



## **Content**

### **Political Cooperation (p. 3)**

Counsellor on Migration Issues Visits Tbilisi

International Conference on Health-Driven Migration

Deputy Head of Mission Joins an EU Monitoring Mission's Trip

### **Economic Cooperation (p. 3)**

TBC and EBRD Host Masterclass on Sanctions Compliance

### **Development Cooperation (p. 4-6)**

New Swiss Cooperation Programme 2026–2029

Visit of Ambassador Arno Wicki to the South Caucasus

Sharing Swiss Expertise: Cooperation in Education and Climate Resilience

2025 Marks the End of the Vocational Education and Training (VET) in Agriculture Project

Peace and Human Rights: OSCE Youth School and Model Conference in Tbilisi

### **Culture (p.6-7)**

### **Consular (p.7-9)**

### **Georgian Regions through Swiss Lenses (p. 9)**

### **1 August – National Day of Switzerland (p. 10)**

## AMBASSADOR'S MESSAGE

Dear fellow citizens,  
Dear partners and friends,

I am pleased to share with you the latest edition of our annual newsletter, highlighting Switzerland's recent engagement and cooperation with Georgia. In this edition, we report on Switzerland's ongoing work in migration, human security, development cooperation, public diplomacy, and regional outreach across Georgia.

Our team and partners have been actively involved in strengthening migration management, exploring relevant approaches to health-driven mobility, and promoting climate resilience in high-risk municipalities. We also deepened collaboration between educational and scientific institutions and celebrated meaningful cultural initiatives across the country.

This edition further reflects our ongoing commitment to fostering inclusive economic opportunities, empowering local actors, and building strong people-to-people connections. The activities outlined below reflect Switzerland's long-term commitment to supporting peace, resilience, and inclusive growth in Georgia.

2025 has been an incredible year in many ways, but one milestone brought Switzerland and Georgia particularly closer: after more than 20 years, direct flights between Tbilisi-Zurich and Tbilisi-Geneva have been taken up, marking the beginning of a renewed and closer people-to-people connection.

We invite you to explore the stories and achievements that have marked this period of cooperation.

I wish you and your families a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Respectfully,

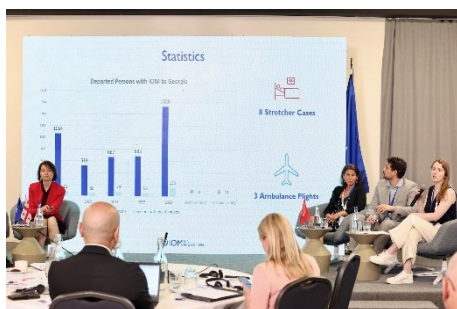
Heidi Grau  
Ambassador

## POLITICAL COOPERATION

### Counsellor on Migration Issues Visits Tbilisi

On 14-17 April and on 17–19 November, Ms. Abigaëlle Gotteland-Gobet, Political Counsellor on Migration Issues, and Mr. Matthias Musy visited Georgia for a series of meetings with government representatives, international partners, and civil society stakeholders. The visit provided an opportunity to exchange on current migration trends, deepen cooperation, and explore avenues for future joint initiatives.

### International Conference on Health-Driven Migration



On 30 June, Switzerland joined Austria, France, Germany, Belgium and other like-minded partners at the International Workshop on Addressing Health-Driven Migration. Participants discussed the complex realities behind health-related migration and shared practical, evidence-based solutions.

Switzerland's State Secretariat for Migration, in partnership with IOM Georgia, is contributing to strengthening Georgia's healthcare system through the Georgia Cares initiative. At its heart is a newly developed Joint Action Plan that addresses root causes of health-driven migration, from access to medical services and financing to trust-building and governance reform.

### Deputy Head of Mission Joins an EU Monitoring Mission's Trip



Switzerland continues to support stability and security in Georgia and the wider region. Deputy Head of Mission Jacqueline Jakob-Gallmann joined the European Union Monitoring Mission (EUMM) for an exposure visit. The visit offered a first-hand look at the Mission's work and reaffirmed Switzerland's commitment to upholding Georgia's territorial integrity.

## ECONOMIC COOPERATION

### TBC and EBRD Host Masterclass on Sanctions Compliance



and large enterprises.

TBC, in partnership with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), organized a masterclass on sanctions compliance for its corporate clients. The event was held with the financial support of the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) and brought together representatives from small, medium,

The primary objective of the masterclass was to raise awareness of sanctions-related requirements, mitigate associated risks, and ensure the continuity of business operations. The session was led by experts from the local consulting firm Skyward Solutions, who provided participants with practical guidance on key topics, including how to access reliable information on sanctions, identify and manage risks, and establish trustworthy partnerships and channels for international trade.



## DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

### New Swiss Cooperation Programme 2026–2029

2026 marks the beginning of a new regional Cooperation Strategy for the South Caucasus. The 4-year programme will build on longstanding experience while sharpening its focus on the following three directions:

1. Promote human security and sustainable peace, strengthen civic engagement and democratic institutions;
2. Increase climate resilience and foster sustainable natural resource management;
3. Support inclusive and green economic opportunities.

Switzerland will combine technical expertise, policy dialogue and financing to ensure coherence across its foreign policy instruments. Working with like-minded donors and regional organisations, Switzerland will ensure added value in areas such as climate risk management, vocational education, financial stability and local governance — always with a strong emphasis on empowering local partners.

### Visit of Ambassador Arno Wicki to the South Caucasus

On 20–24 October, Ambassador Arno Wicki, Assistant Director General of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), visited Georgia and Armenia to review ongoing projects supported by Switzerland.



In Georgia, Mr. Wicki met with members of the Georgian Silk Association and visited a small silk workshop run by the Association's member. Switzerland supports the revival of Georgia's silk industry — a tradition dating back to the 5th century — which is an income opportunity for rural families, especially women. Ambassador Wicki also visited the vocational college Prestige, one of seven TVET institutions offering the modernized and accredited 18-month Forest Work Specialist programme, supported under ECO. Georgia project co-financed by Switzerland.



Watch Ambassador Wicki speak about Swiss support to Georgia's silk industry [here](#)

More about the ALCP project [here](#)

More about the ECO.Georgia project [here](#)

## Sharing Swiss Expertise: Cooperation in Education and Climate Resilience



Switzerland continues to support Georgia through knowledge exchange and technical cooperation. ETH Zurich and Ilia State University collaborate closely in the framework of the Climate Change Adaptation project. A Summer School on sustainable forest management, co-financed by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, brought together scientists from ETH Zurich and Ilia State University. Participants attended lectures in Tbilisi and spent four days in the Sabaduri Forest, gaining practical experience in adaptive forest management.



Swiss experts Markus Zimmermann and Ricarda Bender-Gal joined specialists from Georgia's National Environment Agency for field assessments in several highland municipalities. Their work contributes to hazard mapping and climate-risk planning under the UNDP-led Climate Change Adaptation project supported by Switzerland.

More about the ECO.Georgia project [here](#)

More about Climate Change Adaptation project [here](#)

## 2025 Marks the End of the Vocational Education and Training (VET) in Agriculture Project



For more than 10 years (2013-2025), Switzerland has been supporting the modernization of the Georgia's vocational education system in agriculture. On 8 December, UNDP and Embassy of Switzerland's representatives hosted an event that summarized the achievements of the entire intervention.

The project was implemented by UNDP Georgia and aimed at strengthening vocational education and extension services to boost farmers' incomes and skills across Georgia. The project was carried out in three 4-year phases.

In the 1<sup>st</sup> phase (2013-2018), more than 4,000 farmers benefited from improved training, while over 10,000 received tailored extension services. The project also upgraded the capacities of teachers, extension workers, and service providers, and introduced Work-Based Learning (WBL) to increase private sector engagement.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> phase (2018-2022) aimed to institutionalize these achievements by enhancing coordination between vocational education colleges and extension services and promoting public-private partnerships for high-quality, practice-oriented training. Expanding digital tools improved access to training for farmers and students in remote areas.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> phase (2022-2025) enabled around 12,000 farmers and 1,800 students to upgrade their skills, making agriculture more productive and attractive. Ultimately, the project strengthened stakeholder collaboration, modernized A-VET, and improved satisfaction among trainees and employers.

More about the project [here](#)

## Peace and Human Rights



Thirty-four young participants from the South Caucasus and Central Asia took part in the OSCE Youth School and Youth Model OSCE Conference held on 20-27 July in Tbilisi. Co-financed by the Embassy of Switzerland, the programme introduced participants to the OSCE's broad concept of security, covering key themes such as early warning, climate change, media freedom, security sector governance, and the Women/Youth, Peace and Security agendas.

The Model OSCE Conference allowed participants to develop negotiation and mediation skills by simulating the full OSCE decision-making process.

Watch the video of participants [here](#)

## CULTURE

### 30 Years of GCSP Excellence

The Geneva Centre for Security Policy (GCSP) celebrated its 30th anniversary in 2025. Deputy Head of Mission Jacqueline Jakob-Gallmann hosted a reception with GCSP representatives and alumni — an occasion for reflection, exchange, and celebration. Georgia has been part of the GCSP community since 2004, with an active Alumni Hub established in 2018.

### Four Languages, One Country



The Embassy joined the annual celebration of the German Language Month. On 3 May, together with our German-speaking partners, we visited Akhaltsikhe as part of the German for Young and Old programme. Workshops, a concert, and small gifts made the day special for participants of all ages.

The Settimana della Lingua Italiana was marked on 13–20 October. Deputy Head of Mission Jacqueline Jakob-Gallmann visited Zugdidi School No. 3 to join an Italian class, while

Attaché Christoph Keller took part in the award ceremony for a students' exhibition in Tbilisi.

### Other events



On 21 September, Swiss author Anja Schmitter presented her book *Leoparda* at the Tbilisi International Festival of Literature.

The Swiss film *Der Grosse Sommer* by Stefan Jäger was screened at the Svaneti Film Festival on 11 September 2025.





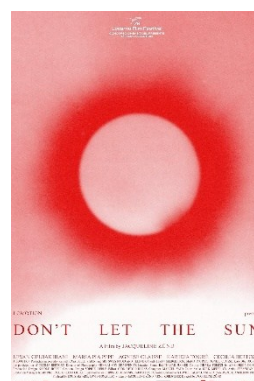


Swiss-Georgian relations date back to the 19th century, from early Swiss settlements to the arrival of Georgian students in Switzerland seeking European education. These longstanding connections are captured in the photobook *Stories of Georgian-Swiss Relationships*, produced with the support of the Embassy together with author Salome Chanturidze and the Georgian National Library.



The 26th Tbilisi International Film Festival featured four Swiss films including Nicolas Wadimoff's so-called GAZA TRILOGY, composed by Aisheen (2010), *The Apollo of Gaza* (2018), and *Who Is Still Alive* (2025).

The 4th film the festival presented was *Don't Let the Sun* (2025) by Jacqueline Zünd.



## CONSULAR

### New face at the Embassy



It is a great pleasure to briefly introduce myself in this year's newsletter. My name is Christoph Keller, I was born and raised in the canton of Thurgau and joined the Embassy of Switzerland in Tbilisi in June 2025 for the brief period of one year as a trainee in the consular- and management career of the FDFA. Prior to Tbilisi, I was stationed in Bern, Mumbai, Sydney and 12 short assignments in various other cities around the world. Tbilisi is an ideal posting to gather experience, not only in consular affairs, but also in matters of the financial management of international cooperation projects of the [Swiss Cooperation Office in the South Caucasus](#).

I already had the pleasure of meeting some of the Swiss community in Georgia at the Embassy's counter or during the celebration of the national day.

I look forward to assisting you with consular services ([tbilisi.consularaffairs@eda.admin.ch](mailto:tbilisi.consularaffairs@eda.admin.ch) / Phone: +995 322 75 30 01) or

meeting you in person on one of the next occasions.

### Renewal of Swiss Passports and ID cards

I would like to point out that you can renew your Swiss identity documents at the Swiss Embassy in Tbilisi or during your next stay in Switzerland. It is recommended to renew a passport six months prior to its expiry date. To initiate the order, please fill out an online application on [www.schweizerpass.ch](http://www.schweizerpass.ch). Should you wish to register your biometric data in any other Swiss Embassy or at a cantonal passport office in Switzerland, please indicate this under 'comments'. The Embassy will then forward your

passport application to the relevant Embassy or cantonal passport authority and will inform you by email about the further steps and how to make an appointment.

## Keeping the Swiss civil status register up to date

All civil status events that mark a person's life, from birth to death, are recorded in the Swiss civil status register. Swiss abroad, their spouses and children must report all civil status events, declarations and decisions to the Swiss representation responsible for their place of residence. Various civil status documents are therefore required. Detailed information can be found on our [website](#).

## Invitation to subscribe to the SwissCommunity newsletter

On behalf of SwissCommunity, we would like to invite you to subscribe to the SwissCommunity newsletter as Swiss citizen living abroad. The SwissCommunity newsletter is sent out around ten times a year. It is dedicated to topics that directly affect the Swiss abroad. It contains the following information:

- **Important news for the Swiss abroad:** Information on AHV, health insurance, military service, e-voting and [webinars](#).
- **Tips and tricks for living abroad:** practical recommendations that make [everyday life](#) easier for Swiss nationals living abroad or make it easier for them to return to Switzerland.
- Insights into **Swiss communities abroad:** on the activities of the [online platform](#).
- **Young Swiss abroad:** Information on [summer- and winter camps and other activities](#) that enable young people to stay connected to Switzerland.

By registering to the newsletter, you maintain and ensure a strong and solidary connection to Switzerland and will always stay informed. You can read the latest newsletter and subscribe to the newsletter [here](#) or on the website [www.swisscommunity.org](http://www.swisscommunity.org).



## Puzzle Interview displaying the Swiss Abroad

On behalf of the “Swiss Review” we invite you to take part in this [Puzzle Interview](#)! The purpose of their series “Fifth Switzerland Puzzle” is to make Swiss people living abroad visible in all their incredible diversity. It has been online since this summer and has grown quite a bit. However, there is not yet any representation of the Swiss living in Georgia or Armenia. All pieces will be published in the “Swiss Review”. Individual pieces, text and picture, will also be published on the social media channels of the Organization of the Swiss Abroad.

## Switzerland in your pocket

SwissInTouch is an engaging, modern information and communication platform designed especially for Swiss citizens abroad. The app complements existing channels such as the social media pages of the representations and the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA), its websites and the FDFA Helpline, which is open year round 24/7 to answer your queries. You no longer have to log on to different platforms or consult different communication channels to get the information you need.





## Recommendation for Swiss citizen in case of a crisis

We invite you to follow the elementary emergency recommendations “[Preparedness measures and what to do in a crisis situation](#)” which we consider to be a general measure of reasonable preparedness. If a crisis should occur, the Embassy would contact and inform you. Make sure to let the Embassy of Switzerland in Georgia ([through the online-desk](#)) know about any changes of address, e-mail-address, phone numbers and, if that is the case, inform us of your final departure from Georgia.

## Your Civic Rights: voting and electing as a Swiss abroad

If you are a Swiss citizen abroad, you can sign initiatives and vote at federal level. Dual nationality has no effect on your voting rights. If you wish to do so, you must be registered on the electoral roll of your last commune of residence or, if you have never lived in Switzerland, in your place of origin.

If you are not yet registered to vote or haven't received the quarterly voting materials by post, you can fill in the [form to apply to exercise political rights](#) either online or at the embassy.

## Job vacancy at the Consular Section of the Embassy



The consular team is looking to hire a Visa- and Consular Officer by March 2026. Are you experienced in managing administrative tasks and like to provide excellent customer service? Is communication in various languages your strength? Applications of all nationalities are welcome. Applications from candidates with Swiss citizenship or the citizenship of a member state of the Schengen area will be advantageous. A valid residence- and work permit in Georgia is a prerequisite for all non-Georgian candidates. We encourage you to check out the vacancy note on [our website](#). Deadline to apply is the 31.12.2025.

## Georgian Regions Through Swiss Lenses

Switzerland's diplomatic team continues exploring Georgia's rich cultural and natural heritage as part of our Georgian Regions Through Swiss Lenses series.

**Abastumani Observatory** – A historic scientific center nestled in the mountains, offering public tours and exceptional night-sky viewing. Efforts to preserve the dark sky remain essential for ongoing research.

**Pankisi** – A valley of serene beauty, untouched nature and warm hospitality, where traditions are shared with visitors like family.

**Tusheti** – Famous for its dramatic landscapes, medieval towers, and distinct architecture, Tusheti offers an unforgettable encounter with Georgia's remote highlands.

**Racha** – At Blauenstein's farm, Swiss expertise in cattle breeding merges with Racha's natural conditions to create high-quality livestock. Nearby, the Oni Museum — home to over 14,000 artifacts - presents a fascinating window into the region's history.

**Guria** – A land of tea traditions and fertile plantations. Switzerland supports the revival of Gurian tea through its Local Economic Development project. The Bakhmaro horse race added unforgettable moments to this year's regional visit.

**Kazreti – Visiting the Rich Metals Group (RMG) Site.** Switzerland remains the largest importer of Georgian gold. In 2025, as in previous years, over 90% of Georgia's gold exports were destined for the Swiss market. Ambassador Heidi Grau visited Rich Metals Group in Kazreti, one of Georgia's key gold producers, where the company presented its operations and ongoing efforts to meet Global Compact and Corporate Social Responsibility standards.



## 1 August – National Day of Switzerland



The Embassy marked 1 August with a lively gathering that brought together members of the Swiss community residing in the country. Guests enjoyed classic Swiss cuisine and music, creating a warm and festive setting.



**Embassy of Switzerland in Georgia**

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