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Basing on my research on the Association Agreement signed between the EU and Georgia and a paper on “The EU-Georgia Association Agreement: An Instrument To Support The Development Of Georgia Or Lip Service?” “published in “Comparative Economic Research”, Volume 18, Number 2, 2015 (The Journal of the University of Lodz, Poland) I would like to submit a few conclusions relating to the implementation of this agreement. Some of them are – in my opinion – relevant also for other similar agreements signed by the EU with other partners of the ENP.

1.The Association Agreement is an instrument which has the potential to enhance Georgia’s position as a country on the way to full market economy, based on democratic values, strong and stable domestic institutions, and on EU-related legislation. In this way, the Agreement should anchor Georgia into the western economic and political system.

2.Adjustments related to the implementation of the Agreement will involve costs. The EU should provide both expertise and financial assistance for the adoption of the provisions of the DCFTA and the whole Association Agreement as DCFTA itself is not sufficient to achieve the expected benefits. Also, the expertise to Georgian institutions and decision-makers would help. In particular, assistance and expertise offered by Members from Central and Eastern Europe would be useful as these countries have gathered plenty of their own experience with economic and political transformation as well as with implementation of their association agreements in the 1990s.

3.Public support is necessary in order to speed up the appearance of economic benefits in Georgia. Without them, integration for its own sake or the adoption of the “EU model” will not necessarily be beneficial. EU could support Georgian authorities in preparing and implementing a broad information campaign. Right now, very few “average” people, but also businessmen, know exactly what the Association Agreement is about as the text of the Agreement is very long (over 1,000 pages), full of details and not always clear.

4.Offering Georgia free visa regime would be a crucial step towards making the Agreement more people-friendly and assuring citizens that the EU actually supports Georgian European aspirations . Such a decision has been taken in April 2014 vis-a-vis Moldovians. Georgian people claim that their country meets all the formal EU requirements for visas waiver to a greater extent than (or at least to the same extent as) Moldova and they do not understand why they are still deprived of a similar solution.

5.Also, greater EU support for education of young Georgians would be invaluable. Educated people are the greatest asset of every country. Wider access to EU Erasmus higher education programs and to academic staff exchange would greatly improve the growth potential of the country.

6. In general, the Association Agreements and DCFTAs are the right instrument for all partners to get closer to the EU economy and political and legal order. This has been earlier confirmed by the Association Agreements signed by the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. The content of these Agreements should be, however, more tailored to the needs and circumstances of individual partners, reflecting, for example a different role of migration and security issues, rate of liberalisation of different sectors of economy to avoid the collapse of some sectors, scope of openness of movement of capital etc.