

# GEORGIA



## 1. GENERAL GOVERNANCE

Georgia is a representative democratic semi-presidential republic. The president is the head of state, and the prime minister is head of government, whose cabinet shares executive power with the president. The cabinet's ministers are in turn appointed by the president. The ministers of defence and interior are not members of the cabinet and report directly to the president. Legislative authority rests with the unicameral parliament, which has 150 members. Georgia includes two autonomous republics, Adjara and Abkhazia, the latter outside Georgia's effective control.

There are 76 municipalities: 12 self-governing cities, including the capital Tbilisi, and 64 self-governing communities. The municipalities outside the two autonomous republics and Tbilisi are grouped into nine regions. Tbilisi itself is divided into ten districts.

## 2. VET GOVERNANCE

### Key roles and functions

Governance is mainly through government structures. The government develops national development policies, strategies and programmes, managed by the Ministry of Education and Science (MoES) through various agencies. Its VET Development Department is responsible for coordinating programmes, and implementing the Medium Term Action Plan, supporting the National VET Council (NVETC).

It also formulates proposals and draft orders for the minister. The National Centre for Education Quality Enhancement (NCEQE) is responsible for VET quality assurance, developing and updating the national qualifications framework, implementing the process for authorising educational institutions, coordinating the development of occupational standards, and accrediting educational programmes.

The Teacher Professional Development Centre (TPDC) develops standards for teachers'

development, and is responsible for planning and running teacher training. The Electronic Management and Information System (EMIS) is responsible for developing information technologies for monitoring VET.

NVETC was established in 2009 to coordinate the activities of social partners. The government, the Georgian Employers Association and Georgian Trade Union Confederation have an agreement to discuss and act on social and economic issues, and legislation stresses the importance of involving social partners at all levels of VET. MoES has produced a Strategy for Private Sector Engagement in VET, which is awaiting approval. The Georgian Trade Unions Confederation (GTUC) takes an active part in the VET policy debate. The Georgian Employers Association (GEA) supports private VET providers because government policy only finances students at public institutions.

### Financing

The main source of VET finance is the state, with extra international support. One of the key objectives of the VET Reform Strategy for 2013-20 is to establish a nationwide network of well-funded, well managed VET providers (public and private). In 2014, funding for VET increased by 173% year-on-year. Since 2012, state funding has come in the form of vouchers for students at levels I-III, alongside programme-based funding and targeted funding.

### Coordination mechanisms for VET policymaking

A Law on Vocational Education was adopted by parliament in 2007. The amended version (2010) defines five levels of VET and multiple aims covering individual, social and economic aspects. The Law on Educational Quality Enhancement (2010) requires VET institutions to be authorised, by meeting standards based on their programmes and resources. The National Qualifications Framework was approved in the same year. Since June 2013, students wanting to enrol for the initial level of a



VET programme have had to pass an admission test administered by the National Assessment and Examinations Centre (NAEC).

In 2013, the VET Reform Strategy 2013-20 was approved, reflecting European and national priorities for socio-economic development. The concept of LLL is reflected in Laws on VET and HE; NQF is based on LLL but LLL policy remains fragmented. LLL is not fully integrated with legal documents; some aspects are missing such as adult education.

Institutionalised policy advice-orientated mechanisms include MoES and its agencies' work on policies and strategies. As well as the agencies already listed, NVETC is also important. It was established in 2009 as the main advisory and consultative body for VET policy, to make governance more participatory. It develops proposal relating to the VET Strategy and action plan, and forms thematic working groups inviting independent experts to study VET issues and frame recommendations.

Public-private structure-orientated mechanisms include MoES's 2013 document on social partner support for VET. To engage business in VET, MoES has established partnerships with representatives of small, medium and large business organisations. After reorganisation, since 2015 there are 11 sector committees coordinated by NCEQE and aiming to contribute to designing and developing the qualification system in line with labour market needs.

Knowledge creation-orientated structures include the NQF systematising qualifications at all educational levels, and the legal requirement for VET institutions to be authorised by meeting minimum standards with their educational programmes and resources. EMIS, created under MoES in 2012, collects educational data and helps the ministry monitor and evaluate progress. The monitoring indicators were developed with VET stakeholders and international donors.

### Country typology

VET governance is centralised. The government develops broad national policies and strategies, and

so has unilateral responsibility for setting objectives for VET. It does this after consultation with MoES and some of its agencies, including NCEQE, TPDC, ESIDA, NAEC, as well as social partners and international partners. MoES develops and manages sector policies, strategies and programmes in line with broad national policies. Through its agencies it enforces the regulatory framework, and through that implements sector programmes.

There is a gap in terms of vertical levels of governance. In the middle (regional) level, More coordination between MoES and the VET providers is needed. Also, social partners aren't adequately represented at all levels of governance. Their role in initiating policy is limited, nor are they active as a partner in monitoring. And while they have a key role as consultative actors at national level, social partnerships at the sector level are almost non-existent. This means social partners lack influence in VET policy-making decisions around the skills that sectors need.

### Development assessment

VET governance development is structured. There is a comprehensive vision for VET, developed by the government with MoES, in line with the goals for national economic and social development. The process of developing vocational education programmes to support the vision is consultative and all major stakeholders are involved. Social partners are engaged in this through NVETC, which involves governmental, employer, employee and civil society representatives. But they are not adequately represented at all levels of governance.

Their role is still limited in terms of initiating or monitoring policy, while they have a more consultative role at national level. Consultation happens regularly, development processes are in place, and stakeholders have access to information. But there is much to do in coordinating, institutionalising and empowering stakeholders' involvement in decision making and VET governance functions.

### Ongoing work in policy development

The governance function of coordinating a national

policy framework is seen in the national reform strategy. The ownership and clear direction of the reform is a strength recognised by all stakeholders, together with the commitment and motivation of all involved and the political direction and support.

The VET Reform Strategy for 2013–20 reflects a clear direction for reform and strong political will, as it is approved by the prime minister. The strategy was based on consultation with various stakeholders and social partners. As a result, it reflects national socio-economic as well as European priorities. But the system lacks a communication strategy to help VET be widely recognised as an attractive and rewarding pathway for personal development; an extension to basic secondary education for young people; and a meaningful mechanism for career development for adults.

Management of public-private partnerships is seen in NVETC's role as the main advisory and consultative body for VET policy. But is not fully authorised to make legal proposals for decision-making, which hinders the involvement of various stakeholders in decision-making.

Mobilising of financial resources is seen in international stakeholders' involvement in donor-supported projects. They have resulted in the VET strategy and concept papers, methodological and financial support adjusted to local needs, and capacity- building to further develop of the VET system.

### 3. POLICY POINTERS

Policy makers may wish to consider the following points for reflection, with a view to working towards their implementation in line with national priorities and in the context of national, regional, and local needs.

#### Overall planning and management

1. Disseminate information about the implementation of the VET Reform Strategy for 2013-20 among the various stakeholders.

2. Adopt and implement an awareness-raising strategy.
3. Trace pathways between VET, general education, and higher education.
4. Make the VET system more decentralised by empowering providers and client-focused so it meets clients' needs more successfully.
5. Adopt the new VET law.
6. Adopt the revised NQF.
7. Adopt legislation for the Georgian Qualifications Framework, including amending or repealing education-related laws and other pieces of current legislation

#### Finance and funding

1. Expand implementation of the new funding rules to all VET providers, including accredited private VET providers, which are currently excluded from access to public funding.
2. Give VET providers more financial autonomy with secondary legislation and regulations based on the existing legal framework.
3. Include local municipalities in funding.
4. Review real cost in the sector, and the relationship between direct and indirect costs.
5. Give enterprises and employers legislated financial incentives, like tax exemptions, for contributing to VET.
6. Consider public-private partnerships as a way to support VET financing and governance, then develop financing partnerships with businesses to further develop the sector.



### Coordination mechanisms for VET policy making

1. Look for efficiencies from merging decision-making roles, coordination and communication and work flow processes by policy function.
2. Stimulate policy debate and consultation on skills by defining the role of social partners by governance level at the macro, meso and micro levels, not just national level.
3. Look for ways to share functions and workflows with the ministry responsible for labour issues, and its actors, and make better use of active labour market policy tools.
4. Improve monitoring and quality assurance of policy functions, in particular clarifying roles and responsibilities in making reform sustainable.