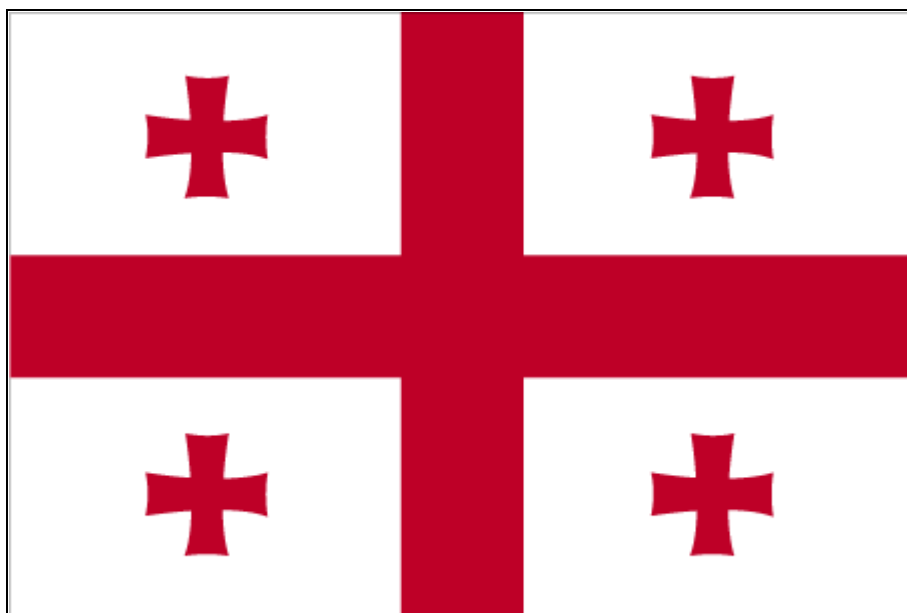




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Introduction

Georgia

Background: The region of present-day Georgia contained the ancient kingdoms of Colchis and Kartli-Iberia. The area came under Roman influence in the first centuries A.D. and Christianity became the state religion in the 330s. Domination by Persians, Arabs, and Turks was followed by a Georgian golden age (11th-13th centuries) that was cut short by the Mongol invasion of 1236. Subsequently, the Ottoman and Persian empires competed for influence in the region. Georgia was absorbed into the Russian Empire in the 19th century. Independent for three years (1918-1921) following the Russian revolution, it was forcibly incorporated into the USSR until the Soviet Union dissolved in 1991. An attempt by the incumbent Georgian government to manipulate national legislative elections in November 2003 touched off widespread protests that led to the resignation of Eduard SHEVARDNADZE, president since 1995. New elections in early 2004 swept Mikheil SAAKASHVILI into power along with his National Movement party. Progress on market reforms and democratization has been made in the years since independence, but this progress has been complicated by two ethnic conflicts in the breakaway regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. These two territories remain outside the control of the central government and are ruled by de facto, unrecognized governments, supported by Russia. Russian-led peacekeeping operations continue in both regions.

Geography

Georgia

Location: Southwestern Asia, bordering the Black Sea, between Turkey and Russia

Geographic coordinates: 42 00 N, 43 30 E

Map references: Asia

Area: *total:* 69,700 sq km

land: 69,700 sq km

water: 0 sq km

Area - comparative: slightly smaller than South Carolina

Land boundaries: *total:* 1,461 km

border countries: Armenia 164 km, Azerbaijan 322 km, Russia 723 km, Turkey 252 km

Coastline: 310 km

Maritime claims: *territorial sea:* 12 nm

exclusive economic zone: 200 nm

Climate: warm and pleasant; Mediterranean-like on Black Sea coast

Terrain: largely mountainous with Great Caucasus Mountains in the north and Lesser Caucasus Mountains in the south; Kolkhet's Dablobi (Kolkhida Lowland) opens to the Black Sea in the west; Mtkvari River Basin in the east; good soils in river valley flood plains, foothills of Kolkhida Lowland

Elevation extremes: *lowest point:* Black Sea 0 m
highest point: Mt'a Shkhara 5,201 m

Natural resources: forests, hydropower, manganese deposits, iron ore, copper, minor coal and oil deposits; coastal climate and soils allow for important tea and citrus growth

Land use: *arable land:* 11.51%
permanent crops: 3.79%
other: 84.7% (2005)

Irrigated land: 4,690 sq km (2003)

Total renewable water resources: 63.3 cu km (1997)

Freshwater withdrawal *total:* 3.61 cu km/yr (20%/21%/59%)
(domestic/industrial/agricultural): *per capita:* 808 cu m/yr (2000)

Natural hazards: earthquakes

Environment - current issues: air pollution, particularly in Rust'avi; heavy pollution of Mtkvari River and the Black Sea; inadequate supplies of potable water; soil pollution from toxic chemicals

Environment - international *party to:* Air Pollution, Biodiversity, Climate Change, agreements: Climate Change-Kyoto Protocol, Desertification, Endangered Species, Hazardous Wastes, Law of the Sea, Ozone Layer Protection, Ship Pollution, Wetlands
signed, but not ratified: none of the selected agreements

Geography - note: strategically located east of the Black Sea; Georgia controls much of the Caucasus Mountains and the routes through them

People	Georgia
Population:	4,630,841 (July 2008 est.)
Age structure:	<i>0-14 years:</i> 16.3% (male 402,961/female 352,735) <i>15-64 years:</i> 67.1% (male 1,496,802/female 1,610,725) <i>65 years and over:</i> 16.6% (male 307,795/female 459,823) (2008 est.)
Median age:	<i>total:</i> 38.3 years <i>male:</i> 35.8 years <i>female:</i> 40.7 years (2008 est.)

Population growth rate: -0.325% (2008 est.)

Birth rate: 10.62 births/1,000 population (2008 est.)

Death rate: 9.51 deaths/1,000 population (2008 est.)

Net migration rate: -4.36 migrant(s)/1,000 population (2008 est.)

Sex ratio: *at birth*: 1.13 male(s)/female
under 15 years: 1.14 male(s)/female
15-64 years: 0.93 male(s)/female
65 years and over: 0.67 male(s)/female
total population: 0.91 male(s)/female (2008 est.)

Infant mortality rate: *total*: 16.78 deaths/1,000 live births
male: 18.81 deaths/1,000 live births
female: 14.48 deaths/1,000 live births (2008 est.)

Life expectancy at birth: *total population*: 76.51 years
male: 73.21 years
female: 80.26 years (2008 est.)

Total fertility rate: 1.43 children born/woman (2008 est.)

HIV/AIDS - adult prevalence rate: less than 0.1% (2001 est.)

HIV/AIDS - people living with HIV/AIDS: 3,000 (2003 est.)

HIV/AIDS - deaths: fewer than 200 (2003 est.)

Nationality: *noun*: Georgian(s)
adjective: Georgian

Ethnic groups: Georgian 83.8%, Azeri 6.5%, Armenian 5.7%, Russian 1.5%, other 2.5% (2002 census)

Religions: Orthodox Christian 83.9%, Muslim 9.9%, Armenian-Gregorian 3.9%, Catholic 0.8%, other 0.8%, none 0.7% (2002 census)

Languages: Georgian 71% (official), Russian 9%, Armenian 7%, Azeri 6%, other 7%
note: Abkhaz is the official language in Abkhazia

Literacy: *definition:* age 15 and over can read and write
total population: 100%
male: 100%
female: 100% (2004 est.)

Government

Georgia

Country name: *conventional long form:* none
conventional short form: Georgia
local long form: none
local short form: Sak'art'velo
former: Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic

Government type: republic

Capital: *name:* T'bilisi
geographic coordinates: 41 43 N, 44 47 E
time difference: UTC+4 (9 hours ahead of Washington, DC during Standard Time)

Administrative divisions: 9 regions (mkharebi, singular - mkhare), 1 city (k'alak'i), and 2 autonomous republics (avtomnoy respubliki, singular - avtom respublika)
regions: Guria, Imereti, Kakheti, Kvemo Kartli, Mtskheta-Mtianeti, Racha-Lechkhumi and Kvemo Svaneti, Samegrelo and Zemo Svaneti, Samtskhe-Javakheti, Shida Kartli
city: Tbilisi
autonomous republics: Abkhazia or Ap'khazet'is Avtonomiuri Respublika (Sokhumi), Ajaria or Acharis Avtonomiuri Respublika (Bat'umi)
note: the administrative centers of the two autonomous republics are shown in parentheses

Independence: 9 April 1991 (from Soviet Union)

National holiday: Independence Day, 26 May (1918); note - 26 May 1918 was the date of independence from Soviet Russia, 9 April 1991 was the date of independence from the Soviet Union

Constitution: adopted 24 August 1995

Legal system: based on civil law system; accepts compulsory ICJ jurisdiction

Suffrage: 18 years of age; universal

- Executive branch: *chief of state*: President Mikheil SAAKASHVILI (since 25 January 2004); the president is both the chief of state and head of government for the power ministries: state security (includes interior) and defense
head of government: President Mikheil SAAKASHVILI (since 25 January 2004); Prime Minister Vladimir "Lado" GURGENIDZE (since 19 November 2007); the president is both the chief of state and head of government for the power ministries: state security (includes interior) and defense; the prime minister is head of the remaining ministries of government
cabinet: Cabinet of Ministers
elections: president elected by popular vote for a five-year term (eligible for a second term); election last held 5 January 2008 (next to be held January 2013)
election results: Mikheil SAAKASHVILI reelected president; percent of vote - Mikheil SAAKASHVILI 53.5%, Levan GACHECHILADZE 25.7%, Badri PATARKATSISHVILI 7.1%
- Legislative unicameral Parliament or Parlamenti (also known as Supreme Council or branch: Umaghlesi Sabcho) (235 seats; 150 members elected by proportional representation, 75 from single-seat constituencies, and 10 represent displaced persons from Abkhazia; to serve five-year terms)
elections: last held 21 May 2008 (next to be held in spring 2012)
election results: percent of vote by party - National Movement-Democratic Front 59.2%, National Council-New Rights 17.7%, other parties 23.1%; seats by party - National Movement-Democratic Front 120, National Council-New Rights 16
- Judicial branch: Supreme Court (judges elected by the Supreme Council on the president's or chairman of the Supreme Court's recommendation); Constitutional Court; first and second instance courts
- Political parties and leaders: Burjanadze-Democrats [Nino BURJANADZE]; Georgian People's Front [Nodar NATADZE]; Georgian United Communist Party or UCPG [Panteleimon GIORGADZE]; Georgia's Way Party [Salome ZOURABICHVILI]; Greens [Giorgi GACHECHILADZE]; Industry Will Save Georgia (Industrialists) or IWSG [Georgi TOPADZE]; Labor Party [Shalva NATELASHVILI]; National Council-New Rights (a bloc uniting a nine-party alliance with New Rights); National Democratic Party or NDP [Bachuki KARDAVA]; National Movement-Democratic Front [Mikheil SAAKASHVILI] (bloc composed of National Movement and Burjanadze-Democrats); National Movement [Mikheil SAAKASHVILI]; New Rights [David GAMKRELIDZE]; Republican Party [David USUPASHVILI]; Socialist Party or SPG [Irakli MINDELI]; Traditionalists [Akaki ASATIANI]; Union of National Forces-Conservatives [Koba DAVITASHVILI and Zviad DZIDZIGURI]

Political pressure groups and leaders: *other:* Georgian independent deputies from Abkhaz government in exile; separatists in the breakaway regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia

International organization participation: ACCT (observer), ADB, BSEC, CE, CIS, EAPC, EBRD, FAO, GCTU, GUAM, IAEA, IBRD, ICAO, ICC, ICCT, ICRM, IDA, IFAD, IFC, IFRC, ILO, IMF, IMO, Interpol, IOC, IOM, IPU, ISO (correspondent), ITSO, ITU, ITUC, MIGA, OAS (observer), OIF (observer), OPCW, OSCE, PFP, SECI (observer), UN, UNCTAD, UNESCO, UNIDO, UNWTO, UPU, WCO, WHO, WIPO, WMO, WTO

Diplomatic representation in the US: *chief of mission:* Ambassador Vasil SIKHARULIDZE
chancery: 2209 Massachusetts Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20008
telephone: [1] (202) 387-2390
FAX: [1] (202) 393-4537

Diplomatic representation from the US: *chief of mission:* Ambassador John F. TEFFT
embassy: 11 George Balanchine Street, T'bilisi 0131
mailing address: 7060 T'bilisi Place, Washington, DC 20521-7060
telephone: [995] (32) 27-70-00
FAX: [995] (32) 53-23-10

Flag description: white rectangle, in its central portion a red cross connecting all four sides of the flag; in each of the four corners is a small red bolnur-katskhuri cross; the five-cross flag appears to date back to the 14th century

Economy	Georgia
Economy - overview:	Georgia's economy has sustained robust GDP growth of close to 10% in 2006 and 12% in 2007, based on strong inflows of foreign investment and robust government spending. However, a widening trade deficit and higher inflation are emerging risks to the economy. Areas of recent improvement include increasing foreign direct investment as well as growth in the construction, banking services and mining sectors. Georgia's main economic activities include the cultivation of agricultural products such as grapes, citrus fruits, and hazelnuts; mining of manganese and copper; and output of a small industrial sector producing alcoholic and nonalcoholic beverages, metals, machinery, aircraft and chemicals. The country imports nearly all its needed supplies of natural gas and oil products. It has sizeable hydropower capacity, a growing component of its energy supplies. Despite the severe damage the economy suffered due to civil strife in the 1990s, Georgia, with the help of the IMF and World Bank, has made substantial economic gains since 2000, achieving positive GDP growth and curtailing inflation. Georgia's GDP growth neared 10% in 2006 and 2007 despite restrictions on

commerce with Russia. Areas of recent improvement include increased foreign direct investment as well as growth in the construction, banking services, and mining sectors. In addition, the reinvigorated privatization process has met with success. However, a widening trade deficit and higher inflation are emerging risks to the economy. Georgia has suffered from a chronic failure to collect tax revenues; however, the new government is making progress and has reformed the tax code, improved tax administration, increased tax enforcement, and cracked down on corruption. Government revenues have increased nearly four fold since 2003. Due to improvements in customs and financial (tax) enforcement, smuggling is a declining problem. Georgia has overcome the chronic energy shortages of the past by renovating hydropower plants and by bringing newly available natural gas supplies from Azerbaijan. It also has an increased ability to pay for more expensive gas imports from Russia. The country is pinning its hopes for long-term growth on a determined effort to reduce regulation, taxes and corruption in order to attract foreign investment. The construction on the Baku-T'bilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline, the Baku-T'bilisi-Erzurum gas pipeline, and the Kars-Akhalkalaki Railroad are part of a strategy to capitalize on Georgia's strategic location between Europe and Asia and develop its role as a transit point for gas, oil and other goods.

GDP (purchasing power parity): \$20.5 billion (2007 est.)

GDP (official exchange rate): \$10.29 billion (2007 est.)

GDP - real growth rate: 12.4% (2007 est.)

GDP - per capita (PPP): \$4,700 (2007 est.)

GDP - composition by sector: *agriculture*: 13.1%
industry: 29.3%
services: 57.6% (2007 est.)

Labor force: 2.02 million (2007 est.)

Labor force - by occupation: *agriculture*: 55.6%
industry: 8.9%
services: 35.5% (2006 est.)

Unemployment rate: 13.6% (2006 est.)

Population below poverty line: 31% (2006)

Household *lowest 10%: 2.4%*
income or *highest 10%: 27%* (2005)
consumption by
percentage share:

Distribution of 40.4 (2003)
family income -
Gini index:

Inflation rate 9.2% (2007 est.)
(consumer prices):

Investment (gross 29.5% of GDP (2007 est.)
fixed):

Budget: *revenues: \$3.68 billion*
expenditures: \$3.08 billion (2007 est.)

Agriculture - citrus, grapes, tea, hazelnuts, vegetables; livestock
products:

Industries: steel, aircraft, machine tools, electrical appliances, mining (manganese and
copper), chemicals, wood products, wine

Industrial 13% (2007 est.)
production growth
rate:

Electricity - 8.338 billion kWh (2007)
production:

Electricity - 8.146 billion kWh (2007)
consumption:

Electricity - 625 million kWh (2007)
exports:

Electricity - 433 million kWh (2007)
imports:

Oil - production: 1,979 bbl/day (2005 est.)

Oil - 13,400 bbl/day (2005 est.)
consumption:

Oil - exports: 2,400 bbl/day (2004)

Oil - imports: 13,530 bbl/day (2004)

Oil - proved 35 million bbl (1 January 2006 est.)
reserves:

Natural gas - 14.39 million cu m (2005 est.)
production:

Natural gas - 1.8 billion cu m (2007 est.)
consumption:

Natural gas - 0 cu m (2005)
exports:

Natural gas - 1.264 billion cu m (2005)
imports:

Natural gas - 8.147 billion cu m (1 January 2006 est.)
proved reserves:

Current account -\$2.028 billion (2007 est.)
balance:

Exports: \$1.97 billion (2007 est.)

Exports - scrap metal, wine, mineral water, ores, vehicles, fruits and nuts
commodities:

Exports - partners: Turkey 12.6%, US 10.9%, Azerbaijan 7.9%, Armenia 5.9%, UK 5.8%,
Bulgaria 4.9%, Ukraine 4.8%, Russia 4.7%, Turkmenistan 4.4% (2006)

Imports: \$4.79 billion (2007 est.)

Imports - fuels, vehicles, machinery and parts, grain and other foods, pharmaceuticals
commodities:

Imports - partners: Turkey 14.1%, Russia 13.1%, Ukraine 8.5%, Azerbaijan 7.4%, Germany
6.8%, US 5%, Bulgaria 4.6% (2006)

Economic aid - ODA, \$309.8 million (2005 est.)
recipient:

Reserves of \$1.361 billion (31 December 2007 est.)
foreign exchange
and gold:

Debt - external: \$4.5 billion (2007)

Market value of \$1.39 billion (2007)
publicly traded
shares:

Currency (code): lari (GEL)

Exchange rates: lari per US dollar - 1.7 (2007), 1.78 (2006), 1.8127 (2005), 1.9167 (2004),
2.1457 (2003)

Fiscal year: calendar year

Communications Georgia

Telephones - main lines in use: 544,000 (2007)

Telephones - mobile cellular: 2.4 million (2007)

Telephone system: *general assessment:* fixed-line telecommunications network has only limited coverage outside Tbilisi; multiple mobile-cellular providers provide services to an increasing subscribership throughout the country
domestic: cellular telephone networks now cover the entire country; urban telephone density is about 20 per 100 people; rural telephone density is about 4 per 100 people; intercity facilities include a fiber-optic line between T'bilisi and K'ut'aisi; nationwide pager service is available
international: country code - 995; the Georgia-Russia fiber optic submarine cable provides connectivity to Russia; international service is available by microwave, landline, and satellite through the Moscow switch; international electronic mail and telex service are available

Radio broadcast stations: AM 7, FM 12, shortwave 4 (1998)

Television broadcast stations: 12 (plus repeaters) (1998)

Internet country code: .ge

Internet hosts: 30,193 (2007)

Internet users: 332,000 (2006)

Transportation Georgia

Airports: 23 (2007)

Airports - with paved runways: *total:* 19
over 3,047 m: 1
2,438 to 3,047 m: 7
1,524 to 2,437 m: 5
914 to 1,523 m: 4
under 914 m: 2 (2007)

Airports - with unpaved runways: *total:* 4
1,524 to 2,437 m: 1
914 to 1,523 m: 2
under 914 m: 1 (2007)

Heliports: 3 (2007)

Pipelines: gas 1,591 km; oil 1,253 km (2007)

Railways: *total*: 1,612 km
broad gauge: 1,575 km 1.520-m gauge (1,575 electrified)
narrow gauge: 37 km 0.912-m gauge (37 electrified) (2006)

Roadways: *total*: 20,247 km
paved: 7,973 km
unpaved: 12,274 km (2004)

Merchant marine: *total*: 197 ships (1000 GRT or over) 875,914 GRT/1,272,586 DWT
by type: bulk carrier 20, cargo 152, carrier 2, chemical tanker 1, container 4, liquefied gas 1, passenger/cargo 3, petroleum tanker 3, refrigerated cargo 6, roll on/roll off 4, vehicle carrier 1
foreign-owned: 161 (China 7, Cyprus 1, Egypt 13, Germany 2, Greece 6, Hong Kong 2, Israel 1, Lebanon 4, Monaco 6, Romania 14, Russia 13, Slovenia 2, Syria 51, Turkey 19, UAE 1, Ukraine 19) (2008)

Ports and terminals: Bat'umi, P'ot'i

Transportation - note: large parts of transportation network are in poor condition because of lack of maintenance and repair

Military

Georgia

Military branches: Georgian Armed Forces: Land Forces, Navy, Air and Air Defense Forces, National Guard (2008)

Military service age and obligation: 18 to 34 years of age for compulsory and voluntary active duty military service; conscript service obligation - 18 months (2005)

Manpower available for military service: *males age 16-49*: 1,113,251
females age 16-49: 1,168,021 (2008 est.)

Manpower fit for military service: *males age 16-49*: 910,720
females age 16-49: 967,566 (2008 est.)

Manpower reaching militarily significant age annually: *males age 16-49*: 35,917
females age 16-49: 34,566 (2008 est.)

Military expenditures - percent of GDP: 0.59% (2005 est.)

Military - note: a CIS peacekeeping force of Russian troops is deployed in the Abkhazia region of Georgia together with a UN military observer group; a Russian peacekeeping battalion is deployed in South Ossetia

Transnational Issues	Georgia
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Disputes - international: Russia and Georgia agree on delimiting 80% of their common border, leaving certain small, strategic segments and the maritime boundary unresolved; OSCE observers monitor volatile areas such as the Pankisi Gorge in the Akhmeti region and the Argun Gorge in Abkhazia; UN Observer Mission in Georgia has maintained a peacekeeping force in Georgia since 1993; Meshkheta Turks scattered throughout the former Soviet Union seek to return to Georgia; boundary with Armenia remains undemarcated; ethnic Armenian groups in Javakheti region of Georgia seek greater autonomy from the Georgian government; Azerbaijan and Georgia continue to discuss the alignment of their boundary at certain crossing areas

Refugees and internally displaced persons: *refugees (country of origin):* 1,100 (Russia)
IDPs: 220,000-240,000 (displaced from Abkhazia and South Ossetia) (2007)

Illicit drugs: limited cultivation of cannabis and opium poppy, mostly for domestic consumption; used as transshipment point for opiates via Central Asia to Western Europe and Russia

Information current as of 7 August, 2008

SOURCES: The CIA World Factbook

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