

REAL TIME MONITORING SURVEY / MULTIPLE INDICATOR CLUSTER SURVEY (MICS) PLUS

SURVEY DESCRIPTION

The National Statistics Office of Georgia (GEOSTAT) has commenced Real Time Monitoring survey of the impact of COVID-19 on the welfare of families and children; the survey is implemented with technical and financial support from UNICEF, based on the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS6) sample.

The survey approach is based on the collection of information from the same respondents repeatedly on a frequent basis over a year (panel survey).

As part of the survey, data will be collected from urban as well as rural households. The sample size for the entire country is set at 2,118 households, among them 996 households in urban areas, and 1,122 households in rural areas. Data collection is performed via tablets, by using a computer-assisted telephone interviewing method (CATI).

First wave field works of the survey were conducted in November-December 2020. Response rate was 86.7 per cent, among them 89.0 per cent in urban settlements, and 84.7 per cent in rural settlements.

KEY MESSAGES OF THE SURVEY

1. Household characteristics and income

- one in five households (20.8%) does not have internet access at home. The share of such households is considerably higher in rural areas as compared to urban areas, 31.3% and 13.3%, respectively
- within 31.8 percent of households, at least one member has lost a job temporarily or for a long period – over the period from March to December 2020;
- during the period from March to December 2020, average monthly income of 53.0% of households decreased. Furthermore, income of over one third of these households (39.5%) fell by over 50%;
- main cause for the reduction of income is COVID-19 and the associated basic circumstances such as closure of a company/business where a household member was employed (31.9%), decreased demand of a company/business where a member of a household worked or which was owned by a member of a household (23.2%), a member of a household has closed his/her own company/business (15.8%), etc.;

- to cope with the reduced income, most often the households cut down on food expenses (67.2%), reduced other household expenses (82.9%), spent savings (49.9%), borrowed money from friends and acquaintances (45.5%);
- as part of the Government activities aimed at the alleviation of COVID-19 impact, during March-December, 2020, 80.6% of households received electricity subsidies for at least a month, 72.7% received natural gas subsidy for at least a month, 40.4% received one-off social assistance -- GEL 200 -- for children under the age of 18, 23.6% received other assistance from the government. Moreover, 32.3% of households had their loans from commercial banks and microfinance organizations deferred;

2. Education

- one in four children aged 2-4 (25.6%) and one in five children aged 2-5 (20.0%) did not attend pre-school educational institutions in March 2020 prior to the closure of the educational institutions. This indicator is even higher in rural areas equaling 42.0% in case of children aged 2-4, and 32.3% in case of children aged 2-5;
- the share of children aged 2-5 years who attended pre-school educational institutions prior to the closure of educational institutions in March 2020 and who received food assistance from pre-school educational institutions for at least a month after the closure of educational institutions in March 2020 has amounted to 85.5%; this represents almost all children within state/public pre-school educational institutions;
- in November-December 2020, percentage of children aged 2-4 with whom adult household members were engaged in 4 or more activities¹ was 92.3%. For comparison, this indicator was 77.6% in 2018;
- the percentage of upper secondary-age (15-17 years) out of school children in 2019-2020 academic year was 11.2%. For comparison, this indicator did not change after 2018-2019 academic year;
- the share of children aged 6-17 who watched TV lessons after the closure of educational institutions in March 2020 was 57.3%;
- the share of 6-17 year olds who had online lessons after the closure of educational institutions in March, 2020 was 96.8%;
- the share of 6-17 year olds during distance learning in the second semester of the 2019-2020 academic year about whom their adult members of a household:
 - received information from teachers about homework or additional tasks was 76.7%
 - received information from teachers about academic achievement was 83.0%.

The second wave of the Real Time Monitoring survey has been conducting in March 2021. This wave of the survey concentrates on different household characteristics, energy consumption, water and sanitation, public attitude towards COVID-19 vaccination, distance learning and child disciplining measures. The Data will be available in April 2021.

¹ read books or looked at picture books; told stories; Sang songs to or with, including lullabies; Took outside the home; play; Named, counted or drew things for/with.