



Funded by
the European Union



NEWSLETTER #4

EU Twinning project at the Center for Disease Control and Public Health of Georgia

“Support in Implementation of Health Impact Assessment Practice in Georgia” (2022-2024), August 2023

The twinning project consists of four major components:

- Approximating Georgian legislation to EU directives in carrying out Health Impact Assessment
- Building technical and administrative capacities of NCDC to improve the Health Impact Assessment (HIA) practice in Georgia
- Building partnerships between Georgian institutions and improving data value chain for HIA
- Improving public participation, involving civil society, and disseminating results in HIA

Component 1: Approximating Georgian legislation to EU directives in carrying out Health Impact Assessment

Three workshops in March and April 2023 were organized on environmental health legislation for risks assessment and management related to air quality, electromagnetic fields and environmental assessment of airfields. In this framework, Caroline Paul, head of the Outdoor Environment and chemical substances at the Ministry of Health of France, met with Georgian colleagues from health and environment authorities to present the implementation of respective directives in France. Different recommendations on legislation changes were formulated.



A study-visit to France was organized from 24th to 29th of April 2023 for ten representatives of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, the LELP National Center for Disease Control and Public Health (NCDC) and the LELP National Environment Agency (NEA).

The main purpose of the study visit was to familiarize with health in the environmental impact assessment process and cooperation between institutions in the direction of health and

environmental issues. Within the framework of the study visit, special attention was paid to air quality, which allowed participants to discuss in detail issues such as environmental burden of disease associated with air pollution, legislation and communication for indoor air quality and ambient air during high pollution episodes, solutions at local levels for improving air quality, management resources and capacities in the health and environmental authorities.

In June 2023, the Government of Georgia passed different legislation pieces with both environmental and health co-benefits in line with the requirements of the Association Agreement:

– By the Decision №238 of the Government of Georgia, the technical regulation "on the Introduction on the Territory of Georgia the limit values provided by EU legislation for emissions (exhaust gasses) from different types of vehicles and other mobile and mechanical means polluting ambient air with harmful substances" was adopted on 28 June 2023. From January 1, 2024, the import of cars produced before 2013 will be restricted to gradually reduce air pollution from the transport sector across the country. Emission limit norms corresponding to the Euro 5 standard are allowed for cars. If a vehicle emission standard does not meet the Euro 5 norm, it may no longer be registered in a country. Registration (import) is only permitted from countries implementing Euro 5 and other higher standards;

– The Law on Water Resources Management (in line with different EU directives like Water Framework Directive, Drinking Water directive, Bathing Water directive, Nitrates directive, etc.) was adopted by Parliament on 30/06, which will considerably change the water system in Georgia in the coming years;

– The Law on Industrial Emissions adopted by the Parliament of Georgian on 29 June 2023 outlines the procedure and conditions for issuing an integrated permit for industrial activities that may cause pollution, and it establishes mechanisms for monitoring compliance with these conditions; it also promotes the Best Available Techniques of the EU for mitigating industrial emissions.

Component 2: Building technical and administrative capacities of NCDC to improve the Health Impact Assessment (HIA) practice in Georgia

Colleagues from the French School of Public Health facilitated different workshops with the NCDC staff for the elaboration of the guidelines on HIA/Health in Environmental Assessment. In order to ensure the application of the manual and tools (forms, scoping

evaluation sheet, causal models, etc.), it is planned to approve them with an administrative-legal act and widely distribute them among competent agencies.



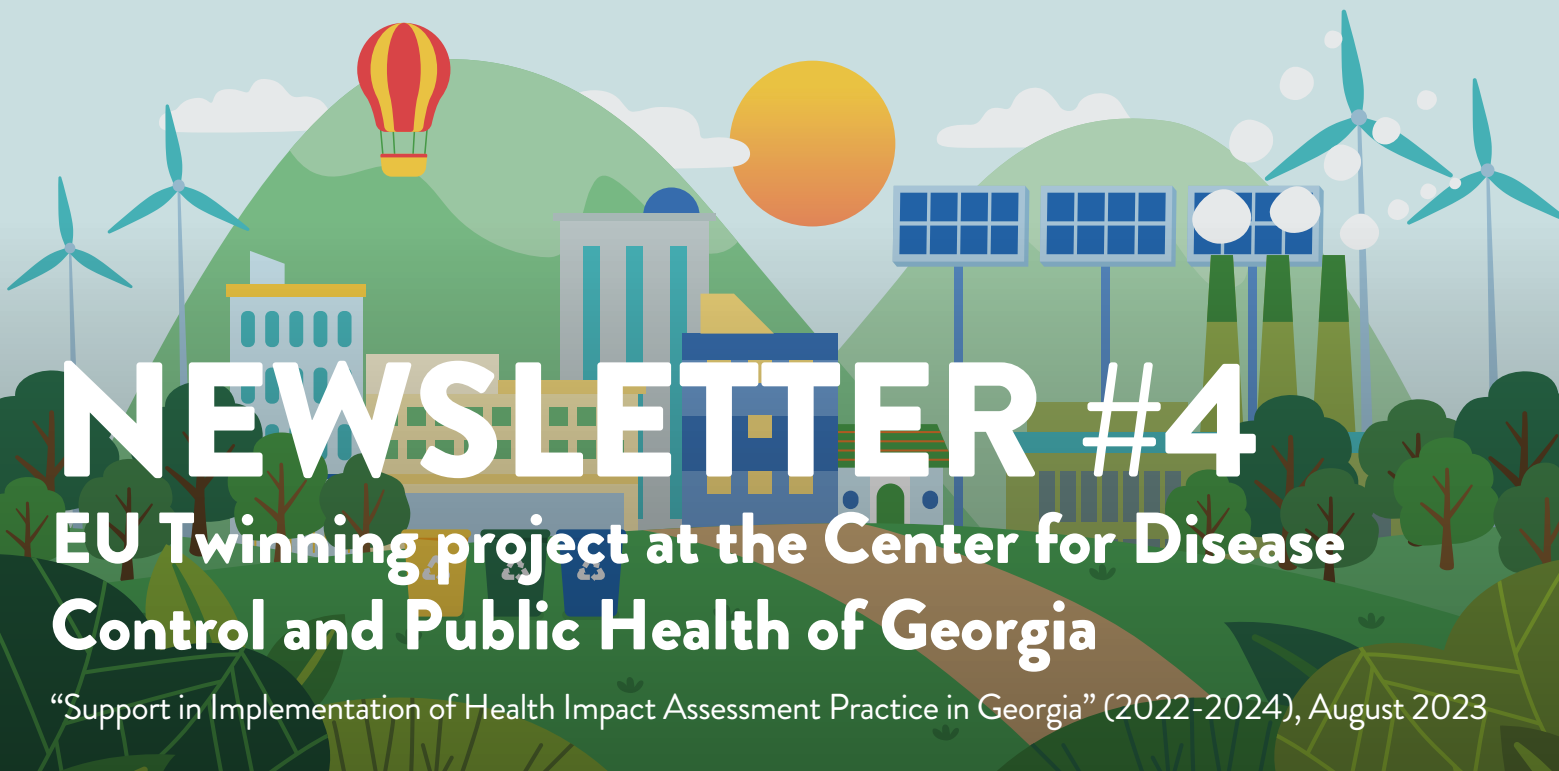
10 participants from the NCDC, the NEA and LELP Spatial and Urban Development Agency of the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia took part in a 9-day training in France on health in environmental assessment and the tools elaborated. The workshops included sharing of theoretical knowledge, hands-on work and exercises using appropriate tools and field visits. The representatives of the agencies participating in the seminar had the opportunity to widen their knowledge and strengthen cooperation.



Different missions on administrative basis for HIA were carried out and recommendations on human resources and budget changes have been formulated. Task descriptions for the HIA process were developed for the NCDC staff: it will support the Environmental Health Department and other structural units (e.g. Health Promotion Division, Legal Division, etc.) to manage HIA cases. According to the recommendation of experts, the NCDC budget for HIA should also be made sustainable to allow for: i) more internal resources to be used (for instance: health promotion, social marketing, website maintenance); ii) use of external expertise if needed, and iii) the participation of the NCDC to the public hearings.



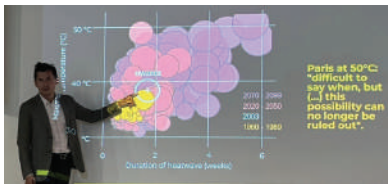
Funded by
the European Union



NEWSLETTER #4

EU Twinning project at the Center for Disease Control and Public Health of Georgia

“Support in Implementation of Health Impact Assessment Practice in Georgia” (2022-2024), August 2023



Paris at 50°C: "difficult to say when, but (...) this possibility can no longer be ruled out".

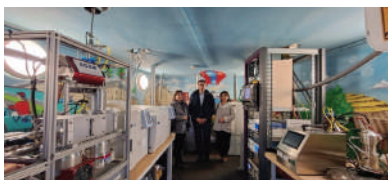
A second study-visit to France was carried out from 19th to 24th of June with the purpose of gaining knowledge on topics related to health impacts of climate change, heatwave risks assessment and management, and water resources protection. Meetings with French institutions at national and regional levels allowed for understanding the challenges of heat, while meetings with municipalities like Paris Municipalities and Marseille Municipality enabled the participants to discover local solutions implemented against heatwaves and especially heat-urban islands.



Oasis schools to protect our children

Component 3: Building partnerships between the public institutions and improving data value chain for HIA

Further work on the data quality for the quantitative health impact assessment of outdoor air quality of Tbilisi, Rustavi, Kutaisi and Batumi was made with the cooperation of the EU project “Support to Environmental Protection and Fight against climate change”, Geostat, the NCDC and NEA.



The environmental data has to be of a certain quality and validity to be used for quantitative evidence-based risk and impact assessments for determinants where science has proved the causal relationship between exposure to a pollutant (for instance to Particulate Matter 2.5) and health outcome (mortality). Evaluation of monitoring data of air quality in Tbilisi has shown that some data can be used for our quantitative health impact assessment of outdoor air quality. Further work continues for the other cities.

Component 4: Improving public participation, involving civil society, and disseminating results in HIA

In cooperation with Finnish experts a recommendation document was elaborated for the architecture of the website of the NCDC for HIA process, which includes the design of general information of HIA, access to the guidelines and tools, template for a specific project case, etc.

In May 2023, the NCDC, in cooperation with the Expertise France and the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare, has announced a short film contest on prevention of health problems related to heatwaves. The twinning team has received different videos and the selection of the winner has been made in August 2023.



Further results

Santé Publique France has invited the NCDC to join the working group of the International Association of the National Public Health Institutes (IANPHI) on

climate change and health.

On July 5-7 of 2023, the 7th Ministerial conference of the European Process of Health and Environment by the World Health Organization was held in Budapest, Hungary, which was attended by the Ministers of Health and Environment of 53 countries of the WHO European Region and more than 600 delegates. Led by the leadership of Germany and Georgia, a new WHO Environmental Health Human Biomonitoring Partnership for the European Region (“HBM Partnership”), has been launched and already joined by Austria, Belgium, France, Hungary, Lithuania and Spain. Based on the close cooperation established within the framework of the Twinning Project, Santé Publique France will be joining the Human Biomonitoring Partnership and will use different resources towards expanding the application of HBM as a scientific tool to inform decision making, sharing experiences and building capacities across the WHO European Region for the use of HBM in the regulation of hazardous chemicals and public health. Santé Publique France, is a co-leader of the HORIZON EUROPE “Partnership on the Assessment of Risks from Chemicals (PARC, 2022-2029)” and shall also support the integration of Georgia into the mentioned partnership.

PROJECT INFORMATION

Antoine Pogorzelski – Resident Twinning Adviser (RTA)
Expertise France
antoine.pogorzelski@expertisefrance.fr
T: +995 551 115 754

A quarterly newsletter published by the RTA office of the EU-financed twinning project

This publication was produced with the financial support of the European Union. Its contents are sole responsibility of the Twinning Project and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union

