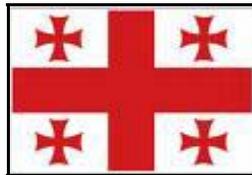


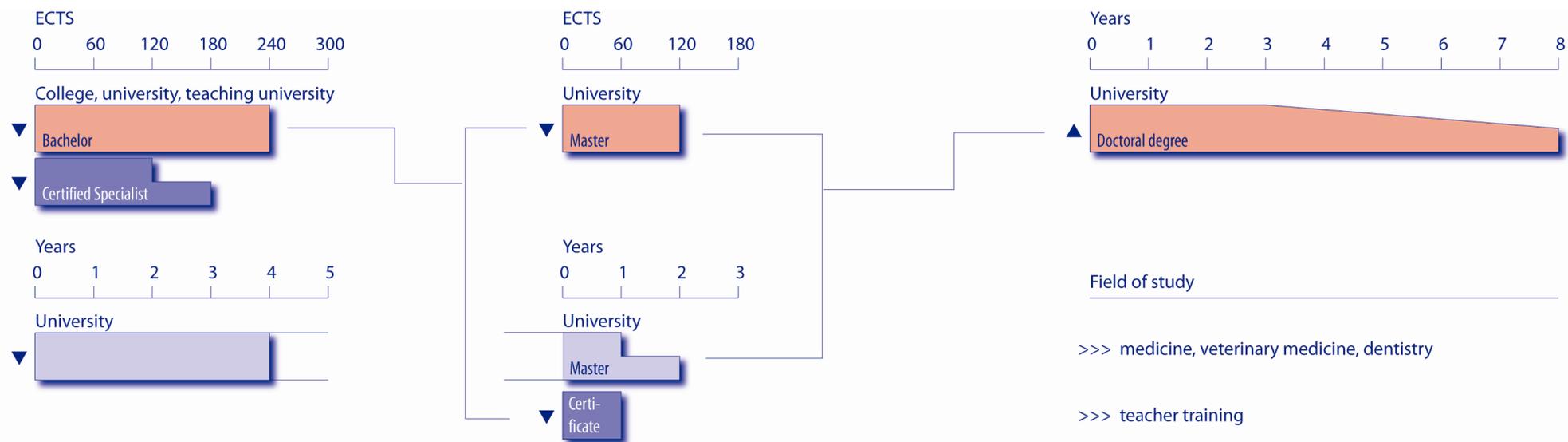


HIGHER EDUCATION IN GEORGIA



- I. Overall description**
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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		▽	△

Source: "Focus on Higher Education in Europe 2010 - The impact of the Bologna Process" (Eurydice, 2010).

I. Overall description

1. Major characteristics of tertiary education in the country

Legislation covering the field of tertiary education

The new 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 and accreditation procedures, types of educational institutions, introduction of credits, etc. Several changes and amendments to the law enacted in the last four years 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 HE system has been implemented in Georgia. Bachelor, Master and doctoral programmes have already been introduced in all accredited higher education institutions (HEI). Almost 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*) 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 (HEI) 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 67 HEIs recognised by the state (accredited and newly licensed): 21 public and 46 private. 72% of HEIs are located in the capital city, Tbilisi. The total number of students in all HEIs is 93.792 (as at November 2009). 50% of students are enrolled in the four biggest universities; 20 HEIs have less than 300 students each. The breakdown of students in the different HE cycles is given below.

Breakdown of students in the different HE cycles

	Bachelor cycle	Higher Professional Education	Medical Education	Master cycle	PhD cycle	Total
Number of students 2008	61222	4403	8275	8413	1444	83757
	73%	5%	10%	10%	2%	100%
Number of students 2009	67887	5532	6697	10835	2841	93792
	72%	6%	7%	11%	3%	100%

Source: "Results of Higher Education Reform" (2008)- a survey conducted by the International Institute for Education Policy Planning and Management for the National Report on the Bologna Reforms. www.eppm.org.ge

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. The Law on Higher Education provides for entirely new organisational and management structures for HEIs, and makes public universities more autonomous, more accountable to the public and democratically governed from the inside. At the same time, the 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; implements licensing procedures.
- Ministry of Culture, Monument Protection and Sport: decides the normative acts in the sphere of fine arts and sports higher education and finances 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.

At the same time, HEIs 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 ensures 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 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 70% of total income, while 30% 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 five 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. Students with higher scores receive 100 percent while others receive only 70 percent, 50 percent or 30 percent of funding of the allocated amount.

The grants are used to finance tuition fees, at both public and private HEIs. They are set differentially at 100%, 70%, 50% and 30% of maximum tuition fees in public universities. 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. 2,463 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

Some 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 five out of 18 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 newly 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 5 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 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 – 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 – a legal entity of public law – the National Examination Centre – 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. 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.

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 (5.01.2007) 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 4 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 (5.01.2007) 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 RPL. 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 (16.12.2007) 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 2009 was 5 452, of which 1 459 were professors, 2 290 associate professors and 1 703 assistant professors. Women comprise 46% of academic staff. HEIs can invite lecturers from other universities or scientific institutions to teach and/or supervise students. In 2009 the number of invited professors under contract was 5 972.

12. Research activities

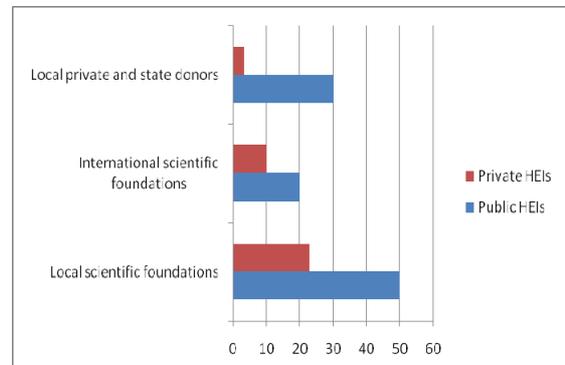
The integration of education and research has become one of the top priorities in Georgia.

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 84% 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 fact the research component in HEIs is still underdeveloped. The neglect of research at universities and its main concentration in the institutes of the Academy of Sciences, inherited from Soviet times is obvious. Thus, only 8.8% of HEIs participate in scientific grant competitions announced by the Georgian National Science Foundation (GNSF). Over 60% of research projects funded by the GNSF are conducted by institutes of the Academy of Sciences. 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.

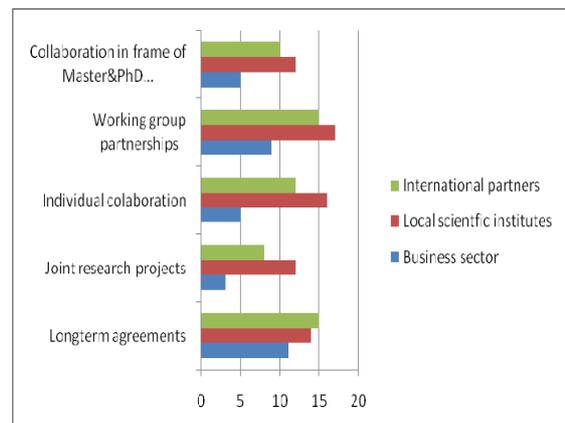
Sources of funding for research activities



Source: "Results of Higher Education Reform" (2008)- a survey conducted by the International Institute for Education Policy Planning and Management for the National Report on the Bologna Reforms. www.eppm.org.ge

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

Forms of research collaboration



Source: "Results of Higher Education Reform" (2008)- a survey conducted by the International Institute for Education Policy Planning and Management for the National Report on the Bologna Reforms. www.eppm.org.ge

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 (90%) self-finance their studies. Only 30% of HEI 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.

Considering the fact that research is underfunded in Georgia (only 0.18% of GDP was spent on research in 2008 and 0.2% in 2009), and the main share of funding goes to the scientific institutes of the Academy of Sciences, universities are left with minimum funds for research activities.

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 10 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, Open Society Georgia Foundation – OSGF) 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.

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
 - o Law of Georgia on Higher Education
 - o Various ministerial decrees and orders
- Establishment of new institutes
 - o National Centre for Educational Quality Enhancement
 - o National Examination Centre
- Programmes and projects supporting reform implementation
 - o Twinning – Capacity Enhancement for Implementing the Bologna Action Lines in Georgia (CEIBAL, Germany & France)
 - o University Curriculum Development Programme
 - o National Qualifications Framework (NQF) for the Higher Education Project
 - o University Textbook Development Programme
 - o University Infrastructure Development Programme
 - o Higher Educational/Research Programme

- o Higher Educational/Research Institutions Supporting Programme
- o Scientific Grants and Awards Programme

The current policy objectives at national level include:

- Development of standards for programme accreditation
- Internationalisation of the accreditation process
- Adoption of a National Qualifications Framework (NQF) for higher education
- Development and implementation of benchmarks
- 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 Process

The Bologna cycle structure

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

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

Legislation on ECTS	Legislation governing the arrangements for implementing ECTS has been introduced.
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Level of implementation of ECTS	Over 75% of institutions and programmes use ECTS for both transfer and accumulation purposes. Allocation of ECTS is based on student workload.
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Diploma Supplement (DS)

Implementation of the Diploma Supplement	DS issued in the vast majority of study programmes
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Diploma Supplement issued	Automatically and free of charge	In the language of instruction and/or English
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National Qualification Framework (NQF)

Stage towards establishing a National Qualification Framework		Not yet started formally.
		<u>Step 1</u> : Decision taken. Process just started.
	X	<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.
		<u>Step 3</u> : The NQF has been adopted formally and the implementation has started.
		<u>Step 4</u> : Redesigning the study programmes is on-going 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.	

National Quality Assurance System

National Agency for Quality Assurance		
Name of the Agency	National Centre for Educational Quality Enhancement	
Year of establishment	2006	
Status	Independent national agency	
Principal "object" of the evaluations undertaken by the Agency	Institutions plus programmes	
Agency responsible for	Both public and private higher education institutions	
Main outcome of the Agency review	X	A decision granting the reviewed institution/programme permission to operate/teach at certain levels/undertake research, etc.
	X	Advice on how the reviewed institution/programme can improve quality in specific areas.

Recognition of qualifications

Ratification of the Lisbon Recognition Convention	YES	1999
Adoption of national laws/regulations required to implement the Lisbon Recognition Convention	YES	2004
Institution responsible for recognising foreign qualifications for the purpose of academic study in the country	National Centre for Educational quality enhancement and Higher Education Institutions. The National Centre for Educational quality Enhancement assesses the equivalence and authenticity of documents prior to their recognition by Higher Education Institutions.	
Institution responsible for recognising foreign qualifications for the purpose of work in the country	Decision on recognition of foreign qualifications is made by the employer.	

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
Joint European Projects	5	16	3	3	4
Compact Projects	5	0	0	0	0
Structural & Complementary Measures (Tempus III) Structural Measures (Tempus IV)	0	3	0	1	1
Total	10	19	3	4	5

Higher education institutions with highest TEMPUS participation during TEMPUS I to III (1990-2006)

Institutions	Total	Number of projects	
		JEP	SCM
IVANE JAVAKHISHVILI TBILISI STATE UNIVERSITY	14	13	1
GEORGIAN TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY (TBILISI)	6	4	2
GEORGIAN STATE AGRARIAN UNIVERSITY (TBILISI)	5	4	1
AKAKI TSERETELI STATE UNIVERSITY (TBILISI)	3	3	0
ILIA CHAVCHAVADZE STATE UNIVERSITY (TBILISI)	3	2	1
SHOTA RUSTAVELI STATE UNIVERSITY (BATUMI)	3	2	1
TBILISI STATE MEDICAL UNIVERSITY	2	1	1
IAKOB GOGEBASHVILI TELAVI STATE UNIVERSITY (TELAVI)	2	2	0
TBILISI ACADEMY OF ART	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 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 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 life long 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 – four projects in the field of QA have been implemented so far. 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.

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 10 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, building national and regional networks of higher educational institutions.

2. Erasmus Mundus

Erasmus Mundus (2009-2013) is a cooperation and mobility programme in the field of higher education with a strong international focus. It operates through three actions:

Action 1 – Erasmus Mundus Joint Programmes (Master Courses and Joint Doctorates)

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. Master Courses and Joint Doctorates are selected each year following a Call for Proposals. There are currently 123 Master and 24 Doctorate programmes offering EU-funded scholarships or fellowships to students and scholars from all over the world.

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

Erasmus Mundus Partnerships bring together HEIs from Europe on the one hand and from a particular region in the world 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. The programme is focused on geographical “lots” of countries or regions covered by the EU's financial instruments for cooperation. These lots include most Tempus countries. New partnerships are selected each year through Calls for Proposals.

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. HEIs (and other key players in the HE sector) may apply.

More information: http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus_mundus

Number of students/staff participating in the programme

Erasmus Mundus – Joint degrees (Action 1)

	2004/2005	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011
Students	2	3	3	5	10	9	7
Scholars	1	1	-	-	1	2	N/A

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

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

Year of Grant Allocation	2007	2008	2009
Undergraduate	16	23	22
Master	14	14	17
Doctorate	11	13	12
Post-Doctorate	5	5	5
Academic staff	3	3	3
Total	49	58	59

Institutions participating in the programme up to and including 2010

Institutions	Action 1 Joint Programmes	Action 2 Partnerships	Action 3 Attractiveness projects
IAKOB GOGEBASHVILI TELAVI STATE UNIVERSITY		X	
IVANE JAVAKHISHVILI TBILISI STATE UNIVERSITY		X	
SHOTA RUSTAVELI BATUMI STATE UNIVERSITY		X	
GORI UNIVERSITY		X	

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- www.moe.gov.ge – Ministry of Education and Science.
- www.naec.ge – National Examination Centre.
- www.nea.ge – National Education Accreditation Centre.
- www.ganatleba.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.statistics.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).
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