

Politics

Georgia's future farmers to benefit from Swiss experience

Over the next ten years, Georgia will graduate 300 professional farmers skilled in milk and dairy production.



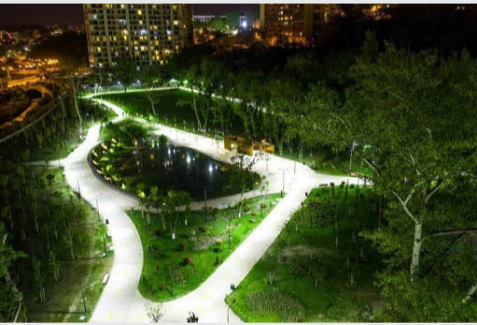
GEOSTAT Publishes study on Foreign Direct Investments of first quarter of 2020

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Economics

Tbilisi Park rebuilt with support of the European Investment Bank

Tbilisi Park was destroyed by the flood in 2015.



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More Coronavirus cases, gov't says there is no need for new regulations



There are more than 864 cases reported in Georgia.

BY NIKA GAMTSEMLIDZE

Over the last few days, more cases of the novel Coronavirus were reported in Georgia. Yesterday, another 13 cases were reported in Georgia, out of which, the sources of five cases are still unknown. The 14th patient has passed away due to the complications caused by the virus.

The head of the Disease Control Center Amiran Gamkrelidze says that there is no need for additional regulations considering today's situation in the country. He talked about this in his interview with Rustavi 2. However, he noted that it is important that people follow the recommendations that are in place right now. "We are waiting for a more classic second wave during the cold autumn. Right now, we believe that this situation is connected to the loosening up of our policies, which we were ready for," said



Some members of the ruling party, including Irakli Kobakhidze, have said that the gov't might need to postpone the 2020 elections if the situation with the virus gets worse.

Gamkrelidze.

The health sector is prepared and will easily cope with 12, 13, 14, and even 20 new cases, but it will be difficult if 50-70 cases are reported daily. A total of 864 cases of Coronavirus have been identified so far, of which 703 have already recovered. However, on June 13th, the virus killed the 14th patient. The deceased was an employee of the National Bank. The 68-year-old patient had been receiving treatment at the Tbilisi First University Clinic for 70 days since April 4th.

"He was transferred from the sepsis center, where he was diagnosed with the Coronavirus, in addition, he had acute pneumonia, heart failure, and severe respiratory distress. The patient was critical at the time of admission, and we could not do anything to help him," said Levan Ratiani.

A few members of the ruling party are talking about moving the elections. Some of the members of the ruling party noted

that they think the elections might take place in late December or January if the virus continues to spread in October as well.

The statements of ruling party members were followed by harsh criticism from the opposition. As UNM's Giorgi Vasahdze said, the situation in the country is not severe enough to not hold the elections.

"If by the end of October, they have a low-rated political situation, they will try to postpone the elections until the end of December. To say, this is playing with fire, they are playing with people's nerves, they are playing with their hunger, the hardship, that our population is going through," said Vasahdze.

Around the world, the number of people infected by the Coronavirus is rising every day. As of now, there are about 8 million cases of the virus reported around the world, out of which more than 2.1 million were reported in the US.



Around the world, about 8 million people have already been infected by the virus.

Georgia's future farmers to benefit from Swiss experience



Modern and advanced training facilities, such as the Swiss Agriculture School, will help provide future farmers with world-class education

Over the next ten years, Georgia will graduate 300 professional farmers skilled in milk and dairy production thanks to a new vocational training institution, the Swiss Agricultural School Caucasus. Modeled on the historic Planta of an agricultural school in Switzerland, the school is set to open in 2021 and will serve as a model training facility for cattle breeding and dairy farming.

"Supporting cattle-breeding is a priority of the Georgian Government," said Levan Davitashvili, Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia.

"We are making important steps to develop this sector. Georgian farmers and entrepreneurs have access to finance, including soft loans and grants, and systemic efforts are undertaken to ensure quality veterinary support.

With this in mind, a qualified workforce is especially critical. Modern and advanced training facilities, such as the Swiss Agriculture School, will help provide future farmers with world-class education."

"International expertise and

cooperation between the public and private sectors are key to reforming vocational education and training," said Tamar Kitiashvili, Deputy Minister of Education, Science, Culture, and Sport of Georgia. "The Swiss Agriculture School will help us introduce a modern approach to vocational training in agriculture and raise the qualification of teachers, ensuring that vocational training supplies the labor market with a qualified workforce and creates employment and self-employment opportunities."

"Switzerland is proud to bring on board its 200-year long experience in agricultural training to assist Georgia in reforming its vocational education system," said Danielle Meuwly, Regional Director of the Swiss Cooperation Office for the South Caucasus. "The Swiss Agricultural School Caucasus will promote quality education and successful business models, changing the lives of many Georgian farmers."

The total investment needed to establish a new institution is estimated at \$3,000,000. Funding will come from Swiss and Georgian private sources, including the Swiss South Caucasus Foundation.

"Our college aims to serve as a benchmark for agricultural vocational education in the region. The high-quality Swiss curricula and modern infra-

structure enable us to achieve that," said the SASC founder Mikheil Svimonishvili.

With \$300,000 from the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) will develop the school curriculum, blending theoretical and practical training in cattle breeding and dairy production based on the Swiss Plantahof model. UNDP support will also include retraining teachers, setting up extension services for farmers, arranging internships for stu-

dents and trainers, and offering business consulting to school graduates.

"Georgia is already famous for its cheese, with over 250 differ-

ent varieties," said UNDP Head

Louisa Vinton. "But to translate great cheese into successful businesses and transform agriculture into a high-value economic sector, dairy farmers need to learn modern methods. UNDP is proud to contribute to this process through the establishment of a state-of-the-art training facility built on Swiss models."

This assistance is part of a wider partnership between UNDP and SDC to help reform vocational education and training so that the educational system responds to the demands of the labor market. The construction of the Swiss Agricultural School Caucasus (SASC), including the college premises, dairy farm, and a guesthouse for teachers, will be completed by spring 2021. Its brand-new campus is located near the village Sarkineti of Dmanisi municipality in the Kvemo Kartli region of Georgia. This area was home to a Swiss agriculture school and cheese enterprises in the 19th century.

In spring 2021, SASC will accept its first students, offering a three-year training course to 300 students over the next ten years and agriculture extension services to up to 2,000 farmers.

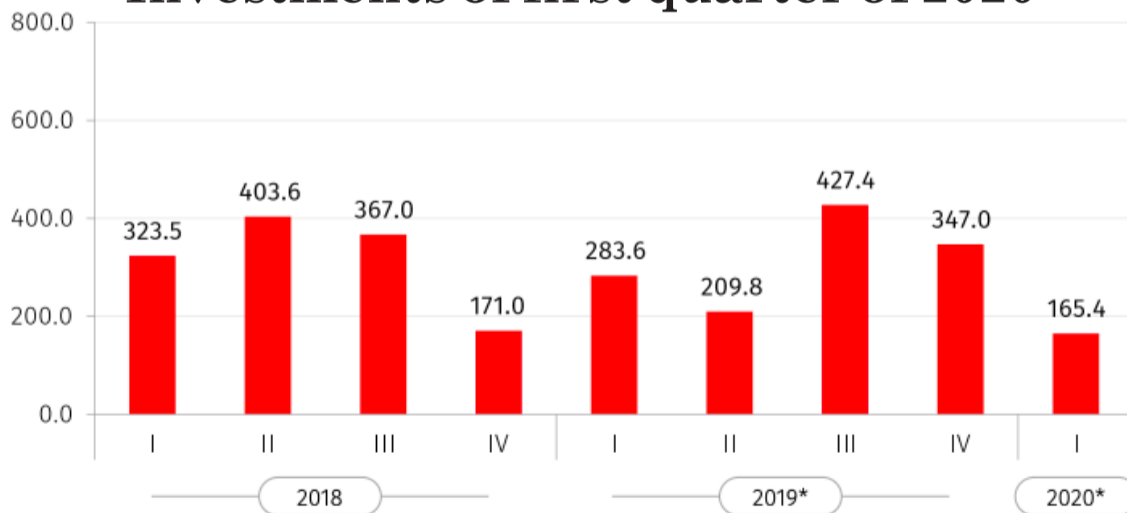
(Source: United Nations Development Programme)



Empowered lives. Resilient nations.

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FDI in Georgia in 2018-2020. Photo: GEOSTAT

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Weather

Monday, June 15

Day Partly Cloudy

High: 34°C

Night Partly Cloudy

Low: 19°C

Tuesday, June 16

Day Partly Cloudy

High: 36°C

Night Partly Cloudy

Low: 20°C

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Five years after the 13th of June 2015 flood in Tbilisi, Georgian Prime Minister Giorgi Gakharia and Mayor of Tbilisi Kakha Kaladze opened the renovated Mziuri Park. Destroyed in the floods, the extensively redeveloped park now features bicycle roads, an artificial lake, a skateboard park and numerous children's playgrounds and is set to be one of the top recreation zones in the city.

Redevelopment of the park was financed with support of the EU's European Investment Bank (EIB), under the natural disaster recovery component of the Georgia Urban Reconstruction and Development € 100 million framework loan.

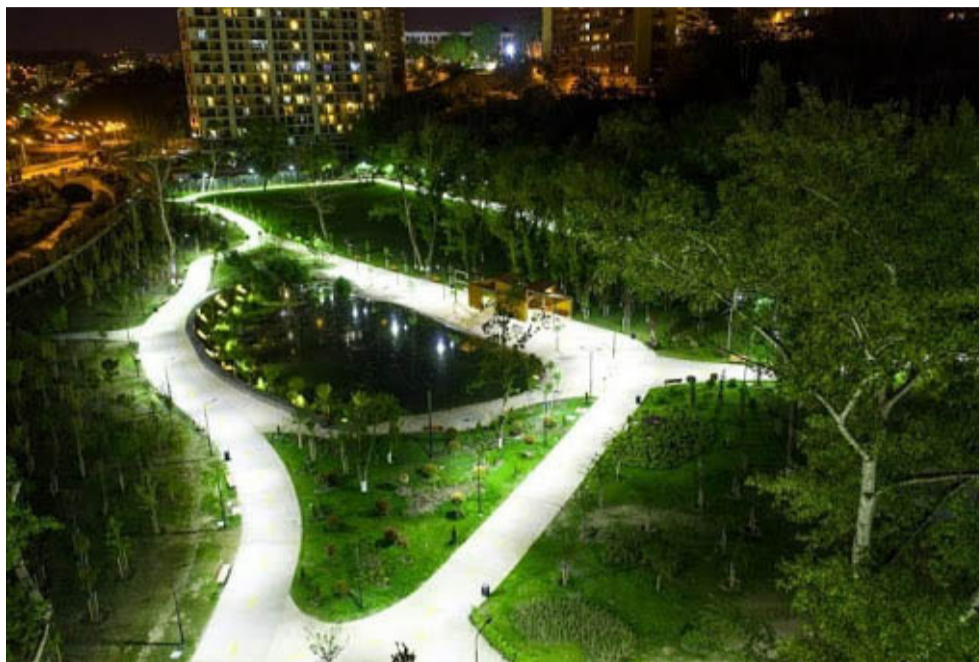
Carl Hartzell, EU Ambassador to Georgia and Maciej Czura, Head of EIB Regional Representation for the South Caucasus were present at the event.

"The flooding five years ago was a tragic event for Tbilisi and for all Georgians. The EU is proud to have supported Tbilisi's recovery by assisting financially in the reconstruction of the Akhali Mziuri park, which we hope, and trust will benefit Tbilisi residents, not least the children, for generations to come," noted Hartzell.

"The financing provided for the Mziuri Park project, and other flood recovery investments, for example Tskneti-Bethania road, is a result of a swift action of the European Investment Bank to support Georgia in the wake of the natural disaster. The flood recovery projects were also designed to mitigate the risks of a similar event in future," noted Mr Czura.

The project, financed entirely by EIB under the natural disaster recovery component of the Georgia Urban Reconstruction and Development EUR 100 million framework loan, comprises Design and Construction of Mziuri Park in Tbilisi. The total value of the investment was approx. GEL 7.8 million. The works included: (i) a master plan/design of the rehabilitated area, (ii) developing sport areas (e.g. skate park, open-air gym,

Tbilisi Park rebuilt with support of the European Investment Bank



Redevelopment of the park was financed with support of the EU's European Investment Bank



100 million loan was dedicated to be used to counter the damages inflicted by the natural disaster.

multi-sport area, parkour square), (iii) demolition of damaged areas and construction of new ones, (iv) arrangement and planning of trees and bushes. It is worth noting that prior to starting works on the park, EIB financed other structural measures under the same facility in 2016 and 2017 to reduce the risk of flooding by formation works on the Vere River bed, sediment trapping facilities and construction of retaining walls.

The Georgia Urban Reconstruction and Development Framework Loan was signed in 2016 between the European Investment Bank and Ministry of Finance of Georgia. Half of the EUR 100 million loan was dedicated to be used to counter the damages inflicted by the natural disaster.

The European Union is the largest donor in Georgia, with over 160 projects active in a variety of sectors supporting economic development, education, governance, justice, environment, energy or culture. Find out more at eu4georgia.ge.

The European Investment Bank (EIB) is the European Union's bank. It is the long-term lending institution of the EU and is the only bank owned by and representing the interests of the European Union Member States. It makes long-term finance available for sound investments in order to contribute towards EU policy goals. The EIB works closely with other EU institutions to implement EU policy.

As the largest multilateral borrower and lender by volume, the EIB provides finance and expertise for sound and sustainable investment projects which contribute to furthering EU policy objectives. More than 90% of EIB activity is focused on Europe but it also supports the EU's external and development policies.

In Georgia, EIB provided almost € 2 billion for 27 projects. The detailed description of the EIB operations in Georgia can be found here.

(Source: Delegation of the European Union to Georgia)

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BY NIKA GAMTSEMLIDZE

The National Statistics Office of Georgia published a study on Foreign direct investments of the first quarter of 2020. According to the study, Foreign direct investments (FDI) in Georgia amounted to \$165.4 million in Q1 2020 (preliminary data), down 41.7 percent from the preliminary data of Q1 2019.

The main reasons for decreasing the FDI included completion of a pipeline project and transferring of ownership in some companies from non-resident to resident units.

The share of FDI by three major economic sectors reached 87.5 percent in Q1 2020. The largest share of FDI was registered in the financial sector, reaching \$94.9 million in Q1 2020, the Real Estate sector was the second with \$34.0 million, followed by the hotels and restaurants sector with \$15.8 million.

The statistical data will be revised according to GEOSTAT's revision policy (based on the regular revision principle) as a result of adjust-

ing data by respondents/administrative sources.

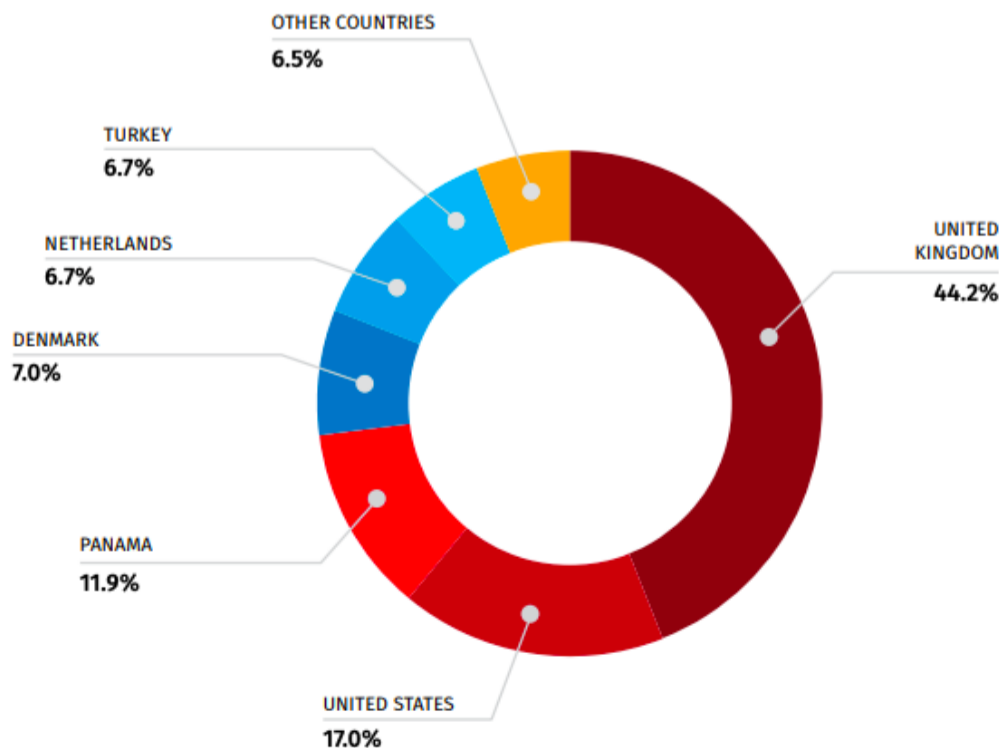
Since March 2018 (according to the IMF recommendations), GEOSTAT has started compilation and dissemination position data for FDI in an integrated format, which allows surveyed economic units to provide GEOSTAT with the adjusted information on a regular basis. GEOSTAT uses this opportunity to update respectively statistical information in regard to ensure high quality of statistical data.

According to the study of GEOSTAT, adjusted data will be published on 17 August 2020 that may affect some changes in the existing dynamic.

The National Statistics Office of Georgia, the legal entity of public law, carries out its activities independently. It is an institution established to produce the statistics and disseminate the statistical information according to the Georgian legislation. The National Statistics Office of Georgia is established by the Law of Georgia, 11th of December 2009, on Official Statistics.

A foreign direct investment is an investment in the form of con-

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FDI by Major Investor Countries in Q1 2020. Photo: GEOSTAT

trolling ownership in a business in one country by an entity based in another country. It is thus distinguished from a foreign portfolio investment by a notion of direct control.