

### **Peculiarities of Management of the Higher Education System of Georgia**

Higher education is one of the important units and constantly developing components of the education system. A lot of considerable changes and reforms have been carried out in higher education system of Georgia in the recent years. The legislation regulation of the education system significantly changed in 2004. Georgia joined the Bologna process at Bergen summit in 2005.

The Parliament and government of Georgia define the higher education state policy, though they are implemented by the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia. On the other hand, the Ministry defines certain rules of execution of regulation and policy for its own system bodies as well as for higher education institutions.

129 higher education institutions operate in Georgia, out of which 20 are state and 109 – private. Among the operating higher education institutions 52 are accredited, out of which 20 are legal entity of public law and 32 – legal entity of private law.

Seventy per cent of accredited higher education institutions are located in Tbilisi and the rest of them in the regions. In accredited higher education institutions at all three levels (three cycle degree studies) and one level medical program study about 85 thousand students and over 6,6 thousand professors and teachers provide their education.

Regulation of the higher education system of Georgia is mainly implemented by the Law of Georgia on Higher Education and the rules in accordance with the resolution of the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia.

Law of Georgia on Higher Education, adopted on December 21<sup>st</sup> 2004, regulates the implementation conditions for educational and research activities of higher education institutions, the principles and rules of higher education management and financing, defines the status of all higher education institutions and the rules for their establishment, operation, reorganization, liquidation, licensing and accreditation.

The types of higher education institutions in Georgia are as follows: 1. University; 2. Institute (School of Higher Education). 3. Collage. A higher education institution may exist as a legal entity of public or private law. Nowadays, quantitatively most prevalent are higher education institutions registered as legal entity of public law. On the next place are higher education institutions formed as limited company and least of them are institutions formed as non-profit legal entity. State is allowed to

establish a higher education institution only in the form of legal entity of public law, although by the law amendment from 2010-2011 academic year the state may establish an institution in the form of non-profit legal entity.

In accordance with the active legislation and the demands of the Bologna process, academic higher education in Georgia is a three-level system:

- First level (Bachelor's Program) – educational program which consists of at least 240 credits.
- Second level (Master's Program) - educational program which consists of at least 120 credits.
- Third level (Doctoral Program) – educational program which consists of at least 180 credits.

The basis of the state economic growth and the improvement of citizens' well-being are business development, improvement of its functioning mechanisms and increase of numbers of employees in it. As a result of transfer from the planned economy to the market economy, it is possible and had an opportunity to develop small, medium and large businesses. As the examples of countries developed market economy show, improvement of medium and large businesses made the demand for qualified business managers (administrators) and the so called top managers. It is already a (formed) trend that world's large or small corporations increase the demand for qualified managers. Namely this trend resulted in increasing the number of MBA students/applicants. Globalization and economic integration have a great influence on business and make it renew constantly and implement changes. Businesses are not located within two countries and quite often are involved in transactions with foreign companies or individuals.

Preparation of administrators consistent to contemporary requirements becomes the actual task around the world. Hence, creating programs appropriate to modern standards become necessary, in order Georgian citizens to be able to travel abroad and become modern managers without spending huge amount of money and compete with oversea trained managers.

All the actual businesses whether they are large or medium should take part in international trade and other operations with certain dose, because it is a rare case when a company operates within one country. This requires managers trained in Georgia to correspond to international level and be able to implement similar operations with success and high-efficiency.

The goal of the Master's program of business administration at any university in the world is to prepare high qualified managers who will be capable to manage businesses on the world's developed markets under the current rapid pace of changes and high speed. To achieve this goal, besides theoretical knowledge, students are required to obtain practical experience through trainings/internships or other activities.

The EU in the current years strives to achieve standardization in the education system what is known as the Bologna process. The main aim of this process is the standards of all the programs offered to students by accredited higher educational institutions to be consistent with Europe standards. The mentioned approach will facilitate graduate/postgraduate students to start work in other EU member countries, in order potential employers not to find it difficult to check a candidate's qualification and knowledge.

Joining the Bologna process and aiming at creation of the education system corresponding to European standards by 2010 is considered as a step forward for Georgia, but unlike other EU member countries, Georgia faced more troublesome tasks as despite the date of accession to the process (2005), the aim of all countries (bringing the education system to conformity with the united standards) should be reached by 2010. Thus, the education reforms carried out in force majeure situation may have negative results. Although the introduction of credit system and setting the general requirements by the Ministry of Education and Science are step forward for Georgia, it is necessary the frames and content of each Master's (and Bachelor's) course to be determined in compliance with the European standards. This means that a student who is taught corporate finances at any Georgian university should be provided with the same materials (that are given to) as well as a student of any other European universities. So Georgia has to create the education system appropriate to the Bologna process standards in a short term that undoubtedly is a difficult task.

In the table below show the official data of the National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement of the Ministry of Education and Science about higher education institutions which offer MBA program (according to data of 2011).

**Table 1: The number of higher education institutions according to territorial and legal form whose academic programs include MBA programs (master of business administration).**

	State	Public	Total	Per cent
	7	20	27	67,50%
	9	4	13	32,50
	16	24	40	
	40%	60%		100%

**Source: National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement of the Ministry of Education and Science.**

Few years' activities of the higher education reforms in Georgia are important in terms of approach to the European space. As a result of the implemented reforms the accreditation system of higher education institutions has been introduced, the practice of enrolling students through national exams and the European credit transfer and accumulation system (ECTS) have been established, syllabi and

curriculums have been improved, quality assurance system have been developed and other. As a result of these increased competitiveness among universities which reflected on the quality of learning.

Since higher education in the world is not an unchangeable but dynamic system, it is constantly improved and brought in conformity to market requirements. Therefore, it is essential for Georgia to keep pace with a rhythm of the world education and be focused on market demand.

It should be mention that it is already 2012 and consequently, this it is timely Georgia higher educational system to be studied, including the existing business administration programs (also MBA programs). Proposals and recommendations should also be prepared which will enable universities to form their educational system in conformity with the Europe standards and gain international acknowledgement.

### References

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