

## PM Garibashvili discusses Georgia's economic growth and debt at government meeting

By Liza Mchedlidze

Prime Minister of Georgia Irakli Gharibashvili discussed Georgia's recent economic growth at the government meeting. According to him, similarly to last year's numbers, Georgia has a very strong double-digit economic growth of 10.4% in the first seven months of the year 2022.

According to the Prime Minister, this year's budget was planned with a 6% economic growth forecast, and the nominal gross domestic product forecast was 64.8 billion GEL.

"Today I want to provide information to our citizens and submit a report regarding the budget. Before that, I want to make a short introduction. As you know, post-pandemic, last year we had very strong, double-digit economic growth of 10.4%, and we started this year with very strong economic growth. In the first seven months, we have had double-digit economic growth, 10.3%.

We also remind you that this year's budget was planned with a 6% economic growth forecast, and the nominal gross domestic product forecast was 64.8 billion GEL. It was also predicted to increase the export of goods by about 13%, and the recovery of tourism, compared to 2019, within 70%."

The Prime Minister also mentioned how the situation in Ukraine carried a risk of economic decline in Georgia which, according to him, was successfully prevented by the government:

"I would also like to point out that after the start of hostilities in Ukraine, in the first stage, of course, new risks were created; Not only our country but the whole world, Europe. We had a discussion then, and if it wasn't for our correct policy, it is possible that today there would be not a double-digit economic growth, but even an economic decline in our country, as well as in the world today.

During this period, we have the following parameters: the rate of export of goods is 3.1 billion US dollars, which is 36% higher than last year's rate; I would also



like to say that the income from tourism is 1.6 billion US dollars, which is 3 times more than last year's figure. The volume of direct foreign investments in the first quarter of the year amounted to 922 million US dollars, which is 2 times higher than last year's rate, and exceeds the rate of the first half of 2019 by 62%; I would also like to say that the turnover of VAT-paying enterprises increased by 21% in the January-July period; This means that this year, in the first 7 months, we still have a double-digit - 10.3% economic growth. Therefore, taking into account these indicators, we have changed the annual forecasts of the main economic parameters as well, and the updated macroeconomic forecasts include the following: The forecast rate of real economic growth will be 8.5%, instead of 6%; Tak-

ing into account the actual indicators, the forecast of the GDP deflator is 10.5%; The forecast of the nominal gross domestic product is set at 72.2 billion GEL, And the gross domestic product calculated per capita exceeds 6500 dollars; The tax revenues of the consolidated budget are increasing by 1,266.0 million GEL," said the Prime Minister Garibashvili.

Prime Minister Gharibashvili also talked about the government debt and said that the size of the debt and the budget deficit is decreasing.

As Gharibashvili said at the beginning of the government session, the country managed to achieve "correct, reasonable policy calculated on national interests".

"By the end of the year, the volume of government debt will decrease to 40% of GDP, instead of 51%, which is also a good

indicator. At the same time, the volume of the budget deficit decreases from 4.4% of GDP to 3.2% of GDP. The deficit will be only 3.2%. Along with reducing the deficit and debt, we should direct additional funds on the one hand to finance the commitments and on the other hand, to finance various areas, be it: police, army, infrastructure, financing of enterprises, agriculture, healthcare, and sports. In the end, I want to say that the forecast, trends, and positive dynamics will continue and this year we will have the same successful year as we had last year. We managed to do this with a correct, reasonable policy based on national interests, and not with an emotional, immature, and anti-state policy, which our opponents urged us to do," Gharibashvili said.

## Mayor Kaladze denies Soso Gogashvili's accusations that Gov't has ties with Federal Security Service of Russia



By Liza Mchedlidze

Tbilisi Mayor Kakha Kaladze has responded to Soso Gogashvili's claims that Georgian high-ranking officials and representatives of special services of Georgia met with the representatives of Russian Security Service, assessing it as 'complete nonsense' and 'absurdity'. Mayor also said that the evidence for the mentioned information does not exist.

"If there were evidence of this, of course, an appropriate response would follow. Any person can make announcements. These statements are based on nonsense and nothing, so it means nothing. You can also make any statement, you are a representative of television, appear on television, use your platform, say something stupid, and it does not mean that the relevant agencies will start an investigation. There is a state for that," Mayor Kaladze said.

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Exchange Rates: US Dollar - 2.8342; Euro - 2.8736; GBP - 3.3081; 100 Russian Ruble - 4.6831; Swiss Franc - 2.9681

# Mayor Kaladze denies Soso Gogashvili's accusations that Gov't has ties with Federal Security Service of Russia

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The former deputy head of the Security Service, Soso Gogashvili, described the scheme by which, according to him, air, land and sea transport are used to bypass sanctions, with the coordination of the Georgian and Russian special services. According to Gogashvili, this system still works properly and when any cargo is to be transported, reports are sent to the patrol police and the customs department so that they are not checked, and sometimes the cargo passes without being fixed at the border.

According to Gogashvili, this system still works properly and when any cargo is to be transported, reports are sent to the patrol police and the customs department so that they are not checked, and sometimes the cargo passes without being fixed at the border. According to him,

Grigol Liluashvili, the head of the Security Service, is in charge of coordination now, who is communicating through reliable officers.

Soso Gogashvili also talked about how this scheme was organized. According to him, in 2016, on the instructions of the founder of "Georgian Dream", Bidzina Ivanishvili, he was at the secret base of the Federal Security Service of Russia in Vladikavkaz, where he met General Sedov of "FSS".

"The purpose of the meeting was to organize the relationship of lower-level allied officers, to select suitable reliable persons, to connect them with each other, as well as to provide safe corridors for illegal and smuggled goods, to grant Georgian citizenship to Russian citizens on their recommendation, business start-up assistance, as well as illegal transfer of Russian citizens in Georgia, who were not wanted persons and were wanted, to Rus-

sia. Then, as planned, a meeting of our seniors was scheduled, which took place in the same city and lasted for 3 hours. I was not at this meeting, my boss, Vakhtang Gomelauri, left by car first, but there was a delay on the road due to falling snow and he turned back, he called me from the road and through Nino Giorgobiani, I prepared for "Airzena" a plane - "Boeing 737" for charter, and the flight took place. "The board could not land the first time and made several circles to land at the Vladikavkaz airport," Gogashvili said.

According to Gogashvili, after these meetings, in November 2017, Georgia hosted two Generals of Federal Security Service of Russia - Sedov and Beseda, and in December, the Georgian side was in Minsk by official invitation, where Vakhtang Gomelauri and Bortnikov met once again.

## The News in Brief

PREPARED BY MESSENGER STAFF

### Georgia is in the top ten in the number of asylum seekers in Belgium, State Secretary of Belgium says

conference held together with the Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs of Georgia, Aleksandre Darakhvelidze, Georgia is in the top ten in the number of asylum seekers in Belgium, and it is important to inform the population that asylum is not granted due to economic background.

"We see an increased number

### NGOs are financed to work against government, Mamuka Mdinardze says

Mamuka Mdinardze, the chairman of the "Georgian Dream" faction, told journalists that based on the facts, the money with which non-governmental organizations are financed is directed against the state, against the government, to plan a campaign to demand a technical government. According to him, several non-governmental organizations in Georgia have more funding than some of the political parties.

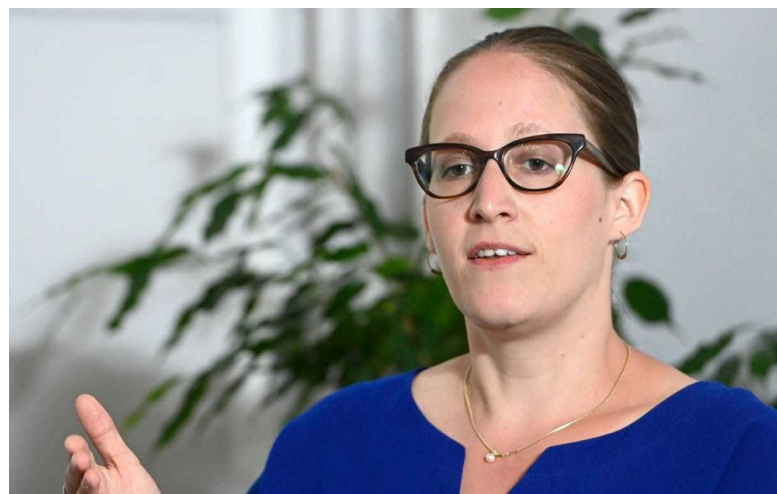
According to Mdinardze, the public should know where non-governmental organizations are financed and for what purpose



they spend the money.

"There are some of the richest non-governmental organizations in Georgia, which have much more funding than most of the parties, and we have seen where all this is directed. When the "National Movement" and their

lobbyists did not come up with the "fake" of 2020 about the forgery, when the journalists of their media outlets shot it, they took it out on the street, and this project also failed. Finally, the richest, and also the richest, part of these wealthy NGOs came out into the streets. This project also failed and finally, based on the facts, we can conclude that the money, several millions and several tens of millions, with which these non-governmental organizations are financed, goes against the state. Against the government, to plan a campaign to demand a technical government, etc. Therefore, of course, the society should know what these funds are spent on, for what purpose they are spent, where they are financed from, etc.," said Mamuka Mdinardze.



According to the information of the State Secretary of the Kingdom of Belgium for Asylum and Migration, Nicole de Moor, the number of asylum seekers in Belgium from Georgian citizens up to July of this year was 613.

As she mentioned at the press

of asylum seekers from all countries, at the moment Georgia is in the top ten in the number of asylum seekers in Belgium. This does not fit your country's profile compared to other countries, as Georgia is considered a safe country and the recognition rate is quite low. Until July of this year, the number of asylum seekers from Georgia in Belgium was 613. It is important to inform the population that asylum is not granted due to economic background," said Nicole de Moore.

## Weather

Tuesday, September 13

Day Partly Cloudy High: 30°C

Night Partly Cloudy Low: 17°C

Wednesday, September 14

Day Rain High: 24°C

Night Partly Cloudy Low: 14°C

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### The Messenger

43, Chovelidze st., Tbilisi, 0108, Georgia

Founded by Prof.

Zaza Gachechiladze

Tamar Gachechiladze

Publisher

Mob.: +995 599 565621; +995 577 760000

E-mail: messenger@messenger.com.ge

http://www.messenger.com.ge/

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**ბათუმი BATUMI**  
 AUGUST 25 20:30  
 AUGUST 26 20:00

**თბილისი TBILISI**  
 SEPTEMBER 17, 18  
 20:00

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 ლიანა ისახაძე  
 Founder of the Festival  
 LIANA ISAKHAZDE

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 გიორგი ისახაძე  
 Artistic Director  
 GIORGI ISAKHAZDE

ფესტივალის საპატიო ორგანიზატორი  
 "სამართლებრივი პრაქტიკის ცენტრი"  
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Editor-in-Chief

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