

In collaboration with

# Forbes

From a regional lender to a \$3.9B institution - how Georgia's leading bank is reshaping capital markets, digital finance & sustainable investment in the Caucasus.

## Bank of Georgia: Bridging Finance, Technology & Sustainability

# Pioneering Georgia's Financial Evolution

## How has Bank of Georgia driven capital markets & sector growth?

Over the past two decades, Georgia's GDP per capita has risen from \$1,000 to over \$9,000, and Bank of Georgia has not only benefited from this growth but also played a central role in that transformation. We evolved from a \$40 million equity base to a \$3.9 billion market cap institution. In 2006, we became the first company from the Caucasus to list on the London Stock Exchange and transitioned into a UK premium-listed entity by 2012. We've expanded our services from retail lending to sophisticated project financing, supporting everything from hydro plants to hospitality. Throughout, we've helped local businesses thrive while enabling their regional expansion into Armenia, Azerbaijan and Central Asia. This combination of stability and ambition is what drives us.

## How do you see Georgia's role as a regional business hub?

Georgia is becoming a "Switzerland of the Caucasus." With competitive tax rates, European legal frameworks and world-class digital banking, we offer a compelling value proposition. The largest global players, like BlackRock, Fidelity and J.P. Morgan, are among our shareholders, which speaks volumes about market confidence. Our regulatory environment supports innovation and businesses increasingly choose Georgia as a base for operations across the Caucasus and Central Asia. Our goal is not



Georgia is open for business—with zero tax on reinvested profits & some of the lowest renewable energy costs in Europe.

**ARCHIL GACHECHILADZE**

CEO, Bank of Georgia

only to serve Georgia but to become the financial and service center of the wider region. The country's strategic location, educated workforce and robust digital infrastructure reinforce that trajectory.

## How do you manage risk in volatile geopolitical times?

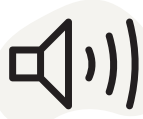
Being a systemic institution, we operate with higher liquidity and capital buffers to remain resilient. During moments of uncertainty, like the 2008 war or recent political events, we maintained full operational continuity and ensured access to physical cash. This helped preserve trust. We invest heavily in redundancy and uptime, and our systems deliver 99.84% service availability. It's a costly approach, but it safeguards public confidence and enables us to act swiftly and stably when others might hesitate. Resilience isn't just a strategy, it's a promise to the people and businesses who depend on us.

## What draws international investors to the bank, as well as to Georgia?

Our listing on the London Stock Exchange gives Georgia visibility. Investors who take a closer look discover an economy with solid fundamentals: low public debt (38% of GDP), low inflation and medium term real growth forecasts. Georgia offers free trade access to over 2.5 billion consumers and a tax environment that incentivizes reinvestment. For investors, Bank of Georgia offers compelling upside: we're trading at just five times



**\$3.7 Billion  
Market Cap**



**73 Net  
Promoter  
Score**



**1.65 Million  
Active Users**



**Best  
Digital Bank  
Global Finance**



**Corporate  
Tax: 0% on  
Reinvestment**





lements with discounts. These features are not only practical, they drive engagement. Over 1.65 million Georgians use our app regularly, and our Net Promoter Score jumped from 33 to 73 in six years. It's more than tech, it's customer-first culture, backed by tangible incentives for management. As we expand regionally, our tech stack becomes an exportable advantage.

#### **How does the bank integrate ESG & inclusion into its strategy?**

We go beyond internal emissions. We track the environmental impact of our lending and set ambitious green finance targets, which we consistently exceed. We finance solar, wind and hydro projects, and help clients reduce emissions through insulation and industrial upgrades. Alongside Georgian and English, we are also committed to inclusion: our app now supports Armenian, Azeri and Turkish, improving access for underserved communities. Our teen-focused "sCoolApp" teaches budgeting and saving because we believe financial education must start early to ensure long-term prosperity for individuals and the nation. Access to finance and sustainability are not side efforts, they're built into our strategic KPIs and performance reviews. That mindset is what will make us a regional leader in sustainable banking. ●

earnings—well below European peers, despite our growth trajectory and strong performance. Our shareholder base includes some of the world's top institutions and our ambition is to become a FTSE 100 company. As investor interest grows, so does interest in Georgia itself.

#### **What sets your digital strategy apart?**

In 2024, Global Finance named us the world's Best Digital Bank, which is a recognition that validated years of internal development. Our core systems and mobile applications are built entirely in-house, which gives us unmatched agility. Our app includes multicurrency wallets, low-cost stock trading, smart bill payments, even one-click traffic fine set-

### **Elevating Wealth Management**

Since 2005, Bank of Georgia Wealth Management (WM) has served over 2,000 high-net-worth clients across 75 countries. With a Net Promoter Score of 88.6% as of June 2024, it offers trusted expertise, world-class service and advanced digital tools. Clients benefit from integrated services including Galt & Taggart trading and a robust custody platform. AI enhances personalization by recommending investments, setting FX and loan rates and streamlining service. The new Internet Banking offers live custody tracking, custom dashboards and downloadable reports. Email Banking ensures 24/7 global access to Private Bankers. Clients can open accounts remotely via video onboarding, trade U.S. stocks through the app and access global custody tools. The exclusive American Express Centurion card adds premium benefits like private jet access, luxury hotel upgrades and VIP lounge entry.

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# Digital by Design: Inside the World's Best Digital Bank

In 2024, Bank of Georgia was named the World's Best Digital Bank by Global Finance Magazine, a notable recognition for an institution based in a country of fewer than four million people. Behind the accolade is a longer story shaped by long-term investment in local capabilities, strategic control over its own technology and a commitment to building systems that respond directly to the needs of Georgian users.

The bank's digital infrastructure has been developed almost entirely in-house. Over 700 software engineers, designers and product specialists are employed directly by the bank, and are responsible for developing its core banking systems, digital channels and payment technologies. This internal model has enabled faster iteration, closer alignment between business and product teams, and a higher degree of technical resilience. These attributes have become especially valuable as digital adoption has surged across Georgia's financial sector.

At the center of its offering is its flagship mobile app, which now counts over 1.65 million monthly active users. The app includes a wide range of features, from multicurrency wallets and U.S. stock trading to bill splitting, government service payments and fine discounting. It is also designed to be data-light, allowing users without mobile plans to access core functions. In a market where cost and coverage remain concerns for some segments, this attention to access has made a significant difference.

The result is one of the highest Net Promoter Scores in the global banking sector. The institution's NPS rose from 33 to 73 within a few years, a trajectory that reflects its structured approach to user feedback. Tools such as Medallia are used

to gather real-time customer input across multiple channels, with suggestions and complaints routed directly to product teams for triage and implementation. These teams work in short development cycles thereby allowing for continuous updates based on real usage data rather than top-down assumptions.

On the technology side, the financial group operates on a modern, cloud-native architecture. Its systems use a microservices framework, with Kubernetes for container orchestration through Rancher Prime. This has allowed for modular deployments and reduced downtime during updates. The bank also maintains an internal API ecosystem, enabling efficient integration of new tools and services without jeopardizing system stability. These investments have made it possible to scale with confidence, while

retaining ownership over the entire development lifecycle.

Its capabilities are increasingly being recognized beyond its home market. Elements of its platform are now being considered for adaptation by financial institutions in neighboring countries, and licensing opportunities are under discussion.

Internally, the bank applies structures and workflows more commonly seen in the tech sector. Cross-functional product teams are standard, with engineering, design, risk and legal teams embedded into the development process. Progress is measured not only in terms of product launches or digital adoption but also in how successfully new services address friction points for users. Project timelines are built around iterative delivery, with post-launch adjustments seen as a routine







part of the product life cycle. Despite its digital focus, the bank continues to report strong financial fundamentals. Its capital adequacy remains well above regulatory minimums, its return on equity is among the highest in the region, and it has consistently delivered profitable growth across both retail and corporate segments. Rather than relying on heavy brand marketing, the bank has stayed focused on the usability and relevance of its digital platform, allowing performance to drive reputation. The institution's position as a digital leader is grounded not in branding, but in structural clarity and long-term vision. Its systems are designed to be stable, scalable and user-focused, with teams structured to adapt quickly while remaining aligned with broader strategic goals. This model has allowed it to operate with the speed of a technology firm while maintaining the regulatory discipline of a bank. More broadly, it shows that digital

transformation is not exclusive to global players or fintech startups. It can emerge from national institutions that invest deliberately in talent, infrastructure and practical innovation, proving that modernization does not require external templates or fragmented solutions. ●



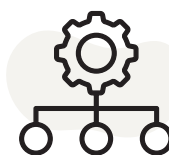
### 700+ In-House Developers

Internal teams fully design & manage tech ecosystem



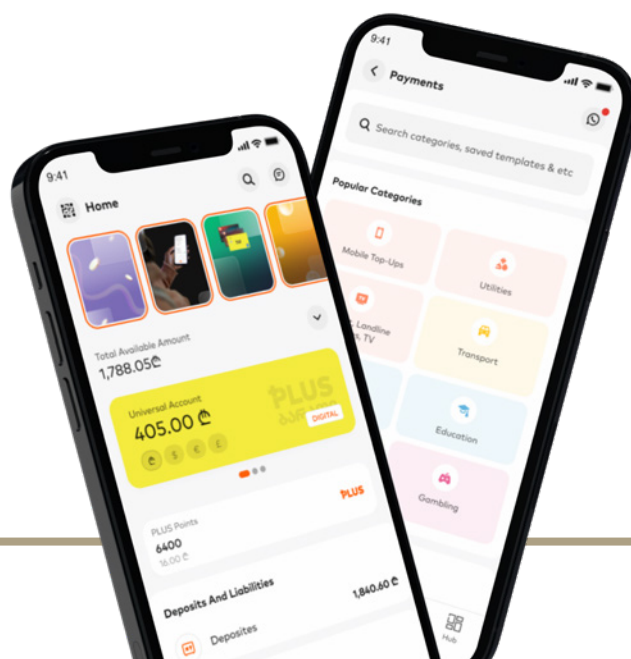
### 5-Language App Interface

Georgian, English, Armenian, Azerbaijani & Turkish



### Modular Infrastructure

Microservices & Kubernetes enable seamless updates





# Beyond Banking: Purpose, Progress & People

In the evolving landscape of global finance, institutions are increasingly recognizing the imperative to embed Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) principles into their core operations. Bank of Georgia stands as a pertinent example, demonstrating how a national bank can integrate ESG considerations across its services and internal practices, not as an add-on, but as a guiding framework for long-term resilience and shared value.

A significant aspect of the bank's ESG strategy lies in its green lending initiatives, particularly those supporting the renewable energy transition. Through programs such as the Energy Credit facility, the bank helps finance the development of solar energy infrastructure, offering both businesses and households an opportunity to reduce utility expenses while lowering their environmental footprint. Installations supported by the bank range from rooftop panels for SMEs to utility-scale solutions in peri-urban areas. In addition to solar, the bank also works with international development partners to co-finance hydropower and

wind energy projects, positioning itself as an active stakeholder in Georgia's energy diversification efforts.

The bank's participation in these projects is not limited to financing alone. Environmental assessments are embedded into the credit evaluation process, and each approved loan includes a follow-up mechanism to evaluate outcomes. To bring structure to these efforts, the bank has adopted green Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), which quantify energy saved, emissions avoided and alignment with international green lending standards. These metrics are incorporated into its annual sustainability reports, which are reviewed by third-party auditors and benchmarked against regional ESG performance indicators.

Equally central to the bank's mission is accessibility. By reducing language barriers, the bank actively promotes financial inclusion in areas where minority-language speakers have historically faced challenges accessing digital services. This commitment to equal access is also visible in the app's user interface, which is regularly updated based on feedback

from users with varying levels of digital literacy.

Financial education has also become a pillar of the bank's social agenda. Among its most impactful initiatives is sCoolApp, an interactive educational platform designed for students and teens. The app, developed in collaboration with educators and youth engagement specialists, offers a gamified curriculum focused on budgeting, saving, spending and the principles of financial planning. Beyond the digital component, the program includes in-person workshops delivered in schools through a growing network of partner teachers. The initiative supports Georgia's broader national financial literacy strategy and has



## sCoolApp in Classrooms

1st banking app for school students



## Green KPIs in Lending

Environmental metrics guide lending & reporting



## ESG Training for All

Staff receive onboarding & ongoing ESG education

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already reached thousands of secondary school students across multiple regions. Internally, the integration of ESG is visible not only in policies but also in the way staff are evaluated and incentivized. As of 2023, the bank has introduced ESG-linked objectives into performance reviews for a wide range of roles, from branch-level staff to product developers. These objectives differ by department. A risk officer may be assessed on climate-related disclosure alignment, while a relationship manager might be evaluated on delivering sustainable finance products to SMEs. These KPIs are tied to bonus eligibility and career progression, reinforcing the message that ESG is not a sideline, but part of how success is defined. To support this shift, the bank has enhanced its internal training program. All new employees undergo ESG onboarding

modules, which include sessions on environmental risk management, ethical lending, data privacy and social impact. For existing staff, regular training cycles include briefings on regulatory developments, stakeholder expectations and case studies drawn from global peers. These learning pathways are reinforced through practical tools, like checklists for ESG due diligence and scenario calculators for project impact, which employees can use in day-to-day operations. Transparency and accountability are key elements in the bank's ESG communications. Its annual sustainability report, aligned with Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) and Task Force on Climate-Related Financial Disclosures (TCFD) frameworks, includes detailed data on the institution's carbon footprint, gender balance across management and

social investments. These documents are publicly available and form the basis of the bank's stakeholder engagement efforts with regulators, civil society and shareholders. In 2023, the bank also became a formal signatory to the UN Global Compact, joining a global network of companies committed to responsible business practices.

In a region where ESG adoption remains uneven, the bank's initiatives reflect both local responsiveness and forward-looking strategy. By financing green energy, offering inclusive digital tools, empowering young people through financial literacy, and aligning internal incentives with sustainability outcomes, it positions itself not only as a commercial leader but also as an institutional bridge between Georgia's economic aspirations and its social and environmental commitments. ●





BANK OF GEORGIA

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# WORLD'S BEST

## DIGITAL BANK 2024

# BY GLOBAL FINANCE