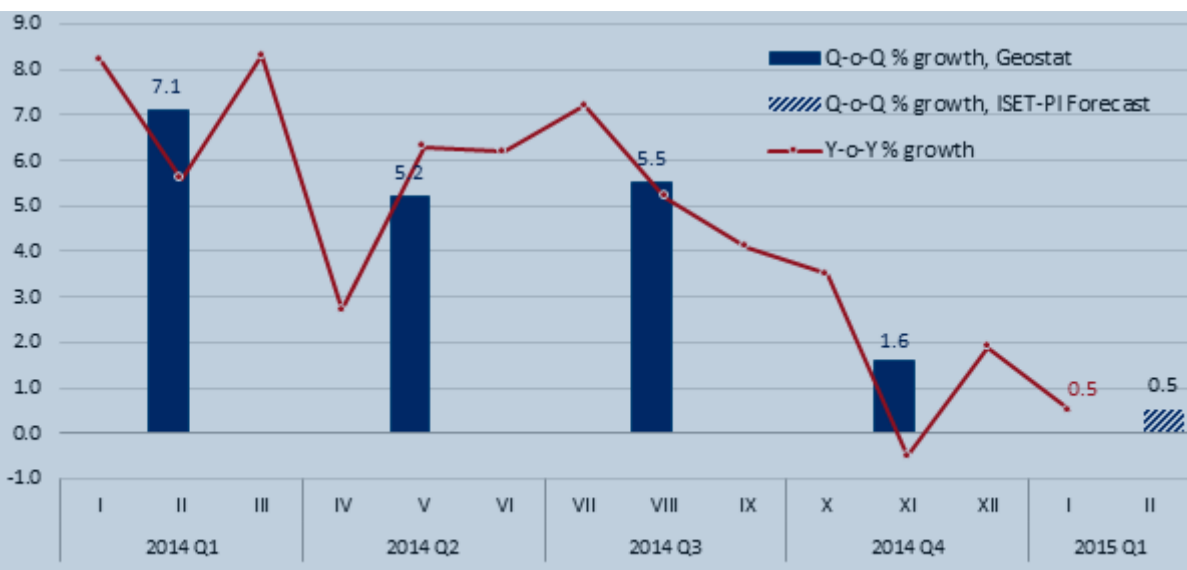




NEWS. RESEARCH. EVENTS.

ISSET Policy Institute was founded in 2011 by the Partnership for Economics Education and Research (PEER) with the financial support of the Think Tank Fund (TTF) of the Open Society Institute.



Issue # 25, March 2015

Slowdown of growth continues in January: Lari depreciation against the US dollar not enough to lift exports

According to Geostat's rapid estimates, real GDP increased by 4.9% in February. This comes as welcome news after several consecutive months of low and, at times (November 2014), negative growth.

[Read More >>](#)

PROJECT UPDATES:

Consumer Confidence Index: The index stabilizes at a low level of consumer confidence

Real Estate Price Index: Lari depreciation is behind a gradual reduction in Tbilisi housing prices

Leading GDP Indicator: January data gives little reason to be optimistic about annual growth

Khachapuri Index: Feeling The Heat of Lari Depreciation



SME Policy Assessment in Georgia

ISSET Policy Institute was contracted by OECD to collect and compile data on SME perceptions of government policies based on the policy dimensions of the EU Small Business Act, which tries to identify strength and weaknesses in policy design and implementation, and allows for comparison and benchmarking of countries.

[Read More >>](#)



Effectiveness of the Agricultural Card Program in Georgia

ISSET-PI has recently completed The Agricultural Card Program project, implemented since 2013. In order to assess the effectiveness of this program, APRC researchers conducted focus group discussions with farmers and individual interviews with input suppliers in different regions of Georgia.

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Increasing Human Capital Accumulation by Poor

The project elaborates on the potential reasons behind rapid decrease in tertiary education enrollment in Georgia starting from 2005. It proposes several policy recommendations aimed at improving educational outcomes and job market skills in Georgia.

[Read More >>](#)



Population Situation Analysis (PSA) Georgia 2014

United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) has recently published a comprehensive report, providing an integrated analysis of the population and reproductive health dynamics, their linkages and impacts on poverty, inequality and development. ISSET Policy Institute researchers have served as national consultants, contributing to the elaboration of the PSA section on Socio-Economic Context in Georgia.

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HIGHLIGHTS:

Apply for the ISET MA Program in Economics



ISSET is opening the annual application process for its highly prestigious Master's Degree Program in Economics. Applications for admission in 2015 are accepted online. The deadline for applications is May 5, 2015.

[Read More >>](#)



Sharing Georgian Experience of Economic Transformation with the Ukrainian Delegation

On March 12, ISSET hosted the Ukrainian delegation within the scope of the project "Ukraine out of Crises through Dialogue" implemented by the Caucasian House. The main purpose of the meeting was to share experience of Georgian economic transformation throughout the last decade.

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ISSET Public Lecture Series: Giorgi Bakradze Reflects on Lari Devaluation

On Thursday, April 2nd, Giorgi Bakradze, the Advisor in Economics Issues to the President of the National Bank of Georgia, gave a public lecture organized by ISSET. The main topic of his presentation was Formation of Exchange Rate that addressed currently occurred exchange rate changes.

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FROM THE BLOG:



All the Roads Lead to Tskaltubo

"Roulette until six in the evening. Lost everything", notes Leo Tolstoy on July 14, 1857. He did not pen these words in Moscow or St Petersburg", writes Elizabeth Neu. "It was in Baden-Baden that Tolstoy closed his diary with a sigh that night." Tolstoy was not the only literary genius to have travelled thousands of miles from Russia to take the waters and enjoy the thrill at the roulette tables...

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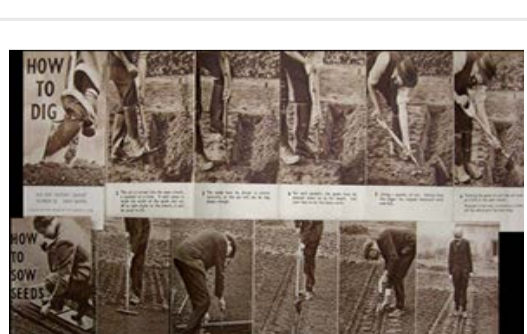


Why Georgia is not South Korea (or Israel)?

Back in October 2014, soon after the introduction of new [visa regulations](#) by the Georgian government, I visited Seoul, the capital of South Korea. An unpleasant surprise awaited me on the way back home at the Seoul airport. The young stewardess checked my (Israeli) passport and informed me that, according to the system, I will not be allowed to board the flight (to Istanbul) unless I show a Georgian residence card or buy a return ticket.

[Read More >>](#)

Does it Make Sense to Subsidize Smallholder Georgian Agriculture, and if so How?



While Georgia never faced anything like a wartime food crisis, the agricultural policies implemented by the Georgian Dream coalition government in 2013-2015 did not lack in ambition, seeking to make up for more than a decade of "active neglect" of Georgia's smallholder agriculture by the Saakashvili administration. In this piece, we take a critical look at one of the first government initiatives, the Agricultural Card Program, introduced in February 2013.

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