

## Foreign Minister Darchiashvili Pays Working Visit to Brussels

BY NATALIA KOCHIASHVILI

Minister of Foreign Affairs of Georgia Ilia Darchiashvili paid a working visit to Brussels on June 1-2. During the visit, Ilia Darchiashvili held parallel meetings with the European Commissioners and Members of the European Parliament.

During his meeting with EU Commissioners Adina Valean (Transport), Virginijus Sinkevičius (Environment), Janez Lenarčič (Crisis Management), Johannes Hahn (Budget and Administration), and Janusz Wojciechowski (Agriculture) the sides focused on the current priorities and current directions of Georgia-EU cooperation, reforms in the country in terms of approximation to EU standards, as well as the dynamic process of implementation of the Association Agreement.

The meeting with Valean highlighted the important role of Georgia as a regional transport and logistics hub connecting Europe and Asia. The parties agreed to continue working on common priorities in the context of the EU Connectivity Strategy.

At the meeting with the European Commissioner for Agriculture, special emphasis was placed on the implementation of the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement, which played an important role in increasing trade turnover between Georgia and the EU. The parties discussed the country's export potential.

Darchiashvili also held a meeting with Chairwoman of the Georgia-EU Parliamentary Committee Marina Kaljurand and Sven Mikser, Rapporteur on Georgia.

At the meetings special attention was paid to the Association Agenda, reforms, and recent developments, as well as Georgia's application for EU membership and further steps, highlighting the new stage of relations between Georgia and the EU, which came after the country applied for membership at the beginning of March. It was noted how important it is to reflect Georgia's progress on the path to European integration in relevant EU decisions and future plans.

Georgian Foreign Minister underlined the high level of mobilization of institutional capacity by the government, as a result of which Georgia successfully completed and submitted a self-assessment questionnaire to the European Commission ahead of schedule. Darchiashvili reaffirmed to the MEPs the country's commitment to the course of reforms and noted the readiness of the government to do even more on the path to EU integration to meet the criteria required for membership in the Union.

The high-priority issue discussed at the meeting was the impact of the ongoing war in Ukraine on regional security and the challenges facing Georgia. The important role of the European Parliament in the European integration pro-



cess of Georgia as well as the support of the European Parliament in the process of overcoming the security challenges facing Georgia was emphasized.

"We also discussed the planned meeting of the EU Council, at which a decision will be made on the application for candidate status of Ukraine, Georgia, and Moldova. We discussed political polarization within the country and that all political actors need to work together constructively to advance Georgia's legitimate aspirations for European integration, shared by the vast majority of the Georgian population." Mikser said adding that politicians need to forget their own antagonism and find statehood to work towards these goals.

"Will Georgia accept candidate status with different specific requirements?

The EU has expressed at a very high political level its expectations for the important reforms presented in the agreement, mediated and promoted by the President of the European Council. Here's what needs to be done that requires constructive collaboration between actors."

According to MEP, the war has radically changed the situation in the region, which is a political factor that might influence the decision. Otherwise, the decision would be based only on individual reforms, and technical requirements.

In her comments to the media, Kaljurand said that she doesn't see a strong desire in the corridors and discussions of the European Parliament for the Eastern Partnership countries to be

granted membership or even candidate status. According to her Ukraine might be in a privileged position because of the war but noted that it was a political issue that needed a political approach.

"I also want to be very clear and sincere, the application for membership would not be on the table now, if there was no war in Ukraine, neither for Ukraine nor for Georgia and Moldova. This is a political decision and political decisions are not always fair. This is a political decision that needs consensus in the EU to grant candidate status." She said calling on Georgian politicians to forget about polarization, and their party interests, to pay attention to the reforms that are being implemented now, and to be united, to work together.



EXCHANGE RATES: US DOLLAR - 3.0076 | EURO - 3.2163 | GBP - 3.7748 | 100 RUSSIAN RUBLE - 4.8199 | SWISS FRANC - 3.1332 |

# Five New Investment Projects Worth \$4 Million to Create 1000 Jobs In Georgia, PM's Annual Report Reads



► Through new projects, 72 various products will be produced in the country by the enterprise that has designated European countries as its main export market.

BY KHATIA BZHALAVA

According to a report by the Georgian Government, submitted to the country's Parliament on Wednesday, 1,000 jobs are being created in the country within the framework of five new investment projects worth \$4 million.

According to the report, the projects involve Girteka Logistics, Europe's leading

asset-based transport company based in Vilnius. The company has chosen Georgia as the location for its Global Business Services and is aiming to create 300 jobs by the end of 2023. According to the report, the company planned to become one of the 10 largest logistics companies in Europe, emphasizing that Georgia is considered an important part of the company's expansion plan.

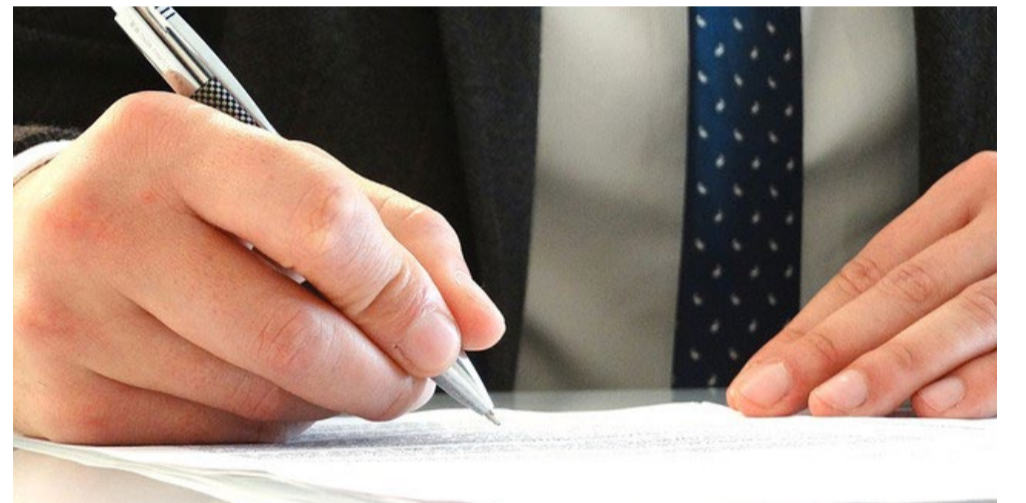
Another company selected by the Government as a target enterprise that will be involved in the projects is British IT company Godel Technologies. According to the document, the company will relocate its business to Georgia due to the attractive business climate, competitive environment, and skilled workforce. As a result of the project, about 250 new jobs will be created.

According to the report, a Lebanese company exporting tobacco products to 90 countries worldwide will also be part of the new investment projects and will open a new enterprise in Georgia's Black Sea Adjara region.

Overall, within the framework of the mentioned projects, 72 various products will be produced in the country by the enterprise that has designated European

countries as its main export market. At the initial stage, up to 50 people will be employed. It is also noted in the document that investment projects implemented within the last year also include an American company in the field of customer service, which is planning to hire 200 employees initially, and the largest Croatian company in Southeast Europe, planning to hire 200 employees by the end of 2022.

The 154-page report covers many other issues, including the European integration process of Georgia and the cooperation between NATO and Georgia. The document also focuses on peaceful resolution of the Russian-Georgian conflict, reforms to improve police performance and work against crime, economic parameters of the country, and structural reform of the education and science system.



► The 154-page report talks about economic parameters, noting that 2021 was a record year for exports, domestic exports, imports, and trade turnover.

## Ilia Eloshvili's Family: We Categorically Rule Out Suicide

BY MESSENGER STAFF

Former MP Zviad Kvachantiradze spreads the statement of the family of Tbilisi Vice Mayor Ilia Eloshvili on Facebook. According to the statement, the family rules out that Eloshvili committed suicide and calls on the public to refrain from various versions.

"There was a great tragedy in our family. It is doubly painful for us the version of suicide spread on social networks, which the family categorically rules out because there was no precondition or any sign that Ilya was in a deep depression. Last Tuesday, May 31, after treatment

and rehabilitation, he passed away at work. This is confirmed by his colleagues and friends, with whom Ilya had contact on Tuesday, directly before the late evening of the tragedy, and with whom he had scheduled meetings yesterday, Wednesday, June 1, the day of his death, and throughout the current week.

We think it was inadmissible to make a statement about suicide by a high-ranking police official a couple of hours after the tragedy, which directly prompted the spread of this version and similar rumors.

In view of the above, given the situation of the family and especially Ilia's minor children, we appeal to everyone to



stop public speaking about suicide and any other version on social networks or on TV until the ongoing investigation is completed and an official expert report is issued.

We thank the community for sharing our indefinite pain," the statement said.

Deputy Mayor of Tbilisi, Ilia Eloshvili, was found dead yesterday, on June 1. The cause of death is unknown. The Ministry of Internal Affairs has launched an investigation under Article 115 of the Criminal Code, which stipulates suicide. Ilia Eloshvili, 47, has been working as the Deputy Mayor of Tbilisi since 2017. In 2012-2016 he was the Deputy Minister of Energy.

FRIDAY		JUNE 3	
Day		Sunny	High: 34°C
Night		Mostly cloudy	Low: 21°C
SATURDAY		JUNE 4	
Day		Sunny	High: 34°C
Night		Mostly cloudy	Low: 20°C

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# Celebration of the Italian National Day

On the occasion of the Italian National Day, The Ambassador of Italy H.E. Enrico Valvo and Mrs. Nadezda Valvo held a Reception on June 2.













