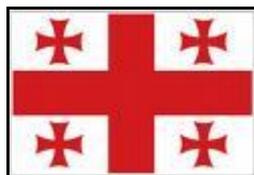


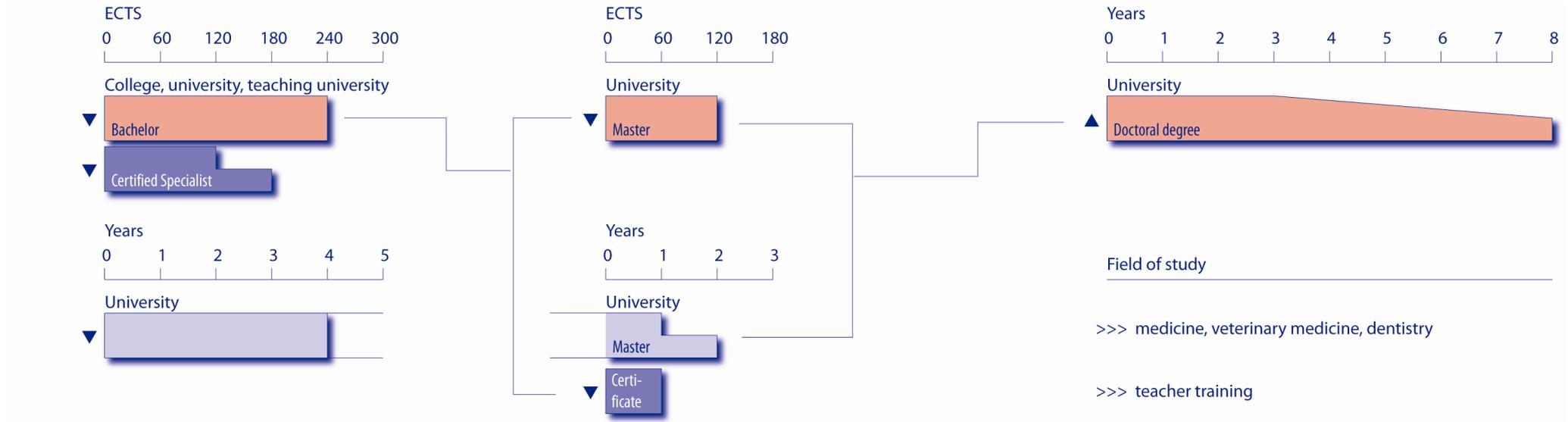


HIGHER EDUCATION IN GEORGIA



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The higher education system in Georgia



- Most common length of a Bologna cycle
- Other length of a Bologna cycle
- Programme outside the typical Bologna model
- Professional programme

ECTS
Credits according to the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System

		regulated at national level	decided at institutional level
ALL	programmes have admission requirements	▼	▲
SOME		▽	△

I. Overall description

1. Major characteristics of tertiary education in the country

Legislation covering the field of tertiary education

The Law of Georgia on Higher Education, adopted in December 2004, created a legal basis for reforms, defining the roles and responsibilities of all players involved in higher education, the levels of higher education, rules for admission, licensing/authorisation and accreditation procedures, types of educational institutions, introduction of credits etc. Several changes and amendments to the law enacted in the last years, including changes in the legal status of public higher education institutions (HEI), reflect the dynamic process of reforms in the field of higher education. All of the main principles set out in the legislation have been implemented so far.

Types of tertiary education programmes and qualifications

The three-cycle higher education (HE) system has been implemented in Georgia. Bachelor, master and doctoral programmes have already been introduced in all accredited higher education institutions. All students below doctoral level are enrolled in the two-cycle degree system (except for certain specific specialisations such as medicine).

Higher professional programmes (*umaglesi profesiuli ganatleba, since September 2010 referred to as level IV and V of professional education*) have been introduced as a short cycle within Bachelor studies for students who are interested in acquiring practical skills. Upon completion of this type of programme, they receive a qualification from a certified specialist. These programmes correspond to 120 to 180 ECTS credits. These credits can be recognised for Bachelor programmes if students continue their education.

Bachelor programmes (*bakalavriati*) cannot comprise less than 240 ECTS credits whereas Master programmes (*magistratura*) comprise 120 ECTS and doctoral programmes (*doktorantura*) 180 ECTS.

Types of tertiary education institutions

There are three types of higher education institutions in Georgia:

- research universities: authorised to award all three academic degrees (Bachelor,

Master and PhD – *bakalavriati, magistratura, doktorantura*);

- teaching universities: without a notable research function, implementing first and second cycles of higher education;
- colleges: higher professional (*umaglesi profesiuli ganatleba*) and Bachelor programmes (*bakalavriati*)

Currently, there are 57 HEIs recognised by the state: 20 public and 37 private. 64 % of HEIs are located in the capital city, Tbilisi. The total number of students in all HEIs is 99 003 (as at April 2012). 62 % of students are enrolled in the five biggest public universities. The breakdown of students in the different higher education cycles is given below.

Number of students at HEI (academic year 2011/2012)	
99 003	
Bachelor	75 820
Higher Professional Education (IV and V levels)	4 525
Medical Education	7 398
Master cycle	8 452
PhD cycle	2 808

Number of HEI	
57	
Public	Private
20	37

2. Distribution of responsibilities

The principle of autonomy of the higher educational institution is stipulated in the Law of Georgia on Higher Education as one of the leading principles of the national HE system. New amendments to the Law on Higher Education (2011) provide for different legal status of HEIs and responsibilities of state authorities differ respectively. There are three legal forms of HEIs: legal entity of public law, legal entity of private law and non-commercial non-profit legal entity (NNLE) (the last can be also established by the state). Law defines the functions and responsibilities of the state authorities.

The state authorities have certain powers in the field of higher education:

- Parliament of Georgia: defines the key guidelines of HE policy and management, and passes appropriate legislative acts.
- Government of Georgia: defines the amount of the state education grant and draws up social programmes and state programmes in the field of higher education; The Government can also establish an HEI as a legal entity of public law. The Prime Minister appoints directors of the National Centre for Educational Quality Enhancement and National Examination Centre.
- Ministry of Education and Science (MoES): implements a unified HE policy; develops basic documents reflecting HE system indicators; proposes the amount of state education grants.
- Ministry of Culture and Monument Protection and Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs: decide the normative acts in the sphere of fine arts and sports higher education and finance fine arts and sports higher education.

HEIs having the status of legal entities of public law are subject to greater control by the Ministry of Education and Science: the MoES approves the charter of public HEIs upon the proposal of the Council of Representatives; the MoES exerts state control over them and is responsible for enforcing normative acts enacted in the field of HE. In case of non-commercial non-profit legal entity, founded by the state, governmental control is significantly reduced.

At the same time, HEIs, independently of their legal form, are free to develop and approve study, research and creative work policies, develop and approve rules for personnel recruitment, their internal regulations, elect their management bodies and officials and manage their finances and property.

The formal autonomy of HEIs granted by law is evolving into an effective autonomy. The establishment of a Council of Rectors of Public Higher Education Institutions and a Council of Rectors of Private Higher Education Institutions in 2009 is a clear sign of the growing self-confidence of HEIs.

3. Governing bodies of the higher education institutions

The law of Georgia on Higher Education (Chapter IV) defines the governing bodies of public higher education institutions as having the status of legal entity of public law. The new legislation defines faculty members, students and professors as chief agents in higher education. Rectors of HEIs are no longer appointed by the President but elected by the members of the Academic Council.

The governing functions are shared within public HEIs through new structures with elected members, including:

- The Academic Council, which takes decisions concerning education and research. Only professors may be elected as members of the Academic Council. The Academic Council elects the rector. The rector is the highest academic authority of an HEI and serves as a chair of the Academic Council, represents the HEI in national and international academic and research fields and is authorised to enter into agreements and negotiations on behalf of the HEI.
- The Council of Representatives, which deals with administrative and financial issues. Students comprise 30 % of the Council of Representatives. The Council also includes a representative from the HEI's library/libraries and may also include alumni of the HEI and representatives of the public according to the rules and the percentage prescribed by the HEI's charter. The Council of Representatives elects the head of administration (the chancellor). The chancellor is the highest administrative manager at an HEI in the field of financial issues, material and human resources and represents the institution in financial and economic matters.
- The students' self-governing body and its branches in individual faculties ensure students' involvement in the management of their HEI. It promotes the protection of students' rights, makes recommendations on improving the management systems and quality of studies of the faculty/HEI and presents them to the Faculty Council, Council of Representatives and Academic Council.

The Academic Council, Council of Representatives, and the students' self-governing body are elected from within the HEI on the basis of general, direct and equal elections, by secret ballot, in accordance with the procedures prescribed by the HEI's charter.

Faculty autonomy is also guaranteed within the structure of the HEI. The Faculty Council is the representative body of a faculty, consisting of the academic staff and representatives of the students' self-governing body (not less than 25 % of the Council's members). The Faculty Council elects a dean.

A new structural unit at public HEIs defined by law is the Quality Assurance Service with subunits at faculty level, ensuring systematic evaluation of educational and research activities, as well as upgrading staff qualifications.

Private HEIs, as well as state founded HEIs with the NNLE status, are free to structure their own governing bodies.

4. Financing

The majority of HEIs in Georgia are funded through tuition fees. For public HEIs, tuition fees account for 90 % of total income, while the rest comes from state subsidies, paid indirectly through state-funded grants to students and directly as a lump sum payment (block grant) to the HEI. Infrastructure grants from the government are provided to public universities for infrastructure projects where necessary, from time to time. Private universities receive no direct funding from the government but receive indirect subsidies through state-funded grants to qualified students who enrol in these institutions.

The funding model of HEIs has changed substantially in the last years. The input-based *lump sum financing model* of education has been transformed into per capita financing. Consequently, vouchers and grants have been introduced. This shift is primarily aimed at increasing efficiency and transparency of financing.

The voucher scheme takes the form of a government grant to students. Different grants are given to the students according to their performance in a national admission exam at the end of secondary education and depending on the field of study. Students enrolled in engineering and natural sciences programmes, identified as priority by the state, receive different percentage of the maximum tuition fee at public HEIs (100 %, 70 %, 50 % and 30 %), while students of other programmes (such as law and business) get public grant only in case of highest scores.

The grants are used to finance tuition fees, at both public and private HEIs. Many private universities charge much higher tuition fees and voucher recipients may use vouchers to partially offset these higher fees.

A student loan system was introduced in Georgia in 2006 in cooperation with the leading commercial banks of Georgia. Students have so far been given loans with various coverage terms and interest rates. Further improvements to student loan schemes will be made to increase the number and availability of loans, as well as lending conditions.

Apart from state student grants, HEIs are entitled to receive funding from the following sources:

- funds received through private grants, contributions or a will,
- research grants awarded by the state on the basis of competitions,

- special state-budgetary programs designed to encourage the enrolment of students in HEI specialties which represent priorities for the state,
- programme financing allocated by the ministries of a relevant field,
- any other sources of income allowed by Georgian legislation, including revenue from economic activities.

In the absence of any objective allocation system (such as formula funding), lump sum payments received by HEIs are negotiated on an annual basis. The negotiating power of individual universities largely determines how much they receive. Thus the system works very much to the advantage of the larger universities in Tbilisi (accounting for some 10-12 % of total income). Lump sum payments (which in many university systems provide the bulk of government funding to universities) is clearly unsatisfactory. The amounts, when received, are limited to a small proportion of the overall funding and the process of allocation is rather arbitrary. Clearly, the present lump sum system needs to be reformed. Discussions are currently under way to decrease the lump sum funding from the state and to replace it by increasing the HEI voucher subsidy scheme. Ultimately, the lump sum funding system may be phased out.

5. Students' contributions and financial support

Up to 25% of students receive vouchers (at varying percentage levels), so most students (or their parents) will need to finance tuition fees, as well as living expenses, from their own resources. Many students take loans to top-up private funding and/or government grants for tuition. However, only few commercial banks provide loans to students and only students from three private HEIs are offered a "typical" student loan, with a grace period extending until six months following completion of studies or obtaining a job. All other students are eligible only for short-term consumer-type loans issued to their families – no grace period, immediate repayment and high interest – used to cover short-term cash flow constraints only.

Overall, the system does little to promote university access of disadvantaged groups, the less well-off and the rural poor. There are some programmes aimed at these groups, but apart from social grants, in the form of needs-based vouchers (a quota is set at 10 % of all vouchers), these reach very few of the groups in need. The situation is slightly better for ethnic minority students graduating from Azeri or Armenian schools, where there are special scholarships available to them. There are no differences in fees required from "traditional" and "non-traditional" students.

6. Licensing, quality assurance and accreditation of institutions and/or programmes

Mechanisms of quality assurance, including authorization and accreditation, are defined by the adopted law "Development of Quality of Education" (July 2010).

Through the authorization mechanism an institution is granted the status of a higher education institution if it complies with defined standards in certain areas of performance. The standards for authorisation are in:

- a) educational programmes,
- b) material resources,
- c) human resources.

The state recognizes diplomas, issued only by authorized HEIs. Authorization is granted for five years.

The accreditation process defines the status (the right to issue the certificate recognised by the state) of an existing HEI and/or educational programme. The aim of the accreditation mechanism is to enable systematic self-evaluations of higher educational institutions. The goal is to improve the quality of education by having educational programmes comply with the standards of accreditation and quality improvement mechanisms. Educational programmes of higher education institutions are funded only with a governmental education grant if the programmes successfully passed accreditation. Regulated programmes and PhD programmes can only be established if the HEI successfully passed accreditation.

Accreditation standards and processes are the same for public and private HEIs, whereas quality assurance processes on the institutional level can be different: the Law on Higher Education obliges public HEIs to establish and operate internal quality assurance services (Article 25), defining its status and responsibilities, while private HEIs are not obliged to do so. But since the self-assessment report is a main precondition for accreditation, private HEIs also establish internal structures and units responsible for quality assurance.

A special state authority – the National Centre for Educational Quality Enhancement (NCEQE) – has been established to ensure authorisation and accreditation processes. It operates in compliance with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area, although there is still some room for improvement. This is essential for ENQA membership and registration in the European Quality Assurance Register (EQAR).

7. Admission

One of the main achievements of the reform of higher education in Georgia was the establishment of the system of Unified National Examinations. The old system contradicted the objectives of transparency and facilitated corruption and was, by definition, not meritocratic, favouring those with money. The state took responsibility for the admission of students to the first cycle of higher education through creating a centralised, objective system and ensuring the principles of equity and meritocracy. Corruption in entrance exams has been eliminated completely.

A special unit, the National Examination Centre (NCE), a legal entity of public law, has been established to implement the Unified National Examinations. The Examination Centre provides the education system with reliable and objective tools for assessing knowledge and abilities of students. Students compete for places at state or private HEIs determined by the National Accreditation Centre. Only students who have completed secondary education and passed the unified examinations may enrol at accredited HEIs. State grants are awarded to the highest achievers.

At the beginning of the academic year, each HEI must announce coefficients set by its faculties for examination results in each subject. The admission of students who have passed the examinations are conducted in accordance with the coefficients set by faculties for each examination subject at the beginning of the academic year. Four exams are compulsory for all entrants: Georgian language, foreign language, skills and aptitude test and a fourth exam chosen from mathematics, natural or social sciences, according to the profile of the programme. For higher professional programmes only one entrance exam in skills and aptitudes is obligatory. The National Examination Centre ranks the entrants who have taken the exams according to those coefficients that were published by the faculties at the beginning of the academic year and sends the lists to the relevant faculties.

There are no specific admission requirements for older students and those with professional qualifications. Students graduating from the higher professional programmes and wishing to continue their studies at Bachelor level must pass the rest of the unified national admission exams.

All Master candidates take Graduate Record Examination (GRE), organized and administered centrally by the National Examination Centre (NCE). Examination in the speciality is administered by universities.

8. Organisation of the academic year

HEIs are free to decide about the beginning and end of the academic year. Typically, the academic year starts in autumn (September/October) and ends in late spring/early summer (May/June). It is generally split into two semesters, although trimesters are used by a few HEIs. The time framework of the academic year is determined by Decree No 3 (5 January 2007) of the Ministry of Education and Science: minimum length – 38 weeks, maximum length – 45 weeks. Examination periods at the end of semester/trimester are typically up to four weeks. The length of academic breaks is set by the HEIs.

9. Curriculum content

Curriculum development is fully under the responsibility of the HEIs, according to the principle of academic freedom. New study programmes must be approved according to the internal procedures of the HEI. The structure of curricula and proportion of compulsory and elective subjects are defined by programme leaders at the HEI.

Most programmes have a modular and major/minor-based structure, except those for the regulatory professions (medicine, law and education). Currently, more than 90 % of HEIs have optional subjects in their curricula and approx. 60 % have optional modules.

Students can also take part in the development of individual study programmes (Law of Georgia on Higher Education, Article 43).

The recently introduced National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and subject benchmarks influenced the curriculum content. Programmes were updated in order to correspond to learning outcomes, defined by the NQF and minimum academic standards.

10. Assessment, progression, certification and degree

Each HEI is required to ensure a fair assessment of the student's knowledge, for which it must develop appropriate procedures. The introduction of ECTS will measure the student's achievements on the basis of clearly defined learning outcomes. Assessment criteria must be indicated in the syllabus.

The student's workload and general assessment procedures are defined by Law and Decree No 3 (5 January 2007) of the Minister of Education and Science on "Rules for Calculating Higher Educational Programmes by Credits". A mid-term assessment is obligatory since the student's achievements cannot be evaluated only on the basis of final exams.

Both, written and oral exams are used for the student's assessment, depending on the learning outcomes.

The National Centre for Educational Quality Enhancement acts as an official institution at national level, responsible for assessing recognition of prior learning (RPL) for access to HE programmes. HEIs are also free to assess the recognition of prior learning. They have their own procedures for defining the compatibility of competences of specific educational programmes and thus recognise credits accumulated. This procedure also ensures the student's mobility. General provisions of credit recognition are defined by Decree No 120 (16 December 2007, some further amendments in 2010) of the Minister of Education and Science.

Recognition of prior non-formal learning at higher education level is not defined by legislation and, as a result, is not applied in practice. Conditions for the student's progress from one year of studies to the next are determined by the HEIs according to the programme requirements.

Requirements for final qualification are defined by the HEIs and vary according to the programme. For regulated professions (medicine, including veterinary, medicine, law and education) students must pass a State Certification Test for practicing in addition to obtaining a relevant academic degree. There are no legal restrictions for accessibility to further levels of higher education: all Bachelor (or equivalent) can access Master programmes and all Master (or equivalent) can access doctoral programmes.

11. Academic staff

Categories of academic staff and qualifications needed to access these categories, as well as requirements for selection are stipulated by the Law on Higher Education (Chapter V).

An HEI has academic, administrative and support staff. The academic staffs consist of professors, associate professors and assistant professors.

The post of professor may be acquired only by a person holding a doctoral degree and having at least six years of experience in teaching and research. A professor leads the study process and supervises the research work of associate professors, assistant professors and students.

The post of associate professor may be acquired only by a person holding a doctoral degree. An associate professor takes part in the main study process and supervises the research of assistant professors and students.

The post of assistant professor may be acquired by a person holding a doctoral degree or by a doctoral student; an assistant professor conducts seminars or laboratory or practical sessions. A professor's teaching load is defined and approved by the HEI.

The rules for filling academic posts are the same for public and private HEIs. An academic post may be filled only on the basis of an open competition based on the principles of transparent, equal and fair competition.

The date and conditions of competition are made public in accordance with the procedures prescribed by Georgian legislation and the HEI's charter, not later than one month prior to the registration and two months prior to the competition. Besides the rules set by law, the HEI may define additional conditions for the selection of academic staff.

Employment contracts for academic staff are concluded for the terms defined by labour legislation. Typically, contracts are signed for three years for professors and associate professors and for two years for assistant professors, although some universities use shorter term contracts.

The number of professors (all three categories) in state-recognised Georgian HEIs in 2012 was 5 977, of which 1 583 were professors, 3 002 associate professors and 1 392 assistant professors. Women comprise of 48 % of academic staff. HEIs can invite lecturers from other universities or scientific institutions to teach and/or supervise students. In some HEIs invited professors exceed the core staff.

12. Research activities

The integration of education and research has become one of the top priorities in Georgia.

Research is clearly stipulated in the mission of universities as one of the main activities, compared to teaching universities, where it is restricted to the obligatory research component of Master programmes. Since Master and doctoral programmes are implemented in 89 % of Georgian HEIs (the rest represented by colleges, offering only Bachelor and higher professional education programmes), research is an integral part of university life.

In 2010, the old system of research institutes under the Academy of Sciences has been abolished and vast majority of research organizations has been merged with different universities, thus increasing their research potential both in terms of infrastructure and human resources.

As a result, 85 % of research projects funded by the Georgian National Science Foundation

(GNSF) in 2011 are conducted by universities (compared to 40 % in 2009). But only 19 % of stately recognized HEIs have submitted project proposals for funding in 2011. Despite of considerable increase (compared to 8.8 % in 2009), these numbers show that research component in HEIs is still underdeveloped. Public HEIs submit more research projects than private. The private HEIs mainly focus on study areas in greatest demand on the labour market, such as business management and law, while fundamental sciences are practically ignored. Private HEIs receive less than twice the amount of national research funds received by public HEIs.

At the same time, a growing number of research projects are being implemented jointly by HEIs and other research establishments. Collaboration within the framework of doctoral programmes is also quite common.

Funds for research activities in HEIs come from various sources. They are mainly a share of a lump sum from state funding, scholarships and grants from different donors, as well as tuition fees of doctoral students. Currently, the majority of doctoral students self-finance their studies. Only at one university (Ilia State University) doctoral studies are free of charge.

No specific data is available on financing research from private sources. There are concrete cases of business sector financing specific research projects or stimulating research development within HEIs.

In Georgia, research is underfunded. Thus only 0.18 % of GDP was spent on research in 2008 and not more than 0.2 % in 2009, without significant increase in following years.

13. University-enterprise cooperation

The dialogue between the academic world and enterprises in Georgia is fairly weak, although 80 % of HEIs report that they have cooperation agreements with private business. The main cooperation area is employability of graduates and traineeships for students. For this purpose, HEIs organise informational meetings with enterprises and present their programmes. There is active cooperation in particular in the fields of business management, banking and law, as well as in sciences and humanities (although much rarer). Some universities (11 %) also conduct labour market surveys in order to identify graduate demand.

Eight HEIs offer special training programmes for the business sector. This initiative was welcomed by enterprises and adult education programmes for specific target groups are quite popular.

Only 10 % of universities cooperate with employers on curriculum design and only six universities (all private) cooperate in the field of university management, inviting business representatives in governing bodies (boards of trustees, boards of consultants).

14. International cooperation

There is no explicit policy to promote mobility of students from or to Georgia, although the number of incoming and outgoing students is steadily increasing. The vast majority of Georgian students study in the USA, Germany and the UK, followed by other EU countries.

The majority of incoming students are from Turkey, followed by India, Russia (students from Russia are mostly ethnic Georgians with Russian citizenship), Azerbaijan, Pakistan and Kazakhstan.

The main obstacle for attracting international students is the language of instruction – most study courses are in Georgian. Only ten Georgian universities offer programmes in EU languages (mostly English, followed by German and French).

At present, there is no database at national level to enable state authorities to track students pursuing their studies abroad. This is complicated by the fact that most students are self-financed and apply directly to foreign HEIs upon completion of their school or undergraduate studies. Nevertheless, available statistics on students leaving to study abroad

in the framework of various programmes clearly show a substantial increase in the number of international students at Georgian HEIs.

Programmes supporting mobility of Georgian students are mainly financed by international donors (Erasmus Mundus, German Academic Exchange Service – DAAD, British Council, International Research and Exchanges Board – IREB, International Research & Exchanges Board – IREX, Open Society Georgia Foundation – OSGF, United States Agency for International Development – USAID) although the Development and Reforms Foundation, founded by the President of Georgia, launched grant fellowships in 2005 for Georgian graduates to follow Master study courses abroad.

Student and staff mobility is also enabled by bilateral agreements between Georgian and foreign universities. This reflects the fact that public universities have longer and more intensive international contacts. Nevertheless, internationalisation is a notable trend in leading private HEIs, too. Development of joint academic degree programmes is seen by the HEIs and the state as one of the most effective tools for programme quality enhancement and internationalisation of Georgian higher education.

One of the novelties of internationalisation is state financial support to public universities for invitation of foreign professors.

II. Current challenges and needs

1. Trends and challenges

As a result of reforms implemented since 2005, higher education in Georgia has moved decisively from a centrally-controlled, supply-driven, public-funded, state system to a more complex, increasingly market-oriented system, with considerable cost-sharing through student fees and a strongly emerging private university sector. The extent to which higher education has moved forward in these new directions and the swiftness of the pace with which it has done so, makes Georgia unique in relation to other countries in the region.

This trend also includes implementation of the objectives the Bologna Process, which is a top priority of the Ministry of Education and Science (MoES) of Georgia.

The reform package includes:

- Legal and normative regulations
 - Law of Georgia on Higher Education
 - Various ministerial decrees and orders
- Establishment of new institutes
 - National Centre for Educational Quality Enhancement
 - National Examination Centre
- Programmes and projects supporting reform implementation
 - Twinning – Capacity Enhancement for Implementing the Bologna Action Lines in Georgia (CEIBAL, Germany & France)
 - University Curriculum Development Programme

- National Qualifications Framework (NQF) for the Higher Education Project
- University Textbook Development Programme
- University Infrastructure Development Programme
- Higher Educational/Research Programme
- Higher Educational/Research Institutions Supporting Programme
- Scientific Grants and Awards Programme

The current policy objectives at national level include:

- Supporting of financial autonomy of HEIs via establishment of endowment funds
- Internationalisation of the accreditation

process

- Establishment of joint programmes and joint research projects

Currently, the main problems and challenges are the following:

- Limited time to implement the reforms
- Lack of resources for implementation
- Low level of involvement of social partners and other stakeholders
- Shortage of educational managers and leaders at university level
- Insufficient recognition of the HE system of Georgia in other countries and consequently lack of trust in its performance

2. The Bologna Process¹

General Information

Level of integration in the Bologna Process	X	Bologna-Signatory Country (in 2005)
		Non Bologna-Signatory Country
		Bologna Process officially embedded in the education system
		Bologna Process being implemented by ad hoc groups under the supervision of the Ministry of Education
		No particular mechanism supporting the implementation of the Bologna Process

Bologna cycle structure

Level of implementation of a three-cycle structure compliant with the Bologna Process	Bologna structure fully implemented in all or most fields of study
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Student workload/duration for the most common Bologna programmes			
Bachelor programmes	240 ECTS (4 academic years)	Master programmes	120 ECTS (2 academic years)

Bachelor/Master cycle structure models most commonly implemented	240+120 ECTS (4+2 academic years)
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European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS)

Definition of the Learning Outcomes Concept	Learning outcomes are defined in national steering documents and implemented through laws and regulations
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Level of implementation of ECTS	More than 75% of institutions and programmes are using ECTS for both transfer and accumulation purposes. Allocation of ECTS is based on learning outcomes and student workload.
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Indicative number of hours of student workload corresponding to one ECTS	1 ECTS = 20 – 30 hours
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Bologna Diploma Supplement (DS)

Level of implementation of the Bologna Diploma Supplement	Bologna DS is issued to students in more than 75% of institutions and study programmes
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Diploma Supplement issued	Bologna DS issued automatically and free of charge	Bologna DS issued in the language of instruction and /or English
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¹ Source: Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency. 'State of Play of the Bologna Process in the Tempus Partner Countries (2012)', A Tempus Study, No 9, April 2012, EACEA, Brussels.

National Qualifications Framework (NQF)

Stage towards establishing a National Qualification Framework		Not yet started formally/not foreseen.
		<u>Step 1</u> : Decision taken. Process just started.
		<u>Step 2</u> : The purpose of the NQF has been agreed and the process is under way including discussions and consultations. Various committees have been established.
	X	<u>Step 3</u> : The NQF has been adopted formally and the implementation has started.
		<u>Step 4</u> : Redesigning the study programmes is ongoing and the process is close to completion.
	<u>Step 5</u> : Overall process fully completed including self-certified compatibility with the Framework for qualifications of the European Higher Education Area.	

Quality Assurance Practices

National Quality Assurance body				
Name	National Centre for Education Quality Enhancement			
Status	A Government-dependent body or Ministry has responsibility for quality assurance.			
Year of establishment	2006			
Involvement in external quality assurance process		Decision-making role	Participation	No participation
	Academic staff	X		
	Students	X		
	International Experts			X

Recognition of foreign qualifications

Ratification of the Lisbon Recognition Convention	X	1997 (signature), 1999 (ratification)
Recognition of Foreign Qualifications for academic study	Recognition for academic study by central or regional governmental authorities	
Recognition of Foreign Qualifications for professional employment	Combination of central or regional governmental authorities / social partner organisations or individual employers	

Joint Degrees

Establishment of joint degrees and programmes in higher education legislation	Joint programmes and joint degrees are allowed in the higher education legislation.
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III. Participation in EU programmes

1. Tempus

Georgia has participated in the Tempus Programme since 1995.

1. Statistics

Number of projects in which one or several institutions in the country have been involved (as coordinator, contractor or partner)

	TEMPUS I and II	TEMPUS III	TEMPUS IV				
	1990-1999	2000-2006	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Joint Projects	5	16	3	3	4	4	10
Compact Projects	5	0	0	0	0	0	0
Structural & Complementary Measures (Tempus III) Structural Measures (Tempus IV)	0	3	0	1	1	1	2
Total	10	19	3	4	5	5	12

Higher education institutions with highest TEMPUS participation during TEMPUS IV (2008-2012)

Institutions	Total	Number of projects	
		JP	SM
IVANE JAVAKHISHVILI TBILISI STATE UNIVERSITY	13	10	3
ILIA STATE UNIVERSITY (TBILISI)	13	12	1
SHOTA RUSTAVELI STATE UNIVERSITY (BATUMI)	11	7	4
AKAKI TSERETELI STATE UNIVERSITY (KUTAISI)	6	5	1
IAKOB GOGEBASHVILI TELAVI STATE UNIVERSITY (TELAVI)	5	4	1
AKHALTSIKHE STATE TEACHING UNIVERSITY	4	3	2
GEORGIAN TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY (TBILISI)	4	4	0
KUTAISI UNIVERSITY	3	2	1

Higher education institutions coordinating TEMPUS IV projects (2008-2012)

Institutions	Total	Number of projects	
		JP	SM
IVANE JAVAKHISHVILI TBILISI STATE UNIVERSITY	2	2	0
ILIA STATE UNIVERSITY (TBILISI)	2	2	0

2. Impact of the Tempus programme

Tempus projects in Georgia, implemented since 1995, have created a solid basis for the successful implementation of the Bologna principles, while supporting curriculum development, the introduction of quality assurance mechanisms and lifelong learning.

In Georgia, more than 70 % of Tempus projects have been implemented in the field of curriculum development and modernisation, covering the subject areas of medicine, biology, law, engineering, agriculture,

environmental studies, European studies, economics, veterinary medicine, library and information sciences and social work. In the framework of Tempus, new programmes have been developed for Bachelor, Master and doctoral levels of higher education, using ECTS. Implementation of modern teaching, learning and assessment methods have led to the development of curricula compatible with European standards.

The most successful curriculum development programmes supported by Tempus (to name but a few) are in the field of biomedical

education, library and information sciences and social work.

Consecutive funding of curriculum development projects in these fields ensures development of the full cycle programmes for all levels, as well as the introduction of short modules for qualification upgrading for specialists in the framework of lifelong learning. A collaborative method of curriculum development has been used, involving social partners – a practice relatively new to the academic world in Georgia. Implementation of these projects increased the numbers of students enrolling, as reported by the universities.

One of the most important points was the introduction of quality assurance mechanisms for programme evaluation; thus curriculum development projects served as models for piloting internal quality assurance mechanisms.

The introduction of quality assurance (QA) as a key element of the Bologna Process, both at national and institutional levels, has been supported by Tempus projects – five projects in the field of QA have been implemented so far (including one current project). Two joint projects supported development of institutional QA mechanisms: “The Establishment of Academic Quality Assurance Centres within Grigol Robakhidze University and Batumi State University” in 2000 (well before joining the Bologna Process); and “Developing an Internal Quality Assurance System at Telavi State University” (2006). Two structural measure projects “Development of an Accreditation System at Georgian Universities (2005)” and “Establishing Quality Assurance Services in the Georgian Higher Education Institutions (2006)” supported development and realisation of an accreditation scheme at five Georgian universities, according to the national Georgian accreditation strategy and EU standards in this field, thus leading to a reform of the existing academic system. A framework model for

internal QA within HEIs has been elaborated. The Structural Measure project “Promoting internationalization and comparability of quality assurance in higher education” started in 2010, involves four Georgian HEIs from different cities, the Ministry of Education and National Centre for Educational Quality Enhancement (NCEQE) and aims aligning internal and external QA systems with European standards.

Tempus also supported the development of the National Qualifications Framework for higher education thanks to the project “Application of Tuning Approaches in the Georgian Higher Education System” (2006). Benchmarks in ten subject areas (nursing, business administration, civil engineering, history, mathematics, physics, chemistry, earth sciences, European studies and education) have been developed. Seven Georgian HEIs, both public and private, including regional universities, participated in this project. Already during project implementation and in parallel, the same methodology has been used to develop benchmarks in other areas, such as biology and psychology. Thus the project had a greater impact than planned, reaching beyond the initially envisaged objectives.

Considering the results achieved, the interest in Tempus projects is growing and an increasing number of Georgian HEIs, in particular in the regions, are applying to participate in Tempus projects, also as coordinators, building national and regional networks of higher educational institutions.

Currently, two Georgian universities (Ilia State University and Tbilisi State University) successfully coordinate Tempus multi-country projects. Universities motivation to coordinate Tempus projects is strongly supported by local authorities, since it’s considered to be one of the best tools for capacity building of Georgian HEIs.

2. Erasmus Mundus

The Erasmus Mundus programme's objective is to promote European higher education, to help improve and enhance the career prospects of students and to promote intercultural understanding through cooperation with third countries, in accordance with EU external policy objectives in order to contribute to the sustainable development of third countries in the field of higher education. It does this through three Actions:

Action 1 – Erasmus Mundus Joint Programmes (Masters Courses and Joint Doctorates) - with scholarships

Erasmus Mundus Joint Programmes are operated by consortia of higher education institutions (HEIs) from the EU and (since 2009) elsewhere in the world. They provide an integrated course and joint or multiple diplomas following study or research at two or more HEIs. Masters Courses and Joint Doctorates are selected each year following a Call for Proposals. There are currently 131 Masters and 34 Doctorates offering offer EU-funded scholarships or fellowships to students and scholars.

Action 2 – Erasmus Mundus Partnerships (former External Cooperation Window) – with scholarships
Under Action 2, Erasmus Mundus Partnerships bring together HEIs from Europe on the one hand and those from a particular region, or geographical “lot” on the other. Together the partnerships manage mobility flows between the two regions for a range of academic levels – Bachelors, Masters, Doctorate, post-Doctorate – and for academic staff.

Action 3 – Erasmus Mundus Attractiveness projects

This Action of the Programme funds projects to enhance the attractiveness, profile, image and visibility of European higher education worldwide. Action 3 provides support to activities related to the international dimension of all aspects of higher education, such as promotion, accessibility, quality assurance, credit recognition, mutual recognition of qualifications, curriculum development and mobility.

More information:

http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus_mundus/results_compendia/selected_projects_en.php

Number of students/staff participating in the programme

Erasmus Mundus – Joint degrees (Action 1)

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Students	2	3	3	5	10	9	7	3	12
Scholars	1	1	-	-	1	2	NA	NA	NA
Fellows	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	0	1

Nationals of the country participated in the programme for the first time in 2004-2005.

Erasmus Mundus– Partnerships (External Cooperation Window, Action 2)

	Undergraduate	Masters	Doctorate	Post-Doctorate	Staff	TOTAL
2007	16	14	11	5	3	49
2008	23	14	13	5	3	58
2009	22	17	12	5	3	59
2010*	18	15	10	3	4	50
2011*	18	12	13	8	9	60
TOTAL	97	72	59	26	22	276

Institutions participating in the programme up to and including 2011

Institutions	Action 1 Joint Programmes	Action 2 Partnerships	Action 3 Attractiveness projects
AKAKI TSERETELI STATE UNIVERSITY		X	
GEORGIAN TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY		X	
GORI UNIVERSITY		X	
IAKOB GOGEBASHVILI TELAVI STATE UNIVERSITY		X	
ILIA STATE UNIVERSITY		X	
IVANE JAVAKHISHVILI TBILISI STATE UNIVERSITY		X	
SHOTA RUSTAVELI STATE UNIVERSITY		X	
TBILISI STATE MEDICAL UNIVERSITY		X	

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- Results of the Higher Education Reform. International Institute for Education Policy. Planning and Management. Tbilisi. 2008 (in Georgian). www.eppm.org.ge
- Education, science and culture in Georgia – Statistical publication. Ministry of Economic Development of Georgia, Department of Statistics. Tbilisi, 2009.

http://geostat.ge/index.php?action=page&p_id=206&lang=eng

- www.moe.gov.ge – Ministry of Education and Science.
- www.eqe.ge – National Centre for Educational Quality Enhancement.
- www.naec.ge – National Examination Centre.
- www.ganatileba.ge – National Curriculum and Assessment Centre.
- www.tempus.ge – National Tempus Office Georgia.
- www.crrc.org.ge – Caucasus Research Resource Centre.
- www.eppm.org.ge – International Institute for Education Policy Planning and Management.
- www.ucss.ge – Centre for Social Sciences.
- www.edu-guide.ge – Education guide.
- www.edu.aris.ge – Education programmes guide.
- www.parliament.ge/index.php?sec_id=259&lang_id=GEO – Education, Culture and Science Committee, Parliament of Georgia.
- www.geostat.ge – Department of Statistics.
- www.euroeducation.net/prof/goergco.htm – The European Education Directory.
- www.cie.ge – Centre for International Education.
- <http://azrebi.ge/> – Discussion portal (in Georgian).
- www.facebook.com/pages/ganatilebis-reporma/91559325097 – Discussion portal on education reform (in Georgian).
- <http://mpr.aub.uni-muenchen.de/16400/> – Higher Education access policies and issues in Georgia before and after the introduction of Unified National Entrance Examinations in 2005.
- <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/COUNTRIES/ECAEXT/GEORGIAEXTN/0,,contentMDK:20872345~menuPK:3949564~pagePK:1497618~piPK:217854~theSitePK:301746,00.html> – Georgia fighting corruption in Higher Education.
- The Bologna Process and Georgia. Shalva Tabatadze. Tbilisi. 2007
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