



# Georgia since 2012

## Factsheet – October 2016

Administration of the Government of Georgia

The Georgian Dream Coalition was elected to government in October 2012 on a platform of democratic reform, rule of law, promotion of human rights, and European and Euro-Atlantic integration. Four years down the line, Georgia has through ambitious reforms achieved substantial progress in all fields, from justice and human rights to economy and business to high-tech public services for its citizens. Georgia's integration into EU and NATO structures has been substantially enhanced.

### Relations with the EU

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- Signed and ratified Association Agreement and DCFTA – Fully in force since July 2016
- Met and surpassed conditions for visa liberalisation from February 2013 to August 2015 – in final stages of approval at EU level following green light from European Parliament committee in September and Member States on 5 October
- Recognised as frontrunner among Eastern Partnership countries at Association Council in 2014 and 2015

### Relations with NATO

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- Received ‘Substantial Package’ of measures in 2014, enhanced further in 2015
- Joined rapid response ‘Spearhead’ force and NATO Response Force
- Opened ‘Joint Training and Evaluation Centre’ in 2015 – 1st NATO permanent structure in a partner country
- NATO commitment to Georgia's future membership reaffirmed at Warsaw summit noting that Georgia possesses all practical tools to prepare for membership
- Inaugurated Defence Institutional Building School in June 2016

### Justice sector reforms

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- Increased the [independence of judges](#) and prosecutors
- Expanded access to trial by jury
- Ended coercive plea bargaining system
- Reviewed, decreased and increased scrutiny of use of pre-trial detention
- Opened trials to public and media
- Reformed prisons and ended mistreatment of prisoners (in cooperation with [EU/Council of Europe](#)).
- Enhanced rights of defendants and legal counsel, including the right to retrial



#### Rankings:

World Justice Project rule of law index: [2012](#) – 66/97; [2015 \(latest\)](#): 29/102 – **UP 37 places**

### Constitutional reforms

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- Increased the balance of power between the democratic institutions of government through constitutional amendments
- Parliament - all Ministers are now required to report to Parliamentary Committees
- Reduced the powers of the President and Prime Minister and reinforced role of the
- Launched a process of decentralisation to increase independence of local self-government



Since the Georgian Dream Coalition came to power in 2012, Georgia has, for the first time in its history, held two national polls judged free and fair by international observers scrutinising the pre-election environment and the vote.

## Human Rights

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- Adopted first national Human Rights Strategy (2014-2020) and Action Plan (2014-2015) - drafted in cooperation with civil society and international organisations (praised by the [EU](#); [Council of Europe](#))
- Adopted first Anti-Discrimination law banning all discrimination on all grounds, including sex, religion, language, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, and political affiliation
- Signed the Istanbul Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence; Adopted first National Action Plan on Gender Equality
- Established State Agency for Religious Issues to enhance dialogue and integrate religious minorities.
- Provided homes to 14,000 Internally Displaced Persons

## Freedom of the media

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- Enhanced democratic composition of the Board of Public Broadcaster and financial transparency of TV companies
- Introduced mandatory must-carry/must-offer principles



### Rankings:

Reporters Without Borders' [World Press Freedom Index 2016](#) : [2012](#) – 100/177 countries; [2016](#): 64/180 countries - **UP 36 places**. Georgia is among the 9 countries worldwide that have improved most in Freedom House's [Freedom of the Press 2015 report](#).

## Ending corruption and organised crime

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- Adopted a comprehensive Anti-Corruption Strategy and Action Plan
- Depoliticised civil service with primary and secondary legislation
- Approved a National Strategy for combating Organised Crime 2015-2018 and its Action Plan 2015-2016
- Introduced transparent criteria for public procurement tenders
- Enhanced the network of police attachés deployed abroad
- Signed an agreement on Operational and Strategic Cooperation between Georgia and the European Police Office (EUROPOL)



### Rankings:

Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index: [2012](#) – 51/177 countries; [2015 \(latest\)](#) – 48/168 countries – **UP 3 places**. World Economic Forum Global Competitiveness index, organised crime indicator: [2012](#): 75/144 countries; [2016](#): 17/144 countries – **UP 58 places**.

## Economic growth and trade

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- Adopted a development plan Georgia 2020 aiming at inclusive and sustainable growth, including structural reforms to support growth in investment, employment, and firm productivity
- Adopted a four-point reform agenda in 2016 including new tax benefits, infrastructure plans, governance reforms and significant reform of the education system
- Overhauled taxation, inspection, and enforcement systems to increase transparency and decrease onerous fines for business
- Joined China-led Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank as co-founder and taking leading role in New Silk Road
- Introducing a 'Business House' for effective state-business relations, that will unite more than 600 state services needed for the business community
- Significantly expanded web of free trade deals: enjoys free trade with the EU, all CIS countries, EFTA (since 2016) and has concluded negotiations for an FTA with China
- GDP growth to re-accelerate to 3.4% in 2016 and 5.2% in 2017 according to latest IMF outlook



### Rankings:

The World Economic Forum: [2012](#): 77/144 countries; [2016](#): 59/138 countries – **UP 18 places**. The World Bank's "Ease of Doing Business Report" says Georgia is most improved country in the world over past 12 years.