

Tbilisi, Georgia

Partner city

Status of the project: Completed Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan



Basic Information

Urban area: 726 km²

Population: 1,227,811¹ | Growth rate: 1.33%

Country capital city

GDP per capita: USD 5,422

Modal Share:

Public transport: 49%

Walking: 28%

Private cars: 20%

Taxis: 2%

National GHG emissions per capita: 4.61 (tCO₂eq)

Exposure to climate change: Medium

Context

Tbilisi is the largest city and capital of the Republic of Georgia, located in the South Caucasus in East Georgia, along the bank of River Mtkvari. Due to its strategic location between Europe and Asia and its proximity to the Silk Road, the city is an important trade route between neighbouring countries, significantly experiencing high traffic levels, primarily through the Tbilisi Metropolitan Area. The 2024 population census indicates that around 1,227,811 inhabitants reside in the city, accounting for approximately 30% of Georgia's total population.

Tbilisi is on the road towards sustainable urban mobility and is working on major areas to promote it. Previously, the city was heavily dependent on private vehicle ownership, resulting in significant traffic congestion and environmental challenges such as air and noise pollution. However, from the 2010s onwards, the city has invested extensively in green transport networks in line with the [Tbilisi Sustainable Urban Transport Strategy](#). Today, Tbilisi has a 27.6 km long Soviet-era metro network servicing an average of 450,000 passenger trips a day and accounting for approximately 13% of total trips – operating as the backbone of the public transport system. The metro is complemented by an expanding BRT system, extensive municipal and minibus services, a ridership of more than 350,000 daily passengers, and a recently introduced bicycle road network.

The city, however, still faces major mobility-related challenges, of which three of the most pressing relate to a lack of infrastructural and fare integration of the diverse public transport services, a persistent predominance of private motorised transport and a very low modal share of active modes, especially cycling. Tbilisi joined the MobiliseYourCity Partnership in 2019 and is now part of a new project aiming to support city administrations in the South Caucasus to design, implement and further develop their urban transport systems in a participatory, sustainable, and integrated manner.

¹ Taken from <https://geostat.ge/media/61960/1-3-population-by-cities-and-boroughs.xlsx>

Georgia's capital is cooperating with various implementing partners of MobiliseYourCity to develop, among others, a Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP), improve the existing BRT system in the city centre, promote active transport, strengthen the capacities of the local government and develop a cable-car service.

Support from the Partnership

Technical Assistance: Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP)

Funded by: AFD for MobiliseYourCity Asia

Funding amount: EUR 406,000

Implemented by: AFD in collaboration with ADB and GIZ

Local counterpart: Municipality of Tbilisi

Supported Activities:

By Asian Development Bank (ADB)

- Infrastructure development and financing of the SUMP

By Agence Française de Développement (AFD)

- Technical Assistance to the Transport Department of the Tbilisi City Hall to monitor SUMP elaboration
- Follow-up on initiatives related to active mobility with the Tbilisi City Hall
- Complementary study on (i) improvement of existing BRT-light in the city centre; (ii) improvement of the standard bus network; (iii) potential development of a cable car system; (iv) development of bike share scheme and cycling master plan

Status of the SUMP development process

Project start: Q1 2019

Project completion: Q1 2023 (endorsed by Mayor Kakha Kaladze)

Completed outputs:

- Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan

SUMP key measures, leveraged financing and projected impact

The following table highlights the most significant measures identified in the SUMP.

| Measure | Cost Estimate |
|---|-----------------|
| Superblocks | USD 44,868,107 |
| Waterfront Revitalisation | USD 3,050,000 |
| Freedom Square and Rustaveli Avenue | USD 15,460,000 |
| Pedestrian-Oriented Kote Afkhazi Street | USD 3,685,000 |
| Didi Dighomi - City Centre Rail Link | USD 276,300,000 |
| Commuter Rail | USD 288,450,000 |

| Measure | Cost Estimate |
|--|-----------------|
| Metro Modernisation | USD 71,900,000 |
| Tbilisi Bus Transit (TBT) | USD 63,365,561 |
| Better Buses and Minibuses | USD 126,487,010 |
| Cable Cars | USD 235,700,000 |
| Station Square Upgrade and Bus Priority Crossing | USD 27,000,000 |
| Pedestrian and Cycle-Friendly River Crossings | USD 11,639,282 |
| Pedestrian Streets | USD 2,495,430 |
| Bicycle Network | USD 27,972,999 |
| On-Street Parking Management | USD 750,000 |
| Parking Levy | USD 950,000 |
| Vision Zero (speed limit reduction, safe cycle network, complete streets, safer junctions) | USD 79,081,000 |
| Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) | USD 230,347 |
| Intelligent Transport System (ITS) | USD 48,500,000 |
| Urban Freight Policy | USD 572,600 |

The following table summarises the total capital expenses (CAPEX) estimates for different measures in the SUMP.

| Urban transport investment measures | CAPEX Estimate (USD M) |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------|
| 5-Year Cost Estimate (Initiation) | 505 -515 |
| Total investment cost | 1,300-1,400 |
| Freedom Square and Rustaveli Avenue | USD 15,460,000 |

Finance leverage

Leveraged financing (resulting or enabled by the SUMP preparation process)²

| Description | Source of financing | Secured | Amount |
|---|---------------------|---------|------------------|
| Detailed design for Tbilisi Superblock project | ADB | N/A | USD 1,000,000 |
| Concept Design and Feasibility Study for Development of Superblocks in Tbilisi | ADB | N/A | USD 784,358.78 |
| Transport System Data Collection | ADB | N/A | USD 900,000 |
| Feasibility Study and Detailed Design for Tbilisi metro station upgrades | ADB | N/A | USD 1,422,547.35 |
| Preparation of Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP) for Tbilisi | ADB | N/A | USD 837,274.58 |
| Feasibility Study on the Development of Public and Tourist Transport Services on the Mtkvari River in Tbilisi | ADB | N/A | USD 791,290.29 |

² <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/project-documents/53118/53118-002-pp-en.pdf>

Associated financing (independently secured financing for measures related to the SUMP)

| Description | Source of financing | Secured | Amount |
|--|---------------------|---------|---------------|
| Sustainable urban mobility in Georgia (SUM Tbilisi) - Project implementation and accompanying measures Consultant (GOPA infra) | KfW | | EUR 4,362,467 |
| Connect Georgia – Shaping the mobility of tomorrow in Georgia | BMZ | | N/A |
| Sustainable Urban Mobility in the South Caucasus (Mobility4Cities) | BMZ, KfW | Yes | EUR 4,800,000 |
| Tbilisi City Hall Transport Advisory | CDIA | Yes | EUR 356,768 |

Projected impacts

A Social and Environmental Impact Assessment (SEIA) was undertaken for each of the proposed actions, focusing on 4 criteria:

- Social Impact – focusing on land acquisition, displacement of people, loss of agricultural land, loss of property, and displacement of minorities e
- Environmental Impact – whether the project is adjacent to an environmentally sensitive area and the potential environmental impacts of the project
- Economic Impact – focusing on the impacts on transport mode choice, jobs, productivity, regional GDP, and health
- Accessibility – improvements to public transport accessibility, as well as impact on the mobility impaired

The actions are evaluated based on these criteria using the following scale:

- A: weakest benefit/impact
- B: medium benefit/impact
- C: strongest benefit/impact

Social and environmental impact assessment

| Urban transport investment measures | Social | Environmental | Economic | Accessibility |
|--|--------|---------------|----------|---------------|
| Superblocks | C | C | B | C |
| Waterfront Revitalisation | C | C | C | C |
| Freedom Square and Rustaveli Avenue | C | C | C | C |
| Pedestrian-Oriented Kote Afkhazi Street | C | C | C | C |
| Didi Dighomi - City Centre Rail Link | C | C | B | C |
| Commuter Rail | C | C | B | C |
| Metro Modernisation | C | C | C | C |
| Tbilisi Bus Transit (TBT) | C | C | C | C |
| Better Buses and Minibuses | C | C | B | C |
| Cable Cars | C | C | B | C |
| Station Square Upgrade and Bus Priority Crossing | C | C | C | C |
| Pedestrian and Cycle-Friendly River Crossings | C | C | B | C |
| Pedestrian Streets | C | C | B | C |
| Bicycle Network | C | C | C | C |

Social and environmental impact assessment

| Urban transport investment measures | Social | Environmental | Economic | Accessibility |
|--|--------|---------------|----------|---------------|
| On-Street Parking Management | C | C | B | C |
| Parking Levy | C | C | B | B |
| Vision Zero (speed limit reduction, safe cycle network, complete streets, safer junctions) | C | C | B | C |
| Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) | C | C | B | C |
| Intelligent Transport System (ITS) | C | C | C | C |
| Urban Freight Policy | C | C | B | B |

Insights from practice: lessons learned from the SUMP process

The Tbilisi SUMP process highlighted the importance of early stakeholder engagement, integrated planning, and securing political commitment to ensure a comprehensive and actionable sustainable urban mobility strategy.

Perspectives for implementation

The Tbilisi Transport Plan was endorsed by Mayor Kakha Kaladze and is expected to move into the implementation phase. The city's leadership invites active participation from citizens to ensure a collaborative approach to bringing this vision to life.

Highlights in the past years

The plan was finalised in 2023, marking a significant milestone in Tbilisi's sustainable mobility journey.

Moreover, in the past years, significant progress has been made in modernising the Tbilisi Metro, enhancing the travel experience for its 500,000 daily passengers, particularly benefiting women and low-income groups. A phased investment program by the Cities Development Initiative for Asia (CDIA), a multi-donor trust fund managed by the ADB, has resulted in replacing outdated power cables and installing modern ventilators, effectively improving passenger safety and air quality. The city government has invested in the renovation of rolling stock and metro stations, which has increased trip frequency and improved overall infrastructure. As a result, Metro ridership has risen to 40% of all public transport users, while ongoing plans aim to enhance inclusivity and accessibility for vulnerable populations. Contributions from donors like the ADB and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development have further supported these efforts through substantial loans for station upgrades and infrastructure improvements. CDIA's assistance has also strengthened transport governance in Tbilisi, improving project planning and creating a unified transport and land use planning agency.

However, in December 2024, the German government decided to stop cooperation projects with the Georgian government, responding to the anti-EU shift in the Georgian government and the ongoing violent suppression of pro-European mass demonstrations. This will stop envisaged cooperation projects with a cumulated worth of 237 million euros.³

Updated in December 2024

³ <https://www.bmz.de/en/countries/georgia>