LANCET COUNTDOWN: TRACKING PROGRESS ON HEALTH AND CLIMATE CHANGE
In collaboration with Wellcome

A decade tracking progress on health and climate change

GEORGIA

LANCET COUNTDOWN ON HEALTH AND CLIMATE CHANGE
DATA SHEET 2026

Health and Climate Change in Georgia

The Lancet Countdown on Health and Climate Change tracks the connections between health and climate change. In its tenth iteration, the 2026 Global Report shows that the health impacts of climate change have escalated and frequently accelerated in the decade since the Paris Agreement came into force.

This document presents key country-level findings from the 2026 Lancet Countdown report for Georgia.

Climate change is driving the vast majority of heatwave days now experienced in Georgia. Heatwave exposure among young children and older adults has risen sharply, and more working hours are being lost to heat, mostly among agricultural workers.

Georgia's electricity is largely low-carbon, but households and road transport energy remain heavily reliant on fossil fuels, air pollution carries a substantial economic cost, and preparedness for the low-carbon transition has weakened.

Deaths linked to eating too few plant-based foods have fallen in Georgia. However, emissions from red meat and dairy, and deaths linked to eating too much of them, are both rising.

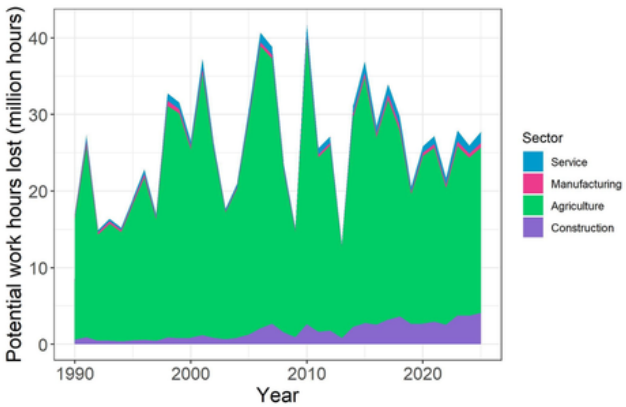
Heat and Health

Exposure to high temperatures increases the risk of heat-related illness and mortality. Vulnerable groups, including older adults, young children, pregnant women, and those with pre-existing conditions, face the greatest risks.

93% of the heatwave days that people in Georgia were, on average, exposed to between 2021 and 2025 would not have been expected to occur without climate change. (Indicator 1.1.1)

Children under one year of age and adults over 65 experienced an average of 10 and 11 additional heatwave days per year, respectively, between 2016 and 2025. This was an increase of 196% and 206% compared with the 1986–2005 baseline. (Indicator 1.1.1)

Annual potential work hours lost, disaggregated by economic sector. Georgia, 1990 to 2025.



ECONOMIC COSTS OF EXTREME HEAT

Heat stress reduces people's capacity to work safely, particularly outdoors, threatening incomes and the social determinants of health, while heat-related deaths impose a growing cost on society. In Georgia, where many people work outdoors, including in agriculture, protecting workers and integrating heat risks into labour and economic policies is essential to safeguard livelihoods.

- The average annual economic value of heat-related mortality losses in those over age 65 was US$600 million between 2021 and 2025, which is equivalent to 32,300 average incomes of Georgia. This represents a 120% increase since 2000 to 2004. (Indicator 4.1.2)
- The potential income lost from reduced labour capacity due to heat was US$ 40 million in 2025. Workers in the agricultural sector were the most severely affected, incurring 66% of the losses. (Indicator 4.1.3)

People were exposed to 268 more hours of moderate or higher risk of heat stress if undertaking moderate outdoor physical activity (e.g., brisk walking) per year in 2016-2025 compared with the 1990s. (Indicator 1.1.2)

Heat exposure caused an annual loss of 27 million potential labour hours on average, between 2016 and 2025, which is 26% higher than the average year in the 1990s. The agriculture sector accounted for 82% of losses. (Indicator 1.1.3)

Energy Transition and Health Co-benefits

Fossil fuel combustion contributes to harmful air pollution, increasing the risk of respiratory and cardiovascular diseases and premature mortality. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), Georgia's annual mean concentration of fine particulate matter ($PM_{2.5}$) was 19 µg/m³, almost four times the WHO's recommended annual guideline of 5 µg/m³. Reducing dependence on polluting fuels can improve air quality and protect health, while also reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

In 2023, the carbon intensity of Georgia's energy system increased to 47 tCO_2/TJ, which is 4% higher than in 2016. As of 2023, coal made up almost 3% of Georgia's total energy supply, but none of electricity generation. Low-carbon sources accounted for 17% of total energy supply and 76% of electricity. (Indicator 3.1.1)

In 2023, 15% of household energy came from electricity; however, 72% came from fossil fuels. And 13% of household energy was still coming from harmful biomass, a 57% decrease from 2016. (Indicator 3.1.2)

In 2023, Georgia had still not adopted electricity use in the transport sector, and fossil fuels still accounted for almost 100% of all road transport energy. (Indicator 3.1.3)

In 2023, the monetised value of premature mortality due to air pollution in Georgia amounted to over US$2 billion, the equivalent of 7% of GDP. (Indicator 4.1.4)

Georgia had a net-negative carbon revenue in 2024, indicating fossil fuel subsidies were higher than carbon prices. The country saw a net-subsidy of US$10 million, which is equivalent to 0.6% of the national health budget. (Indicator 4.3.2)

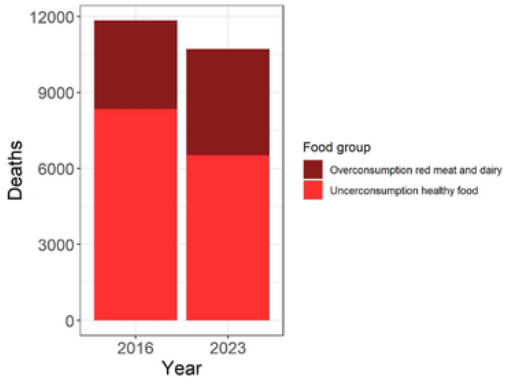
Diet and Health

Diets high in red and processed meat and dairy, and low in fruits, vegetables, legumes, whole grains, nuts and seeds, increase the risk of chronic disease and drive greenhouse gas emissions. In Georgia, where livestock farming is an important source of rural livelihoods, policies that support healthier, more plant-rich diets alongside a fair transition for farmers can deliver benefits for health, the climate and rural communities.

The emissions associated with demand for agricultural food products increased by 13.7% between 2016 and 2023. Red meat and dairy emissions increased by 14.7% in the same time period and accounted for 65% of all consumption-related emissions in 2023. (Indicator 3.3.1)

In 2023, 6500 deaths were linked to not eating enough healthy plant-based foods, like fruits, vegetables, beans, whole grains, nuts, and seeds, down from 8300 in 2016. Another 4200 deaths were linked to eating excessive dairy, red meat, and processed meat, an increase by about 20% (almost 700 deaths) from 2016. (Indicator 3.3.2)

The graph shows the number of deaths attributable to dietary imbalances in 2016 and 2023 - namely high intake of red meat and dairy and low intake of nutritious plant-based foods



Adaptation, Planning and Resilience for Health

Building resilience to the health impacts of climate change depends on sustained political commitment, private sector engagement and strong health emergency preparedness. In Georgia, more consistent integration of health into national climate policy, alongside stronger emergency preparedness, is needed to protect the population from growing climate-related health threats.

Georgia did not mention the intersection of climate change and health in their UN General Debate in 2025, although it did so in 2019, 2020 and 2022. Georgia has mentioned health topics in the first 2 NDCs it submitted. The country's second NDC mentioned the most health topics yet (7 mentions), including overall health, disease, infections and medical infrastructure. (Indicator 5.4.1)

In 2025, Georgia reported medium implementation of health emergency management capacity. This is a decrease from 2022. (Indicator 2.2.4)

Of 35 companies in Georgia that submitted reports as part of their participation in the UN Global Compact (the world's largest voluntary sustainability initiative for companies), 10 (29%) referred to the health dimensions of climate change in 2024. (Indicator 5.5)

Romanello M, Walawender M, Israelsson J et al. The 2026 report of the Lancet Countdown on health and climate change: A decade of escalating health harms and a decisive moment for all. The Lancet 2026; published online October 2026. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(26)01779-4
World Health Organization (2023). Health and environment scorecard: Georgia