Caucasus Barometer 2024 Georgia

METHODOLOGICAL REPORT

Funded by:

CRRC-Georgia

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What is Caucasus Barometer?

The Caucasus Barometer (CB) is a regular nationwide household survey conducted by CRRC offices in the South Caucasus. It is the longest-running continuous survey data collection in the region that makes all its data available for public use. Starting from 2015, Caucasus Barometer has been administered in Armenia and Georgia.

The purpose of the Caucasus Barometer survey is to provide the general public, researchers, journalists, and policymakers with high-quality data on socio-political and economic trends in the South Caucasus. As for mid-2020, Caucasus Barometer, and its predecessor, CRRC Data Initiative, have been cited in about 4,000 scholarly publications, according to Google Scholar. CB data has been used in dozens of regional and international policy documents.

Since its inception, Caucasus Barometer has been supported by generous funding from the Carnegie Corporation in New York. The 2024 wave of the survey in Georgia was self-funded by CRRC-Georgia.

Geographical and population coverage

The 2024 wave of the Caucasus Barometer Georgia survey was conducted in April and May, 2024 by CRRC-Georgia. Survey covers the adult (18+) population of Georgia, excluding those residing in the territories of Abkhazia and South Ossetia that are not currently under Tbilisi's control. Interviews were conducted in Armenian, Azerbaijani, and Georgian. All interviews were administered face-to-face, using the Computer-Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI) method.

Sampling design

Respondents were selected using the Multi-stage Stratified Cluster sampling method. CRRC offices used lists of electoral precincts as primary sampling units (PSUs). Sampling frames were prepared based on 2020 Parliamentary Elections in Georgia.

Primary sampling units were allocated into three strata: precincts located in capital cities, other urban settlements, and rural settlements. Urban and rural strata were further divided by four geographic regions ('quadrants'): north-east, north-west, south-east, and south-west. The factors that influenced the sample size include the number of population subgroups to be represented, the targeted margin of error, and available resources. In each stratum, the sample size was adjusted based on expected nonresponse. Hence, the interviewers contacted more households to get the targeted number of completed interviews. The sample size was independently calculated at a 95% confidence level for each stratum.

In the first stage, the sample of primary sampling units from each geographic substratum using a probability proportional to size (PPS) method was drawn.

Next, selected PSUs were visited, and households (Secondary Sampling Units) were sampled via Random Walk protocol using a predefined starting point, directions for a walk, and step size.

At the final stage, respondents were selected using a Kish grid. Interviewers were strictly instructed to interview only selected respondents and not replace them.

Questionnaire design and a pilot survey

The survey instrument for the 2024 Caucasus Barometer survey was developed by CRRC-Georgia and CRRC-Armenia offices. Along with new questions, the instrument contained a number of questions that were asked in the survey's previous waves.

The source questionnaire was developed in English. The initial instrument was piloted by CRRC-Georgia's office. The instrument was tested using 30 interviews conducted in and near Tbilisi during March 15-18, 2024. After the pilot, CRRC office adjusted the questionnaire and translated the final instrument into Armenian, Azerbaijani, and Georgian.

Fieldwork

The CB 2024 fieldwork was conducted based on CAPI face-to-face interviews. 89.8% of the interviews were conducted in Georgian, 8.7% in Azerbaijani, and 1.5% in Armenian. Interviews were administered between April 16 and May 13, 2024.

CRRC-Georgia used ODK software to program questionnaires for tablet forms. ODK is a free and open-source survey data collection toolkit that allows implementing in-form logical checks, automatized advances in forms, collecting multimedia data, and complex resources for questionnaire auditing. CRRC offices used their encrypted and secure data servers to upload and store collected interviews.

Experienced CRRC interviewers and fieldwork supervisors were involved in CB 2024 data collection. Most of them have worked with CRRC offices for several years.

CB 2024 fieldwork was supervised by a Fieldwork Coordinator and eight Fieldwork Supervisors in Georgia. Overall, 92 interviewers were involved in the fieldwork.

Intensive trainings were carried out for fieldwork supervisors and interviewers before the fieldwork. Prior to the training, all interviewers received paper versions of the questionnaire, show cards, and sampling instructions. During the training, interviewers practiced the questionnaire and sampling instructions (including random walk, step size, and respondent selection), and discussed possible problems or challenges that could arise during fieldwork.

During the fieldwork, interviewers were instructed to follow protocols for random walk protocol respondent selection. After selecting a target household, interviewers were instructed to make at least three attempts to contact the household. After entering the household, interviewers explained the goals of the survey to household members and selected the respondent using a Kish grid. If the selected member of the household was not at home, interviewers made at least three follow-up visits to interview the respondent. Household and interviewer level refusals were carefully marked down on interviewer forms and entered in tablets.

Overall, 1,509 complete interviews were collected. The minimum response rate (AAPOR RR1) of 23% was achieved. Table 1 shows a detailed breakdown of responses by strata.

	Capital		Urban		Rural	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Non-response	3,802	90%	657	60%	480	43%
Complete interviews	429	10%	436	40%	644	57%

Table 1: Completed interviews by strata

1,224 interviews were completed during the first contact, 238 interviews were done during the second attempt, and 47 interviews were administered during the third attempt. On average, interviews lasted for 31 minutes.

After the end of the fieldwork, CRRC-Georgia conducted a face-to-face fieldwork check of the 10% of interviews.

Data management and analysis

Data cleaning was carried out to identify and, where possible, correct inconsistencies. In addition, open-ended questions with textual responses were recoded so that these answers matched numeric codes. It should be noted that, with CAPI, the cleaning process was straightforward: pre-programmed questionnaire forms helped to eliminate ambiguous codes from being entered into the dataset. Also, the form did not accept errors related to selecting more values than permitted in the questionnaire. Additional protocols for data cleaning are summarized in Table 3:

Issue	Protocol
Responses were typed ambiguously, but the data cleaning specialist could determine the intended response.	The value was changed to the response identified by the data cleaning specialist.
Responses were typed ambiguously, but the data cleaning specialist could not determine the intended response.	The value was changed to an interviewer error code.

Table 1: Additional protocols for data cleaning

Sampling weights account for the fact that different members of the population have different probabilities of being selected for an interview and thus represent different numbers of people than within the overall population. Sampling weights are necessary when estimating the proportion of the population that would choose a particular response if interviewed. For calculating sampling weights, CRRC offices used precinct-level information; specifically, the number of voters.

Next, sampling weights are adjusted for nonresponse; for example, if 80% of the interview attempts in a voting precinct resulted in interviews, then the weight of that 20% who did respond would be adjusted upwards by a factor of 1.25.

Finally, the respondents are binned into gender, age, and geographic categories (e.g., females in Tbilisi aged 18-34, males in rural areas aged 35-54, etc.), and weights are adjusted so that the weighted age and gender ratios of the sample matched that of the population. CRRC-Georgia used the results of the 2014 National Census of Georgia to calculate demographic bins.

As Caucasus Barometer has a complex survey design, it is highly recommended that users take into consideration survey design when analyzing the dataset. Below is a recommended syntax for survey settings in STATA:

Household-level analysis: `svyset psu [pweight=hhwt], strata(substratum) fpc(npsuss) singleunit(certainty) || id, fpc(nhhpsu)`

Individual-level analysis: `svyset psu [pweight=indwt], strata(substratum) fpc(npsuss) singleunit(certainty) || id, fpc(nhhpsu) || _n, fpc(nadhh)`

Dataset and documentation

CB Dataset in SPSS and STATA formats, survey instruments, and information on previous waves are available via Caucasusbarometer.org