amount of Robusta in the blend increases, as they generally prefer a relatively bitter coffee.

Coffee blends are roasted according to the Italian tradition and made with coffee of the most prestigious origins. Our

roasting company is always looking for the origins to create the best organoleptic profile. Some of our Origin are classified as "Super Premium Coffee" and all our coffees are positioned in the high end of the market.

The high quality of the coffees is due to their almost total absence of defects and to the cultivation in plateaus where the climatic and soil conditions are optimal.

The main feature of this coffee is that it is not a single country bean - Arabica

beans are selected from four countries: Guatemala, Brasil, Vietnam and Equador. The roasting of the finest coffees in the world takes place with an "artisan" process but with sophisticated technology, ensuring a constant blend throughout the year.

The result is blends able to satisfy the most demanding palates.

Restaurant Ambrosiano has a coffee chef who chooses the farms from which the restaurant should bring coffee and



directly controls the coffee roasting process. Ambrosiano Factory uses large quantities of washed coffee in its blends.

The term "washed" means that the coffee is treated with natural processes IN THE ORIGIN COUNTRIES in order to enhance the quality of the coffee making the product very valuable and highlighting aromatic notes. The coffee beans are roasted in Milan, therefore, the symbols of Milan are printed on the coffee pack-

aging. Each of these details makes this coffee unique and special.

Restaurant Ambrosiano constantly seeks to offer the public innovations and high quality service. Thus, very soon, the public will have the opportunity to visit the new branch of the restaurant, enjoy the taste of delicious coffee, and to revel in the pleasant environs, beautiful views and choice of delicious dishes.



# Demographics

BLOG BY TONY HANMER

Our guesthouse has been running in Etseri, Svaneti for over 10 years now, and it's interesting to look at how things have changed and grown over this time.

When we bought the house, it had been empty and unfinished for over a decade, and still had no windows (just rotting old wooden frames), no water or electricity. So I drove up first from Tbilisi early in an August with Lali's nephew as a helper, taking a car full of our belongings. Our jobs were to enlist local talent to get a few windows made and brought from Zugdidi (the nearest place for double-glazed ones at the time), as well as water and electricity put in rudimentarily. The outhouse was built by Lali's brother and I as the first new building on the 300 sq m property; it still stands today.

Our first guests that summer were actually willing to sleep in their own sleeping bags and mattresses on the 1st floor; they were from Germany and had come to look at humanitarian possibilities in the village.

Gradually, the guest house idea grew, being that the house is so large anyway and we are childless. Upstairs eventually went from three concrete block walls to 6 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms and a kitchen. We had known that renovation would be multiple times the purchase price of the property (\$12,000); this was indeed the case! But it took some years.

We began keeping a book for guests to

sign if they wanted, and now this has about 67 languages from all over the world, one of our sources of pride. The main guest countries have changed over the years, though.

Some years before Covid, our three biggest visitor countries were Poland, Ukraine and Israel, in that order (some guest houses in Mesti even had their signs in Hebrew as well as English). During Covid, there was a 14-month stretch with zero guests. Since then, things have been picking up again, although all over Svaneti, numbers are still not quite yet back to before the Virus. Ukraine, of course, has quite other things on its mind as a nation of late, sadly...

A new guidebook on the Caucasus recently came out in German, and this seems to have prompted a surge of Germans, starting not long ago. This year, though, the biggest visitor population is from the Czech Republic, by a big margin, followed by Poland and a few Germans. Interesting how these things change.

Our other demographic tracking moment was in Etseri school, where I taught English for 4 years and Lali for 10. Here, we were interested in how many children were entering grade 1 each September, as a gauge of the population health of the village. Our record was 10 some years ago, but there was a year, earlier, when there were none. Now the influx remains fairly good. Infrastructure has improved with a new cement road through the village from top to bottom, running right past the house. A new two-story sports complex was started on the school grounds last summer, and is still being built now, hopefully to be finished



for the coming school year.

It is one of the privileges of living for a decade or more in one village to see the changes over time: not just what happens each season of the year in a farming community, but to see the differences overall. Less plowing-scything of hay by hand, for example; more being done by gasoline-powered machines.

Slowly, life seems to be improving; we hope without too much development money going sideways. Now, if we could just get our hope measurement up to a reasonable level, get more of the young men working more and drinking less, we'd really have something.

Tony Hanmer has lived in Georgia since

1999, in Svaneti since 2007, and been a weekly writer and photographer for GT since early 2011. He runs the "Svaneti Renaissance" Facebook group, now with over 2000 members, at [www.facebook.com/groups/SvanetiRenaissance/](http://www.facebook.com/groups/SvanetiRenaissance/)

He and his wife also run their own guest house in Etseri: [www.facebook.com/hanmer.house.svaneti](http://www.facebook.com/hanmer.house.svaneti)

# Georgia Adopts Ambitious Long-Term Low-Emission Development Strategy 2050

BY MARIAM GORKHELASHVILI

The government of Georgia has publicly presented its inaugural long-term low-emission development strategy 2050, which was

officially adopted on April 24, 2023. As mentioned in the information released by UNDP Georgia, the adoption of this most important document will contribute to updating the National Climate Action Plan for 2023-2025 and refining the road map of the climate-wise development of Georgia.

The low-emission development strategy

fully complies with the main principles of the Paris Agreement and is adapted to the reality of Georgia. The document serves to identify opportunities for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and to describe the priority measures that should be implemented in various sectors of the economy, including energy, the construction sector,

transport, industry, agriculture, waste management, land use, and forest management.

The Ministry of Environment Protection and Agriculture of Georgia played a leading role in the development of the low-emission development strategy in close cooperation with key public agencies, civil society, and international

partners. The strategy development process was supported by the European Union (EU) and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) within their regional initiative, EU4Climate. Support from the European Union and UNDP provided the necessary resources, technical assistance, and international expertise needed to develop this critically important document.

"The Government of Georgia has made a firm commitment to properly deal with the challenges related to climate change and to take care of the climate-smart future of our country's citizens. The long-term low-emission development strategy reflects our national vision of carbon-neutral development and the creation of a climate-smart economy. By adopting this strategy, we are taking another step on the way to preserving the environment and developing a sustainable economy," - states the Minister of Environment Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, Otar Shamugia.

"The European Union welcomes the adoption of Georgia's long-term low-emission development strategy. We are proud to have supported the formation of the vision of a carbon-neutral economy and smart technological development, and we are ready to actively support its implementation," said Pavel Herczynski, EU Ambassador to Georgia.

"The adoption of a long-term low-emission development strategy is an important step on the path of sustainable development of Georgia. We congratulate the Government of Georgia on this achievement and confirm our readiness to support the country's efforts in achieving its national climate goals," explains Nick Beresford, Permanent Representative of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in Georgia.

The infographic features a blue and white color scheme with stylized icons representing various sectors like agriculture, energy, and industry. At the top, it lists the logos of the European Union, the Ministry of Environment Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, the Ministry of Economic Development and Sustainable Growth, the Ministry of Energy, the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). The central text reads 'საქართველოს გზა დეკარბონიზაციისკენ' and 'Georgia's Road to Decarbonisation'. The year '2050' is prominently displayed in large white numbers on a blue background. At the bottom, there are icons for a tractor, a recycling symbol, a power plug, and a stylized mountain range.



# New Donated Medical Equipment Allows Children's Hospital to Provide Services for Children in Need of Long-Term Care



BY NINA KOPALEISHVILI

**W**ith the financial aid of the Czech Development Agency, Caritas Czech Republic has been working for years on the development of a long-term care service focused on the social and medical needs of children with severe disabilities in state care. The support provided since 2017 envisaged the provision for Zhvania's Children's Hospital with necessary medical equipment, elaboration of the package of regulatory documentation for the arrangement of the long-term care system, and capacity-building trainings for the medical personnel across the whole country. With the final donation with a total budget of 150 000 USD, the children's hospital can now provide appropriate services and

relief the conditions of children with severe disabilities.

## THE DONATION WILL IMPORTANTLY CHANGE THE CONDITIONS OF CHILDREN UNDER THE STATE CARE

In June, 2023, within the framework of the Czech Development Agency-supported project "Establishment of Children's Long-term and Palliative Care Services in Georgia", Caritas Czech Republic donated medical equipment with a total budget of 150 000 USD to the Zhvania Children's Hospital of TSMU. The donation was the final stage of a project which aimed to develop a long-term care service focused on the social and medical needs of children with severe disabilities in state care.

Following the handover ceremony, Petr Mikyska, Ambassador of the Czech Republic to Georgia shared his thoughts with us:

"The project was conceived based on the needs of the healthcare system of Georgia. I am very grateful to my colleagues that they could identify that niche as it was not tackled before. Now we have the methodologies, we have the procedures established, the equipment was handed over today and we also have the hope, it will be replicated in other institutions and other hospitals in the regions. Unfortunately, we are dealing with a very sad situation in the lives of the beneficiaries, the situation which requires very special and specialized treatment and we are happy that we could provide means and experience for this care and treatment," Mikyska noted.

The project was initiated by the Ministry of Health of Georgia for children with severe disabilities in need of long-term and palliative care. The new service established is focused not only on the medical needs of these children but on their social needs as well.

As Tamila Barkalaia, the Deputy Minister of Health of Georgia told us, the Ministry together with the State Care Agency, where these children are enrolled, has actively cooperated with the donor organization and the beneficiary to ensure that the children will receive high-quality services at the newly equipped clinic:

"It is a specialized service that is designed in the best interests of children, so that their needs are fully met, and their socialization is ensured. And what is also very important is that the specialists, who know what type of care is needed for such children, have been trained respectively," Barkalaia said.

## WITH OUR EFFORTS, CHILDREN WITH SEVERE DISABILITIES CAN NOW RECEIVE APPROPRIATE CARE

At the initial stage of the project 'Establishment of Children's Long-term and

Palliative Care Services in Georgia, on the 5th floor of the newly built Zhvania Children's Hospital of TSMU, "Medical-Social House" – a structure for long-term care of children was established and provided with medical equipment and furniture with the budget of 400 000 GEL. In addition, the package of regulatory documentation for the arrangement of the long-term care system was prepared, and "Child-oriented care" – a training course based on the bio-psycho-social model of long-term care for children, was created. In the framework of the project, the personnel of the clinic were trained and the manual "Pediatric long-term care" was prepared and published.

Through the Czech Development Agency-funded initiative, more than 200 doctors countrywide underwent the training course on new standards of doctor-patient communication accredited by the Ministry of Health of Georgia. Moreover, a new clinical protocol on the management of several pediatric nosologies was prepared, and appropriate accredited training was provided to the pediatricians employed in various clinics across the country.

One of the directions of the project was the promotion of palliative care,

within the framework of which a special multi-sensory room – Snoezelen MSE was organized and equipped at the children's hospice "Fireflies Land". The medical personnel of the clinic underwent the appropriate training on its use.

With the final donation in June 2023, Caritas Czech Republic donated the following medical equipment to the clinic: the latest generation of electroencephalograph and electromyograph, ventilators for artificial breathing, patient beds, monitors, infusomats, aspirators, multi-functional wheelchairs for patients with disabilities, cranes, and other necessary medical equipment and furniture.

The project was implemented within the framework of the memorandum of understanding between the Ministry of Health of Georgia and the Czech Development Agency.

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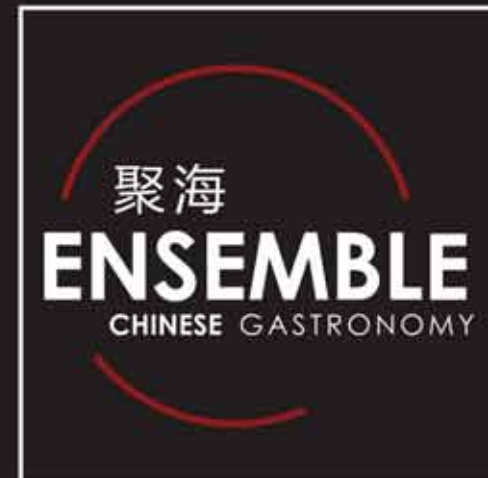




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# ENSEMBLE Chinese Restaurant

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