Strategic Review of the National Statistical System of Georgia 2023

Final Report
June 2024

Preface

This Strategic Review of the National Statistical System of Georgia follows closely the standard methodology for Global Assessments. The latter is a high-level evaluation of the National Statistical System by a group of international and national experts. They are conducted in partnership between UNECE, EFTA and Eurostat. They follow an agreed methodology and format and cover the most important generic areas, for example, statistical legislation, structure of the National Statistical System, resources available, methodology and quality framework, and also the most important substantive areas, for example National Accounts, the Population and Housing Census, Labour force statistics and many more. The evaluation includes meetings with users of official statistics, such as scientist, policy makers and representatives of local regional and international organisations. If there was a previous Global Assessment, it follows-up on this. Georgia had two previous global Assessments, in 2012 and the last in 2018. The country has to request for a Global Assessment and the final results will be made public on the UN and national websites.

As this review was requested in preparation for the National Strategy for the Development of Official Statistics of Georgia, some additional topics were added, for example Agricultural and Environmental Statistics and various sub-topics were included under standard items.

The Strategic Review was conducted by Randi Johannessen (Statistics Norway, representing EFTA), Dario Florey (Swiss Federal Statistical Office, representing EFTA), Stefan Sigurthorsson (Eurostat), Michael Nagy (UNECE), Steven Vale (independent expert, representing UNECE), and Taeke Gjaltema (UNECE, leading expert).

The assessment team carried out a mission to Tbilisi in September 2023. This report and its recommendations are based on discussions during that mission, as well as documentation provided by Geostat, including a self-assessment questionnaire completed by Geostat staff before the mission to Tbilisi.

The mission included meetings with representatives from the following agencies: Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development, Ministry of Education Science and Youth, Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories Labour Health and Social Affairs, Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure, and the National Bank. They participated as producers and/or users of statistics. Various other user groups were consulted in the review, these include representatives from national media organisations (newspapers, tv channels and social media), representatives from the scientific community (Academy of Sciences and various universities and research institutes) as well as representatives from international organisations such as UN WOMEN, UNFPA, UNDP, UNICEF, FAO, EU Delegation, IMF and World Bank.

The collaboration between the international experts and the staff of Geostat was very positive and constructive throughout all phases of the work. The international experts would like to thank Geostat's management and staff for this.

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Introduction and Summary Conclusions

This report provides a short overview of the findings from the group of international experts and lists of derived recommendations for further improvement. As each chapter in the report is already concise, this section only provides a summary reflection of the findings from the team of experts.

The international experts were impressed by the follow-up on the 2018 Global Assessment. There was a significant progress made and all recommendations were or are being followed-up on. Recommendations were taken very seriously and great progress on many other fronts was made, and more are planned. The new Law on Official Statistics that was recently adopted is a good example of this.

Geostat is a global best practice example on client orientation. Users were very positive about their openness and transparency and about how Geostat continuously improves its website. Users are happy with the timeliness and appreciate the response they got from Geostat staff when they had further questions. They found Geostat the best performing government agency in Georgia in this respect.

Geostat has a good reputation with respect to providing impartial and quality data. The continuous improvements to the website and having various activities to improve statistical literacy were also commented. Although some users would like to have more and further disaggregated data, the continuous improvements and increase in the availability of data and indicators were acknowledged.

Even though progress and plans are in place, the expert team came with several new recommendations. Some of these had already been identified by Geostat and were confirmed by the expert team. This report provides per institutional theme and next for each subject matter domain covered, a short evaluation and the ensuing recommendations. Here a summary of the main recommendations:

•   Various areas need to be developed further. For example, Environmental statistics is not covered well and needs more work and collaboration between Ministries and Geostat is important.

•   The EU Accession plans means that even more statistics have to be produced in accordance with agreed methodologies. Current resources will not be enough to cover this.

•   Moving towards a Census based on administrative sources, is a challenge that lies ahead. These sources need a lot of improvements in terms of quality, coverage, and alignment with statistical concepts to be able to be used.

•   The use of new data sources such as various Big Data, administrative records and privately held data will need further attention.

•   Further training of staff is important, for example to use these new data sources. Problematic here is that once staff is trained, they often leave as with their new skills, they can earn better elsewhere. More competitive salaries therefore need attention.

•	The data stewardship role of Geostat within the national statistical system needs to be strengthened further. Geostat is best placed to take a more prominent role here. This again means that more resources are needed.

Chapter 1: Legal framework and professional independence

Overview

This chapter assesses the legal framework for the collection and production of official statistics and the professional independence of the producers of statistics in Georgia against the United Nations Fundamental Principles for Official Statistics and the European Statistics Code of Practice.

The Law of Georgia on Official Statistics (https://www.geostat.ge/media/56202/The-Law-of-Georgia-on-Official-Statistics.pdf) was revised following the previous Global Assessment. The current Law was drafted taking into account the recommendations of that assessment, the UNECE Generic Law on Official Statistics, and the European Union Association Agreement. It was one of the main results of the National Strategy for the Development of Official Statistics in Georgia, 2020-2023. It was passed by the Georgian Parliament in May 2023, and entered into force on August 30, 2023, shortly before the Strategic Assessment mission.

The other main legal instruments related to official statistics include the Constitution of Georgia, Charter of the National Statistics Office of Georgia, GEOSTAT's Board Charter, and the Annual Statistical Work Program.

The Law on Official Statistics sets out the purpose and main principles of official statistics, as well as the rights and responsibilities of Geostat, other members of the National Statistical System (NSS), data providers and users of official statistics.

Professional independence

The Law on Official Statistics covers professional independence in the following articles:

- Article 5, on the main principles of official statistics states that "the producer of official statistics independently, without political or any other pressure or interference, makes decisions on the development, production, and dissemination of statistics, including the selection of data sources, concepts to be used, definitions, methods, and classifications, as well as all forms of dissemination about time and content. Producers of official statistics, within their competence, can publicly express an opinion on statistical issues and misuse of statistics".
- Article 10, which sets out the appointment and dismissal procedures for the Executive Director of Geostat.
- Article 12, which states that "Other Producers of Official Statistics shall be professionally independent entities within their competence in matters of development, production, and dissemination of official statistics".
- Article 13, on the Board of Geostat, which states that the Board "is a body established for the strategic development of official statistics and the professional independence of its producing bodies".
- Article 24, on the mandate for data collection, which states that producers of official statistics are "entitled to select data sources based on professional considerations and collect the necessary data to compile official statistics …"

It is therefore reasonable to conclude that there is a good legal basis for the professional independence of Geostat and other producers of official statistics in Georgia.

As in many other countries, these legal provisions on professional independence do not extend to financial independence. Geostat receives annual allocations from central government based

on the agreed annual statistical work programme, as well as additional amounts for special activities such as the population and housing census. Geostat currently only has limited powers regarding the reallocation of funding between different budget lines, so, for example is constrained in offering increased salaries.

Overall, there have been clear improvements in the legislative framework for official statistics in Georgia since the Global Assessment in 2018-19. The new Law on Official Statistics is a major step forwards and is broadly compliant with international norms and best practices. Clarifications on the role of the Geostat Board, the appointment of the Executive Director, and the exclusive use of statistical data for statistical purposes, fully address the recommendations of that Global Assessment.

The only concern that the current assessment team noted in respect to the new Law on Official Statistics, is that the statistical activities of the National Bank of Georgia are still not fully integrated. For example, Article 8(k) states that one of the competencies of Geostat is the "introduction and protection of quality management concepts in the National Statistics System, *except for the National Bank of Georgia*", whilst Article 19 sets out the coordinating role of Geostat in the NSS "*except the National Bank of Georgia*". It should be noted that upon the adoption of the Law of Georgia on the Official Statistics, accompanying legislative amendments to the organic law of Georgia on the National Bank of Georgia were also adopted to make them consistent.

The assessment team understands that these exceptions are due to the specific legal status of the National Bank, but would nevertheless propose that Geostat and the National Bank should explore ways to remove these exceptions in practice, and eventually in legislation. For example, one action could be the joint development (also with other producers of official statistics) of an NSS-wide agreement or protocol on quality management and assessment (see also Chapter 5 on Commitment to Quality). Further activities to develop the concept and the institutional basis of the NSS should also seek to remove any practical differences between the National Bank and the other producers of official statistics through consensus and agreement (see also Chapter 2 on the coordination of the NSS).

As the Law on Official Statistics is so new, one priority in the short-term should be to communicate the changes to stakeholders, particularly where the obligations or responsibilities of those stakeholders have changed. As noted during the assessment discussions, having a good statistical law is just the start. It is of limited value until it is implemented in practice. Given the widespread consensus that was reached during the preparation of the new law, Geostat is in a good position to drive the implementation.

Another short-term priority should be to ensure all secondary legal documents, as well as Geostat and NSS policy documents, are fully aligned with the new Law on Official Statistics. The assessment team noted that the current Geostat policy documents relating to statistical confidentiality will need some minor revisions.

Recommendations

1. Geostat should explore with the Ministry of Finance how flexibility in the allocation of the total annual Geostat budget between different budget headings might be increased.

2. Geostat should continue regular promotion of the new law and the fundamental principles it is based on to ministries and other governmental agencies.

3. Geostat is encouraged to update the policy documents related to confidentiality available at Geostat's website so that the documents are in line with the new Law on Official Statistics.

4. Geostat and the National Bank of Georgia should work towards agreements on the practical level, and in the context of the development of the National Statistical System, that will eventually remove the need for the specific exceptions for the National Bank in future statistical legislation.

Chapter 2: Coordination and cooperation

Overview

Coordination of the National Statistical System

The new Law of Georgia on Official Statistics clarifies and strengthens the role of Geostat as the coordinator of the NSS. By definition Geostat, the National Bank of Georgia and as stipulated in article 6 of the new law, "*other bodies producing official statistics, in accordance with the Statistical Work Programme*" make up the NSS. The National Bank of Georgia is responsible for producing financial, monetary, and external sector statistics, while paragraph 2 in Article 7 declares that:

> "*Geostat is the leading producer of official statistics in the country and coordinates the national system of statistics and all kinds of statistical activities related to the development, production, and dissemination of official statistics, except for the activities of the National Bank of Georgia.*"

On other producers of official statistics Article 6 declares in paragraph 4:

> "*Other bodies producing official statistics are administrative bodies that develop, produce and disseminate official statistics based on the Statistical Work Programme, in line with the basic principles of official statistics defined by this law.*"

and in paragraph 5:

> "*Criteria and rules for determining other producers of official statistics shall be approved by the Government of Georgia in compliance with this Law.*"

Development of the criteria and rules for determining other producers of official statistics has been finalised. The Annual Statistical Work Program is the main tool for coordination of activities within the NSS, and in its preparation Geostat has close consultation with other producers of official statistics. Over 30 Memorandums of Understanding have been signed with other producers of statistics and with various data providers. Interagency working groups are in place on quality and on establishing a population register in Georgia.

Cooperation between Geostat and the National Bank of Georgia and other key data providers and stakeholders is well established. The Managing Board of Geostat consists of 9 members, chaired by the Executive Director of Geostat with representation from the National Bank of Georgia, the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development, as well as 5 members from other fields such as academia, business, and independent experts. Advisory Board consisting of 12 members, including representatives from international organizations, business, academia, and non-profit organizations, provides consultation and recommendations to Geostat, which further facilitates cooperation within key stakeholder groups.

Geostat furthermore conducts regular meetings with different user groups, including both the public and the private sector, media, and academia. The assessment team met with representatives of different user groups, who confirmed good relations with Geostat with focus on openness and service, while expressing the opposite trend in the last years from ministries and other institutions in Georgia, with less access to data and less responsiveness than before to inquiries. In meetings with other producers of statistics and data providers the challenge of

separating the roles of statistical production and other work within ministries and institutions was highlighted.

Recommendations

5. Geostat and the other producers of official statistics should build on their existing strong bilateral relations to develop a full NSS.

6. The new National Strategy for the Development of Statistics should include enhanced mechanisms for dialogue within the NSS and with data providers.

7. Geostat should have a memorandum of understanding with all the producers of official statistics.

8. Geostat should establish more interagency thematic working groups, starting with considering convening an inter-agency group to coordinate preparations for EU accession in the area of official statistics.

9. Geostat, in cooperation with international partners, should provide training for the members of the NSS on professional independence, the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics, the associated Core Values, and the European Statistics Code of Practice, as well as how to communicate these to non-statisticians in their ministries and agencies.

Coordination of international cooperation and donors

Geostat actively participates in international cooperation with evident results in enhancing the quality, relevance, and comparability of statistics and increasing capacity of the NSS. Georgia and the EU have an Association Agreement which includes articles on statistics, and since 2022 Georgia has a potential EU candidate country status. An EU funded Twinning project with Statistics Denmark concluded in 2021 and the regional "Statistics Through Eastern Partnership" (STEP) program concluded in 2022, both contributing to improved methods in various statistical domains and supporting drafting of the newly adopted Georgian Law on Official Statistics. A new EU Twinning programme is under development and foreseen to commence in 2024.

Geostat has furthermore extensive cooperation with multiple UN agencies, other international organisations, and bilateral donor partnerships. In 2019, Georgia became a member of the UN Statistical Commission, and between 2020-2022, Geostat's Executive Director chaired the Bureau of the Committee on Statistics of UN's Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP).

Donor support is predominantly coordinated through involvement of the Georgian government and relative ministries, which maintains a certain user needs approach towards projects and prioritisation. Considering the demanding EU accession process and the consequent requirements for new statistics and alignment of current methods and outputs to the EU acquis, Geostat will need to be highly focussed and strategic in selecting development projects and partners that support these priorities within the NSS. On the EU accession path, managing absorption capacity for development work effectively and choosing the right donor projects that align with Geostat's main priorities will be very important.

Statistical offices are in many aspects facing similar issues independent of geographical locations, with increasing focus on modernisation in a very different new data landscape and making use of new technologies. Furthermore, more statistical offices are on the same EU accession path as Geostat, some having years of experience while others entered the path at the same time as Geostat. A Strong bilateral cooperation with other NSIs can be a valuable resource when navigating the challenges ahead.

Recommendations

10. Given the high-level of effort needed to prepare for EU accession, Geostat should re-assess cooperation activities with other donors and focus more on EU accession activities.

11. Geostat should explore opportunities in strengthening peer relations with other statistical offices for exchange of best practises and mutual support in modernisation activities.

Chapter 3: Mandate for data collection

Overview

The mandate for data collection is clear in the new Law of Georgia on Official Statistics. Geostat can request and receive from administrative bodies, physical and legal persons all kinds of statistical data and other information, including confidential information and/or information containing personal data, in line with the Law on Personal Data Protection. The new law clarifies that confidentiality and secrecy provisions in other legislation cannot be invoked to prevent full access to administrative data for statistical purposes unless such access is explicitly excluded. The law furthermore grants access for statistical purposes to relevant administrative data held by private enterprises. Participation in statistical surveys is mandatory for both enterprises as well as individuals. Response rates in household surveys are relatively high; approximately 70% in the cities and 80% in rural areas.

The process of requesting data from enterprises and organisations has been simplified, as an electronic notification sent to the e-mail address of the legal entity registered in the register of entrepreneurs and non-entrepreneurial entities is considered officially delivered to the respondent. Additionally, arrangements for imposing sanctions for non-compliance with mandatory demands for data have been streamlined.

Having the clear legal provisions for requesting individual data is an important step, but the challenge remains of changing the current data culture and how other organisations, government bodies and private data owners operate and interact with Geostat and other producers of official statistics. The assessment team observed from talks with representatives of different government bodies, which are in many cases both data providers and users of official statistics, that Geostat is a trusted collaborator and the international standards and methodology guiding Geostat are recognised. Geostat board members are in some cases representatives of other government bodies, e.g., the Ministry of Finance. The good reputation and connections provide opportunities to communicate effectively on the changing data landscape under the new law on official statistics and develop further formal tools and structures facilitating data submissions.

Geostat has eleven regional offices spread across Georgia with the main responsibility of collecting data and promoting official statistics at the regional level. A special web portal dedicated to regional and municipality statistics is available on Geostat's website, but in discussions with different user groups and Geostat officials, limited regional data and some difficulties in collecting data from municipalities were raised with the assessment team. A harmonisation plan for the gradual implementation of EU NUTS classification for regional statistics in Georgia has been established and released in 2022, and support for this implementation is included in the upcoming EU Twinning programme.

Geostat became fully paperless in its data collection in 2023. Data are collected using CAPI, CAWI and online questionnaires. Further modernisation of data collection is under development or has been introduced is a few cases, including web scraping, mobile phone operator data and scanner data. Further work is needed for establishing sustainable cooperation with data owners and developing sound methodologies in integrating alternative data sources into the statistical production.

Recommendations

12. Geostat should continue efforts in securing access to personal data from administrative registers for statistical production purposes.

13. Geostat should continue to identify alternative data sources, including administrative registers as well as data collection tools such as machine-to-machine (web scraping, API).

14. Geostat should strengthen further relationships with municipalities to facilitate submission of relevant timely data for statistical production.

15. Geostat should consider a formal agreement for sharing data with the Ministry of Finance and other key government data providers.

Chapter 4: Adequacy of resources

Overview

Since the previous Global Assessment (2018) several important achievements were made for the benefit of the efficiency of Geostat and staff's working conditions:

- Structural reorganization of GEOSTAT implemented
- Working conditions and environment for staff improved
- Number of permanent staff (213+ contracted permanent staff) has been increased
- The office infrastructure has been updated and renovated
- Total budget of Geostat has been increased
- Average salary of staff has been increased
- Modern data collection methods has been introduced in all surveys (CAPI, CAWI)
- Server and network infrastructure has been updating
- Continuous investment in IT infrastructure and human recourses is in place

In 2023 there was a total of 1039 staff employed in Geostat (908 in 2018), of which 720 were engaged as field staff in the conduct of household surveys and the collection of agricultural statistics. Of the remainder, 213 were classified as permanent staff (same as in 2018) with a further 105 employed on a non-permanent basis as support staff (70 in 2018). The 214 permanent staff corps includes management grades and also statistical, IT and other specialist staff and, as such, represents the central core of the organisation with primary responsibility for the organisation and delivery of the statistical programme. Three quarters (164) of the permanent staff are located in the central office in Tbilisi with the remainder (49) located in the eleven regional offices.

From 2012 until 2018 there has been an increase of almost 50% in the number of permanent staff, from 149 to 214. However, there has been no increase in the number of permanent staff since 2018. The number of field staff has increased by 80% from 400 to 720. Despite these increases, the number of permanent staff available to Geostat is relatively low when compared with NSOs in comparable countries.

Geostat's total budget consists of the state budget, grants and revenues from commercial activities. Compared to 2018, in 2023, the total budget increased by 54% including grants and other commercial activities; without grants and other commercial activities, the increase of the state budget alone compared to the base year, 2018 (excluding the census budget) amounted to 59%. Works provided by the annual statistical work program, are completely financed from the state budget.

The existing number of employees is sufficient to perform the task provided by the work program. However, in order to achieve the required degree of disaggregation of data and to expand the scope of work (which is necessary in the context of EU accession), it is desirable to increase it.

Furthermore, the assessment team observed that there is a too large turnover of younger staff. Even if the average salary between 2018 and 2013 increased by 54% (from 1,484 to 2,283 GEL), other government agencies, in particular ministries, have higher salary schemes and thus are more attractive employers. If Geostat could offer the same salaries, young and new staff

would have a longer career perspective and the turnover would decrease. Currently, Geostat is in a situation where well-educated and motivated staff, trained at the cost of Geostat, is likely to leave after a short period of time.

Recommendations

16. The government of Georgia should recognise that Geostat will need additional resources to prepare for EU accession, particularly in relation to the additional data requirements and the enhanced role for international cooperation and coordination functions.

17. Geostat should request increased funding to ensure staff salaries are at least comparable to those for similar functions in ministries.

Chapter 5: Commitment to quality

Overview

The first strategic goal of the 2020-2023 National Strategy for the Development of Official Statistics of Georgia was to "Produce high quality official statistics based on user needs". This focus on quality is echoed throughout that strategy and has resulted in considerable progress since the Global Assessment of 2018-19.

The new Law on Official Statistics has a specific chapter (Chapter X) on "Quality of Official Statistics". Within this chapter, Article 41 deals with "Quality Commitment", stressing the need for continuous improvement, common standards, and documentation of production processes and methods. Article 42 covers "Quality Assessment of Official Statistics", including the importance of user consultations and collaboration with the academic community and international organisations to assess and improve methodology, processes and outputs.

Specific actions to improve quality over recent years have included:

- The establishment of a high-level working group on quality management issues, consisting of Geostat's top management, heads of departments and representatives of the methodology and quality management division.

- Geostat adopted and published a new "Quality Policy of the National Statistics Office of Georgia" in 2020 (see https://www.geostat.ge/media/44380/QP_Geostat_EN.pdf).

- A self-assessment questionnaire has been introduced based on the European Statistics Code of Practice Quality Framework. Geostat will undertake quality self-assessments of statistical outputs on a regular basis from 2023.

- A quality audit was conducted in May 2023, further audits will be conducted on a regular basis.

- Geostat produces and disseminates metadata (including on quality) based on the EURO-SDMX Metadata Structure (ESMS) 2.0 since 2019. Metadata in this format now covers most of Geostat's statistical processes and products.

- Geostat is implementing the Generic Statistical Business Process Model (GSBPM) including as a standard structure for process documentation.

The assessment team noted that these excellent initiatives now need to be broadened to cover the whole NSS. This will inevitably require training for other producers of official statistics, but the establishment of a common quality culture, backed up by standard tools and methods, is an essential building block of the NSS.

In the context of Georgia's European Union membership prospects, a key future step will be the adoption of the Single Integrated Metadata Structure (SIMS), including user-oriented and producer-oriented quality reporting. Geostat identified a need for technical assistance from Eurostat and/or existing EU Member States to support this work.

Geostat also plans to introduce the DESAP (Development of a European Self-Assessment Programme) checklist for survey managers to assist the systematic quality assessment of the surveys that they are responsible for. Again, technical assistance will be required for this.

Recommendations

18. Geostat and the other members of the National Statistical System (when membership is finalised) should develop a standard quality framework and assessment mechanisms, in line with European Union requirements, which will be applicable for the whole NSS.

19. Geostat should provide training in quality assurance to other members of the NSS to ensure a standard approach.

20. Geostat should request support from Eurostat on the introduction of Single Integrated Metadata Structure (SIMS), the DESAP self-assessment questionnaire, and related producer-oriented quality measures.

Chapter 6: Statistical confidentiality

The Law of Georgia on official statistics (LOS), ensure the protection of primary data collected for statistical purpose. The previous LOS (which was valid till August 30, 2023) did not fully comply with the recommendations set out in the Generic Law on Official Statistics (GLOS). The Global Assessment Report (GA) 2019 highlighted a set of recommendations for full alignment with the GLOS, e.g., the respective principles of the Eurostat Code of Practice (ESCoP). In the new LOS, the confidentiality criteria have been updated, access to confidential data, relevant obligations, and access to microdata for research purposes is more clarified.

Overview

Data confidentiality and the use of individual data for statistical purpose only is ensured in article 5 as well in Chapter IX (articles 34 – 40) covering collection, processing, and storage of data.

Article 34 define the type and the use of data in official statistics in line with confidentiality. The article guarantees the confidentiality of data collected and aggregates for statistical purposes. The data collected for the purpose of producing official statistics shall be confidential if it allows for identification of observation unit or is possible to identify such data through it.

The article underlines the disseminating and distributing confidential data and its use for non-statistical purposes. Thus, the new LOS excludes the reference to the potential use of confidential data for non-statistical purposes as recommended in the GA 2019 report. Further the LOS declares aggregate data as a state secret based on the Law of Georgia on State Secrets. Both article 34.2 and 34.6 specify that confidential data should exclusively be used for producing statistics. In very few cases where an economic activity is dominated by a monopolist, e.g., production of sugar, dissemination of statistics is possible based on agreements with the respondents (enterprise).

Article 35 secures the data processing and storage. The producers of official statistics are obliged to destroy or store separately the identity data including the (paper) questionnaires containing such data and used for statistical surveys according to the rules defined in the Georgian legislation.

IT measures might be further developed with integrate efficient mechanisms, including encryption and anonymisation, to safeguard confidentiality of personal information.

Articles 36 and 37 describe the access to individual data of the National Statistical System and access of confidential data for research purposes. The new LOS clarifies that confidentiality and secrecy provisions in other legislation cannot be invoked to prevent full access to administrative data for statistical purposes unless such access is explicitly excluded. Additionally, Geostat has been granted access for statistical purposes to relevant administrative data held by private enterprises; Article 26.1 of the new LOS states that, unless otherwise provided by the legislation of Georgia, administrative bodies shall be obliged to provide available information on individuals and private entities, including confidential and personal data, to Geostat in accordance with the Law on Personal Data Protection.

The LOS specify that data provided for research purpose should not contain identifiers, and only data necessary for the research purposes. Personal data should be processed by the Law

of Georgia on Personal data Protection. The new LOS also improves the procedures on access to microdata for research purposes.

Articles 38 – 40 underline the confidentiality commitments, including violation and sub-contracting (third-party contractors). Geostat has implemented various measures to ensure data confidentiality, including legal, methodological, technical, and logical measures. This includes the development of a confidentiality policy document. All staff members sign a confidentiality commitment, and an interagency quality group has also dealt with statistical confidentiality matters.

In 2023, training sessions were conducted to raise staff awareness of personal data processing and IT system development issues. Draft guidelines on the Protection of Tabulated Business Data and Personal Data have been developed.

In addition to the LOS, confidentiality is clarified and available for the public on Geostat's website at: [About Geostat - National Statistics Office of Georgia](). However, this should be updated to reflect the new LOS.

Recommendation

21. Geostat is encouraged to update the documents on the websites to reflect the confidentiality in the new LOS.

22. Geostat is encouraged to continue the work with preparing and implementing procedures for systematically monitoring adherence to the confidentiality guidelines.

Chapter 7: Sound methodology

The new Law on State Statistics, which entered into force on 30 August 2023, provides Geostat with an appropriate legal basis to ensure the development and implementation of a sound statistical methodology to produce official statistics. The law recognises the European Statistics Code of Practice and endorses internationally recognized methodologies and standards.

Geostat's staff regularly participate in international methodological workshops. In addition, they receive assistance from international expert to identify best practices in statistics. Methodology used by different statistics producers may satisfy international concepts and definitions but differ. However, Geostat is in a strong position to force them to be transparent concerning the definitions to avoid misuse. The main classifications and overall methodological framework used for statistics in Georgia follows European and other international standards.

Although the National Statistical System (NSS) is a set of units producing official statistics, as provided for by law, the list of organizations participating in the NSS is not complete. Geostat should take the initiative in choosing clear criteria for qualifying for bodies to be included in the NSS.

The Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of the Economy and the National Bank are members of the Board, ensuring good cooperation. However, it is essential to have a mechanism to guarantee Geostat's independence.

Recommendations

23. Geostat should consider a formal agreement for sharing data with the Ministry of Finance (currently the cooperation is very good, but this is mainly due to the fact that Ministry of Finance is a member of the board).

24. Geostat needs to create criteria to monitor their independence in practice (having the law on its own is not sufficient).

25. Geostat should increase and expand cooperation with the various statistics producers, and should formally have a memorandum of understanding with common basic criteria (calendar and timeliness for exchanging the data, accuracy) with them.

Chapter 8: Appropriate statistical procedures and cost-effectiveness

Overview

Geostat has started the move towards a more process-based approach to statistical production. Dissemination and communication have been centralised, and there are central units for IT, methodology and quality. The previous Global Assessment recommended a centralised structure for acquiring and coordinating the use of administrative data. This has not yet been completed but is planned for the coming years. This will be a major step towards centralising data collection functions.

The move towards a process-based organisation structure is being carried out in the context of the implementation of the Generic Statistical Business Process Model (GSBPM). A separate Sector Review on this topic was conducted by UNECE in February 2023. This Strategic Assessment supports the conclusions and recommendations of that Sector Review[1]. Greater centralisation of data collection and methodology are seen as priorities by both assessments.

The centralisation of data collection, together with the already well-advanced move to electronic collection methods and the increased use of administrative data, mean that the nature of the work of regional offices is changing. Geostat will need to reflect further on how best to use the resources it has across the different regional offices in future.

As Geostat modernises and standardises statistical production processes, opportunities to adopt international best practices, methods and tools will arise. This will help to reduce the amount of manual data work in the statistical production process. The typical experiences of other national statistical offices show that greater automation means that less resources are needed for data collection and validation, and that, with suitable re-training, these resources can be reallocated to focus on quality, user needs, analysis, etc.

Geostat has processes in place to manage metadata, including approval by the central methodology and quality unit, and posting on the Internet by the IT Department. However, Geostat doesn't yet have a central metadata repository. This would be a logical next step and would support the move towards a process-based approach to statistical production.

Geostat has some initial knowledge of the SDMX (Statistical Data and Metadata eXchange) standard but will need to further develop this knowledge to be able to implement SDMX data and metadata transfers to Eurostat and other international organisations. This is likely to be a requirement for the EU accession process.

Recommendations

26. Geostat should continue with plans to move to a more process-oriented structure, including consolidating resources for data collection and acquisition of administrative data, and centralising methodology.

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[1] See: https://unece.org/sites/default/files/2023-03/GSBPM%20Sector%20Review%20Georgia%20Report.pdf

27. Geostat should establish an organisational unit to deal with acquiring administrative and other non-statistical data sources, including managing agreements with the source owners.

28. Geostat should identify additional tasks that could be carried out in regional offices, bearing in mind the expected reduction in direct data collection, and that it is relatively easy to recruit workers for those offices.

29. Geostat should continue developing production systems that reduce manual work, e.g. the use of refined data validation procedures.

30. Geostat should consider developing a central metadata repository to support the harmonisation and re-use of data and metadata.

31. Geostat should develop the SDMX standard to transmit data to international organisations.

Chapter 9: Non-excessive burden on respondents

Available sources of statistical information in the Geostat include primary statistical data, administrative data, web scraped data and a few new data sources held by private companies, e.g., scanner data (big data). Primary statistical data is mostly covered by online questionnaires from businesses and CAPI (Computer-Assisted Personal Interviews) and face-to-face interview among households.

Overview

Field data collection that covers questionnaires, CAPI and face-to-face interview counts for 72 per cent of the data collection. The response rate is around 86 per cent on average. Geostat is allowed to fine the businesses if not responding. The fine is 200 GEL which is mostly a symbolic sum of money. However, the rate of businesses fined among the 60 000 annual respondents, is very low. To measure the burden, the time spent by the respondent on filling out a questionnaire is used by Geostat. In the Household Income and Expenditure and Labour Force surveys, time spent on completing questionnaires is also used to assess the quality of interviewers' work.

Geostat has paid attention to reducing the burden on respondents by perfecting the questionnaires for statistical surveys, including the use of electronic questionnaires, optimizing the collection of primary data, e.g. by using web scraping, and expanding the use of administrative data and alternative data sources such as scanner data. Data from mobile phones operators will be considered and tested as a possible data source. The new Law of Georgia on official statistics (LOS) strengthen the access to administrative and other data sources. The use of administrative data sources and other sources counts for 28 per cent of the data collection but is increasing. By the time being the following administrative registers are used in statistical production:

- Revenue Service
- National Agency of Public Registry
- Customs Service
- Ministry of Internal Affairs

Significant attention is paid to determining the source of primary statistical information. In this case, the quality, timeliness, costs and burden on the respondent of potentially acceptable information from different sources are considered. Challenges faced are the quality of data such as accuracy of data and incomplete data and lack of disaggregated administrative data. Also lack of communication with policymakers and owners of data sources is sometimes challenging.

In accordance with the recommendations in the 2018 Global assessment report, a policy document on reducing the burden on respondents has been developed and approved in Geostat. Guidance to consider the limit of respondent's participation in surveys and how to measure this, has also been prepared, but needs further discussion. The future plan is to introduce further actions to reduce the respondent burden; develop methods for more relevant measuring of respondent burden. Technical assistance and sharing good practices with other statistical offices are requested.

Recommendation

32. Geostat is encouraged to continue to identify alternative data sources, including administrative registers as well as data collection tools like machine to machine (web scraping, API)

33. Geostat is encouraged to continue increasing the use of CAPI in statistical surveys.

34. Geostat is encouraged to seek technical assistance as well as share good practice with other statistical offices to reduce the respond burden.

Chapter 10: Relevance, accessibility, impartiality and clarity

Overview

Article 5 of the Law on Official Statistics sets out 7 main principles of official statistics in Georgia, including:

- Relevance – Ensuring compliance with users' current and expected needs and the degree of protection of citizens' right to access information.

- Impartiality and objectivity – development, production, and dissemination of official statistics should be done in a neutral, reliable, and impartial manner, by professional standards, and free from any political statement or opinion. All users should be given equal and simultaneous access to official statistics.

- Clarity and transparency – official statistics must be presented clearly and understandably, and the methods and procedures used must be transparently communicated to users to ensure correct interpretation.

Whilst "accessibility" isn't explicitly mentioned in these principles, it is strongly implicit in several of them.

Articles 43 and 44 of the same Law go into more detail about the legal requirements for statistical dissemination, including equal and simultaneous access for all users, the need for all producers of official statistics to maintain a release calendar, and the management of errors and revisions.

Geostat conducts regular user dialogues and surveys to determine user needs. User surveys were conducted in 2019 and 2021, with another one due shortly at the time of writing. User feedback has been a major driver for the significant developments in the Geostat web site over recent years, including a range of portals on specific topics, which have been welcomed by users.

Feedback from the different user groups consulted within the Strategic Assessment was positive. Geostat was frequently identified as one of the most transparent, trustworthy, and approachable public sector institutions in Georgia. As always, there were areas where users would like more detailed and/or more frequent statistics. Areas such as land use, land ownership and tourism were mentioned, as well as requests for more detailed regional statistics, linked to the development of the NUTS territorial classification in Georgia. Some users also requested more training to help them understand different types of statistics, and welcomed the explanatory videos that Geostat has published on certain key indicators.

Geostat has developed an active presence on social media, particularly Facebook and X (formerly Twitter), where it has developed a good number of followers. Effort has also gone into developing infographics and videos, which are used effectively across different dissemination channels.

User questions and feedback are invited, mainly via e-mail. Users appreciated the responsiveness of Geostat staff. Currently, personal e-mail addresses are widely used, but moving to generic addresses for different parts of Geostat could make it easier to respond when staff move or are out of the office.

Trust in official statistics in Georgia seems quite high amongst expert users, but there was a perception that it was much lower amongst the general population, partly as a result of a general mistrust of public institutions, and partly due to low levels of statistical literacy. European

Union countries have explored the factors affecting trust in official statistics through surveys conducted by independent bodies, which have led to action plans to improve trust.

To encourage greater statistical literacy, Geostat has developed excellent portals on statistics for kids and teenagers. These could be promoted more with teachers and through the Ministry of Education. Promoting international statistical literacy competitions (such as those run by the International Statistical Literacy Project - https://iase-web.org/islp/Competitions.php) in Georgian schools could also help to boost the understanding of statistics in the next generation of users.

Geostat has developed a communications strategy which covers most main points. However, the assessment team felt that is could include more on risk management and communications during crises, so that Geostat would be better placed to deal with difficult situations when they arise.

Various mid to senior level Geostat staff act as spokespersons for Geostat in their areas of competence, including in television, radio and press interviews. Many national statistical offices provide training for staff in these roles; however, this is not yet available for Geostat staff. It was also noted that often the burden of external communications falls on a small number of experienced staff. Training others could help to spread this burden.

Finally, looking at the wider NSS, users currently have to know which organisation produces which statistics, as all the web sites are separate. An easy way to help new users would be to add links on the different web sites to other types of statistics, regardless of which organisation publishes them. This would also help to strengthen the feeling of a coherent system, rather than a set of individual organisations.

Recommendations

35. Geostat should explore producing indicators on land use and privatisation of land and properties.

36. Geostat should continue work on developing NUTS classification in Georgia and strengthening regional statistics.

37. Geostat should consider providing more training materials and courses for users of their statistics.

38. Geostat should consider creating generic e-mail addresses for statistical areas that regularly receive e-mail queries.

39. Geostat should consider commissioning an external body to survey the public on trust in official statistics.

40. Geostat should publicise international statistical literacy competitions for children and encourage participation from Georgian schools.

41. Geostat should reach out to teachers and the Ministry of Education to promote the portals for kids and teenagers and advocate for statistical literacy in the school system.

42. Geostat should develop formal protocols for communications during crises.

43. Geostat should consider assigning more spokespersons, and providing training for staff who appear on television and on social media.

44. Geostat and the other members of the NSS should consider how to consolidate their web sites, to make it easier for users who don't know which agency produces which data to find relevant statistics (this could be started by simply adding links to other agency web sites).

Chapter 11: National Accounts (Macroeconomics statistics)

This chapter discusses the following statistics: National Accounts, External Sector Statistics and Government Finance Statistics.

The information provided by Geostat and Ministry of Finance suggests that the National Statistical System of Georgia has made significant progress since the previous Global assessment (2018). Indeed, the majority of recommendations concerning the macroeconomics statistics from the previous Global assessment have been implemented or they have plans to implement them. Geostat is committed to improving the quality and relevance of its statistics.

National Accounts

The National Accounts department of Geostat, staffed by 13 people, is composed of two divisions: quarterly and annual accounts. The most important aggregates of national accounts that are compiled and published are: quarterly and annual GDP, flash estimate of economic growth, supply and use tables, input and output tables, regional accounts, and the sequence of account for the national economy.

Main sources to compile national accounts statistics are household surveys, business statistics surveys, price statistics data on producers, consumer and export and import prices indices, surveys of agricultural holdings, export and import of goods. Data from the National Bank of Georgia (income and expenses of commercial banks and National Bank, balance of payments statistics), data of insurance companies and data from the Ministry of Finance are also used.

National Accounts data are used by a wide range of stakeholders, including economic and monetary policymakers, businesses, and researchers. Therefore, it is essential that these data are of high quality. The National Accounts department of Geostat has a number of measures in place to ensure the quality of its national accounts data. These include:

- The implementation of 2008 System of National Accounts (2008 SNA), replacing the existing methodology 1993 SNA, in November 2019, including improvement of data sources;
- During the revision, fundamental methodological changes were made and data sources were improved: non-market output is now based on the sum of cost, holding gains are eliminated and the use of double deflation concept is improved;
- The time series is revised from 2010 onwards;
- The Main methodological changes are: the estimation of FISIM and the breakdown by institutional sectors; the treatment of the imputed rent of owner-Occupied Dwellings – the user-cost method was introduced for measuring services of owner-occupied dwellings. Implementation of the method was stipulated by the fact that 90% of dwellings are used by owner-occupiers and are distributed unevenly over the country;
- Research and Development (R&D) expenditure are now classified as capital formation.

Together with the implementation of the SNA 2008, Geostat introduce some other international methodologies: the National Statistical Classification of Economic Activities (NACE Rev. 2) to classify the unit, Classification of Individual Consumption by Purpose (COICOP), Classification of the Functions of Government (COFOG) and the Statistical Classification of Products by Activity 2008 (CPA 2008). These nomenclatures are also used by National Bank of Georgia and the Ministry of Finance.

New surveys were introduced to meet the requirements for measuring the non-observed economy. These have been launched in the following industries: hotels and restaurants, transportation, real estate activities, education, human health services, arts-entertainment-recreation and in the information sector. Moreover, Geostat plans to conduct new household surveys in 2023 on repair of computers, tips, other personal activities and on the structure of intermediate consumption.

In 2024 Geostat plans to produce and disseminate the sequence of accounts distributed by institutional sectors with the help from IMF.

External sector statistics

The External Sector Department has two divisions: Foreign Trade Statistics and Foreign Investment Statistics. Currently, ten people work in these two divisions (and there is one vacancy in each). They are responsible for conducting surveys, compiling, and disseminating data on foreign trade and foreign direct investment, including the collection and processing of data for the Balance of Payments. The close cooperation between the External Sector Department and the National Bank of Georgia is also important, as it ensures that the two institutions are working together to produce high-quality data.

The methodology used follows the sixth edition of the Balance of Payments Manual (BPM6), the International Trade in Services Statistics (ITS) and the International Merchandise Trade Statistics 2010 (IMTS).

Numerous improvements have been made to foreign direct investment, foreign trade and international trade in services statistics since the last global assessment in 2019, including the development of a very attractive portal for data dissemination. In the future, Geostat plans to produce data on imports at FOB prices. This would be a very significant improvement and would eliminate the discrepancies with the Balance of Payments statistics produced by the National Bank of Georgia.

Recommendations

45. Geostat should consider adopting the Harmonised European revision policy (HERP).

46. For the next benchmark revision (2029), Geostat should plan to move from System of National Accounts 2010 to European Statistical Accounts.

47. Geostat and the National Bank of Georgia should ask Eurostat for technical assistance on this move from the System of National Accounts to the European System of Accounts.

48. Geostat should produce sector accounts (users request these; Geostat already plans to produce them on an experimental basis next year).

49. Geostat should improve the classification of budgetary units.

50. Geostat should gradually align the timing of major national accounts and balance of payments revisions with the schedule for such revisions in the European Statistical System.

51. Geostat is encouraged to continue the EU twinning project to improve the accuracy of the data.

Government financial statistics

Ministry of Finance is responsible to produce and publish Government financial statistics. The team is composed by 2 persons. The main source of data for the fiscal information included in the database is the Georgian Treasury accounts.

In 2022, Georgia adopted the 2014 Government Financial Statistics Manual. The adoption of the GFSM improve the international comparability of the data.

Together with the implementation of GFSM 2014, Ministry of Finance expanded the coverage of the general government sector by including the legal entities of public law (LEPLs) of both central and local government. It provides a more comprehensive picture of the public finances. The introduction of balance sheet data provided further information on the stock of assets, liabilities, and the net worth of government.

Overall, the improvements made to the fiscal data are significant and positive. They have made the data more comprehensive, accurate, and consistent with international standards.

Since Georgia aim to move closer to European Union, and presented its application for EU membership, Georgia Statistical System should progressively adopt Eurostat methodology. Concerning fiscal data, Ministry of Finance should start providing government finance statistics according to the EU program of transmission; this includes data on debt and deficit according to the National Accounts methodology.

Given Eurostat's large requirement for public administration data and the lack of capacity at the Ministry of Finance's to compile this, it would be advisable to share the work with Geostat. This would allow Georgia to make the most of its limited resources and improve the overall efficiency of the GFS compilation process.

Recommendations

52. Ministry of Finance and Geostat should start to introduce the EU program of transmission.

53. Ministry of Finance should explore with Geostat the possibility of sharing the excessive burden of data to satisfy the requirement of Eurostat in the field of Fiscal data.

54. Ministry of Finance and Geostat is encouraged to continue the good collaboration between the two institutes. Ministry of Finance could benefit from the experience of Geostat staff for the implementation of the European System of National and Regional Accounts (ESA) 2010.

Chapter 12: Balance of Payments Statistics

Georgia's Balance of Payment statistics are compiled quarterly and annually by the National Bank of Georgia (NBG), in accordance with the 6th edition of the IMF's Balance of Payments and International Investment Position Manual (BPM6), as well as the External Debt Statistics Guide for compilers and users (2013 EDS Guide). The division employs 7 persons.

To compile Balance of Payments Statistics, the NBG uses a variety of sources, including data from the Geostat surveys of external economic activities of enterprises and trade in goods, from the Ministry of the Economy and Sustainable Development, as well as the government's external debt and debt-related financial services from the Ministry of Finance, trade in goods data from the Revenue Service of the Ministry of Finance and the Service Agency of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. For services, the NBG uses annual and quarterly surveys conducted by Geostat, data from government agencies, commercial banks and other financial companies.

With regard to foreign direct investment, portfolio and other investment, the NBG compiles data using the survey of non-financial enterprises on foreign economic activities conducted by Geostat, data from resident banks, microfinance organisations, data from insurance companies and administrative data from the Ministry of Finance. In addition, information from the media is used.

Data are revised for the last three years to ensure the accuracy and consistency of the balance of payments statistics. However, in cases where major methodological changes occur, the entire time series is revised to reflect the updated methodology.

NBG has started compiling cross-border FISIM since 2023 (data is available from 2022) and this work was completed.

The expert group acknowledge the good cooperation between the NBG and Geostat and encourages continued cooperation. However, since the national economy are always more opened to the world, it is essential to have granular data to reach a high level of quality for National Accounts statistics and bop statistics.

The best practice should be to exchange the most granular data; therefore, we recommend expanding the collaboration between the two institutes.

Recommendations

55. National Bank of Georgia should consider adopting the Harmonised European revision policy (HERP).

56. NBG and Geostat are encouraged to expand mutual cooperation in regard to exchange granular data ensuring common confidentiality rules.

57. At the level of the international organizations, the new manual of the Balance of Payments (BPM7) is being prepared. The NBG should follow the work to be able to implement it in 2029, like the most advance countries. The BPM7 is due to be adopted by the United Nations Statistical Commission in 2025.

58. NBG and Geostat jointly should consider the possibility how to measure the growing use and impact of crypto currencies in external sector statistics.

Chapter 13: Price statistics

Price statistics are compiled within the Price Statistics Department. The Department has two divisions: the Consumer price statistics division and the producer price statistics division. In total the department has 11 permanent staff and 1 contract employee. The department is producing several statistics within consumer price area, housing, and producer price area. The price statistics are compiled in line with international recommendations. The department is also involved in the International Comparison Program (ICP) activities, through participation in the Eurostat-OECD working group.

Overview

For the consumer prices a survey of consumer prices and tariffs is used as the main data source. The survey is conducted on-site (price collectors), online, by phone and by email. Besides that, administrative data is used, mainly for consumer basket updates. For the producer prices, online questionnaires are used, which are located on the Geostat website. Together with the development of the Residential Property Price Index (RPPI), Geostat successfully implemented web-scraping from major Georgian websites that advertise dwellings for sale, as the data source for this index. ICP databases are prepared using administrative data and information collected on-site and online.

Since the Global assessment (GA) in 2018/2019 an impressive number of milestones have been achieved. New price statistics: Harmonised consumer price index (HICP) based on the EU legislation and guidelines, RPPI, and several producer price indices for services (SPPI), an expanded monthly Construction index covering three areas of construction and a Unit Value Index of Agricultural Products.

In response to the GA recommendations the producer price index (PPI) is transited to a newer version of classification of product activity, CPA 2008, to ensure full compliance with the SNA 2008 methodology used by the Georgian National Accounts. Also, at regional level more detailed index series and basket weights for the consumer price index (CPI) are disseminated.

Geostat has developed a lot of useful online tools within price statistics; among other calculators for indexation and compiling inflation as well as tools that enables quick analysis of inflation and its main contributors.

Future development

Since 2020 Geostat has been actively working on the implementation of scanner data for consumer price index (CPI) as a complementary data source for the index. Negotiations are ongoing with the main data providers to organize regular and timely data submissions. An analyse of the pilot scanner data already collected could provide further evidence of its importance in negotiations with retail chains. The work with scanner data is supported by the technical assistance of the IMF.

The Owner-Occupied Housing (OOH) is not yet explored by Geostat and is planned to be developed within the next few years. If and how to include OOH should be decided after analysing the results of the population Census in 2024, as the census should reveal new figures of among other the share of OOH in Georgia.

Although the OOH is still not part of the HICP, Eurostat disseminate for every member state a stand-alone OOH price index. In future, Geostat might need to produce this type of price index in line with the HICP requirements. This should be clarified in dialogue with Eurostat.

Work is ongoing on the development of HICP-constant taxes and HICP-administered prices, to be in line with the EU requirements. This work will be finalized in 2024-2025.

In 2021 the international (5-digit) version of COICOP 2018 was translated and a 6-digit level was added to create a national classification. As a result, the national COICOP 2018 classification was adopted by the Board of Geostat. In 2022, a converter between COICOP 1999 and new versions was prepared, which will be used for the transition to the new classification. The transition to COICOP 2018 is planned for 2025-2026.

The RPPI currently covers only the segment of new dwellings in the capital city; It is planned to increase coverage of the RPPI to include existing dwellings and other major cities in Georgia. This work is also assisted by the IMF. Within the Transport Statistics (Business Statistics) railway, air and maritime statistics are based on among other, administrative sources. Geostat should consider if these sources could provide useful information when developing SSPIs for transportation and storage (sector H in NACE). Geostat could also consider if more information could be obtained from these data sources, e.g. could prices be collected through the Survey of airlines.

For both the PPI and the SPPI work on new goods and services for improving coverage is ongoing as well as the improvement of quality adjustment methods with the technical assistance of the IMF.

The price department faces high rates of staff rotations, thus, often lack of human resources for timely achievement of goals. One main challenge is the improvement of staff skills to catch up with modern methods and technologies.

Recommendations

59. Geostat is encouraged to continue the work of getting access to alternative data sources like scanner data and the use of alternative data collection tools like web scraping and API.

60. Geostat is encouraged to continue the developing of the HICP-CT and HICP-AP in line with the EU requirements.

61. In collaboration with the Household Budget survey and National Account, Geostat is encouraged to continue the transition to the COICOP 2018.

62. Within the PPI and the SPPI, Geostat is encouraged to increase the coverage of goods and services.

63. Geostat should in collaboration with National Accounts investigate the possibilities of including OOH in the national consumer price index. If required by Eurostat, a stand-alone OOH price index might also needs be developed as part of the HICP requirements.

Chapter 14: Business statistics

The Business Statistics is managed by the Business Statistics Department. The Department covers Business Register Division, Short-term Statistics Division, Industry, Construction and Energy Statistics Division, Service Statistics Division and Tourism Statistics Division. In total the division has 27 permanent staff and 3 employees on contract.

The department is responsible up to 20 monthly, quarterly and annual Business Statistics Surveys, including producing the Energy Balance. All statistics are compiled in line with international recommendations. Several new indicators were developed since the Global assessment (GA) in 2018/2019.

Overview

Statistical Business Register

The Statistical Business Register (SBR) data is updated regularly from different sources like administrative registers (Revenue Service, National Agency of Public Registry), and CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interview) surveys to update the status, kind of economic activity and actual address of every local unit of the enterprises and the annual and quarterly statistical surveys of enterprises.

The quality of the SBR has significantly improved based on different internal and external sources. The database establishes logical connections and applies the principle of cascading updates between statistical units as enterprise, local unit and local kind of activity unit. SBR also contains data about the start and end time for each event, which allows to present complete information about the statistical unit for any time.

Since the GA in 2018/2019, an online business register portal was launched, which provides an opportunity to find detailed information about enterprises operating in Georgia. Through the portal, the user will receive information such as: the actual and legal address of the economic entity, information about the founders and persons with representative powers, to see the connection between the owners and founders of different companies and more. Online business register portal is directly linked with the Geographic Information System (GIS) portal, which provides geographic coordinates of the active companies on the digital map.

The main challenges in the SBR are missing data on founders and shareholders of joint-stock companies, as well as the quality of administrative data (this especially applies to the information regarding the kind of economic activity).

Procedures for finding a group of enterprises was created and the accumulation of the relevant statistical information has been started. Also, the work related to inclusion of full-time equivalent employment in SBR is ongoing. Another milestone is to start production of statistics on foreign affiliates of Georgian enterprises.

Structural business statistics/Short-term statistics

Geostat is producing quarterly and annual indicators on enterprises, quarterly hours worked indices and monthly turnover value indices. The indicators are based on statistical surveys of enterprises as well as administrative sources (Revenue Service).

Based on the recommendation from the GA 2019 report, Geostat has started the production of structural business statistics indicators by the category of "small enterprises" (with less than ten employees). This data is not published on the official website, but available upon request for any kind of interested users. Geostat should consider the availability of these data on the website for all users. If disaggregated, e.g., by economic activity, Geostat must ensure that confidentiality is attended. Future plans include further development of Structural business statistics and to produce more disaggregated data.

According to Eurostat's definition, Short-term statistics (STS) indicators are covering four major domains: industry, construction, trade, and services. Producer price indices for industrial production and for services, and Construction cost index are covered in the Price Statistics department. Indicators for services, energy and construction are produced in the other divisions within department of Business Statistics relevant statistical indicators are discussed below.

Transport statistics

Geostat produce rail, air and maritime transport statistics indicators covering passenger and freight, in line with international standards. In addition, road transport statistics indicators are produced and the motor vehicles statistics portal has been developed. The indicators are mainly based on different administrative data sources and one survey of airlines registered in Georgia.

Challenges faced are lack of as well as the quality of administrative data to fulfil all international requirements. The road transport statistics (except of the number of registered vehicles and the length of common use roads) needs to be updated.

Future plans among others include to conduct a more comprehensive road freight transport survey, get access to new data sources as well as improve the quality of existing data sources.

Tourism statistics

Tourism statistics indicators covering inbound, outbound, and domestic tourism has been developed. Geostat also produce annual accommodation (hotels and similar accommodation) statistics. The indictors are mainly based on surveys. In addition, border crossing data recorded by the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia is used. Work has been undertaken to update the accommodation survey methodology and questionnaire, and to produce additional disaggregation indicators in line with the Eurostat's requirements. Some challenges in recording occupancy rates for small-sized accommodation enterprises (due to a lack of appropriate software to fill out the questionnaires within these enterprises) has been faced.

The developing of a Tourism satellite Account (TSA) is work in progress. So far TSA tables 1 through 4 have been published.

Plans for the future include further development of the accommodation statistics. Among others production of net occupancy rates of beds and rooms, and the statistics of accommodation with rooms accessible for persons with reduced mobility are planned.

Energy statistics

Energy statistics includes the Energy Balance, Monthly Energy Statistics Indicators and data on Consumer Prices of Electricity and Natural Gas. The statistics are based on survey of enterprises, and administrative data.

The quality of the natural gas consumption indicator for energy and non-energy purposes has been improved and the Survey on Energy Consumption in Households in 2022 was conducted by CAPI (computer assisted personal interview). Also, Geostat started producing new energy efficiency indicators in 2022.

Future plans include, in accordance with the Renewable Energy Directive, development of disaggregated data and the development of the energy efficiency indicators based on methodologies of International Energy Agency and communication with relevant experts.

Recommendations

64. Within energy statistics, Geostat is encouraged to provide more disaggregated data on renewable energy as well as develop energy efficiency indicators based on methodologies of International Energy Agency.

65. Geostat is encouraged to consider the availability of the statistical business indicators by the category "small enterprises" for all users.

Chapter 15: Environment and Agricultural Statistics

The main functions of Geostat´s Agricultural and Environment Statistics Department are the

- Planning, organizing, implementing the agricultural Census and the various statistical surveys in the fields of agriculture and environment;
- Production of official statistics in the fields of agriculture and environment;
- Ensure the operation of the Food Security Information System of the country;
- Compile Food Balance Sheets.

The Department has two substantive Divisions, one on Agricultural Statistics and one on Environment Statistics.

A total of 15 persons are employed in the Department, of which 11 persons are allocated in the Agricultural Statistics Division and 3 persons in the Environment Statistics Division. At the time of the assessment one post was vacant in each of the two Divisions.

There is a close collaboration with the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture (MEPA).

Overview

Agricultural Statistics

Given the fact that agriculture plays an important role in the Georgian economy, agricultural statistics was reviewed to a great level of detail already in the Global Assessment in 2018. Already then, the Assessment Team considered that Geostat´s agricultural statistical system is well developed, nevertheless, a few recommendations were formulated to further develop it. This was in particular important for the organisation of the next Agricultural Census, which will be carried out in 2024.

Since June 2023 data on agricultural statistics are made available via the Agricultural Statistics Portal in Georgian and English at https://agriculture.geostat.ge/. The main statistics and indicators produced by the Division are available for visualisation and download (about 99% of what is available).

One of the current main activities is the organisation of the 2024 **Agricultural Census**, which will be held in conjunction with the Population and Household Census (as recommended in the GA 2018). The census is based on FAO guidelines (World Programme for the Census of Agriculture). The current main activities include the development of the CAPI and CAWI versions of the census questionnaire and related methodologies. The number of interviewers (field staff) varies from 250 to 275 persons.

The establishment of **administrative farm register** (managed by the Ministry of Agriculture and Environment) is still ongoing. In the future it is expected to play a key role in updating sampling frames for surveys in the agriculture sector. The current main problem is to complete the farm register with administrative data. It does not include all kind of agricultural holdings (according to MEPA, at present there are about 190,000 holdings in the register about). Therefore, currently it is only partially used for formation of sampling frames for surveys.

Geostat has also recently introduced a **new survey of aquaculture holdings**, which follows the FAO Guidelines to Enhance Fisheries and Aquaculture Statistics through a Census Framework.

The Division also produces the **national food balance sheets** for 12 products (wheat, maize, potato, vegetables, grapes, meat, beef, pork, sheep and goat meat, poultry meat, milk/milk products and eggs). However, more are needed (e.g. on various fruits) and are currently being developed.

Environment Statistics

The 2018 Global Assessment concluded that the main challenge is the reliability of administrative data and recommended to continue with the development of environment statistics in the context of SPAERS 2016-2020 and to give high priority to the development of waste statistics.

Currently, the main data source for environmental statistics are the survey of water supply companies, various surveys conducted by different departments of Geostat, and administrative sources:

- Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture (MEPA)
- Agency of Protected Areas
- National Forestry Agency
- Forestry Agency of Adjara AR
- National Environmental Agency
- Department of Environmental Supervision

Following the GA 2018 recommendations, waste statistics were developed, and new waste-related indicators are being produced (e.g. related to municipal waste). Furthermore, work on the implementation of Material Flow Accounts and water statistics has started.

Also, new indicators recommended in the "UNECE Guidelines for the Application of Environmental Indicators" have been produced, including on ambient air quality, GHG emissions and protected areas.

The planned next steps are to establish comprehensive data collection system, to further develop environmental-economic accounts, to develop additional waste statistics indicators and to develop an interactive Portal for Environmental Statistics.

The main challenges for each thematic area, for which also external support would be needed, include:

- Air quality: Insufficient air quality monitoring stations; Absence of air quality modelling and forecasting system. Lack of established procedures for air quality data verification and validation; Lack of baseline data on stoves in households and burning agricultural residue and other waste; lack of baseline data on transport to use COPERT (Computer model to calculate emissions from road traffic) for the estimation of air emissions; Lack of aggregated data on the construction sector;
- Water: The introduction of a water classification system in accordance with the EU Water Framework Directive is an upcoming challenge;

- Soil: Outdated quality standards for soil. Absence of modern methodology for soil pollution monitoring and assessment.
- Biodiversity: Absence of legal framework for biodiversity monitoring. Lack of human and financial resources to conduct monitoring. One of the challenges the Forest sector is facing is a lack of modern technologies and integrated electronic system for sustainable forest management.
- Waste: Incomplete waste management electronic system that complicates aggregation of reported data on waste (including hazardous) generation, transportation, recycling, and disposal.
- Implementation of SEEA: Training and exchange of knowledge on the implementation on relevant SEEA modules (water, waste, but also those of the Eurostat Statistical requirements compendium)

Despite the progress made since the 2018 assessment it can be concluded that there is still lack of capacity (including availability of human resources in the Environment Statistics Division), need for further thematic prioritisation (what is relevant for national policy makers?) and need for stronger institutional collaboration in terms of priority setting and data quality assurance. Furthermore, capacity and procedures are needed to integrate data from different source and ensure consistency and reliability.

Recommendations

Agricultural Statistics

66. Geostat should consider how the further development of the administrative farm register can improve agriculture statistics.

67. Geostat should continue its work to develop and improve food balance sheets.

68. Geostat could introduce modern data collecting systems in agricultural statistics and environment statistics (e.g. remote sensing).

Environment Statistics

69. Geostat should request UNECE / Eurostat to arrange a sector review on environment statistics.

70. Geostat should consider increasing the number of professional staff working on environment statistics (currently only 2); consider hiring new staff with subject-matter expertise and provide targeted subject-matter training for current staff.

71. As the coordinator of the national statistical system of Georgia, Geostat should in consultation with relevant members of the national statistical system provide strategic guidance and clarity on environment statistics by:

     o defining the national scope of environment statistics using the United Nations Framework for the Development of Environment Statistics (UN FDES) as a reference;

       o determining short and long-term priorities for environment statistics development.

Consultations on priorities should in addition to national priorities consider the requirements defined in the Eurostat Statistical Requirements Compendium.

72. At the strategic level, an inter-agency environment statistics group should be established in order to strengthen collaboration with users and producers of administrative data. At the technical level, working groups on specific topics (such as water, waste, air, etc.) could be established to agree on data sources, data gap filling, data validation procedures, etc.

73. Geostat needs to review how to utilise existing surveys (household surveys, business surveys) to collect data on environment statistics (e.g. energy, water, waste generation).

74. Geostat should request a special training workshop on energy statistics, energy accounts and climate change-related.

75. Geostat to continue with efforts to improve water statistics and water accounts (e.g. through the EU4Environment Project).

76. Geostat should continue with efforts to improve waste statistics.

Chapter 16: Population Census

Overview

The Population Census and Demographic Statistics Department is responsible for planning, organizing, and implementing the Population Census and demographic surveys and producing and disseminating demographic statistical data. The department has six permanent and five contract based staff members. Four of these staff members are working on Census methodology. There are an additional thirteen GIS specialists and programmers from the IT department working on the Census preparations.

Census

The Population Census will be conducted in 2024 and will be combined with the Agricultural Census. Two stages are planned, first a Computer Assisted Self Interview (CASI) from 14 to 23 November, followed by a visit by enumerators using the CAPI method from 29 November to 19 December. Given the large share of household holdings, it will be combined with the Agricultural Census.

Overall, Geostat uses internationally recommendations methodologies, standards, and classifications. For example, as in 2014, data on persons living with disabilities will be collected using the Washington Group questions. In some rural areas, no address lists exist yet, and households are identified by id numbers. This makes enumeration more complicated, and care needs to be taken to ensure coverage and to identify housing units and households that might be missed. Geostat is using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to collect data on the initial list of households by each building. It will also be used to monitor fieldwork and for the dissemination of results.

Population registers and next census round

For the 2030 Census round, Geostat is planning to move to a Census based primarily on administrative sources. Geostat plans to setup a Population Register based on various administrative sources. Unfortunately, current legislation does not allow for the Census to be used to update administrative records or as a basis for a population register.

An inter-agency group was setup to advance the introduction of a population register. A draft version of the methodology was prepared. Geostat is also trying to initiate Twinning projects to develop an action plan to introduce a population register.

Capturing international and to a lesser extent, internal migration will be the main challenge in a register-based census. It is important to build in various checks to ensure that administrative records and thus statistical population register, are up to date. Geostat has already identified migration statistics as needing improvement. For migration statistics, information from the Ministry of Internal Affairs is used. Unfortunately, Geostat does not have access to identification numbers and no information on country of origin or destination is available. Geostat is also considering using mobile phone data to estimate mobility and migration. Geostat is active in the UN Big Data working group (UN-CEBD) and is leading the sub-group working on a methodological handbook for using mobile phone data. Unfortunately, the project was put on hold from the partner side.

Population projections

To make effective population projections and scenarios, detailed population data is needed (age and sex specific population data, age specific fertility rates, age and sex specific mortality rates as well as emigration and immigration data or patterns by age and sex). Additionally, it is important to have reasonable assumptions about future developments and for various scenarios.

To advance their work on producing population projections, Geostat has obtained technical assistance from the United Nations Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs. A draft methodology has been developed. Geostat is now seeking a Twinning project to further advance their population projections and scenarios.

Recommendations:

77. Geostat should continue efforts in securing access to personal data from administrative registers for statistical production purposes.

78. Geostat should continue preparations for using administrative data and for establishing a Population Register in Georgia.

79. Geostat should consider various sources for producing migration estimates and administrative corrections (including for inter-census period), including correction mechanisms from related administrative data sources and Big Data sources that indicate potential migration.

80. Geostat should explore synergies between the work on establishing a Population Register and the upcoming 2024 censuses on population and housing and agriculture.

81. Geostat should consider setting up a dedicated unit to manage, integrate, and monitor the quality of administrative data sources.

Chapter 17: Labour market statistics

Overview

Geostat has made several improvements to align labour market statistics with international standards since the Global Assessment in 2019. In 2020, Geostat adopted the latest statistical standards proposed by the International Labour Organization (ILO) through the 19th International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS). This introduced new definitions, distinguishing work as any activity to produce goods or services, and employment as activities conducted for pay or profit. Farmers primarily producing for personal use are now classified as unemployed or outside the labour force if they are not actively seeking paid work. This has revealed a significant increase in the rural unemployment rate in Georgia, highlighting regional disparities in the labour market.

Geostat has also expanded its labour statistics reporting by producing indicators of labour underutilization based on ILO standards. Additionally, with assistance from UN Women calculating and dissemination of the Adjusted Gender Pay Gap (GPG) began in 2021, which is an important step for promoting gender equality.

Another important transition was the move from the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-88) to ISCO-08 for occupation coding in the LFS. Employment status still follows ICSE-93, but plans are in place for transitioning to ICSE-18. Classification of economic activities follows NACE Rev. 2. From 2025 onwards, European statistics will start being produced based on NACE Rev. 2.1, which will entail several changes, including new positions to reflect emerging forms of economic activity.

The LFS sampling frame relies on 2014 Census data and employs a two-stage cluster design. Census units serve as primary sampling units (PSUs), while household addresses are secondary sampling units (SSUs). All individuals aged 15 and older in selected households are surveyed. The sample size is approximately 6400 households per quarter. The rotation scheme is 2-(2)-2, with each household interviewed for two consecutive quarters and a seven-day reference period for employment. The data collection process was modernized in 2021, transitioning from Paper Interviewing (PAPI) to Computer-Assisted Personal Interview (CAPI).

Responding to user demand for wage statistics, Geostat introduced the publication of median earnings of employees in 2022. Furthermore, Geostat enhanced its data collection efforts, incorporating additional modules into its establishment survey to collect data on occupations and the structure of labour costs, but Structure of Earnings Survey is not implemented due to resource constraints.

Job vacancy statistics, in line with EU standards, are being developed, exploring options such as web scraping for collecting data. Geostat has also started gathering data on work-related illnesses and accidents from the Labour Inspection Office (LIO) to improve occupational injury statistics. Green activity employment statistics have not been developed in Georgia.

Recommendations

82. Geostat should continue with the planned introduction of ICSE-18 in the LFS.

83. Geostat should request technical assistance from UNECE on web-scraping for job vacancy statistics.

84. Geostat should seek support from the Georgian government and international organisations for conducting a pilot of the Structure of Earning Survey

85. Geostat should explore introducing green activity employment statistics based on EU requirements.

86. Geostat should start preparations for updating from NACE 2 to NACE 2.1 classification of economic activities.

Chapter 18: Other Household Statistics

Overview

The Social Statistics Department is responsible for all non-demographic surveys. This includes the Labour Force Survey (LFS) and the Establishment Survey (see Chapter 17). It has 38 staff, 16 permanent and 22 on contract basis (including 3 vacancies). In the past years, the department has gradually been moving away from using PAPI. The CAPI method was introduced for the Survey on Information and Communication Technologies Usage in Households (ICT) in 2021, while the Household Incomes and Expenditure Survey (HIES) adopted this method starting from 2023. All household surveys will now be conducted as CAPI.

Since the previous Global Assessment, several new household surveys have been conducted:

- Child Welfare Survey
- Health Utilization and Expenditure Survey
- Time Use Survey
- Real-Time Monitoring (RTM) Survey on the impact of COVID-19 on the well-being of families and children (MICS+)
- Conducting Survey on the Impact Evaluation of Targeted Social Assistance

Furthermore, the sample sizes of the HIES and ICT surveys were increased.

Households Incomes and Expenditures Survey (HIES) and related survey

The methodology and survey instruments of the Households Incomes and Expenditures Survey (HIES) are in line with the methodology outlined in the United Nations "Handbook of Household Surveys, UN, New York 1984." The classifications used in the survey include the Classification of Individual Consumption by Purpose (COICOP) and NACE, Rev. 2. The previous (1999) version of the COICOP classification was used but Geostat will introduce the latest (2018) version for the next survey round.

The improvements in HIES have since 2021 allowed Geostat to produce new poverty indicators such as the Poverty Headcount Ratio (calculated for all three international poverty lines defined by the World Bank), the at-risk-of-poverty indictor and relative poverty.

With assistance from UNICEF, the Child Welfare Survey 2022 was conducted as added module of the HIES. This allowed for the calculation of indicators of material deprivation.

The Health Utilization and Expenditure Survey (HUES) that was conducted on a regular basis (2007, 2010, 2014, 2017, 2023), also became part of the HIES in 2022.

As the HIES is quite intensive for the respondent, it uses a quarterly 2-(2)-2 rotation. It has moved to CAPI, but the diary is still on paper. The option to have a smart phone app version should be considered.

Other Household Surveys

The Time Use Survey was conducted, for the first time, from September 2020 to September 2021 based on the latest international methodological guidelines using Eurostat's Harmonized European Time Use Surveys (HETUS) and the International Classification of Activities for Time-Use Statistics (ICATUS).

The Survey on Information and Communication Technologies Usage in Households (ICT) questionnaire was broadened and is now in line with Eurostat's ICT methodology and model questionnaire (*Methodological Manual for Statistics on the Information Society*) as well as with ITU standards and recommendations (*Manual for Measuring ICT Access and Use by Households and Individuals*). As recommended, metadata is published online.

With technical and financial assistance from UN Women, the Violence Against Women Survey was held in 2017 and again in 2022.

Geostat also conducted the Real-time Monitoring Survey (RTM) on impact of the COVID-19 on the well-being of families and children as a MICS plus. In this case, the CATI method was used. The aim was to collect information regarding the ongoing situation of the children and families during the COVID-19 pandemic. It was held in six waves from November 2020 until December 2021.

Another ad-hoc survey conducted by Geostat was the Impact Evaluation of Targeted Social Assistance in 2019 using the CAPI method.

Challenges:

Geostat has is conducting many surveys with limited resources. Efficiency gains have already been achieved by combining surveys and by moving from PAPI to CAPI and CATI. Accession to the European Union might lead to the need to conduct additional surveys or adapting to EU standard surveys, for example EU-SILC. Further reducing the response burden is also important to ensure good response rates and quality.

Recommendations:

87. Geostat should carefully consider the frequency of the various surveys and give preference to those that are needed for EU accession.

88. Geostat should explore reducing response burden in diary of the household surveys by offering mobile applications or other methods to simplify household reporting.

89. Geostat should continue reducing the response burden and prevent sampling the same respondent.

90. Geostat should investigate if data from administrative sources can be used for producing some of the household statistics.

91. Geostat should consider including questions on material deprivation comparable to those normally derived from the EU-SILC or even start preparing to move towards this common instrument.

92. Additional to absolute poverty lines and the planned material deprivation indicators, Geostat should consider relative and multidimensional poverty indicators to better measure inequality, social inclusion, and poverty risk, including for vulnerable groups.

Chapter 19: Statistics for the Sustainable Development Goals

In 2015, the Administration of Government of Georgia was assigned to lead nationalization and coordination process of the SDGs at the highest political level. A Sustainable Development Goals Inter-Agency Council has been established to facilitate the implementation and monitoring of the SDG goals.

This council has 4 thematic working groups:

1. Social Inclusion;
2. Economic development;
3. Sustainable Energy and Environmental Protection;
4. Democratic Governance.

All stakeholders from the public, civil, international, academic, and private sectors are involved in the work of the Council and working groups.

Georgia currently has all 17 goals, 94 targets, and 202 indicators nationalized (201 of them unique for Georgia). SDG 3 (good health and wellbeing) and SDG 16 (peace, justice, and strong institutions) have the most nationalised indicators (35 and 48).

A total of 76 indicators are available (i.e. lack of 26 indicators) and are published on the SDG Portal https://sdg.gov.ge. The web portal was developed by the Administration of the Government of Georgia with the support of the United Nations Development Program UNDP, SIDA and IDFI. Technical development was carried out by the LEPL – Data Exchange Agency (DEA). The portal is managed by the Secretariat of the Inter-Agency Council for Sustainable Development Goals, and the various government agencies responsible for individual SDG indicators provide their data directly to the portal.

Overview

Geostat is the data source of 61 out of 201 nationalized unique indicators is Geostat. In the Current situation Geostat:

- Produces data on 57 indicators (93.5%);
- Partially on 1 indicator (1.6%): 4.3.1: Participation rate of youth and adults in formal and non-formal education and training in the last 12 months, by sex and age group;
- Doesn't produce on 3 indicators (4.9%): 8.9.1: Tourism direct GDP as proportion of GDP; 9.5.1: Research and development expenditure; and 17.18.1: Statistical capacity indicator for Sustainable Development Goal monitoring.

Geostat furthermore gives trainings on methodologies.

The main challenges from the perspective of Geostat are the:

- Non availability of disaggregated data;
- Lack of data sources (mainly in social statistics);
- Data quality;
- Insufficient resources;
- Communication with policy makers and decision makers.

Furthermore, from the perspective of the entire production process of SDG indicators, the following weaknesses were observed by the assessment team:

- There is a strong dependency from donor funding;
- Geostat does not have a leading role in the overall production process, quality assurance and dissemination of the indicators. However, according to the *CES Road Map on Statistics for SDGs*[2] NSOs have a role to play as main information hubs, because official statistics are the cornerstone of national information systems, and NSOs are the central coordination bodies of official statistics;
- Geostat is furthermore not involved in the coordination with users;
- The data dissemination on the portal does not follow statistical criteria. For example, no metadata are available.

Recommendations

93. Reporting on SDG should be managed by Geostat to ensure consistent methodology and up to date data. The new Statistical Law, placing Geostat in the leadership role of the National Statistical System, would provide the legal basis.

94. Geostat should see the mandate of the SDG Inter-Agency Council to take the leadership role in SDG indicator-reporting.

95. Geostat should explore if there is a chance to get more budget, or to re-direct budget, from main donors (e.g. UNDP) to fulfil the leadership role.

96. Geostat should consider the creation of separate unit to coordinate the production of SDG indicators within entire NSS.

97. Geostat should encourage more frequent updating of the national SDG reporting platform, including more focus on data quality and metadata provision.

98. Geostat should be stronger involved in quality control for SDG indicators.

99. Geostat should be involved in further development of the SDG web portal (sdg.gov.ge) in order to guarantee good statistical standards (e.g. metadata, such as national source of the indicator etc.)

100. Geostat should take measures to facilitate the production of all indicators for which they have been identified as the primary producer within the NSS (not yet or only partially produced are SDG indicators 8.9.1, 9.5.1, 17.18.1 and 4.3.1).

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[2] https://unece.org/sites/default/files/2022-02/Road_Map_2_E_web.pdf

Annex 1 - List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

API	Application Programming Interface
BPM6	Balance of Payments Manual
CAPI	Computer Assisted Personal Interview
CASI	Computer Assisted Self Interview
CATI	Computer Assisted Telephone Interview
CAWI	Computer Assisted Web Interview
CES	Conference of European Statisticians
COICOP	Classification of Individual Consumption by Purpose
COFOG	Classification of the Functions of Government
COPERT	Calculations of Emissions from Road Transport
CPA	Statistical Classification of Products by Activity
CPI	Consumer Price Index
DEA	Data Exchange Agency
DESAP	Development of a European Self-Assessment Programme
EFTA	European Free Trade Association
ESCAP	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
EU	European Union
EU-SILC	European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organisation
FOB	Free on Board
FISIM	Financial intermediation services indirectly measured
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
Geostat	National Statistics Office of Georgia
GFSM	Government Finance Statistics Manual
GHG	Greenhouse Gas Emissions
GIS	Geographic Information System
GLOS	Generic Law on Official Statistics
GPG	Gender Pay Gap
GSBPM	Generic Statistical Business Process Model
HERP	Harmonised European Revision Policy
HETUS	Harmonized European Time Use Surveys
HIES	Household Incomes and Expenditure Survey
HUES	Health Utilization and Expenditure Survey
ICATUS	International Classification of Activities for Time-Use Statistics
ICLS	International Conference of Labour Statisticians
ICP	International Comparison Program
ICSE	International Classification of Status in Employment
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
IDFI	Institute for Development of Freedom of Information
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IMTS	International Merchandise Trade Statistics
ISCO	International Standard Classification of Occupations
ITS	International Trade in Services Statistics
ITU	International Telecom Union
LEPL	Legal Entities of Public Law
LEPL	Ministry of Justice of Georgia
LFS	Labour Force Survey
LIO	Labour Inspection Office
LOS	Law of Georgia on official statistics

MEPA	Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture
MICS	Multi-Indicator Cluster Survey
NACE	The European Union's Classification of Economic Activities
NBG	National Bank of Georgia
NSO	National Statistics Office
NSS	National Statistical System
NUTS	Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OOH	Owner-Occupied Housing
PAPI	Paper Assisted Personal Interview
PPI	Producer Price Index
PSU	Primary Sampling Unit
RPPI	Residential Property Price Index
RTM	Real-Time Monitoring
SBR	Statistical Business Register
SDG	Sustainable Development GoalS
SDMX	Statistical Data and Metadata eXchange
SEEA	System of Environmental and Economic Accounting
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SIMS	Single Integrated Metadata Structure
SNA	System of National Accounts
SPPI	Services Producer Price Inflation
SSU	Secondary Sample Unit
STEP	Statistics Through Eastern Partnership
STS	Short-Term Statistics
TSA	Tourism Satellite Account
UN-CEBD	Committee of Experts on Big Data and Data Science for Official Statistics
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
UNFDES	United Nations Framework for the Development of Environment Statistics
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund