

EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

***Beyond the Human Development  
Index: Assessing the Human  
Development in Georgia through  
International Indices and Rankings***

Nani Bendeliani  
Research Fellow

**Contents**

Human Development Index ..... 3  
HDI of Georgia – Main Conclusions ..... 4  
About the Author ..... 11  
Bibliography ..... 12

The report assesses the progress in Georgia in terms of human development according to Human Development Index (HDI) published in scope of the United Nation's Human Development Report. To make valid conclusions, the report focuses on the methodology and various sources of data, such as Human Development Reports, published on yearly bases since 1995, The Special development Report on Georgia and the HDI data base.

## Human Development Index

HDI is the instrument developed by UN published since 1990 in scope of human development reports. HDI is an alternative of assessing the country's progress based on economic growth. HDI doesn't measure the level of countries' economic development, but the rights and choices available for people that are necessary to develop their capabilities and utilize the human potential. Three core choices/capabilities are selected: education, health and the decent standard of living<sup>1</sup>. These three components are the part of HDI. Except HDI there are gender equality index and multidimensional poverty index included in UN Human Development Reports as the part of suggested development model.

According to 2011 methodology education is measured by mean years of schooling (primary, secondary, tertiary) and expected years of schooling; health is measured by life expectancy and the decent standard of living- by GNI per capita. Index value is estimated as a geometric average of all these three components, accordingly education, health and income are represented with equal portion. In 2011 Human Development Report the country classifications according to HDI are based on quartiles of index distribution across countries. The level of human development is denoted as very high, high, medium and low. In each quartile there are 47 or 46 countries.<sup>2</sup>

**Critical Approach to HDI.** It should be mentioned that none of the indices are perfect – they represent the abstract models partially capable to capture the existing reality. Ratings reflect the cross-country comparison – they assess the country progress in relative terms. In case of HDI, the additional problems exist that make it complicated to draw a valid conclusions about the country progress – the index is constructed according to the theory that reflects the comprehensive approach to development, however, included variables are not sufficient to capture the wide spectrum of information; the data inaccuracy on developing counties farther distorts the validity of the index. Additionally, the aggregated country data does not consider the inequality existing in the county – the UN has started to publish the inequality adjusted HDI since 2010 report only. The comparison across the year, to see the country dynamics, is partially possible because of the constantly changing

---

<sup>1</sup> United Nations Development Programme (1995). Human Development Report 1995. Oxford University Press <http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/global/hdr1995/chapters/> (accessed on 28.02.12/12:00)

<sup>2</sup> United Nations Development Programme (2011). Human Development Report 2011. Palgrave Macmillan, 2011  
<http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/global/hdr2011/download/> (accessed on 28.02.12/12:00)

methodology. Finally, the ratings based on HDI are not comparable, as the number of countries included in the reports is not constant. Therefore, it has to be taken into consideration that the assessments based on HDI represent the general picture of the human development in Georgia. Further in-depth study is needed to make sound conclusions.

Additional HDI criticism includes the adequate justification for significance of included components, education, health, and income – the simple average to accumulate the components leads to the threat of offsetting the drawback in one component with the success in another one. Thus, where possible, the data of all three components are represented in this report.<sup>3</sup>

## **HDI of Georgia – Main Conclusions**

According to data of Human Development Index (2011) Georgia is classified as the country with high level of Human Development: overall score – 0,733 and overall rating 75, counted out of 187 countries. The scores for the countries with high Human Development level (2011) vary from 0,698 - 0,783. HDI of Georgia is more than world's average and less than the average of European and Central Asian countries (Diagram 1). In 2010 Georgia has advanced as the country with high Human Development Level, before that time Georgia was in the list of the countries with average level of Human Development. One can assume that Georgia has surpassed the entire stage of development and has progressed in field of Life Expectancy, Education and Average Income. However, according to the dynamics of HDI, the progress of Georgia is visible, but the dramatic improvements are not. In 2000-2011 the Index changed in a progressive way, but the HDI scores for Georgia in 2009 and 2010 is similar – 0.722 and 0.724 respectively (according to 2011 methodology – Diagram 2). Therefore, the change in the country level of development is to be attributed to the changes in mythology of scaling in 2010 report – the scaling was shifted to ratings, instead of score values.

As for the index components, one can state that HD Index has improved for the both time periods we can compare – in 2000-2005 and in 2005-2011. In 2000-2005 the positive change was stimulated mainly by the increase of income sub-index, but Education Index and Health Index have not improved (Diagram 4). In 2005-2011 all three mentioned components have improved – the education and life expectancy indices have progressed, but the income index has not demonstrated the similar pattern of grows as in 2000-2005 time period (Diagram 5).

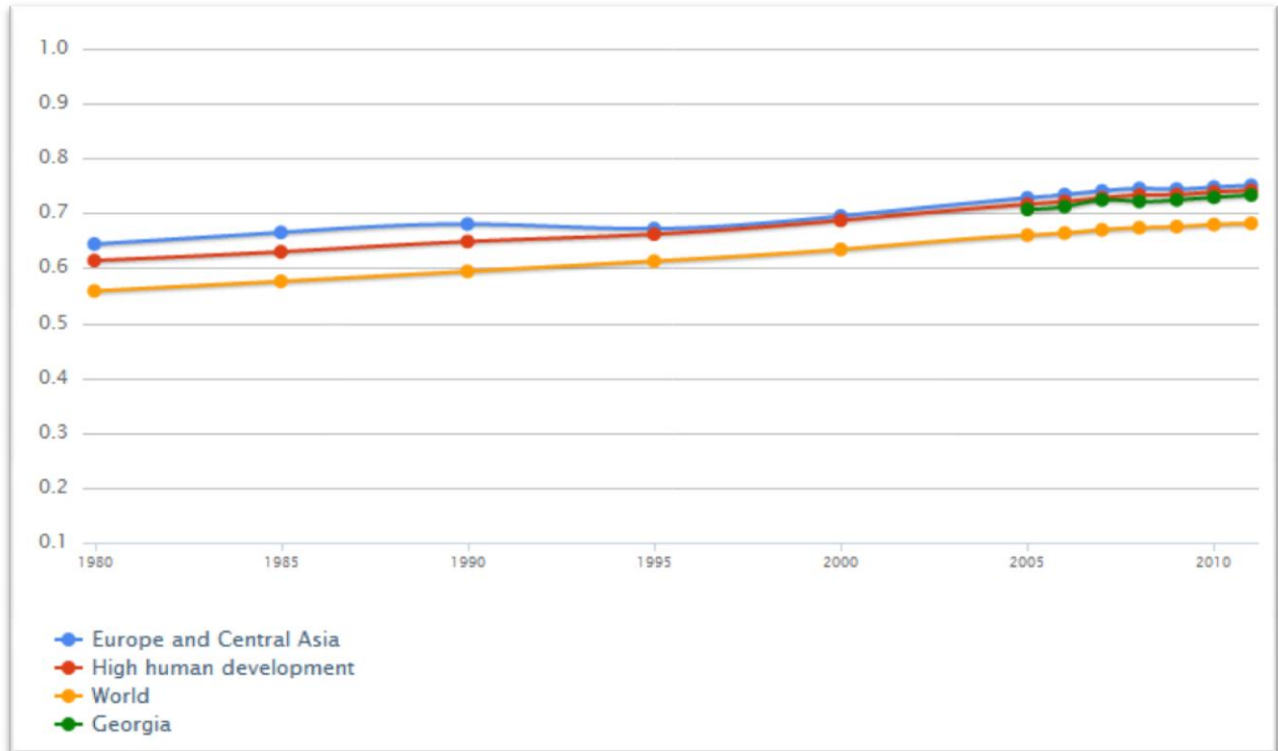
Finally, it should be mentioned that Georgia scores high in HDI based on education and health sub-indices. Education Index is evaluated by the following indicators: Access to Education – Primary, Secondary, Tertiary levels and expected years of schooling. The Health Index is measured by one

---

<sup>3</sup> Grimm, et al (2006). A Human Development Index by Income Groups. Ibero-American Institute for Economic Research Discussion Paper No. 155, Ibero-American Institute for Economic Research, University of Goettingen

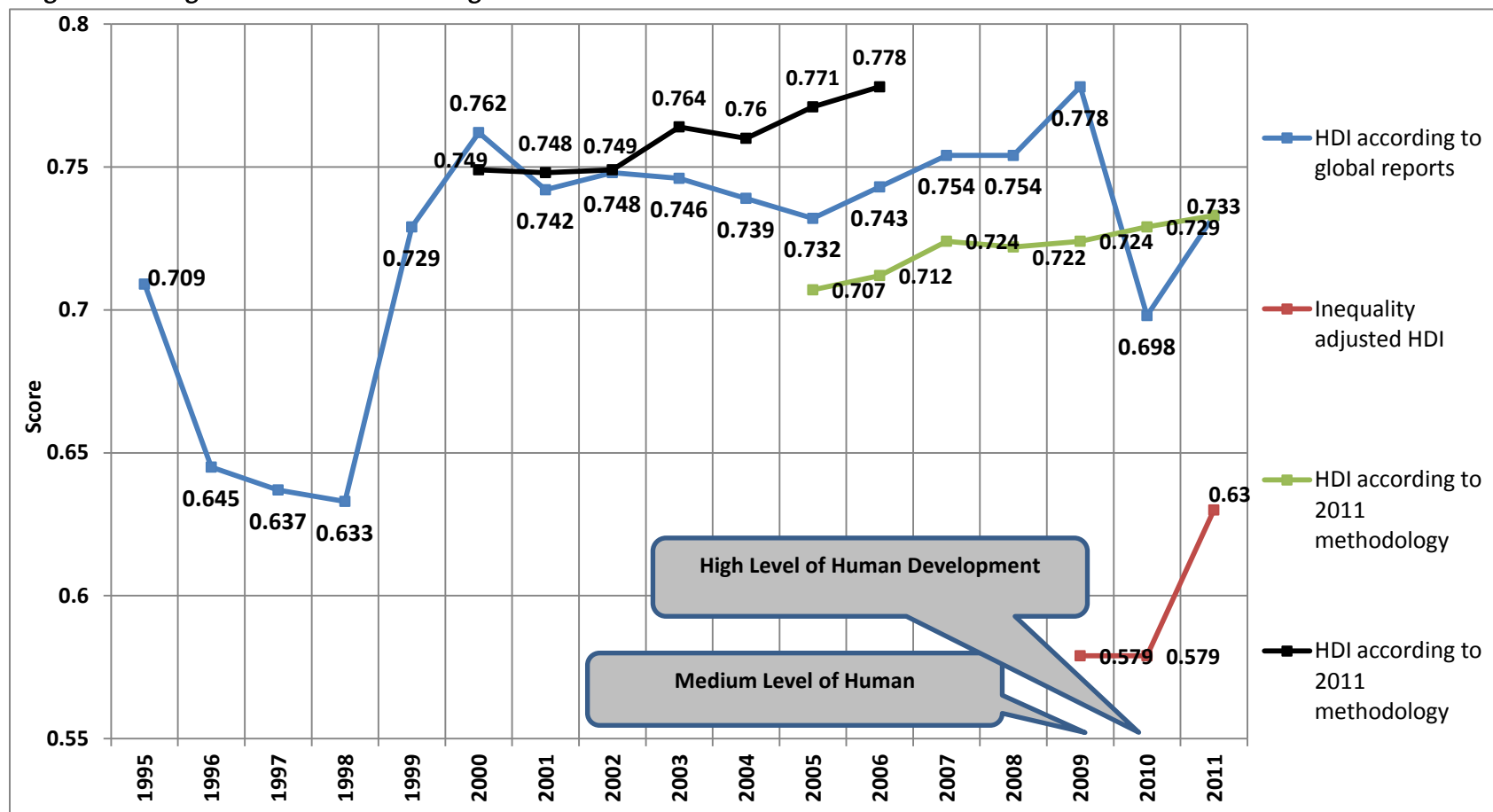
indicator - average life expectancy. Accordingly, these indicators are only basic measures for Health and Education Indices and they do not reflect generally the quality of Educational and Health Systems in Georgia. The quality of Education represents the bigger problems in Georgia than its accessibility. Concerning the Life expectancy, this indicator does not reflect the situation regarding to public health in short-term time period.

Diagram 1. The HDI – Georgia and the World<sup>4</sup>



<sup>4</sup> Diagram is exported from Human Development Reports, Official Website  
<http://hdrstats.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/GEO.html> (accessed on 07.03.12; 14:15)

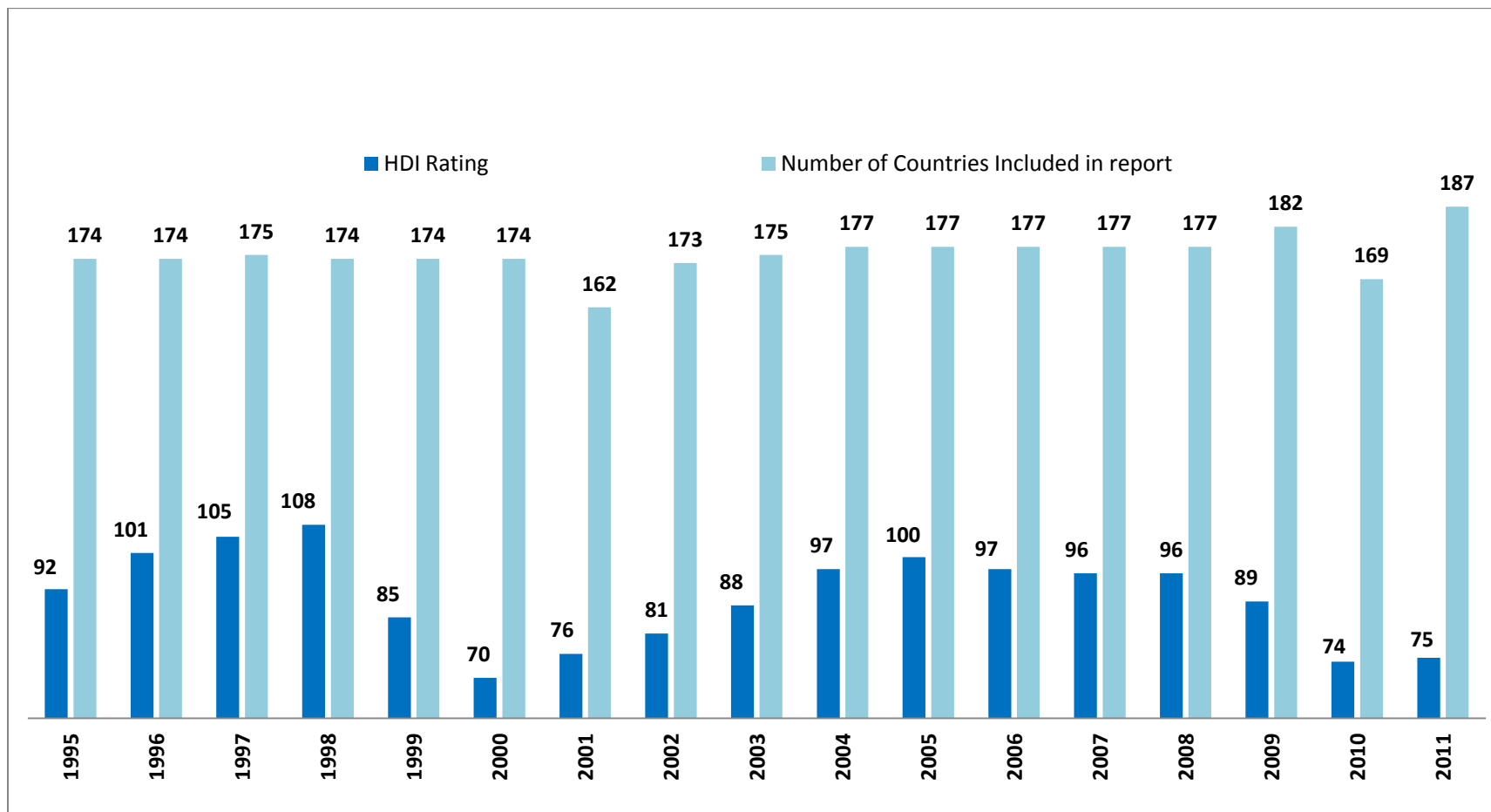
Diagram 2. Georgia, HDI Scores<sup>5</sup> According to Diverse Data Sources<sup>6</sup>



<sup>5</sup> The data comes from the 1995-2011 HDRs, 2008 Human Development Report on Georgia and World Bank data base (HUD according to 2011 HDR methodology) Please refer to Bibliography for detailed references;

<sup>6</sup> The years on Diagram reflect the years of publication of HDR, not the year of collecting the data. The only comparable data through the years is HDI according to 2011 HDR methodology and HDI according to 2008 Methodology.

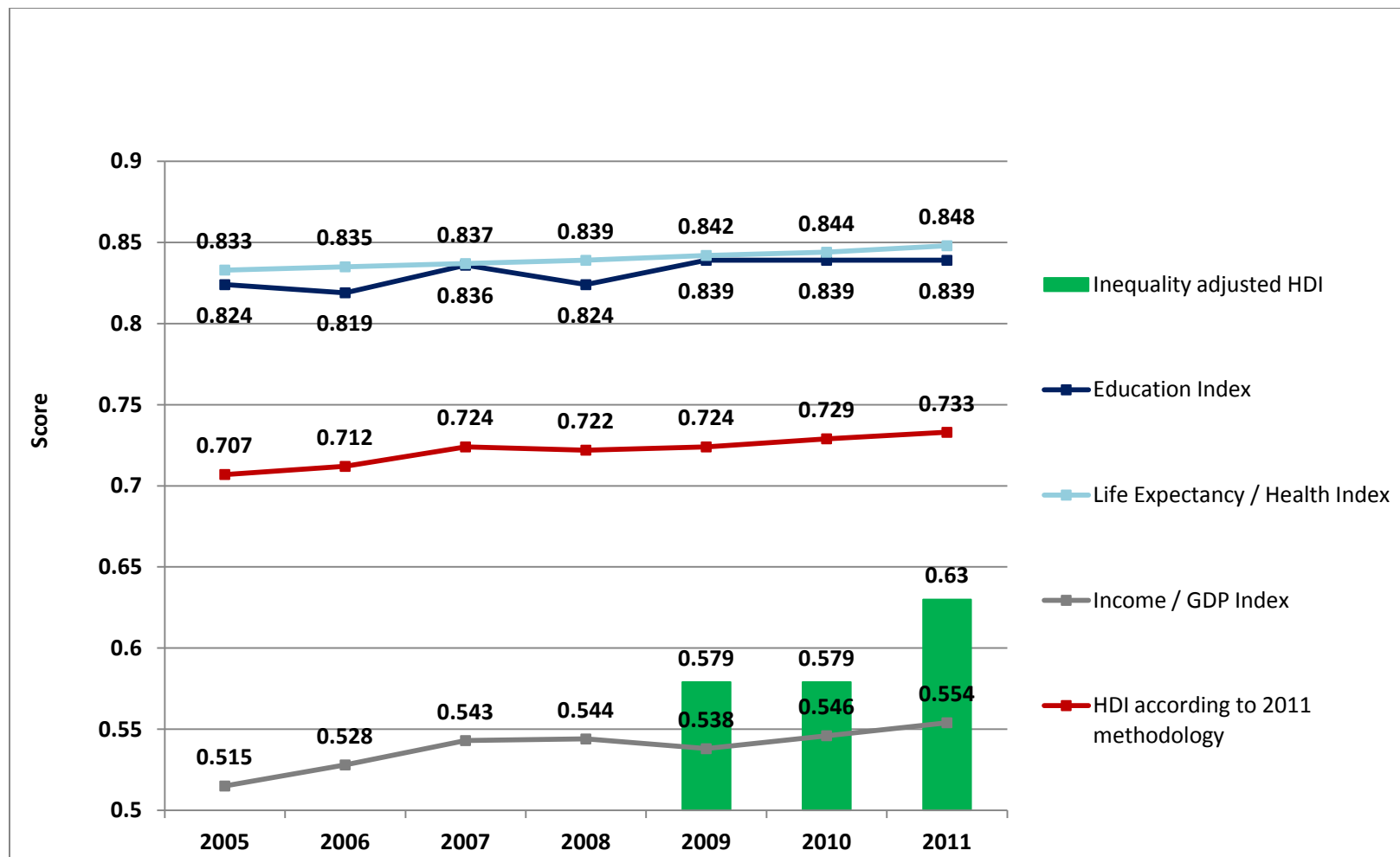
Diagram 3. Georgia, HDI Ratings<sup>7</sup>



<sup>7</sup> The data comes from the 1995-2011 HDRs, Please refer to Bibliography for detailed references;

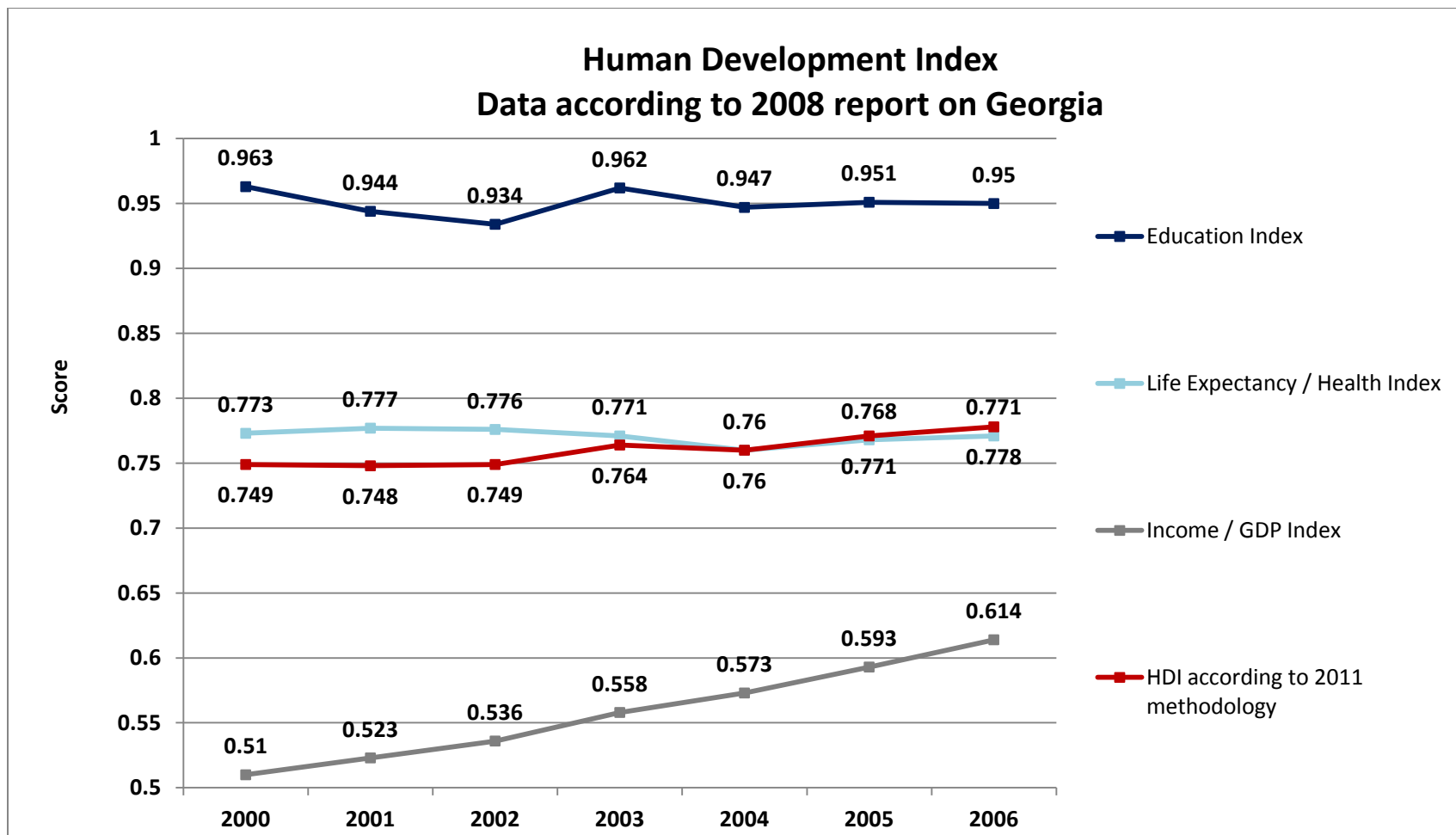


Diagram 4. Georgia, HDI Scores, according to 2011 HDR methodology<sup>8</sup>



<sup>8</sup> United Nations Development Programme (2011). Human Development Report 2011. Palgrave Macmillan, 2011  
<http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/global/hdr2011/download/> (accessed on 28.02.12/12:00)

Diagram 5. Georgia, HDI Scores, according to methodology of 2008 report data<sup>9</sup>



<sup>9</sup> Welton, et al (2008). Georgia Human Development Report 2008. UNDP  
<http://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/upload/Georgia/Georgia-NHDR-2008.pdf> (accessed on April 2, 2012. 17:00)

## **About the Author**

Nani Bendeliani cooperates with CSS since 2007. She is a CSS alumnus, graduate of MA programme in International Relations in 2005. She obtained the MA degree in Development Studies specialized on economics of development from the Institute of Social Studies of Erasmus University Rotterdam in 2011. Currently she is a research fellow at the Education and Development program at the Center for Social Sciences.

## **Bibliography:**

Grimm, et al (2006). A Human Development Index by Income Groups. Ibero-American Institute for Economic Research Discussion Paper No. 155, Ibero-American Institute for Economic Research, University of Goettingen

United Nations Development Programme (1995). Human Development Report 1995. Oxford University Press

<http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/global/hdr1995/chapters/> (accessed on 28.02.12/12:00)

United Nations Development Programme (1996). Human Development Report 1996. Oxford University Press

<http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/global/hdr1996/chapters/> (accessed on 28.02.12/12:00)

United Nations Development Programme (1997). Human Development Report 1997. Oxford University Press

<http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/global/hdr1997/chapters/> (accessed on 28.02.12/12:00)

United Nations Development Programme (1998). Human Development Report 1998. Oxford University Press

<http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/global/hdr1998/chapters/> (accessed on 28.02.12/12:00)

United Nations Development Programme (1999). Human Development Report 1999. Oxford University Press

[http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/HDR\\_1999\\_EN.pdf](http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/HDR_1999_EN.pdf) (accessed on 28.02.12/12:00)

United Nations Development Programme (2000). Human Development Report 2000. Oxford University Press

[http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/HDR\\_2000\\_EN.pdf](http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/HDR_2000_EN.pdf) (accessed on 28.02.12/12:00)

<http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/completenew1.pdf> (accessed on 28.02.12/12:00)

United Nations Development Programme (2002). Human Development Report 2002. Oxford University Press

[http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/HDR\\_2002\\_EN\\_Complete.pdf](http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/HDR_2002_EN_Complete.pdf) (accessed on 28.02.12/12:00)

United Nations Development Programme (2003). Human Development Report 2003. Oxford University Press

[http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/hdr03\\_complete.pdf](http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/hdr03_complete.pdf) (accessed on 28.02.12/12:00)

United Nations Development Programme (2004). Human Development Report 2004. Hoechstetter Printing Co

[http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/hdr04\\_complete.pdf](http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/hdr04_complete.pdf) (accessed on 28.02.12/12:00)

United Nations Development Programme (2005). Human Development Report 2005. Hoechstetter Printing Co

[http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/HDR05\\_complete.pdf](http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/HDR05_complete.pdf) (accessed on 28.02.12/12:00)

United Nations Development Programme (2006). Human Development Report 2006. Palgrave Macmillan

<http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/HDR06-complete.pdf> (accessed on 28.02.12/12:00)

United Nations Development Programme (2007). Human Development Report 2007/2008. Palgrave Macmillan

[http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/HDR\\_20072008\\_EN\\_Complete.pdf](http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/HDR_20072008_EN_Complete.pdf) (accessed on 28.02.12/12:00)

United Nations Development Programme (2009). Human Development Report 2009. Palgrave Macmillan

[http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/HDR\\_2009\\_EN\\_Complete.pdf](http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/HDR_2009_EN_Complete.pdf) (accessed on 28.02.12/12:00)

United Nations Development Programme (2010). Human Development Report 2010. Palgrave Macmillan

<http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/global/hdr2010/chapters/> (accessed on 28.02.12/12:00)

United Nations Development Programme (2011). Human Development Report 2011. Palgrave Macmillan, 2011

<http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/global/hdr2011/download/> (accessed on 28.02.12/12:00)

World Bank. World Development Indicators Database

<http://data.worldbank.org/data-catalog/world-development-indicators> (accessed on April 2, 2012. 17:30)

Welton, et al (2008). Georgia Human Development Report 2008. UNDP

<http://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/upload/Georgia/Georgia-NHDR-2008.pdf> (accessed on April 2, 2012. 17:00)

Human Development Reports, Official Website

<http://hdr.undp.org/en/> (accessed on 07.03.12; 15:00)

<http://hdrstats.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/GEO.html> (accessed on 07.03.12; 14:15)