

Georgia

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Principles and general objectives of education

The Law on Education, adopted in 1997, establishes the right to education for every citizen regardless of race, ethnicity, nationality, sex, religion, social status and economic conditions. This Law reflects the basic principles of the State educational policy: a unified education system throughout the country; decentralized administration of educational institutions and transfer of management to local governments in the provinces; humanistic, scientific and democratic character of education and upbringing; recognition and appreciation of human and national cultural values; independence of educational institutions from political and religious organizations.

In Georgia, primary education is compulsory and basic secondary education is free of charge.

Current educational priorities and concerns

Georgia is undergoing a transition period from a centrally planned system to a free market economy. The country chose to undertake the democratization of the political system and the transition to a market economy, legally guaranteed by the new Constitution adopted in 1995. A multiparty system and free elections, pluralism and respect for human rights and basic freedoms, are the main characteristics of the new democratic legislative system.

Since 1990, the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) has decreased and the efficiency of the economy diminished. The education sector faces several difficulties in the process of transition.

Gross Domestic Product (GDP) during the transition period

Year	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
GDP 1990 = 100	78.9	43.5	30.8	27.6	28.3	31.5	35.1

Source: Georgian State Department of Statistics.

In 1995, the Government approved the State Programme of Education Reform including the General Principles of the State educational policy and of the education system in Georgia. This document served as the basis for the Law on Education, adopted in 1997, as well as for the preparation of the implementation plan of the education reform.

The State Programme was comprised of several components, including: information and public support to the reform; methodological provisions of the reform; definition of normative provisions for education financing; procedures for



licensing and accreditation of educational institutions, etc. The main aim of the reform was to revise the content of education at all levels and to elaborate educational standards. In November 1997, after two years of work, the Board of the Ministry of Education approved new study plans and educational standards in fourteen main subjects.

One of the most important tasks has been the preparation of textbooks according to the new study plans. In this regard, a regulation concerning the new Textbook Competition Committee has been prepared, in addition to instructions for the constitution of the expert group and new mechanisms for testing and printing textbooks. This activity was carried out with the support of the Soros Foundation. A financial support of approximately US\$4-5 million was envisaged for the next three years. In 1998, a total of forty-two textbooks on different subjects were reviewed and published.

Recent reforms focused on: reviewing the study plans at all educational levels; improving the capacity of educational institutions to carry out independent activities giving them more freedom and increased autonomy; fostering the transition towards the six-year primary education programme and the secondary education programme; encouraging more interactive teaching methodologies; decentralizing educational management and improving the information system of the education sector.

In 2004, the country launched radical education reforms. The first phase of restructuring pursues three main directions: harmonization of the Georgian education system with European standards; eliminating corruption on all levels of education (primary, basic, secondary, vocational, tertiary and others) and shifting to new system of financing education.

In 2005, the Government initiated official negotiations to include the country in the European Union Neighbourhood Policy. Under this initiative, an action plan prioritizing education and science was elaborated. This five-year plan provides, among other measures: improving the qualification of teachers; optimizing the network of schools; limiting the number of pupils in the class to 25; introducing inclusive education; developing vocational training in Southern Caucasus comparable to European standards; developing vocational training and lifelong learning in cooperation with European structures which are based on social partnerships; introducing the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS); transferring to the three-step system in universities; integration of studies and research in tertiary education institutions; establishing a National Students' Union and setting up an independent quality assessment service. Major challenges remain in raising the population's awareness and participation as well as in securing adequate material and social conditions. This will require coordinated cooperation between the public and private sectors, along with international support.

The Parliament of Georgia adopted the Law on General Education on 8 April 2005. Main provisions stipulated in the Law include the following: the teaching of languages; duration of studies; rights and freedoms of students, their parents and teachers; financing mechanisms of general education; management principles for educational institutions and accreditation and property disposal mechanisms. The Law also establishes the implementation a twelve-year school education programme



(expected to be full operational in 2006/07), introduces the Boards of Trustees, elections of the principal, and students' self-governance. The teachers' retraining projects "Civil Integration Programme" and "Future Starts Today" were elaborated with the aim of including and fully integrating the non-Georgian population into the educational system of Georgia. The joint project, "Milky Way", is implemented with Estonian partnership and envisages full computerization and the establishment of Internet access in all schools. This will facilitate unregimented dissemination of information in all regions of Georgia and will contribute to the development of students' technical skills while also introducing On-line and distance learning methods in Georgian schools.

The Ministry of Education and Science elaborated a concept of Teachers' Professional Training and Development that defines the status of a teacher, introduces relevant mechanisms for professional skills development (such as credits and certification tests), and establishes transparent remuneration and a merit-based system. Work is underway to develop a national curriculum, which will include a number of mandatory and elective disciplines to foster the development of analytical skills. The prospective mandatory and elective disciplines are in line with the main directions of civil and state development and correspond to modern and international educational requirements. (Government of Georgia, 2005).

Laws and other basic regulations concerning education

Since independence, one of the most important tasks has been the reform of the education system and the development of a new legal framework for education. To this end, the Board of Ministers adopted in 1995 the State Programme of Education Reform.

In June 1997, the Parliament of Georgia approved the **Law on Education**. This Law defines the main principles of the State educational policy, enables the establishment of private educational institutions and provides for education financing from public and private sources. A number of normative acts have been issued by the Ministry of Education in accordance with the 1997 Law, including: regulation concerning regional departments of education; State standards for educational institutions of all types; regulation concerning secondary schools; regulation regarding primary and secondary vocational education institutions; regulation and criteria for licensing pre-school institutions; regulation concerning the Accreditation Board of higher education institutions.

According to the Law of 1997, in Georgia primary education is compulsory and lasts six years. Children are admitted to primary education at the age of 6. Basic secondary education (three years' duration) is provided free of charge. According to the Law, general secondary education is provided free of charge to a quota of students determined by a State Order on the basis of available financial resources. In 1999, according to the Budget Law, 30% of students receive general secondary education free of charge. Other students pay fees. The Law states that, for the year 2003, the State should provide general secondary education free of charge to all students.



The Parliament of Georgia adopted the **Law on General Education** on 8 April 2005. According to the new law, the citizens of Georgia with a native language other than Georgian enjoy the right of receiving a full-course general education in their native language in compliance with the national curriculum. Among other provisions, the Law also establishes a twelve-year cycle of school education to be finalized during 2006/07. The new **Law on Higher Education** was adopted in December 2004 and amended in 2006 within the framework of the implementation of the Bologna process.

The Ministry of Education and Science has promoted the establishment of the Government Commission on Social Partnership in Vocational Education, which was approved by the **Government Resolution No. 90** on 27 May 2005. The Minister of Education through the **Decree No. 350** of 11 July 2005 created a special commission with the task of drafting a law on vocational education.

Georgia was officially recognized as a full member of the Bologna process on 19 May 2005. (Government of Georgia, 2005).

Administration and management of the education system

The education system in Georgia is under the responsibility of the Ministry of Education (MOE, today the **Ministry of Education and Science**). The functions of the MOE are defined by the Law on Education and the Regulation concerning the Ministry of Education approved by the President of Georgia. All publicly financed education is subordinate to or under the supervision of the Ministry of Education. The Minister, who is a member of the government, is assisted by deputy ministers appointed according to the main directions of activities.

In accordance with the Law of 1997, the main functions of the MOE are as follows:

- to implement the unified state policy in the education sector;
- to define study plans and State educational standards and supervise their application;
- to approve criteria, rules and conditions for licensing educational institutions;
- to approve criteria and rules for the attestation of students and pedagogical staff;
- to approve academic degrees and regulate their granting;
- to recognize certificates and diploma obtained abroad.

In addition, the MOE organizes the creation of the necessary material and technical base, provides scientific-methodological and information services, and approves and publishes textbooks and other teaching aids.



The Ministry of Education consists of the following main Departments: Executive secretariat; Department of pre-school, secondary education and children's rights; Department of primary education; Department of higher and secondary vocational education; Department of sport and military training; Department of international relations and co-operation; Department of personnel; Department of information and planning; Department of accountancy and analysis; Department of infrastructure; Department of textbooks; Department of information on the education reform; Department of coordination of national programmes; and Bureau of coordination of regional programmes within the framework of the reform. The Department for Accreditation was separated from Ministry in March 2006, and an independent **National Centre for Educational Accreditation** (formerly the State Accreditation Service of Educational Institutions in Georgia) was established in accordance with the Decree No. 222 of the Minister of Education and Science.

These structural units provide policy and planning guidelines, contribute to the process of definition of educational policies and are responsible for their implementation. There are two autonomous republics in Georgia, which have their own Ministries of Education. These Ministries are the main governing bodies of the education system within the territories under their jurisdiction. They participate in the development and implementation of the unified state educational policy. They also define educational programmes and control their implementation within the territories under their jurisdiction.

Georgia is comprised of ten regions and 70 *raion* (districts). **Regional Education Departments** and Education Departments at the district level are responsible for the administration and management of kindergartens and schools. Administration and co-ordination of all activities related to state higher education institutions is under the responsibility of the Ministry of Education.

The MOE establishes educational standards for higher education institutions, as well as typical regulations and principles for the admission of students, the appointment of pedagogical staff, and the granting of diplomas and degrees. All educational institutions in Georgia have a certain degree of autonomy. They are managed by administrative and pedagogical or scientific (at the higher education level) councils. Normally in each educational institution a board is in charge of fund raising and the rational distribution of available funds.

Higher education institutions have a high degree of autonomy. They elect their rector and scientific board, take independent decisions concerning their structural units, staff, content of courses and other organizational matters.



Structure and organization of the education system

Georgia: structure of the education system

Age						
25	Aspirantura (doctorate)					
24	Higher schools					
23						
22						
21	Secondary schools				Colleges	
20						
19						
18						
17					Vocational schools	
16						
15						
14						
13			Compulsory schools			
12						
11			Primary schools			
10						
9						
8	Kindergartens					
7						
6	Nursery-schools					
5						
4						
3						
2						



Pre-school education

Pre-school education is not compulsory and caters to children aged 1-5. Nursery schools admit children in the age group 1-3 years and kindergartens cater to children aged 3-5.

Primary education

Before the adoption of the Law on Education, primary education lasted four years (Grades I-IV). Since 1998, compulsory primary education lasts six years for the age group 6-11. Children may attend primary school until they reach the age of 14.

Secondary education

Before the adoption of the Law on Education, secondary education was divided into basic secondary (five years of study) and general secondary (two years). Since 1998, secondary education consists of two stages, each one lasting three years: basic secondary education, provided free of charge to all students; and general secondary education, provided free of charge to a limited number of students. Secondary vocational education institutions require for admission the completion of basic secondary education; students may also receive secondary vocational education jointly with general secondary education. Specialized secondary vocational institutions offer courses lasting two to four years leading to the certificate and diploma of specialist.

Higher education institutions offer five-year diploma, four-year bachelor's degree and master's degree (normally two years of study after the bachelor's degree) programmes. Some state universities also offer pre-doctoral (Candidate of Sciences, three years' duration) and doctoral degree courses.

There are thirty-four working weeks in a typical school year. At the higher education level, the duration of the academic year is determined by the Scientific Council, taking into account that it should consist of thirty-four to thirty-five working weeks divided into terms.

The financing of education

The main sources of education financing are the State budget, local budgets and tuition fees. In 1997, the share of education in the total government expenditure was 11.6%. Funds allocated to education are not sufficient to meet existing needs.

Pre-school institutions are financed by local budgets, tuition fees collected from parents and additional income earned from profit-making activities. As a measure for coping with the financial crisis, the government increased parents' contributions for food expenses in pre-school institutions, reduced staff and asked parents to pay part of the staff salaries. All primary and basic secondary schools are funded by the State budget. Part of the students (some 30%) receive general secondary education free of charge financed from the State budget. All other students have to pay tuition fees.



Some colleges are funded through the State budget, some others through local budgets while the rest are self-funded. Higher education institutions are financed from the State budget based on the number of students, and also receive special funds for institutional and infrastructure development including targeted funds. Other funding sources include: funds received through private grants and contributions; research grants awarded by the state on the basis of competition; special state-budgetary programmes designed to encourage enrolment in programmes considered as a national priority; programme financing allocated by ministries within their field of competence; any other sources of income allowed by legislation, including revenues from economic activities.

According to the World Bank, total public expenditure on education represented 2.2% of GDP in the year 2000.

The educational process

Pre-primary education

In Georgia pre-primary education is provided in nursery schools (age group 1-3) and kindergartens (age group 3-5). Many kindergartens have been closed due to the difficult economic situation. The main objective of pre-primary education is to prepare children for school and to encourage their intellectual, physical and social development. Children normally attend kindergarten five days per week. Some kindergartens operate 10½ or 12 hours per day. There are also kindergartens operating twenty-four hours.

According to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, in 2004 the gross enrolment ratio at the kindergarten level was 49%. In the same year, there were 74,309 children enrolled.

Primary education

Primary education is compulsory and lasts six years. The main objectives of primary education are: to promote the harmonic development of children and encourage the development of their talents, abilities and living skills; to help children to develop their personality and inclinations; to foster motivation for learning, as well as respect for human values and labour.

The weekly lesson timetable is shown in the table below:

Primary education: weekly lesson timetable (1998)

Subject	Number of weekly periods in each grade					
	I	II	III	IV	V	VI
Georgian language	8	9	8	8	4	3
Georgian literature	–	–	–	–	4	3
Russian language	–	–	4	4	3	3
Foreign language	–	–	–	–	4	4
History	–	–	–	–	–	2
History of Georgia	–	–	–	–	2	–
Drawing	1	1	1	1	1	1
Music	2	2	2	1	1	1
Mathematics	5	5	5	5	5	5
Biology	–	–	–	–	–	2
Science and environment	–	1	1	2	2	–
Geography	–	–	–	–	–	2
Life skills	1	1	1	1	2	2
Physical education	2	2	2	2	2	2
Elective subjects	2	2	2	3	1	1
Total weekly periods (min.)	21	23	26	27	31	31
Optional subjects	1	2	2	2	2	2

Each teaching period lasts 45 minutes.

Promotion to the next grade is based on the assessment of pupils. At the end of Grades IV, V and VI end-of-year examinations can be administered, depending on the decision of the school pedagogical board and subject to the approval of the local Education Department. An average of 2% of children drop out of primary school, mainly due to the family's poor living standards, or because of psychological or health reasons.

According to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, the gross enrolment ratio at the primary level was 95% in 2004. In the same year, there were 362,582 pupils enrolled, and in 2003 the total number of teachers was 16,500 (of whom 95% were women). In 2003 the teacher/pupil ratio was 1:14.

Secondary education

As mentioned, in accordance with the Law of 1997 secondary education consists of two stages: basic and general secondary.

Basic secondary education lasts three years (Grades VII-IX). The main objectives at this stage are: to further develop motivation for learning; to encourage the further development of pupils talents and abilities; to encourage logical independent thinking; to teach pupils to respect others and nature; to strengthen their appreciation of aesthetic values and their sense of citizenship. The well-round physical development of pupils at this stage is also very important.

In 1998 general secondary education was a two-year programme (Grades X and XI) but according to the Law of 1997 it now consists of three years of study. The main objective of general secondary education is to prepare students for higher

education or the labour market. After completing general secondary education students should be morally and physically prepared for independent living.

The tables below show the weekly lesson timetables for basic and general secondary education in 1998:

Basic secondary education: weekly lesson timetable (1998)

Subject	Number of weekly periods in each grade		
	VII	VIII	IX
Georgian language	3	3	2
Georgian literature	3	2	3
Russian language	3	3	3
Foreign language	3	2	2
Mathematics	5	5	5
History	2	1	1
History of Georgia	2	2	2
Principles of State and laws in Georgia	–	–	1
Geography	2	–	3–0
Geography of Georgia	–	2	0–3
Biology	2	2	2
Physics	2	2	3
Chemistry	2	3	2
Drawing	–	1	1
Physical education	2	2	2
Life skills	1	2	1
Total weekly periods	32	32	33

Each teaching period lasts 45 minutes.



General secondary education: weekly lesson timetable (1998)

Subject	Number of weekly periods in each grade	
	X	XI
Georgian language	1	1
Georgian literature	4	4
Russian language	3	3
Foreign language	2	2
Mathematics	4	4
Computer studies	1	2
History	2	2
History of Georgia	1	1
Social studies	1	1
Geography	2	–
Biology	1	1–2
Physics	4	4
Chemistry	2	3–2
Astronomy	–	1
Physical education	2	2
Life skills	1	1
Military training	2	2
Total weekly periods	33	34

Each teaching period lasts 45 minutes. General secondary education is now a three-year programme.

According to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, the gross enrolment ratio at the secondary level was 82% in 2004. The total enrolment (all programmes) was 319,766 students. In 2003 there were 48,965 teachers at the secondary level, and the average student/teacher ratio was 1:9.

Secondary vocational education institutions (technical secondary schools, colleges) provide training in various specializations, such as industry, building, transport and communications, art, etc. The duration of studies varies between two and four years, leading to the certificate and diploma of specialist. In 1996/97, there were seventy-seven institutions with about 27,000 students enrolled and 4,615 teachers.

As of 2005, there were 75 state and 184 private primary vocational schools and 87 state and 223 private secondary vocational schools. The reform of vocational education is underway. The new concept of vocational education development included a comprehensive analysis of the current situation in the sector and also reviewed prospects of European integration. The vocational education policy is based on lifelong learning principles. The policy is oriented towards the European Union principles of free movement, the mobility of work force and of training highly professional human resources capable of contributing to the economic growth of the country. (Government of Georgia, 2005).

Assessing learning achievement nationwide

No national programmes for assessing and monitoring pupils' and students' learning achievement nationwide are reported.



Higher education

Higher education in Georgia reflects the prevailing conditions of a rapidly changing society, moving towards a market economy and attempting to become more open and democratic.

The main objective of higher education is the training of highly qualified specialists, as well as the training and re-training of pedagogical and scientific staff. Admission to state higher education institutions requires the completion of general secondary education or a secondary vocational education diploma. Candidates must pass a competitive entrance examination.

In 1996/97, there were twenty-six state higher education institutions in Georgia, including eight universities, three academies, one conservatory and various technical and specialized institutes. There were about 86,500 students enrolled with 8,979 teachers. An increased emphasis is being placed on specializations such as medicine, economics and foreign languages.

Students receive an average of twenty-four to twenty-eight hours of instruction per week. The workload of pedagogical staff varies between a minimum of 450 hours and a maximum of 720 hours per year.

The degree structure of higher education has changed with the introduction of bachelor's and master's degree programmes, in accordance with the implementation of the Bologna process. Bachelor's degree courses last four years. Successful students are awarded a bachelor's degree together with a specialization. Master's degree courses require two to three years of study after the bachelor's degree. Other higher education institutions offer courses normally of five years' duration. Graduates may continue their studies at the post-graduate level, where the old system of science degrees has been retained: candidate of science (*aspirantura*, three years' duration) and doctor of science degree programmes.

Along with students in State-supported educational programmes, state higher education institutions also admit students who pay tuition fees. In general, they are students who passed the entrance examination at least with a "satisfactory" but have not gained a place in state sectors; some of these sectors independently announce competitions and conduct entrance examinations.

Since 1992, higher education institutions enjoy a considerable degree of autonomy in decisions concerning their academic, organizational and financial policies. The rector is appointed by the scientific council of the higher education institution. Starting from 1991, a number of private higher education institutions have been established. According to the Law on Education of 1997, all licensed private education institutions have the right to award certificates. Only accredited institutions have the right to award diplomas recognized by the State. According to national data, in 2000 there were 214 private higher education institutions in the country, with some 45,700 students enrolled and 10,350 teachers.



As mentioned, Georgia was officially recognized as a full member of the Bologna Process on 19 May 2005. Hence, the country became an official part of European High Education Area (EHEA) and European Research Area (ERA). The new legislation has completely changed the existing higher education system of Georgia and corresponds with international standards. The new legislation regulates the structure, management, financing, licensing, accreditation, and student admission rules of the tertiary education institutions. It gives them autonomy and grants special rights to the students as partners and interested agents. The tertiary education institutions now provide a three-step education (Bachelor's degree, a minimum of three years of study; Master's degree, a minimum of two years; and PhD, a minimum of three years). The European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) is projected to become an integral part of the education system in Georgia by 2009/10.

In the first months of 2005, all tertiary education institutions were accredited. Out of 237 applying institutions, 48% passed accreditation. The state no longer recognizes diplomas of the institutions that are not accredited. The Government also introduced a nation-wide university admissions examination. For the 2005/06 academic year, 30,400 applicants participated in the examination and 17,341 were admitted as students. Out of these, 4,300 students received state scholarships (from US\$550 to US\$830). Students have the right to use these scholarships at any accredited institution of their choice within and outside of the country. This "money follows the student" scheme has changed the tertiary education financing formula. To improve the quality of education, the total number of admissions was restricted. If in 2004 more than 35,000 students were enrolled, in 2005 this number was halved. An additional 250 state scholarships are allocated for ethnic minorities and students from marginalized regions as well as for socially vulnerable students.

A quality control system is now also being introduced. According to the law of tertiary education, this quality control system entails evaluation (internal and external, with students' participation and through the publication of results) of the respective tertiary educational institutions. Several universities have already created quality control units within their institutional structure. (Government of Georgia, 2005).

Special education

Children attend special schools on the basis of a decision of the medical-pedagogic commission and with the approval of their parents. There are about thirty State-run special schools in Georgia, including boarding schools for the blind, for the deaf, for children with visual impairment, etc.

By the end of the 1990s, the total number of staff in special schools amounted to about 1,500, including 800 teachers, and the number of students enrolled was about 3,000.

Boarding schools for children with physical and mental impairment, with the exception of boarding schools for children with mental disabilities, follow the general secondary school curricula and programmes.



Boarding schools for the deaf and for children with hearing impairments offer a ten-year programme based on the nine-year programme of general secondary schools; children are also taught living skills for an additional two years. Boarding schools for the blind and for children with visual impairments offer a twelve-year programme according to the eleven-year programme of general secondary schools.

The Parliament of Georgia adopted a document “Main directions of social policy with respect to protecting rights of children with limited abilities” on 13 February 2004. The Government elaborated specific strategies for its implementation. Additionally, the authorities have drafted a concept of special education for mentally retarded children to provide them with appropriate education, preserving high standards for educational services and securing access to education for children with limited abilities and their families. The Ministry of Education and Science is developing and introducing new methodologies and approaches that conform with the requirements of a democratic society. These methodologies and approaches include: an inventory of children with limited capacities in Tbilisi schools; ten pilot schools that have been provided with incentive assistance (computers, copy-machines, sports equipment) are currently and successfully providing inclusive education services; the salaries of corrective and assistant teachers were increased; training is being conducted for corrective teachers to enhance their practical skills of working with handicapped children; a multidisciplinary council has been established and will organize further training for parents, teachers and children to facilitate their integration into the teaching process. It is crucial to adapt school premises and raise public awareness for inclusive education. (Government of Georgia, 2005).

Private education

By the end of the 1990s, there were 110 private secondary schools, ninety-eight secondary vocational institutions (colleges) and 249 private higher education institutions. There were about 20,000 students enrolled in secondary schools, a total of 10,203 students in secondary vocational schools and a total of 52,510 students in higher education institutions. The number of teachers amounted to 2,310 in secondary schools, 1,053 in secondary vocational schools (697 full-time and 356 part-time), and 9,144 in private higher education institutions (2,663 full-time).

The optimization of the network of private higher education institutions is underway. The Law on Education adopted in 1997 specifies that all educational establishments should be licensed again according to the new regulations and standards. Licensed educational establishments have the right to award certificates. Private education institutions can award a diploma recognized by the State only if they are accredited on the basis of an attestation. Currently, there are no private educational institutions accredited by the State.

In recent years, the number of students in secondary vocational and higher education institutions decreased, mainly due to the establishment of private departments in state educational institutions and to the lack of an adequate material-technical base.



Means of instruction, equipment and infrastructure

Information is not available.

Adult and non-formal education

Due to the transition to a market economy, there is an increasing need for training and re-training according to new ideas and to meet the demands of a new political, social and economic system. This new setting requires persons with new skills and a continuous improvement of their educational level.

Therefore, the government started to provide learning opportunities for those who are outside the school system, or whose skills are no longer appropriate for the daily life or the labour market, through the establishment of a non-formal education structure. Centres for professional re-orientation have been established. Secondary specialized and vocational/technical education institutions have acquired new functions for re-training adults.

Special courses for re-training and in-service training have also been established at higher education institutions.

Teaching staff

Teachers are trained at colleges and higher education institutions.

The Tbilisi State University, the Batumi State University, the Kutaisi State University and the Institute of Western Languages and Cultures offer courses where trainees qualify as teachers and graduate in their main speciality (mathematics, history, philology, etc.). Teacher education is also offered at the Tbilisi Pedagogical University, the Pedagogical Institutes of Telavi and Tskhinvali and the Tbilisi Pedagogical College.

Pre-school and primary (elementary) education teachers are trained at colleges. Higher education institutions offer teacher training for all levels of education. A total of forty specializations are offered by higher and secondary vocational education institutions.

The academic year is divided into two semesters. Assessment of prospective teachers consists in tests and exams at the end of each semester. Student teachers have also to practice in schools for a period varying from three to six months, according to the main field of their specialization. In order to graduate, students must pass two or four state examinations and submit a thesis at the end of the last term of study. The academic programme includes subjects such as history, political science, psychology, philosophy, physical education, etc., and the required subjects for the teacher profession.



The salary scales and the type of allowances for teachers are determined by the Salary Scheme for Civil Servants approved by the Government taking into account the different qualifications. Salary varies according to the different teacher categories.

Salary scales according to teacher categories

Teacher category	Coefficient
III category	1.0
II category	1.4
I category	1.9
Highest category	2.5

The Law on Education (1997) specifies that the minimum amount of a teacher's salary should not be less than the average salary of civil servants. Teachers who have worked during twenty-five years receive a pension according to the length of service, equivalent to 50% of their salary, which is paid to them whether they are still working or not.

In private schools, teacher's salaries are determined by the founder(s) of the school and, generally speaking, they are higher than the salaries of teachers in state schools. Primary school teachers are mainly women, but the number of male teachers increases at higher levels. At higher education institutions, there are more male than female teachers. The average age of teachers is 40-45 years.

The Central Institute for In-service Teacher Training and eight regional institutes offer in-service training programmes, aiming at helping to improve teacher qualifications, enhancing the quality of teaching, and introducing innovations in teaching methods. In-service teacher training is mainly funded from the local budgets or by the teachers themselves.

Curricula and programmes for in-service teacher training are developed by the Central Institute for In-service Teacher Training and approved by the Ministry of Education.

Educational research and information

Information is not available.

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Web resources

Ministry of Education and Science: <http://www.mes.gov.ge/> [In Georgian. Last checked: October 2007.]

For updated links, consult the Web page of the International Bureau of Education of UNESCO: <http://www.ibe.unesco.org/links.htm>