



National Education and Training Strategy 2025

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INTRODUCTION

Human capital is related to economic development in various ways: each extra year of education attainment of the population raises productivity by at least 5%; better-educated entrepreneurs operate firms that grow faster; the supply of university graduates affects a country's potential for absorbing, developing and disseminating advanced technology; better-educated employees earn more; and literacy scores 1% higher than the international average convert into productivity levels 2.5% higher than those of other countries¹.

The development of a skilled workforce and the expansion of human capabilities through high quality systems of education, training and lifelong learning are important for helping workers to find good jobs, and enterprises to find the skilled workers they require. High levels of human capital are a key competitive strength for all countries, while the lack of a well-educated and skilled workforce can put economies at a severe disadvantage.

In 2016, the Georgian Employers Association (GEA), assisted by the ILO, published a detailed assessment of the current business environment in Georgia and an analysis of the areas for improvement². The assessment was conducted in line with the ILO methodology on Enabling Environment for Sustainable Enterprises. This methodology assessed the business environment in terms of the economic, social, political and environmental aspects of doing business. It included information gathered through a review of secondary data, several focus groups and an in-depth survey of 300 businesses. Education and training emerged as a clear priority message from this assessment.

At focus group meetings employers indicated that the education system is not meeting the needs of the labour market in Georgia. The most significant shortcoming was the lack of qualifications and specialised programmes for specific sectors such as tourism. A lack of communication and trust between employers and universities, and the lack of employability skills amongst students were also highlighted.

The Georgian education system has already undergone significant reforms over the last two decades, particularly with regard to transparency and efficiency. Analysis and policy options outlined in the report emphasise the need to engage in a second wave of reforms focusing on the quality dimension and improving system's performance since the country has already made improvements in the transparency and efficiency of the sector via the reforms implemented over the last two decades. Creating improvements requires a long-term and sustained effort as evidenced by the experience of many countries with advanced education systems.

In the past, there has been no shortage of policy recommendations for the Georgian system from the European Union, World Bank, OECD, Ministry for Education and Science and others, but strategy implementation has been less effective. International experience suggests that many education and skills reforms fail to deliver because they have little effect on what happens inside the classroom, training centre or lecture hall

Therefore the recommendations in this report, which have been prepared for the Tripartite Commission on Social Partnership, are designed to be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound. They are derived from the experiences of employers who can provide a unique perspective on identifying the skills that are relevant, and how these can be developed and used effectively.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN GEORGIA

The scope and pace of education reforms in Georgia over the last decade are unique in the region. The key reforms have included:

¹ OECD, 2011, Competitiveness and Private Sector Development: Eastern Europe and South Caucasus

² http://www.ilo.org/global/topics/employment-promotion/small-enterprises/WCMS_472659/lang--en/index.htm

- the decentralisation of management;
- the adoption of a “per-student” financing mechanism at all levels of education;
- the creation, under the umbrella of the Ministry of Education and Science, of new public legal entities responsible for ensuring the quality of reforms (see Appendix 1);
- the adoption of new standards and outcome-based national curricula in general education along with the development of new textbooks; and
- the design of a new national assessment and examination system.

The Government’s socio-economic development strategy³ continues to emphasise the importance of high quality of education in improving human capital. Strategic priorities include increasing labour market relevance of educational programs to meet workforce requirements, increasing access to preschool education, improving quality of general education, emphasising vocational training, and enhancing the attractiveness of the teaching profession.

Despite the many innovations and important changes to the education sector, reforms have not yet translated into gains, particularly in the quality of education. Large-scale reforms were introduced before gathering a clear understanding about their potential consequences. In many cases, the speed at which they were introduced did not leave sufficient time for their proper planning and consultation. They also failed to take into account existing capacity and management limitations.

A significant number of externally funded pilot projects, particularly in the area of vocational education and training (VET), have provided insights which have not been incorporated into mainstream provision.

Therefore there are a number of remaining challenges that must be addressed:

- The lack of supervision, monitoring and quality of pre-school provision which has led to wide variations in the quality of service.
- The majority of students in Georgia demonstrate below average levels of performance in reading, mathematics and science as measured by national and international student assessment.
- Teaching is not an attractive career path and there are critical issues with regard to teacher management, deployment, career path development, compensation and performance evaluation.
- The lack of results-based accountability mechanisms at school, VET and higher education levels.
- Skills mismatches, and low employment and under-employment amongst graduates.
- Lack of participation social partners in identifying, developing and utilising relevant skills.
- The requirement for a national lifelong learning policy.
- The absence of an effective skills analysis and forecasting architecture.
- Insufficient emphasis on ‘21st century’ employability and entrepreneurial skills.
- Poor integration between the vocational and higher education sectors.
- The population from economic backgrounds, living in rural areas and from ethnic minority groups is systematically excluded from the education system.
- Public expenditure on education is low by international standards.
- Financial instruments in higher education are not conducive to improved teaching quality.
- Private education provision is discouraged through unfair competition from the State.

³ Socio-Economic Development Strategy of Georgia: GEORGIA 2020; Government of Georgia, 2014

VISION, VALUES AND STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES TO 2025

VISION

Georgia will develop a high quality education and training system which will respond to the changing and diverse needs of its people, society and the economy.

VALUES

The education and training system will value:

- Learning as a public good and recognise its role in the development, cohesion and wellbeing of society
- The learner's place at the centre of policy development
- Quality, a commitment to the principle of continuous improvement and openness to external ideas, challenges and debate
- A culture of accountability, efficiency and value-for-money, which is rooted in an ethos of independence, integrity, impartiality, openness and respect.
- Choice for students and parents based on the principle of fair competition between public and private educational institutions
- A 'whole of system' approach that integrates relevant national strategies and monitors their progress as they each contribute towards Georgia's vision for education and training
- Relationships and working in collaboration within the education sector and with the wider community, including enterprise.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES TO 2025

- Objective 1: Objective 1: the education policy based on the real and concrete data for developing the economy and effective state resources modification among them;
- Objective 2: Education and training providers will focus on providing skills development opportunities that are relevant to the needs of learners, society and the economy.
- Objective 3: Employers and other social partners will participate actively in the development of skills and make effective use of skills in their organisations to improve productivity and competitiveness
- Objective 4: Education and training funding will be adequately funded using mechanisms which incentivise excellent outcomes through fair competition between public and private institutions
- Objective 5: The quality of teaching and learning at all stages of education and training will be continually enhanced and evaluated.
- Objective 6: Entrepreneurial skills and thinking will be embedded in the curricula of schools, VET centres and higher education centres.
- Objective 7: People across Georgia will engage more in lifelong learning.

OBJECTIVES AND KEY ACTIONS

OBJECTIVE 1: THE EDUCATION POLICY BASED ON THE REAL AND CONCRETE DATA FOR DEVELOPING THE ECONOMY AND EFFECTIVE STATE RESOURCES MODIFICATION AMONG THEM;

The national education policy should be based on the long-term plan in the frame of economic policy. The parameters of economic policy must be determined by the geo-political and international economic strategies of the country itself.

Adequately, in the frame of the 4 strategic directions of the Government of Georgia the short-termed and long-termed strategical visions of educational system development must be determined among which are: systemic character of labour market valid assessment, determination of priorities of educational levels of the system, adaptation of the state financial resources to the defined levels, improvement of educational programmes via ensured involvement of sectoral business structures, determination of professional orientation state policy on each level of education system and pre-school level among them, integration of informal education in the education system policy, defining of maximal efficiency of educational institutions via protecting of all the principles of market economy, adaptation of state finances to the youth funding (the ones who is in urgent need based on the social conditions and etc...)

The special attention should be payed to rapid modification of education system while planning the short-termed strategies based on the mentioned above. Herewith, worthwhile to state that conceptual frame of educational system should be guided with the regional development principles where the state and private partners resources must be maximally utilized and even more, with the involvement of all interested stakeholders.

Key actions:

- Establishment of systemic and valid policy of labour market assessment;
- Modification of state resources on education, the state budget among them, based on the assessment results;
- Establishment of professional orientation strong mechanisms and rapid integration of it in the educational system;
- Complex orientation of the educational institutions and state funding system on the requirements of business sector;

OBJECTIVE 2: EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROVIDERS WILL FOCUS ON PROVIDING SKILLS DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES WHICH ARE RELEVANT TO THE NEEDS OF LEARNERS, SOCIETY AND THE ECONOMY

Georgia's prospects to compete in the global economy will depend on its ability to produce a highly-skilled workforce. This largely depends on the relevance and quality of the education received by the students. Therefore, the education system needs to be aligned with the requirements of economy.

The low employment rates among Georgian young people suggests skills mismatch of graduates with the labour market needs and relevance problems for education. The recent GEA/ILO consultation confirmed that among Georgian graduates, there is lack of specific professional skills in demand by the economy. It also identified a shortage of key competencies and employability skills. Some 98% of participants reported that skills shortages were having negative effects on new working practices, introduction of new technologies and the development of new products or services. Employers in Georgia are looking for

professionals with effective social, literacy and numeracy skills, and higher order cognitive skills, such as leadership, creative thinking, foreign languages and problem solving.

Recent studies on Georgia's workforce development and skill mismatch⁴ recommend that substantial progress must be achieved to enable the Ministry of Education and Skills to acquire a good understanding of labour market needs and develop the capability to design and redesign programs so that they fit the constantly changing needs of employers. This would require a renewed partnership between the education and training system and GEA to close information gaps, thereby allowing employers to communicate their expectations, and educators to better assess learning. Therefore, a new National Skills Council, which is chaired by business and includes representation from the relevant Ministries, the National VET Council and higher education institutions, should be established. Its work should be supported by a specialist technical forecasting unit.

The economy would benefit from regular assessments of the needs of the labour market, which could help increase the relevance of training for both jobseekers, employees and employers. However, this type of activity requires coordination of multiple ministries and stakeholders, not only the Ministry of Education and Skills. For these purposes, it is important that the government recognises employers as strategic partners and formalises their role, in setting priorities and in enhancing skills-upgrading for workers.

Better matching of skills to employment opportunities can also be achieved by promoting the full range of skills provision available across the VET and higher education sectors and the value of these skills in meeting the needs of the labour market and providing career opportunities for individuals. Genuine progression paths between VET and higher education will help to address the perception that vocational education is a 'second-best' option.

KEY ACTIONS

Georgia will have robust skills and labour market forecasting architecture

Students at all stages will learn '21st Century Skills' – transversal skills, ICT and subject knowledge

Beyond school, there will be enhanced integration, partnerships and synergy between the vocational and higher education sectors.

⁴ World Bank. Georgia Skills Mismatch and Unemployment: Labor Market Challenges, March 2013
Ministry of Labour Health and Social Affairs of Georgia, The Survey Report of Labour Market Demand Component, 2015
Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Affairs, Survey on Attitudes, Motivation and Employment Strategies of the Youth, 2016

OBJECTIVE 3: SOCIAL PARTNERS WILL PARTICIPATE ACTIVELY IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF SKILLS AND MAKE EFFECTIVE USE OF SKILLS IN THEIR ORGANISATIONS TO IMPROVE PRODUCTIVITY AND COMPETITIVENESS

The OECD has argued that skills development is more effective if the world of learning and the world of work are linked. Learning in the workplace allows students to develop ‘hard’ skills on modern equipment and ‘soft’ skills such as teamwork, communication and negotiation, through real-world experience. Employers, with close knowledge of their business needs and opportunities, are also well positioned to help identify where education and training policies and initiatives can narrow skills gaps. Co-operation among employers, policymakers and education institutions is therefore critical for strengthening the employability of individuals. Methods to improve co-operation can take different forms, such as providing incentives to education institutions to engage with employers, raising awareness among employers about education trends, and fostering joint initiatives to help develop work-based learning opportunities.

There are particular challenges for smaller business to participate in education and training. They need to be incentivised to invest more in continuous workforce training. There is also a need for managers to upskill – especially in SMEs – to underpin company development and growth.

There has been some progress in establishing coordinating mechanisms in Georgia to engage employers and social partners with the education system. However greater engagement is needed to ensure that employers can articulate their needs, partner with the supply side (education and training providers) and promote learning in the workplace. Intra governmental, formal “partnerships” are also important to assure coherent, structured government coordination and deliver effective interventions.

One important instrument for ensuring the relevance of VET programs is the National Qualification Framework and qualification descriptions. In 2011, the National Centre for Education Quality Enhancement created 14 Subsector committees to accommodate the needs of the labor market into the qualifications and competencies described in the National Qualifications Framework. However, the engagement of employers and social partners in these subsector committees is still minimal. This can be partly attributed to the capacity of SMEs, in particular, to engage and a lack of clarity around the role of business. The role of employers is to define the occupations required and occupational standards – what people actually need to be able to do and know in their jobs. The most effective engagement method is the tripartite social dialogue which has an important role in providing labour market intelligence and providing work placement opportunities. It also has a key role in providing career guidance, which is crucial in preparing young people for life beyond the classroom. Young people need to be well-informed when making education and career decisions. Career guidance helps students reflect on their ambitions, interests and abilities and make the right decisions about their future. This in turn prevents early leaving, delivers greater social equity, improves labour market outcomes and enhances the overall efficiency of education pathways. However the integrity of the tripartite process in agencies such as the National Vocational Education and Education and Training Council, should be maintained. NGOs should only have voting rights on issues in which they have a competence and direct interest.

One of the most effective ways of improving enterprise engagement and delivering relevant skills is through apprenticeships. This offers a unique opportunity to meet the skill needs of industry and deliver real choice for young people and other learners as they move into and within the world of work. GEA would be prepared to propose a new model of apprenticeships, based on 30% of theoretical learning, which could be implemented locally by companies or through the GEA training centre. Other enterprise-led-training models such as the Skillnets network in Ireland⁵ should also be examined.

KEY ACTIONS

Employers will participate in skills development through active collaboration with education and training providers.

The capability of small firms will be enhanced through skills development.

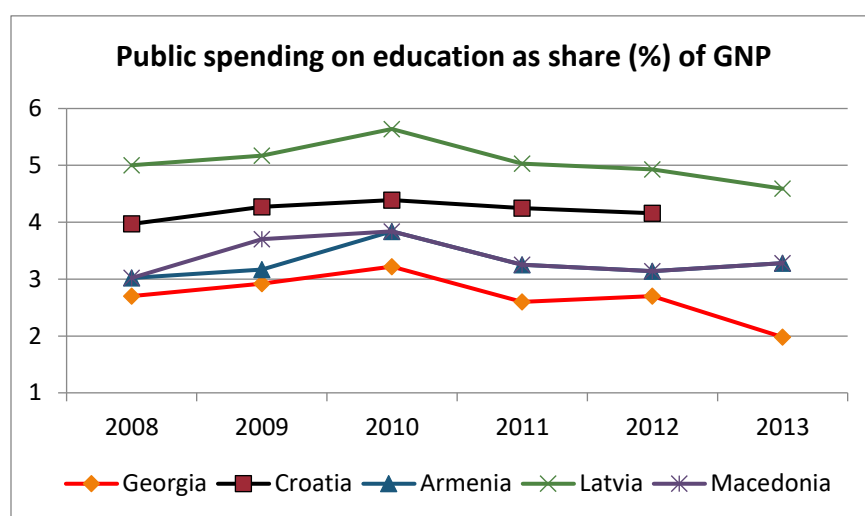
⁵ www.skillnets.ie

Improved employer participation will strengthen the promotion and communication of career opportunities.

OBJECTIVE 4: EDUCATION WILL BE ADEQUATELY FUNDED USING MECHANISMS WHICH INCENTIVISE EXCELLENT OUTCOMES THROUGH FAIR COMPETITION BETWEEN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS

PUBLIC SPENDING IN EDUCATION.

Public expenditure on education in Georgia is low by any international standards. The average level of education expenditure in Georgia as a percentage of GDP has been oscillating between 2 percent and 3 percent for a decade. This is much lower than the average for new Member States in the European Union (over 5 percent) or comparable countries in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) (around 8 percent). The level of expenditures is much lower than other countries with similar level of income per capita. Although total education budget substantially increased since 2006, as a share of total public spending government allocation for education did not show significant improvement.



The highest share of the education budget is allocated for general education sector. The bulk of current expenditures in general education is spent on teacher salaries, which represents 75-80 percent of current expenditures. At 8.5 percent, the student to teacher ratio of general education in Georgia is considerably lower than the OECD. However teacher salaries in Georgia are among the lowest compared to other countries that participated in PISA.

THE ROLE OF PRIVATE EDUCATION

It is difficult to imagine the future of education in Georgia without a significant role for the private sector, but how that future develops raises important questions.

Private institutions can and should make up a greater share of the overall system, specifically in terms of bidding for state-funded student places in areas of identified need. The sector has demonstrated its willingness and capacity to respond to national needs, and it can play a vital role in meeting additional demand in coming years through programmes which meet business needs.

By encouraging the private sector to provide education, the Government would (i) allow for different options of service delivery, which can be appealing to students/parents that are willing to pay for these differentiated services and (ii) free provision for poorer students in the public system. If demand is in place and supply of public institutions is not large enough or parents have different preferences with respect to education, private institutions with different models will arise. This should be encouraged.

The private sector also offers an opportunity to periodically reassess the value for money and effectiveness of public providers; where private providers can offer better value for money, the State should consider using them to deliver on its objectives.

Public Private Partnerships should also be encouraged, both in financing and delivery of VET and higher education. This may also facilitate the alignment of education programmes with labour market needs. The business sector could play an increased role in the design of curricula, management and service delivery options, which will serve as incentives for the private sector to contribute to the sector.

The strengthening of privatisation and market forces does not mean that the Government will retreat from any kind of regulation. It has a key role in providing information on outcomes and safeguarding the principle of fair competition between public and private provision..

A specific example of unfair competition is provided by the unfair rules governing the universal voucher system in VET, which can only be redeemed in public institutions. The voucher model currently operating in relation to higher education colleges should be extended to VET.

The government should clearly delineate the respective purposes of the public and private sectors of the VET and higher education system. It should promote governance arrangements in each sector that match its policy and purpose. This includes regulatory and financial policies that assure quality in both sectors, and that enable both to thrive.

HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCING

At the higher education level, the existing level of financing and financial instruments are not conducive to improving quality of teaching and learning, and for strengthening research capacity. Introducing student state grants was instrumental in increasing transparency in the allocation of public resources for higher education. However, there are limited opportunities for competitive research grants. Also, the capacity of higher education institutions to generate other sources of revenue has been limited. Therefore, the tuition fees collected from students are the main source of revenue for the higher education sector. Though the mechanism helps create healthy competition for students among institutions, it also drives universities to maximize student numbers beyond their capacity, which negatively affects the quality of teaching. Moreover, the existing financing arrangement does not support the development of the higher educational institutions' research capacity and the integration of research into teaching and learning process.

KEY ACTIONS

Georgia will prioritise increasing public investment in education.

Private education provision and Private Public Private Partnerships will be encouraged both in financing and delivery of at all levels

The level of financing for the higher education sector will be increased for improving quality of teaching and learning, and strengthening research capacity.

OBJECTIVE 5: THE QUALITY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING AT ALL STAGES OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING WILL BE CONTINUALLY ENHANCED AND EVALUATED

International research indicates that high quality initial and continuing education for staff involved in direct provision of education and training is key to fostering better learner outcomes. The need to provide for a high quality of teaching and learning experience for everyone is a key element of this strategy. There is also a strong emphasis on improving accountability and the use of evaluation to measure outcomes.

Early Childhood Development (ECD) School Readiness

The expansion of pre-school education is mainly justified by its great potential for improving the beneficiaries' future educational development. International research indicates that early childhood interventions are very effective at boosting non-cognitive skills, which are important determinants not only of schooling, but also of labour market and behavioural outcomes. However, these benefits will not be realised if quality is not achieved.

In Georgia, the majority of the children who attend preschool institutions show very low school readiness. The decentralised preschool education model has the advantage of being flexible and easy to be shaped to the particular needs of each region. However, the lack of supervision, monitoring, and quality assurance leads to wide differences in the quality of the service across the country. One of the major constraints towards improving the quality of preschool education is the lack of the national standards and the absence of instruments for their enforcement. Given the importance of preschool education, the Ministry of Education and Skills could play a pivotal role in setting up curricula and quality standards for facilities and teachers, and monitoring them.

School student performance in mathematics, reading and science

PISA (Programme for International Assessment) is the OECD's benchmarking tool to assess achievement and application of key knowledge and skills of 15 year-olds. PISA tests proficiency in mathematics, reading, science and problem-solving. In 2015, 72 countries and economies participated in PISA. Approximately 30 points in the PISA scales are considered equivalent to one year in schooling

Table 1 Mean PISA scores in 2015

	Science		Reading		Mathematics	
	Mean score	3 year trend	Mean score	3 year trend	Mean score	3 year trend
Georgia	411	+23	401	+16	404	15
OECD avge.	493	-1	493	-1	490	-1

Georgia performed significantly below the OECD average across all three subjects, with its performance lagging behind the OECD average by the equivalent of 2.5 and three years of schooling. The share of students below the basic proficiency level is still more than 50% in all subjects. There is a wide gap between the top and bottom income groups, while the gap between rural and urban students is equivalent to more than one year of schooling. However, its performance in the PISA rankings has improved noticeably in recent years, with the highest gain in science.

Teaching quality

McKinsey, the consultancy company, has argued that "the quality of an education system cannot exceed the quality of its teachers⁶". International good practice has seen a move from the explicit specification of content towards a more generic, skill-based approach to discipline knowledge. As well as having more responsibility for what is taught, teachers are increasingly expected to teach knowledge and understanding.

⁶ McKinsey & Co (2010). How the world's best-performing school systems keep getting better, www.mckinsey.com

According to analysis by the World Bank⁷, improving teacher quality is one of the most pressing problems facing the Georgian education sector. The key factors contributing to low teaching quality include the issues of teacher management, deployment, career path development, compensation, and performance evaluation. More specifically, low salaries make teaching an unpopular choice. The poor management of supply and demand of teachers and teacher deployment nationwide has resulted in imbalances between demand and supply of teachers in some subject areas and geographic locations.

The World Bank has issued a number of recommendations which, it suggests, could improve teacher quality in Georgia:

- Introduce a sustainable school-based teacher professional development model. This will require a substantial capacity building at the school level, creating a critical mass of qualified teachers to assume the role of a leading teacher, encouragement of peer learning among the teachers and trained school principals to focus on instructional leadership.
- Improve the performance of teacher pre-service training by emphasising the development of new cadre of university teachers equipped with modern expertise in the field. School principal training courses would be particularly important for developing future school leaders.
- Address the issue of lack of competitive compensation for teaching profession.
- Develop a comprehensive teacher evaluation system, which serves as an effective instrument for managing teacher quality and provides a clear path and opportunities to teachers for professional growth and career advancement, linked to financial incentives.
- Improve the current poor management of supply and demand of teachers across the country. This will require a solid understanding of teacher supply and demand, and implementation of targeted policies/measures to respond to emerging trends.

Vocational Education and Training (VET)

The Georgian VET system has already been the subject of significant policy attention from the Georgian Government, the World Bank, the United Nations and the European Union over the last decade. However, according to the World Bank's analysis, initial reforms in the VET sector were launched without a comprehensive development plan, full understanding of the skills development needs and potential impact of the new proposed programs. This translated into a set of rushed and improvised measures. One such measure was the separation of VET pathways from general education by the 2007 VET law and introduction of artificially fragmented short-term programs in 2010 (sometimes as short as two months) to meet the government objective of creating rapid paths to employment. Many young students enrolling in these programs found it difficult to get employment as the competencies acquired were not sufficient to meet the labour market needs.

The Ministry of Education and Skills has launched a new strategy, the *Vocational Education and Training Development Strategy for 2013-2020*⁸ which includes the following priorities:

- Improvements to the regulatory environment of the VET system with a view to enhancing the capacity of VET institutions to meet the skill demands of the labour market by ensuring facilities are of high quality.
- establishment of effective funding mechanisms enabling the achievement of excellence through both public and private sector institutions based on competitiveness.
- preparation and training/re-training of VET teachers
- Reinforcement of full social partner, employers, professional association and civil society participation at all levels of the VET system in decision-making as well as in the whole process of VET education.
- Establishment of a robust system for the recognition of non-formal and prior learning.
- Strengthening of support mechanisms for all students, including those with special educational needs.
- Promoting the role of entrepreneurship in VET in close cooperation with employers.

⁷ World Bank. Education Sector Policy Review: Strategic Issues and Reform Agenda, 2014

⁸ http://mes.gov.ge/uploads/12.%20VET%20Strategy%202013-20_EN.pdf

- Training a workforce with vocational skills specifically suited to particular trades or specialities as well as relevant general cultural competences (such as ICT knowledge, communication, foreign languages) in order to sustain employability through rapid change.

Higher education

The higher education system requires greater transparency in order that::

- Higher Education Institutions will be better able to develop and communicate their missions, to show their profiles to stakeholders and to engage more effectively in partnerships, benchmarking and networking.
- Students will be better able to identify their preferred higher education institutions and make better choices regarding their study programs and labour market perspectives.
- Business and industry can identify which types of institutions are of particular interest for them, facilitating easier creation of mutual partnerships and stronger relationships.

Despite poor employment prospects, enrolment in social sciences, humanities, arts, business and law is higher in Georgia compared to the European and CIS average. In order for students to make intelligent decisions on their future career fields, they need to have reliable information on labour market prospects. Since 2010, the Government has been trying to affect the students' choice through financing a higher share of grants allocated to science and engineering programmes. However, this has met with limited success.

At VET and higher education levels, introducing result-based accountability mechanisms is essential for quality improvement. These accountability mechanisms should be built around measuring performance of these institutions according to defined outcomes. The performance indicators should be agreed upon among key stakeholders, tracked by institutions themselves and verified by an independent agency. The indicators should be shared publicly with all higher education stakeholders (e.g. parents, students, employers, etc) to inform both policy and personal decisions.

KEY ACTIONS

Quality will be embedded in the delivery of early-years services.

Teaching and learning in schools will be improved by investing in a high quality outcomes based teacher education and evaluation system

Vocational and higher education will provide high quality learning experiences leading to better outcomes

OBJECTIVE 6: EMPLOYABILITY AND ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILLS AND THINKING WILL BE EMBEDDED IN THE CURRICULA OF SCHOOLS, VET CENTRES AND HIGHER EDUCATION CENTRES.

A well thought-out entrepreneurial education policy will maximise the potential of young people to develop the next generation of innovative products, services and processes. The education system has a critical influence in shaping entrepreneurial attributes from an early age. In order to secure educators' commitment to do this, we need to redefine entrepreneurship in a way that does not undermine educational values. Entrepreneurship should not be viewed solely from “an economic perspective” as it has applications for society and culture.

Young people who benefit from entrepreneurial learning develop latent business knowledge and essential skills including creativity, initiative, tenacity, teamwork, understanding of risk, a sense of responsibility and social resilience. These are the high level skills necessary for all commercial and social endeavours which make young people more employable and entrepreneurial.

The OECD (2015) has argued that entrepreneurship promotion across all levels of Georgian education still requires more concerted policy effort, in particular through greater involvement of higher education institutions. Improvements to SME skills intelligence are required to support policy implementation. Support for women's entrepreneurship also requires more emphasis on women's contribution to the national competitiveness agenda.

Georgia's socio economic strategy, Georgia 2020, and the SME strategy include entrepreneurial learning, providing impetus for policy changes in education and training. The recently established Enterprise Georgia could also play an important policy-coordination role in lifelong entrepreneurial learning.

The EU Entrepreneurship Competence Framework⁹ (which includes entrepreneurial learning outcomes) is a useful policy reference tool which education policy makers could possibly adapt to school, college and university curricula. The learning outcomes should ideally be piloted across all levels of education and evaluated to determine implications for schools, assessment arrangements and teacher training

Developments in formal education should be matched, and where possible connected, with entrepreneurship promotion in non-formal entrepreneurial learning. The authorities should consider how to integrate direct entrepreneurship provided by organisations such as GEA into the mainstream curricula.

GEA and the Ministry could develop an entrepreneurial skills strategy that could help to embed promote entrepreneurial learning at all education levels, provide professional development and opportunities for educators to encourage entrepreneurial thinking, inspire the student to participate in entrepreneurial activities and encourage business and civic society to engage on this issue. This is particularly important for universities which still need to buy-in if higher education is to more directly contribute to an entrepreneurial economy. The aim should be to develop entrepreneurship across all faculties of all universities, as well as to upgrade university-business co-operation in R&D areas with good market potential

KEY ACTIONS

Complete an Entrepreneurial Education Policy Statement

Issue guidelines to schools, training centres and colleges to support the delivery of transversal and entrepreneurial education

⁹ <http://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/bitstream/JRC101581/lfn27939enn.pdf>

OBJECTIVE 7: PEOPLE ACROSS GEORGIA WILL ENGAGE MORE IN LIFELONG LEARNING

Lifelong learning brings benefits to the individual, to society and to employers: lifelong learning has an important contribution to make to people's wellbeing, to creating a more inclusive society and to supporting a vibrant and sustainable economy. From an economic development perspective, the continuous training and up-skilling of people in the workforce is particularly important in maintaining the competitiveness of companies and in making Georgia an attractive location for investment. This is a complex activity to measure, so it is important to have clear terminology.

Lifelong learning as defined by Eurostat, the European Union's statistical agency includes 'all purposeful learning activity, whether formal, non-formal or informal, undertaken on an ongoing basis with the aim of improving knowledge, skills and competence'.

Formal education covers the regular education and training system where courses are

- of a predetermined purpose and format
- provided in the system of schools, colleges, universities and other educational institutions
- normally constitute a continuous ladder of education
- structured in terms of learning objectives, learning time and learning support
- normally intended to lead to a qualification recognised by national authorities

Non-formal education refers to all organised learning activities outside regular or formal education. The learner normally has to register for each learning activity. Non-formal education includes

- participating in a course or a seminar to acquire/improve skills, knowledge and competence; courses can be aimed at improving job-related knowledge or enhancing skills for social and personal purposes
- both courses leading to certificates and courses not leading to certificates

Informal learning includes learning that is not organised or structured in terms of purpose, time or instruction (e.g. language skills acquired during a stay abroad, IT skills acquired at work, skills acquired through sports etc.)

Georgia does not yet have a consolidated national policy for integrating lifelong learning (LLL) in the education sector. A holistic policy approach would be valuable as it will be necessary to redefine some aspects of formal education and to develop and integrate to it into two important learning systems:

- the recognition of workplace learning and the need to value and support learning at work, which will require addressing many questions about the nature of the curriculum, the relation of educators to employers, and practical arrangements to locate or connect, and to recognise and accredit, purposeful learning on as well as for the job and
- the recognition and accreditation of learning that takes place away from the classroom. This integration must be also developed, as it should enhance the standing and recognition of informal learning, in its own right and as a way into more formal education and training.

KEY ACTIONS

There will be more and easier opportunities for those in employment to engage in education and training.

There will be greater recognition of workplace learning and capacity for recognition of prior learning and informal learning will be developed.

The benefits of lifelong learning will be promoted and communicated to the full population of Georgia.

IMPLEMENTATION AND MEASURING SUCCESS

To succeed in achieving the national education goals, objectives, and targets, the implementation of the future sector reforms must have a solid foundation. The development and implementation of a sector-wide Education Strategy will require active stakeholder engagement, the definition of efficient coordination mechanisms and clear lines of responsibility, authority and accountability at central as well as at decentralized levels. It is important to avoid the creation of heavy bureaucratic structures and to focus on outcomes - not activity.

Objective 1: Conceptual modification of educational system			
ACTION	MEASURE	LEAD	TIMELINE
1.1 Georgia will have systemic and valid labour market research policy	1.1 determination of survey methodology	Government of Georgi and social partners	Short-term (2-3 year)
	1.2 Development of research instruments oriented on results and objectiveness;	of GeoStat and business unions	Short-term (2-3 year)
	1.3 the research frequency and finances are determined by legislation;	of GeoStat and Ministry of Finances of Georgia	Short-term (2-3 year)
1.2 the state resources are adjusted to survey/research results	1.2.1 the state resources are updated and adapted to the needs of concrete market requirements	Ministry of Education of Georgia Ministry of Finances of Georgia Social partners	Short-term (2-3 year)
	1.2.2 the mid-term budget planning is agreed and fixed	GoG and social partners	Mid-term (5-6 year)
1.3. the effective mechanisms of professional orientation are integrated in the whole sphere of education system	1.3.1. Development of professional orientation approaches based on international experiences	Ministry of Education of Georgia Social partners Donor organizations	Short-term (1-2 year)
	1.3.2. integration of professional orientation programmes/modules at all the levels of education system	Ministry of Education of Georgia EQE;	Short-term (2-3 years)
1.4. The educational institutions and state funds are oriented on market requirements;	1.4.1. adjustment of educational institutions involvement motivation on market economy principles	Ministry of Economy Ministry of Education Business unions	Mid-term (4-5 years)
	1.4.2. Modification of state budget on new realities	Ministry of Finances; GeoStat; Ministry of Education;	Short-term (1-2 year)

OBJECTIVE 2: DEVELOPING SKILLS WHICH ARE RELEVANT TO THE ECONOMY			
ACTION	MEASURE	LEAD	TIMELINE
1.1 Georgia will have a robust skills and labour market forecasting architecture	1.1 Establish a National Skills Council which will use data on skills requirements to proactively address emerging skills gaps.	MoES MoLHSA Enterprise Georgia	Short-term
	1.2. Establish a specialist inter-Ministry technical skills forecasting unit	MoES MoLHSA	Short-term
	1.3 Conduct annual surveys of employers to inform policy and programme development	MoES MoLHSA Enterprise Georgia	Short-term
1.2 Students at all stages will learn '21st Century Skills' – transversal skills, foreign languages ICT and subject knowledge	1.2.1 Implement a multi-annual programme of curriculum reform to ensure that the pre-school and school curricula are continuously improved and remain relevant to the needs of the economy	NCEQE MoES	Short-term
	1.2.2 Promote the development of transversal skills at all levels of the education and training system and increase the understanding of the skills developed at each level among stakeholders	MoES NVETC NCEQE HEIs	Long-term
	1.2.3 Develop an ICT Skills Action Plan	MoES	Medium-term
1.3 Beyond school, there will be enhanced integration, partnerships and synergy between the VET and higher education sectors	1.3.1 Develop a pilot joint VET/Higher Education funded programme (e.g an 'advanced apprenticeship	MoES	Short-term
	1.3.2 Ensure that the higher education institution performance agreements include progression of students from VET as a key metric	MoEs	Medium-term

OBJECTIVE 3: SOCIAL PARTNER ENGAGEMENT IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING			
ACTION	MEASURE	LEAD	TIMELINE
2.1 Employers will participate in skills development through active collaboration with education and training providers	2.1.1 Build on good practice across institutions and increase employer participation in curriculum design and review	MoES NCEQE Employers HEIs	Long-term
	2.1.2. Appoint business representatives to the board of the NCEQE	MoES	Short-term
	2.1.3 Review the effectiveness of the NCEQE subsector committees and improve employer input	NCEQE	Short-term
	2.1.4 Reform the voting structures in the NVETC to reflect the body's tripartite mandate	MoES NVETC	Short-term
	2.1.5 Pilot an apprenticeship programme for selected occupations	NVETC	Short-term
	2.1.6 Pilot an enterprise-led upskilling network (a 'Skillnet') for two sectors	GEA	Medium-term
2.2 The capability of small firms will be enhanced through skills development	2.2.1 Support management development in SMEs in order to increase the number of Georgian companies exporting and growing to scale	Enterprise Georgia GEA	Medium-term
	2.2.2 Support the further development of skills assessment resources to help companies, especially SMEs, to accurately identify their skills requirements	Enterprise Georgia GEA	Medium-term
2.3 Improved employer participation will strengthen the promotion and communication of career opportunities	2.3.1 Mainstream the BMZ and GEA vocational training programme into a national initiative	MoES GEA	Medium-term
	2.3.2 Introduce a pilot National Work Experience Programme designed for the specific needs of students at all levels of the system (school, VET and higher education)	MoES Employers	Medium-term
	2.3.3 Carry out a review of guidance services, tools and careers for school students and adults and recommend changes to improve the services available	MoES	Short-term
	2.3.4 Introduce a pilot National Careers Advisory Service for school students	MoES Employers	Medium-term

OBJECTIVE 4: ADEQUATE FUNDING AND FAIR COMPETITION			
ACTION	MEASURE	LEAD	TIMELINE
3.1 Georgia will prioritise increasing public investment in education.	3.1.1 Publish a five year plan for increasing public investment in education as a proportion of GDP	MoF	Short-term
	3.1.2 Publish annual report benchmarking expenditure per student with new EU members states and comparable countries in the Commonwealth of Independent States	MoES	Short-term
	3.1.3 Use international agreements including the EU-Georgia Association Agreement to secure funding to underpin education reform initiatives	MoES	Medium-term
	3.1.4 Publish accurate, timely and specific information on allocation of state education funding and use of all technical assistance grants from international agencies	MoES	Short-term
3.2 Private education provision and Private Public Private Partnerships will be encouraged both in financing and delivery of at all levels	3.2.1 Implement legislative changes to the funding rules for the VET voucher systems	MoES	Short-term
	3.2.2. Develop a specific strategy to encourage Public Private Partnerships both in the financing and delivery of vocational education	NVETC	Medium-term
	3.2.3 Develop a strategy that sets out clearly the respective purposes of the public and private sectors of the VET and higher education system and includes regulatory and financial policies that enable both sectors to thrive.	MoES	Short-term
3.3 Increased financing for the higher education sector	3.3.1 Implement a pilot plan for introducing innovative financing mechanisms for courses that are aligned with labour market needs	MoES HEIs	Medium-term
	3.3.2 Implement the MoF's guidance in developing strong program budgeting practices with attributable and measurable performance indicators	MoES HEIs	Short-term

OBJECTIVE 5: TEACHING QUALITY, IMPROVED LEARNER EXPERIENCES AND EVALUATION			
ACTION	MEASURE	LEAD	TIMELINE
4.1 Quality will be embedded in the delivery of early-years services	4.1.1. Establish national curricula, quality standards and a monitoring regime for preschool institutions	MoES	Medium-term
	4.1.2 Promote gradual expansion of preschool enrolment with a particular attention to disadvantaged groups	MoES	Long-term
4.2 Teaching and learning in schools will be improved by investing in a high quality outcomes based teacher education and evaluation system	4.2.1 Introduce a school-based teacher professional development model	TPDC	Medium-term
	4.2.2 Improve the performance of teacher pre-service training	TPDC	Medium-term
	4.2.3 Expand the provision of school principal training courses	TPDC	Medium-term
	4.2.4 Address the issue of the lack of competitive compensation for teachers	MoES	Long-term
	4.2.5 Develop a comprehensive teacher evaluation system	TPDC	Medium-term
	4.2.6 Improve intelligence on teacher supply and demand to address regional disparities and respond to emerging trends	MoES	Medium-term
	4.2.7 Appoint a business representative to the board of the TPDC	MoES	Short-term
4.3 Vocational and higher education will provide high quality learning experiences leading to better outcomes	4.3.1 Establish a new System Performance Framework which sets out the system-led objectives for all higher education and VET institutions. This should include metrics around teaching and learning, and the student experience.	MoES	Medium-term
	4.3.2 Develop and implement a continuous professional development strategy for VET and higher education staff	TPDC	Long-term
	4.3.3 Develop core Quality Assurance Guidelines for the VET and higher education sectors	NCEQE	Medium-term

OBJECTIVE 6: EMPLOYABILITY AND ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILLS			
ACTION	MEASURE	LEAD	TIMELINE
5.1 Complete an Entrepreneurial Education Policy	5.1.2 Publish a comprehensive entrepreneurial education policy document	Enterprise Georgia MoES GEA	Short-term
	5.1.2 Publish a strategy to address the skills required to exploit women's entrepreneurship potential	Enterprise Georgia MoES GEA	Short-term
	5.1.3 Develop an entrepreneurship strategy specifically for university faculties in R&D areas with good market potential	MoES	Short-term
5.2 Issue guidelines to schools, training centres and colleges to support the delivery of entrepreneurial education	5.2.1 Pilot the learning outcomes defined in the EU Entrepreneurship Competence Framework in school, college and university curricula	NCEQE	Short-term
	5.2.2 Connect non-formal entrepreneurial initiatives into the mainstream curricula	MoES Education Resource Centres	

OBJECTIVE 7: INCREASE ENGAGEMENT IN LIFELONG LEARNING			
ACTION	MEASURE	LEAD	TIMELINE
6.1 There will be more and easier opportunities for those in employment to engage in education and training	6.1.1 Develop a holistic policy to integrate lifelong learning into the formal education system	MoES	Long-term
	6.1.2 Promote and support engagement with continuing professional development across all levels of the education system	MoES	Long-term
	6.1.3 Funding models for education and training must incentivise Georgian providers to deliver on the wide spectrum of lifelong learning needs. This will mean appropriate approaches to funding that support different types of part-time provisions, module-based delivery systems, collaboration across education and training providers (including between VET and higher education) and access by all potential lifelong learners	MoES	Long-term
6.2 There will be greater recognition of workplace learning and capacity for recognition of prior learning will be developed	6.2.1 Promote the development of a common understanding of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and support the dissemination of good practice in RPL across the VET and higher education sectors	MoES	Medium-term
	6.2.2 Support a new approach to the development of RPL within education institutions in consultation with relevant stakeholders.	MoES	Medium-term
6.3 The benefits of lifelong learning will be promoted and communicated to the full population of Georgia.	6.3.1 Promote the concept and benefits of lifelong learning among the general population, the self-employed and employers to drive cultural change	Enterprise Georgia	Medium-term
	6.3.2 Benchmark the level of investment by businesses in workforce training to provide a comprehensive and regular picture of progress.	Enterprise Georgia	Medium-term

KEY:

BMZ - The German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development

GEA – Georgian Employers Association

HEIs – Higher Education Institutions

MoES - Ministry of Education and Science

MOF – Ministry of Finance

MoLHSA – Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Affairs

NCEQE - National Center for Education Quality Enhancement

NVETC – National Vocational Education and Training Council

TPDC - Teachers Professional Development Centre

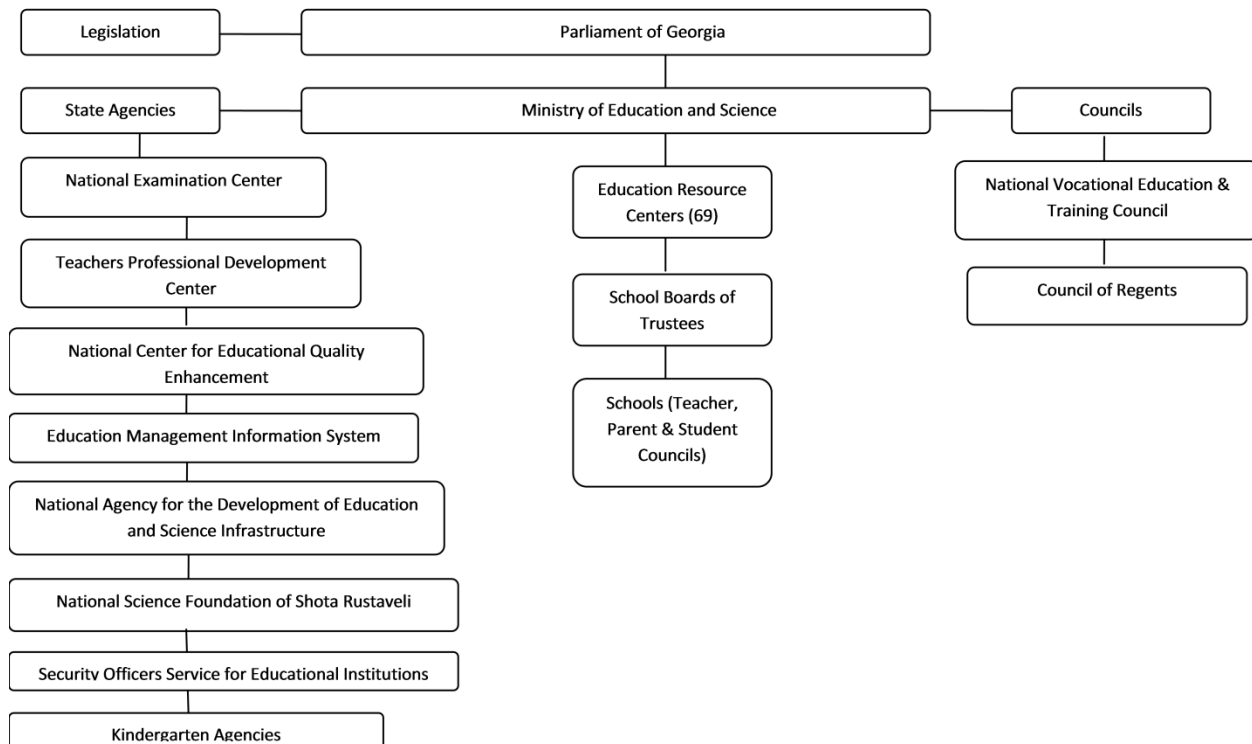
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APPENDIX 1

The Ministry of Education and Science (MES) has the primary responsibility for the policy and management of the education sector in Georgia. Nonetheless, some of the core functions such as examinations and assessment, teachers' professional development, quality assurance, educational infrastructure development, science development, education statistics are implemented by the specialized semi-autonomous Legal Entities of Public Law (LEPL) under the umbrella of the Ministry, as presented below. These institutions receive financing from the state budget but also generate revenues through their activities.

- The National Examination Center (NAEC) is responsible for administering school leaving examinations, teacher certification examinations and international assessments of learning outcomes.
- The National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement (NCEQE) is responsible for authorization and quality control of educational institutions.
- The National Center for Teachers Professional Development Center (NCTPDC) sets teacher standards, certification requirements, and administers professional development programs.
- The Central Education Management Information System (EMIS) collects data on general education and is responsible for ICT infrastructure development in the sector.
- School Infrastructure is managed by the National Agency for the Development of Education and Science Infrastructure.



SOURCE: WORLD BANK, 2014