

# FEASIBILITY STUDY FOR NEW PUBLIC TRANSPORT SYSTEM (LRT) IN TBILISI

## FUNDED BY FRENCH GOVERNMENT

Strategically located at the crossroads between Asia, Middle East and Europe, along the historic Silk Road, Georgia's position makes it an important commercial transit route. The country inherited a well-developed transportation system when it became independent in 1991, but, lack of money and political unrest have cut into the system's maintenance and allowed it to deteriorate somewhat since independence.

Since the nineteenth century, Tbilisi has been the centre of the Caucasus region and **its development has become a key challenge and a priority for the Government**. Important issues such as traffic congestion, air pollution and lack of reliability of the public transport system and lack of calming zones arise. They are reinforced by the increase in private car ownership, damages on the road network, the decrease in quality and attractiveness of public transport services, which entail the deterioration of quality of life for Tbilisi inhabitants. Capital and largest city of Georgia, Tbilisi counts 1.4 million inhabitants representing 25% of the national population and more than 56% of the urban one

For a couple of years, the whole city has been reconstructed. Even if Old Tbilisi keeps a special position with a high touristic attractiveness, new urban centralities have appeared, such as Vake, Saburtalo or Didube, around the central station and the stadium; Digomi and towards Didi Digomi in the northern part of Tbilisi. This will be reinforced by new urban developments, especially the Uptown Tbilisi project and the new University complex projected in Digomi; and retail and residential developments near the central station, Ortachala and Avlabari.

In this context, the development of a sustainable urban public transport network is a key component for the development of urban areas and to turn Tbilisi into an important business centre in the Caucasus region. Based on local strategy and existing masterplans, the Municipality is willing to

- to meet with the increasing demand and guarantee good mobility conditions for all citizens;
- to improve tourist and inhabitant's quality of life expectations and environment preservation;
- to provide world-class infrastructure to allow investors to find a convenient and efficient environment.

In this context, the **necessity to create new reliable LRT lines** to develop a heavy public transport network linking all the main areas of the city has appeared. The required steps to implement a feasibility study for these new lines have been identified as detailed below:

- optimisation of the all public modes network, based on a comprehensive and reliable **household survey** to obtain new O/D matrices,
- definition of the LRT routes and feasibility study
- Economical and financial aspects,
- Environmental aspects.