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**Main Directions and Action Plan for Implementing the Bologna Process in
Georgia Until 2010**

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PREFACE

The present document was elaborated in the framework of the project "Towards the European Higher Education Area". The project was implemented through financial assistance of the Eurasia Foundation.

The project aimed at facilitating the higher education system of Georgia in joining the European Higher Education Area through active participation of civil society.

The following tasks had been fulfilled within the project:

1. Bologna Process materials had been translated into Georgian and published:
 - The Main Documents of the Bologna Process
 - User's Guide in "European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS)" and the Diploma Supplement;

The noted documents had also been written on a CD-ROM and posted on the web pages of the Civil Society Institute and the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia: www.civilin.org; www.mes.gov.ge

2. Eight round tables on the basic principles of the Bologna Process had been held with the participation of higher education stakeholders (See the list in the annex N1);
3. Bologna supporters group, a voluntary union of all the stakeholders has been created (Memorandum Annex N2);
4. Information campaign raising public awareness had been launched;
 - 7000 leaflets were printed and disseminated in higher education institutions;
 - Video clips were aired on TV channels of "Rustavi 2" and "Imedi" earlier in October;
 - Three newspaper articles were released in "24 Hours" (See the list in the Annex N3);
 - A talk show was arranged on "202" TV channel on 7 July, 2005
5. " Main Directions and Work Plan for Realizing the Bologna Process in Georgia Until 2010" had been elaborated and discussed with the relevant stakeholders;
6. Website of the Bologna supporters group has been created www.bologna-supporters.ge

The project experts Ms. Lali Bakradze, Ms. Lika Glonti, and Mr. Emzar Jgerenaia had been working on the present document. We would like to thank Ms. Marina Chitashvili, Ms. Marina Karchava, Mr. Gigi Tevzadze and Mr. David Kiziria for the comments and assistance while working on the final version of the document.

1. INTRODUCTION

On 19 May 2005, Mr. Alexander Lomaia Minister of Education and Science of Georgia signed the Bergen Communiqué and thus Georgia officially joined the Bologna Process and committed itself to becoming a constituent part of the European Higher Education Area by 2010.

Re-emergence on the international arena, political, economic and social integration into the European structures had been a major goal of Georgia for the last decade. European integration in education and especially, in higher education is a historical opportunity for the country and concomitantly, it is a huge challenge: Participation in the Bologna Process enables us to implement the higher education reform, to join the common education area by introducing the European standards of quality assurance, to promote the European dimensions in higher education and eventually become a part of "Europe of Knowledge".

Integrating with Europe is a big responsibility – We have to prove our readiness for reforms and implement the requirements of the Bologna Process by introducing the irreversible changes.

Introducing easily readable and comparable academic degree system based on three cycles (bachelor, master's and doctoral); credit transfer and accumulation system; promoting mobility of students and academic staff; quality assurance; promoting the attractiveness of the European higher education area; lifelong learning; student participation in decision-making; synergy between education and research; - this is an incomplete list of those principles that are given in the basic documents of the Bologna Process and their realization is an essential precondition for becoming a fully-fledged member of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). The higher education reforms in Georgia should be based on these principles.

Inevitability of fundamental reforms in higher education and the desire to integrate with the European education area was first publicly voiced in the decree "The Main Directions of Developing Higher Education in Georgia" passed by the parliament on 1 March, 2002, – it is noteworthy that adoption of this decree did not go smoothly, as it entailed major controversies in the parliament. In the decree it was explicitly stated that reaching the European standards was a sole way for rescuing higher education system of Georgia – adopting the quality assurance system, promoting equal access to higher education, merging educational and research activities, brain circulation – these reform priorities had been scrupulously discussed in the decree. After a biannual pause, the newly convened parliament adopted the Law of Georgia on Higher Education (December 21, 2004), in which the government openly demonstrated its political will to implement radical and fundamental reforms. The law forms a legislative framework for the higher education reform.

Concomitantly, concrete steps had been taken. The first phase (2005) of the reform was the institutional accreditation of higher education institutions in Georgia – 110 higher education institutions and their branches¹ had been awarded the accreditation – as a result of accreditation more than half of higher education institutions in Georgia lost their right to accept students for the new academic year.

Taking into consideration the present situation of the higher education system in Georgia, it is obvious that the institutional accreditation is an essential part of the reform but it is not a panacea. The outdated study programmes and teaching methods, corruption, extremely fragmented educational programmes, brain drain, much higher average age of academic personnel as compared to the similar indicators in Europe, dearth of young scientists in academic

¹ www.naec.ge

activities imperil the heritage and sustainability of the Georgian scientific traditions and achievements, shortage of educational managers and most alarmingly the financial cutbacks – while all these problems persist it is impossible to implement the Bologna Process successfully in Georgia.

Against the backdrop of the European countries we are in an unfavourable starting position. Accordingly the reform should be planned scrupulously in order to avoid the wastage of time and resources. The present document is an attempt to make a plan for implementing the reform, to determine the responsible persons and organizations in a very short period of time (till 2010).

2. STRATEGIC ANALYSIS OF THE DOCUMENT

2.1 MISSION OF THE DOCUMENT

Fostering the process of creating higher education area based on humanistic values and scientific/educational traditions, as well as the contemporary technologies, oriented towards the up-to-date challenges, having the European dimension and being competitive and attractive, that is organically integrated with the European higher education area and represents the solid basis for shaping the knowledge-based information society.

2.2. AIMS AND BASIC PRINCIPLES OF THE DOCUMENT

The aim of the document is to elaborate and implement the strategy of activities at the national level for realizing the principles of the Bologna Process by stimulating the dialogue among the stakeholders, elaborating clear, flexible and sustainable national vision, facilitating formulation and realization of the strategy of activities and thus assuring the fully-fledged membership of the Georgian higher education system with the European higher education area.

Outcome

In the higher education system of Georgia the following tasks will be implemented by 2010:

- 1) Formulating open, flexible platform for people based on responsibility, cooperation and partnership (2006);
- 2) Elaborating the national strategic framework-programme for implementing the Bologna Process based on this document (2006).
- 3) Adapting/introducing/realizing the principles of the Bologna Process (2006-2010) in the framework of the clear-cut strategy.

Achieving the above-noted goal is possible through promoting the initiatives of the Bologna Process and anticipating the possible threats. In line with the basic principles of the Bologna Process and taking into consideration the local peculiarities, the following basic priority directions have been defined within the present document:

- Elaborating the national qualifications framework
- Introducing three-cycle degree system
- Quality assurance
- introducing European Credit Transfer and Accreditation System
- Doctoral degree and synergy between education and research
- Promoting mobility
- Recognition of academic degrees
- Introducing the principles of lifelong learning in higher education institutions

- Promoting participation of higher education institutions and students in the reform process
- sustainable funding of higher education institutions
- Creating flexible system of cooperation and partnership among the stakeholders of higher education in Georgia

2.3 STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS

Based on the review of higher education system of Georgia and using the structure given below we can estimate the opportunities in the context of the Bologna Process, determine its strong and weak sides and possible threats.

STRENGTHS

Political will – In the official addresses and resolutions the government and parliament of Georgia the primary importance of higher education is particularly emphasised. On 1 March 2002 the parliament of Georgia adopted the resolution on “The Main Directions in Higher Education Developing in Georgia”. In the document it is noted that - establishing the modern system of higher education is of utmost importance for the state of Georgia, since a sound higher education system is an essential precondition for building democratic society, protecting national and world cultural values, reducing poverty and social exclusion. The reformist approach of the government of Georgia towards the higher education had been reflected in the law of Georgia on higher education that was passed by the parliament in December 21, 2004. In the law it is described in details the new system of higher education in Georgia, its principles and philosophy. The newly adopted legislative framework forms the basis for implementing the reform and it is in full compliance with the Bologna requirements.

Intellectual Resources – One of the most important preconditions for a successful implementation of the reform is the academic/intellectual potential of the Georgian society. Compared to the contemporary indicators in the world, the higher education institutions of Georgia are underdeveloped in the sense of institutional change; however the scientists in Georgia could maintain high standards in scientific research and pedagogic activities. A lot of Georgian scientists are successful both in Georgia and in the recognized higher education institutions and scientific research centres of the world. Successful reform of higher education will further facilitate participation of the Georgian scientists in international scientific projects.

Traditions – The first Georgian university, founded in 1918 under the patronage of Ivane Javakhishvili, gave rise to the traditions for scientific research and pedagogic activities in Georgia. The best traditions were developed in historiography and mathematics, physics and physiology, history of art, language studies and Georgian studies, psychology and many other areas of science. The higher education reform will assist positive and successful realization of the existing traditions, introduction of innovative methods and approaches in the scientific research and the pedagogic activity. The tradition of the existing academic activity in Georgia is one of the important guarantees for the success of reforms.

Strive for higher education – Higher education always was one of the most important social capitals in Georgia. The higher education institutions of Georgia so far cannot compete with the leading higher education institutions of the world. However, gaining higher education abroad is still very prestigious for the major part of our society. In order to guarantee success of the reform higher education received in Georgia should be as popular as it is abroad.

Desire for reform – Lately in the Georgian society and mass media the reform of higher education provoked severe controversies. Discussions about joining the Bologna Process were quite diverse. Both politicians and representatives of the society expressed their points of view. The non-governmental sector has been very active in these discussions. The general pathos of these discussions is that: "The reform does not have an alternative".

Reforms in education and science – The reform of higher education would be unfeasible without restructuring general education, professional training and science. To date, the reforms are underway in all the abovementioned fields.

Macroeconomic stability - The first signs of macroeconomic stability is already palpable in the country. The state budget has augmented significantly. The government attempts to ensure favourable conditions for foreign investment. Increasing the state budget is an essential prerequisite for the successful implementation of higher education reform.

Civil society – Well-functioning network of civil society significantly contributed to democratic development and societal readiness to specific reforms, including the education sector. Numerous NGOs support reforms in higher education. The foundations functioning in Georgia financed several projects necessary for implementing reforms and raising awareness of the society. Support of the non-governmental sector is the important precondition for the success of the reforms.

WEAKNESSES

Insufficient financial resources – The success of the reform to a great deal depends on the appropriate state policy for funding higher education and science. The existing financing of the education sector is a major obstacle on the way towards success of the reforms, since disenchanted professorship, non-sufficiently financed for scientific projects and educational process endangers the reform process as a whole.

Law awareness – Despite the fact that the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia, higher education institutions, mass media and non-governmental organizations make their best to inform the society and representatives of the academic circle about the aims and objectives of the ongoing reforms still the wider society lacks sufficient information and the discussions in the printed media is a proof to that. The reform will not be successful if the society does not have exhaustive and complete information about the processes underway in the higher education sphere. A lot still needs to be done in this direction.

Outdated higher education system – Different achievements of the Georgian scientists was not determined by the flexibility of higher education system but by the individual endeavours of certain scientists and students. Quite frequently realization of individual initiative was hampered by the institutional backwardness of a higher education institution. The possibility for institutional development was hindered by the soviet ideology that also had a negative impact on study and research process. The obsolete soviet system of higher education is a serious obstacle to reforms in the context of the modern historical reality.

Nihilism of society towards the state institutions – Political and economic order that existed for 70 years in the country did not reflect the preferences of the citizenry hence it was a forcefully imposed totalitarian system. Individual initiatives were curbed and if they still persisted the communist ideology turned them down. Naturally in such order the state institutions did not enjoy societal trust. This distrust is still preserved by inertia: Distrust may lead to collapse any new venture. The diminishing trust towards the higher education institutions

was on one hand provoked by the soviet rules at entrance exams, on the other hand by the intra-university system, however it is still possible to reinstate the trust towards the state institutions if transparency is assured, the members of the society are involved in decision-making to the maximum, the society is informed and cooperation with the non-governmental institutions and the media is enhanced. The low social capital of trust towards the state institutions is an impediment for the education reform.

The dearth of higher education managers – The basic documents of the Bologna Process requires introduction of innovative methods in study and management processes from the higher education institutions. Fulfilment of these requirements is impossible without well-trained higher education managers. Higher education manager is an absolutely new phenomenon in the higher education system of Georgia. True the Ministry of Education and Science already took first steps for training such managers but it is not sufficient yet.

The dearth of up-to-date programmes, manuals and the material-technical base. On the way towards reforming the higher education system of Georgia the shortage of up-to-date programmes, text-books, material-technical base and the outdated methodology of teaching is an important impediment. The educational-scientific laboratories are outdated and do not meet the contemporary demands, therefore frequently the theoretical lectures go without the relevant practice. The situation is especially grave in view of modern textbooks and the visual study aids. True, that the contemporary manuals in several fields of science had already been compiled but it is not enough so far. In parallel with the institutional changes it is necessary to assure study processes with the relevant literature, contemporary teaching methodology and the manuals. As for developing the new curriculum it is essential to envisage its compatibility with the labour market.

Brain drain – During the last decade the Georgian scientists were put into extremely unfavourable conditions. Underinvestment in science, macroeconomic instability forced many scientists either to cease their scientific research or to seek jobs in universities abroad. Many Georgian scientists gained significant success in foreign universities. To date Georgian physicists, biologists, mathematicians, physicians, representatives of art act in different universities and research centres of the world. Many young scientists are ready to leave the country and to seek a job abroad that is suitable for their qualification. *Ipsa facto* brain drain is explicit in Georgia weakening the academic community of Georgia as a whole. The education reform should set as a target to reverse this process. The augmenting process of "brain drain" should be turned into the "brain circulation", i.e. the higher education system should support sound mobility of the Georgian scientists. Otherwise "brain drain" may turn into a serious barrier to the higher education reform in Georgia.

Low prestige of higher education acquired in Georgia – True that higher education in Georgia enjoys a high social prestige, however the higher education institutions in Georgia, with few exceptions, are gradually losing their prestige. At the public openings for filling the vacancies the recruitment commissions openly give advantages to those applicants who have spent at least two months in European or American higher education institutions. This tendency formulates stereotypes according to which, higher education in Georgia is like a ski jump to a genuine, foreign education, thus studying at higher education institutions of Georgia no longer have the original value. Further developing such approach may become a serious obstacle to the higher education reform of Georgia. One of the major goals of the reform is to restore the lost prestige of the higher education of Georgia.

Weak linkage between the higher education and research – The existing practice showed that the scientific-research activities used to take place in the research institutes of the Academy of

Sciences. Therefore it was not always possible to integrate the gained results with the study processes.

OPPORTUNITIES

To build up an education system that is compatible with the European standards;

Quality assurance, implying updating the study programmes at all the three cycles of the higher education and introducing the innovative methods in the process of teaching;

Increased opportunities for mobility, both for students and academic personnel; promoting attractiveness of the higher education system of Georgia;

Moving from brain drain to brain circulation;

Better opportunities for academic and professional activities and employment;

Improving the conditions for implementing the joint international scientific projects;

Elaborating joint educational programmes together with different higher education institutions in Europe.

THREATS

There are a range of factors that we can estimate as threats to higher education reforms. For example,

Instability – Still there are ethnic conflicts in the country. True, presently these conflicts are frozen, but there is always risk that they will escalate. If the conflicts turn into the armed confrontation, higher education reform may be seriously endangered, since the escalation of ethnic conflicts will entail the macroeconomic instability and the higher education reform may become less prioritised.

Financial cutbacks on reforms – The success of the reform is to a greater degree dependent on the volume of financing. The allocated assignments are still very poor and can not assure complete realization of different phases of the reform.

Time constraints for realization of the reform - According to the Bologna Declaration, European Higher Education Area should be created by 2010, implying that the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia and the higher education institutions should implement the major part of the reform during the four remaining years. It is a pretty short time for such a large-scale restructuring. It is crucial to plan well in advance the different phases of the reform. The opportunities as well as complex and less complex measures should be well calculated to distribute their implementation efficiently and effectively during the four years. Otherwise the reform process will be imperilled.

The fear of losing national identity – The education reform provokes the fear of losing one's identity among the wider society. Frequently the question is posed, whether the new system will serve the national interests. Whether it will train a true professional, a specialist who is competitive and employable, but also a citizen that is loyal and a patriot to its country? Will it require total rejection of the long-standing academic traditions in the country? Less persuading answers to these questions may result in losing the public confidence.

3. PRIORITY DIRECTIONS OF DEVELOPMENT

3.1. NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR QUALIFICATIONS

Existing situation

Achieving compatibility and comparability among the higher education qualifications of different European countries envisages introduction of appropriate mechanisms. The noted mechanism was first presented as a recommendation in 2003 Berlin communiqué and in 2005 the qualifications framework for the European higher education area and the question was raised to start work on national qualifications framework by 2007: “We adopt the overarching framework for qualifications in the EHEA, comprising three cycles (including, within national contexts, the possibility of intermediate qualifications), generic descriptors for each cycle based on learning outcomes and competences, and credit ranges in the first and second cycles. We commit ourselves to elaborating national frameworks for qualifications compatible with the overarching framework for qualifications in the EHEA by 2010, and to having started work on this by 2007. We ask the Follow-up Group to report on the implementation and further development of the overarching framework”². The Bergen summit proposed the overarching European framework, with the basic descriptors (see annex N4).

After the Bergen summit in July 2005 a European Commission staff working document “Towards a European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning” was released for discussion. The draft document is more comprehensive and covers the requirements of the Bologna Process.

The qualifications framework is tightly connected to almost all the principles of the Bologna process (compatibility, the system of academic degrees, mobility-recognition, introduction of credits, quality assurance, lifelong learning, and promoting European dimension) and is one of the prerequisites for their realization.

Problems connected to the qualifications framework

The national framework of qualifications does not exist in Georgia yet³ and the notion of national qualifications framework is not stipulated in the Georgian legislation. During the last 15 years the higher education institutions created new programmes by themselves with the appropriate qualifications (Often they were quite unique e.g. the international journalism of agriculture etc).

So far, no connection had been sought between the Bologna and Copenhagen processes in Georgia. Presently, work has been commenced on elaborating the “system of qualifications for the vocational education”⁴ in line with the concept of vocational education. It will definitely concern the higher professional education as well, but the issue of other higher education qualifications is not resolved yet. In the document elaborated within the framework of the Bergen summit “A framework for Qualifications of the Higher Education Area”, it is noted that “the national framework for higher education qualifications and the body or bodies responsible

² Bergen Communiqué www.mes.gov.ge

³ It should be noted that so far exists only the classification of specialties of higher education system of Georgia elaborated in according to the UNESCO ISCED 1997, but this document can not substitute the national framework for qualifications.

⁴ N150 decree of the government of Georgia (31 August, 2005) on approving the concept of vocational education of Georgia.

for its development are designated by the national ministry with responsibility for higher education” and work on the issue should start before 2007. For sure it is optimal to create “a national qualifications framework” for the whole education system in the country. Pursuant to the concept on vocational education The Ministry of Labour, health and Social Care is the coordinating body for the work on “the qualifications framework for vocational education”.

Also, there is a terminology problem of technical nature: Qualifications framework, structure or system?

Upcoming Tasks

According to the Bergen Communiqué the work on the qualifications framework should start by 2007 and be completed by 2010.

- According to the document⁵ that was approved at the Bergen Summit and dealing with the national qualifications framework, the Ministry of Education and Science should establish an appropriate body and the work on setting up this body should start immediately. All the stakeholders (ministries, HEIs and their academic personnel, employers, students etc) should be brought together in the body. The body/council in its part will set up sectoral commissions. Herewith, relevant consultations should be provided both for the council and for the members of its sectoral commissions;
- First of all the mission of the national qualifications framework should be determined. It may be formulated as follows:
 - Describing the interrelationship among the qualifications (degrees, diplomas) existing in the country;
 - Assuring easily understandable and transparent qualifications for the wider strata of society (entrants, students, employers);
 - Assisting HEIs in the process of planning the study programmes and introducing the new study programmes;
 - Assisting quality assurance;
 - Assuring compatibility and comparability at the international level
- In order to achieve comparability and assure transparency of the national qualifications framework clear description of qualifications should be provided using the following terms:
 - Higher education cycles and appropriate academic degrees;
 - Workload of a student (credits);
 - Distinguishing levels within the first cycle of higher education;
 - Learning outcomes with the described competences;
- Qualifications framework should be elaborated *in line with the lifelong learning strategy*; It is important to define the place of the short cycle in the national qualifications

⁵ “A Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area” - www.bologna-bergen2005.no/Docs/00-Main_doc/050218_QF_EHEA.pdf

framework and relationship of such qualifications with the first cycle of higher education academic degree;

- In order to check the compatibility of national qualifications framework with the European framework of qualifications the appropriate body should hold a self-certification process according to the Bologna requirements⁶.

See in annex N5 the scheme of the body working on the national qualifications framework, possible sectoral commissions and the example of qualifications framework in one of the fields.

3.2. THREE-CYCLE DEGREE SYSTEM

Existing situation

Bologna Process suggests comprehensive restructuring of the European higher education area, for what double-level system should be introduced, undergraduate and graduate. “The successful completion of the first cycle” at least three years ”gives access to programmes of the second cycle”⁷. At the inception phase of the Bologna Process the third cycle (doctoral degree) was added in Berlin in 2003 to the defined two cycles. The relevant clauses (ch. VII) of the Law of Georgian on Higher Education (2004) fully comply with the abovementioned requirements of the Bologna Process. According to the article 87 point 7 of the Law the higher education institutions should move to the three-cycle degree system before 2007-2008 academic year. Thus in Georgia the legislative basis is appropriate for implementing the structural changes. According to the law the structure of Georgian higher education system looks as follows:

3 Years	Doctoral	
2 Years	Master’s	One cycle degree
		Specialist with a Diploma
3-4 Years	Baccalaureate 3-4 years	(3-5 years, 5-6 years in Medical education)

Structural changes partly took place as early as in 1990s in some HEIs of Georgia, herewith not all the fields of these institutions move to the two-cycle system. It should be underlined that frequently the noted changes were nominal and therefore the first cycle of higher education - bachelor’s degree was totally discredited. It is still associated as being just the means for continuing education at master’s level that in itself gives a complete qualification.

Accordingly, in some higher education institution of Georgia the already existing two-cycle system is transformed into different kind of two-cycle systems and the scientific degree system is replaced by the third cycle of academic degree.

⁶ “A Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area” - www.bologna-bergen2005.no/Docs/00-Main_doc/050218_QF_EHEA.pdf

⁷ Bologna Declaration; Main documents of the Bologna Process, p. 42; Tbilisi 2005

In reality, the given shift of the academic degree structure and the duration of studies require *on one hand substantial changes in the content of educational programmes moving from the teacher-centred study process to a student-centred study process and on the other hand assuring relation between the new academic degrees and the labour market.*

Except the mentioned three cycles and the appropriate degrees the Bologna Process also envisages the possibility of awarding joint academic degrees. The joint academic degree is recognised as one of the important factors of the European higher education area. However, there is no necessary legal framework for regulating this issue.

Problems related to a three-cycle degree system,

- Awareness of the society (entrants, students, parents, academic personnel, employers) on the new cycles of higher education is often inadequate;
- The aims of the first-cycle degree are vague and the demands of the labour market are neglected, that is to a certain degree conditioned by the definition given in the law: “Bachelor's Programme – the first level of a three-level higher education – the combination of educational programmes providing for teaching theoretical basics in a relevant field, essential for pursuing master's studies or studying professions requiring initial preparation of a level higher than the general education can provide⁸”. Accordingly, bachelor's degree is perceived by the society as a lower level qualification than the former 5 year programme of “certified specialist” and as just the inception phase for obtaining the higher education. The noted problem is very acute throughout the entire Europe. In most cases the bachelor's degree is invalid at the labour market. Therefore it is clearly stated in the Bergen Communiqué: “... there is a need for greater dialogue, involving Governments, institutions and social partners, to increase the employability of graduates with bachelor qualifications, including in appropriate posts within the public service”⁹.
- There is no differentiation between the professional and academic degrees. European experience shows that in certain fields it is appropriate to introduce professional degrees at all the three cycles of higher education in parallel to the academic degrees;
- Apart from the three-cycle degree system, the Law of Georgia on Higher Education (Art. 46-47) stipulates one-cycle higher education with a programme of a certified specialist. A specialist possessing practical knowledge and skills is trained by this programme. By 31 August, 2005 the decree of the Government on the concept of vocational education had been approved, that also envisages the one-cycle vocational higher education. It is unclear what the interrelationship is between these two “one-cycle” systems of higher education.
- Shortened course at the bachelor's level (the so called short cycle), authorised by the appropriate certificate, still is not introduced in the Georgian reality;
- It is essential to define the qualifications granted through the programmes of certified specialists and their relationship with other cycles of higher education. This issue is especially important with regards to the regulated professions, specifically, compatibility of qualification in medical field with the European qualifications;
- Pursuant to the Art.46 of the higher education law the duration of master's degree should not be less than two years. Whereas in the Bologna Process it is possible to introduce master's degree programmes of 60-90-120 credits, implying 1-1,5-2 year studies. The duration of master's degree should be dependent on the content and volume of the

⁸ Law of Georgia on Higher Education Art. 2. Point “m”

⁹ Bergen Communiqué; www.mes.gov.ge

master's degree. By fixing the lowest threshold will induce unsubstantiated increase in the duration of master's programmes;

- The problem related to awarding the joint degrees lacks appropriate legislative norms and the appropriate curricula;
- Structural change also determines the changes in the content, but in reality nothing has changed in the curriculum. Programme design in modules and their description through learning outcomes have been recently commenced;
- Absence of national qualifications framework. The noted framework should play a leading role, to make the significant structural changes and to make the academic degrees easily readable and compatible in the European higher education area.

Upcoming Tasks

- Defining more precisely the bachelor's degree in the higher education law. Making difference between the "professional degree" and the "academic degree" (Trends IV p. 13);
- Promoting attractiveness of bachelor's degree;
- Elaborating the appropriate approach towards the short cycles at the bachelor's level
- Regulating the duration of master's degree studies
- Elaborating explicitly student-oriented new curricula. Modularisation of study programmes by indicating learning outcomes, basic, complementary and elective subjects/modules;
- Setting up the national coordinating groups in order to elaborate curricula in the regulated professions (Trends IV. p. 18);
- Raising public awareness by sharing the best practices and experience (creating the webpage on higher education institutions that will be constantly updated);
- Regulatory framework on adopting the joint degrees; promoting the international cooperation and elaborating the appropriate curricula;

3.3 QUALITY ASSURANCE

Present situation – major tendencies

Quality assurance in higher education is a new tendency for Georgia – the term was first mentioned in the parliamentary decree on the "Main Directions of Higher Education Developing in Georgia" (2002). In the decree it was noted that "in the process of decentralizing teaching, scientific research and management, quality assurance system will enable wider society to get impartial information about how compatible is the teaching process in higher education institutions of Georgia with the contemporary educational requirements, how reasonably the appropriate social resources are spent and what the perspectives are for improving education". In the Law of Georgia on Higher Education (2004) quality is declared as a criterion for assessing the effectiveness of higher education system. The law stipulates to set up the appropriate structures both in higher education institutions and at the state level (Par. 25, 31, 63).

One of the main requirements of the Bologna Process – promoting international cooperation in quality assurance – gives Georgia a unique chance to create the intra-university and national quality assurance services of learning, teaching and research in line with the European standards. Presently, the principles of operating the quality assurance services at a national level are being actively discussed and common standards, procedures and rules are being recognized as it is stated in the Berlin Communiqué (2003).

In February 2005 a document elaborated by the European Network of Quality Assurance (ENQA) had been released "Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education" (see the summary of the document in annex N6). In the document the standards of internal quality assurance services of higher education institutions are described in details, also the standards for quality assurance agencies in Europe and the principles of their registration and control. The document was discussed and approved at the Bergen Summit (May, 2005). It is noted in the Bergen Communiqué that the Ministers of the 45 countries recognize the quality assurance standards put forth by the ENQA and welcome the creation of the common European register and they consider "cooperation of agencies recognized at national level" as crucial a factor, facilitating the bilateral recognition of decisions of quality assurance and accreditation.

The working scheme of quality assurance system is quite clearly defined in the main documents of the Bologna process. Unlike those countries where this system already existed and presently they need just to adapt to the common European standards, Georgia has to start work in the institutions directly in line with these requirements. By signing the Bologna Declaration Georgia undertook this commitment. Clearly the European experience should be taken into consideration.

In Trends IV¹⁰ – the report prepared by the European University Association – it is especially underlined that autonomy of higher education institutions is a necessary precondition for the effectiveness of internal quality assurance services. Besides, the issue of financing should be taken into consideration by all means. Quality assurance is connected to specific expenses but the outcome of this investment is raising the quality of education.

Basic problems

- There is no experience of quality assurance in Georgia;
- There is no culture of quality assurance in universities – prior to starting the evaluation of teaching and research the academic personnel and students should get acquainted and understand the assessment criteria, to assure the objectivity;
- In the transitional period before the governance of higher education institutions change on the basis of the law, in most cases the functions overlap between the newly created quality assurance services and the existing method centres.

Upcoming Tasks

To start up and/or setting up the quality assurance services in higher education institutions of Georgia, national agencies and the state accreditation services in line with the ENQA standards.

3.4. INTRODUCTION TO ECTS

The existing situation in Europe and Georgia

Credits as a tool for measuring student's workload, first was introduced in the United States of America in the beginning of the XX century. Later this system of student assessment was introduced in the Great Britain and lastly it was spread throughout the entire Europe. Since

¹⁰ www.bologna-bergen2005.no/

1989 ECTS – European Credit Transfer and Accumulation system – was introduced in higher education institutions of Europe. Introducing the ECTS is one of the major requirements of the Bologna Process – It ensures both effective planning of educational programmes and mobility of students. Herewith it should be noted that a lot of mistakes had been made while introducing the ECTS or a system compatible to it in Europe; In most European higher education institutions ECTS is introduced in separate faculties (departments) and very often the credits are not properly allocated. In order to avoid similar problems special attention should be paid to introduction of ECTS in Georgia.

According to the Law of Georgia on higher education (Art. 87, point 8) ECTS should be universally introduced before 2009-2010 academic year in Georgia.

Problems related to introduction of credits

- According to the Law higher education institutions should introduce the new study programmes before 2007-2008 academic year and in order to start these study programmes higher education institutions should move to the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System before 2009-2010 academic year. Thus, while elaborating the new study programmes we reject a very effective method of planning them.
- Credits as a tool for measuring student's workload are already used in many higher education institutions of Georgia; some institutions apply the American model of credits, some the British one etc. Accordingly the higher education institutions will have to work hard in order to adopt the European system.

Action plan

- To change the date for introducing the credits
- To meet the requirements envisaged in the ECTS User's Guide
- To Contact and consult the European experts of ECTS
- To introduce the ECTS national counselors

3.5 DOCTORAL DEGREE – SYNERGY OF EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

The existing situation in Europe and Georgia

In January 2000 by the proposal of the European Commission it was decided to create the European Research and Innovation Area – (IRIA), the aim of which is to assure conditions for establishing and developing knowledge-based economy in Europe. Knowledge-based economy cannot be created without the appropriately trained highly qualified specialists. The doctoral degree as a third cycle of higher education assures the linkage between the European higher education area and the research areas. The requirement to introduce the doctoral degree as a third cycle was mentioned at the Berlin summit in 2003.

This requirement of the Bologna Process was fully reflected in the Law of Georgian on Higher Education. Pursuant to the law the scientific degrees will be defended according to the previous old system only until the end of 2006 – the academic degree of a doctor is already introduced, and it will substitute the degrees of a candidate of science and the scientific degree of doctor.

The shift from the two-tier system of scientific degrees to a single cycle academic degree is connected to a number of problems. The third cycle of higher education practically should be

formulated anew. The necessary steps for introducing doctoral degree should be defined, also the interrelationship between the old and new systems of academic and scientific degrees; the academic characteristics of study programmes of the doctoral degree, the institutional basis for transferring to a three-cycle degree system etc.

On 25-26 June 2005 an international conference had been held at the Tbilisi State University, where the conditions for introducing the doctoral degree had been defined and agreed: the rules of admission; the share of educational and research components in the doctoral programmes, the mechanisms for quality assurance and other issues. An action plan was also defined in the memorandum of the conference (See the conference memorandum in annex N7).

3.6 PROMOTING MOBILITY AND THE ATTRACTIVENESS OF THE HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM OF GEORGIA

The existing situation

Promoting mobility is one of the most important objectives of the Bologna Process. "We recognize that mobility of students and staff among all participating countries remains one of the key objectives of the Bologna Process. Aware of the many remaining challenges to be overcome, we reconfirm our commitment to facilitate the portability of grants and loans where appropriate through joint action, with a view to making mobility within the EHEA a reality. We shall intensify our efforts to lift obstacles to mobility by facilitating the delivery of visa and work permits and by encouraging participation in mobility programmes. We urge institutions and students to make full use of mobility programmes, advocating full recognition of study periods abroad within such programmes"¹¹.

Characteristics of Mobility in the Bologna Process:

1. Mobility is not a one-way process;
2. It concerns students, academic and administrative personnel;
3. Recognition of study period and workload of students participating in mobility/exchange programmes abroad is essential;
4. The mechanisms for mobility are: diploma supplement, transcript of marks, credits and learning agreement¹².

Mobility is one of the most specific, clear and attractive issues and there are fewer debates against it. Mobility of students and academic personnel mostly depended on private initiatives and was not organized by the higher education institutions, later causing certain problems with regard to recognition of the courses taken abroad and the marks received. One of the mechanisms facilitating student mobility is a diploma supplement and learning agreement. According to the Ministerial Order N149, 5 April 2005, Diploma Supplement being acclaimed by the Bologna Process and elaborated by the UNESCO, Council of Europe and European Commission, is a necessary tool for recognition.

No precise statistics exist on how many entrants or /and students leave Georgia for academic purposes. Based on the information provided by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) some tendencies may be tracked.

- In 2003-2004 academic year the number of Georgian students in Germany was:

¹¹ Bergen Communiqué; www.mes.gov.ge

¹² European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System and Diploma Supplement – Guidelines; Tbilisi 2005; www.mes.gov.ge; www.civilin.org

2 902 – Georgian students enrolled in the higher education institutions of Georgia;
1 380 – Language and Culture;
657 – Law, Economics and Social Sciences;
405 – Mathematics and natural sciences;
170 – Engineering Sciences;
101 – Medicine;
150 – Art and Art studies

- There are very few students in Germany willing to study in Georgia:

DAAD provides approximately 20 scholarships for German students and young scientists wishing to study or work in Georgia.

Problems related to mobility

- Certain number of Georgian students try various channels to go abroad. As a rule when they go abroad for continuing studies they skip a year in Georgian higher education institution by taking one year out. Such cases are controversial to the requirements of the Bologna Process; hence in Europe students may study a semester or two in other university on the same specialty. The documents necessary for mobility are not in use, such as: transcript of marks and learning agreement;
- In reality mobility is in one direction. According to the data of the German side in 2003-2004 German students studying in Georgia comprised only 0,69 % of the number of Georgian students studying in Germany;
- The lack of interest towards the higher education institutions of Georgia is determined by the low attractiveness of the educational programmes proposed by the Georgian HEIs, very small information, and absence of general infrastructure;
- There is no statistics on mobility; especially on the mobility of academic personnel.

Measures to be taken in order to promote mobility

Mobility Georgia-Europe:

- Effective management of the mobility schemes:
 - Central Structure in the higher educational institutions – so called foreign relations office – should provide students and scientists with relevant information on the content, culture, language (language courses, rules for filling in the application etc.) prior to departure. Partner higher education institutions abroad could also take part in this process;
 - There should be a central body in higher education institutions and/or at the Ministry of Education and Science, providing information to all the interested parties about the existing possibilities for mobility in higher education institutions of Europe;
- Studies or practice abroad should be taken as a necessary study component. The mobile students should be guaranteed to gain recognition at home (including the passed exams). ECTS learning agreement and the transcript of marks has a special importance in this matter. The latter represents a standard format document and is determined to describe all the study activities taken by a student. It is necessary to create software for the transcript of marks and its introduction in higher education institutions;
- The programmes existing in Georgia should be used effectively, supporting partnership among HEIs and elaborating joint educational programmes;

- Diversifying financing of mobility. The desire of Georgian students for studying abroad and for general mobility may be organized effectively at a state level. Newly created state scholarships programme, coordinated by the “development and reform foundation”, envisages scholarships only for lawyers. It is necessary to encourage a number of fields by the support programmes and target funding (e.g. for students of economics and agrarian specialties etc.);
- Assuring reliable statistical data on mobility.

Mobility Europe-Georgia:

- Providing tailored programmes for the European Students and Scientists in the fields where Georgian Higher Education institutions have special competence, e.g. archaeology, linguistics, History, History of Art;
- Assisting foreign students in Georgia: Easily understandable internet pages in foreign language of higher education institutions of Georgia, where it will be clearly presented the educational programmes, contact persons, addresses, special advice for foreign students;
- Improving special services for foreign students and scientists in Georgia. Designing special courses of the Georgian language, assisting at the administrative level, providing accommodation, consultations while choosing the study programmes etc.

Internal Mobility

The issue of mobility of students and personnel among different educational institutions within Georgia should be regulated through the similar mechanism as it is in case of international mobility, in order to recognize the study period spent in other educational institutions it is necessary to have the transcript of marks, learning agreement and other documents.

It is desirable to introduce the best practices of the European inter-institutional research and education for the so-called “joint degrees”. To create open, transparent and competitive research-educational environment, that will on one hand enable different research and educational institutions to present their "product" at a market of higher education and on the other hand, to give more freedom of choice to students. That will be one of the conditions for quality assurance fair competition and attractiveness of the Georgian higher education system.

3.7 INTRODUCING THE PRINCIPLE OF "LIFELONG LEARNING" IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Existing situation

The goal of the Lisbon Strategy of the European Union (March 2000) - to make Europe the most competitive, dynamic and knowledge-based economy in the world is quite ambitious and it will be possible only through the substantial changes in education and training system of Europe. Based on this, the concept of lifelong learning represents the major element for the strategy of economic and social development in Europe before 2010. This is a chance to get education throughout life with the aim to improve one's skills and competences, taking into view the personal, both civil and social development and also employability and income¹³.

¹³ <http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/policies/life/memoen.pdf>

In 2001 Prague communiqué lifelong learning was announced as one of the basic principles of the Bologna Process. The issue was more specifically reflected in the Berlin Communiqué:" Ministers underline the important contribution of higher education in making lifelong learning a reality. They are taking steps to align their national policies to realize this goal and urge higher Education Institutions and all concerned to enhance the possibilities for lifelong learning at higher education level including the recognition of prior learning. They emphasize that such action must be an integral part of higher education activity.

Ministers furthermore call those working on qualifications frameworks for the European Higher Education Area to encompass the wide range of flexible learning paths, opportunities and techniques and to make appropriate use of the ECTS credits"¹⁴.

Problems related to introducing the Lifelong learning principles in higher education

- It can be said that higher education institutions do not pay attention to realizing the mentioned principle so far. The reason is simple from one point of view - the present transitional period in the higher education system (such as formulating new management structures, creating new educational programmes, introducing the system of credits etc.) do not leave the time and energy to higher education institutions.
- Apart from the noted reason, frequently universities do not understand, that alongside with the traditional education and research, lifelong education is also their function and that by this they serve to society. Accordingly, from the side of higher education institutions neither labour market nor the needs of other target groups are studied. The system of social partnership is very weakly developed. Higher education institutions are not ready to offer target groups the necessary courses for upgrading their qualification and retraining.
- In order to introduce the noted principle in higher education institutions certain mechanisms should exist e.g. recognition of prior learning paths (formal, non-formal, informal) and flexible-learning paths. In a nutshell it is essential to elaborate a national framework of qualifications in line with the lifelong learning principle.

Measures to be taken

- To create the national framework of qualifications (see ch. 3.1) in line with the lifelong learning principles.
- Higher education institutions should take into view the noted principle when defining their mission and elaborate appropriate policy for continuing education, implying the implementation of the following measures:
 - Define the type of an educational programme – short course, distance learning, other educational services in the framework of "lifelong learning";
 - Investigate the market for continuing education – defining potential customers, disciplines and levels demanded by the labour market.
 - Define the needs of lifelong learning for the development of the regional economy.
 - Prepare appropriate materials and intellectual resources in order to assure "lifelong learning";
 - Assure quality of the proposed educational programmes;
 - Provide financial support for the continuing education – defining the cost of studies etc.

¹⁴ Berlin Communiqué. Main Documents of the Bologna Process; Tbilisi 2005, p.82

- Diversify the profile of the higher education programmes in line with the above-mentioned principles.

3.8 HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS AND STUDENTS

Existing situation

In Prague and Berlin Communiqués, and the official documents of the European University Association, and ESIB the role of higher education institutions and students in reform issues is particularly underlined. Obviously, in the process of creating the European Higher Education Area higher education institutions are the major partners.

“Ministers welcome the commitment of Higher Education Institutions and students to the Bologna Process and recognize that it is ultimately the active participation of all partners in the Process that will ensure its long-term success. [...] Ministers stress the need for appropriate studying and living conditions for the students, so that they can successfully complete their studies within an appropriate period of time without obstacles related to their social and economic background”¹⁵.

In the declarations of the European University Association, Salamanca and Glasgow Conventions it is noted that universities are ready to implement the reforms, but it is necessary to increase their autonomy in order to assure the necessary dynamics for implementing the reforms.

From the ten action lines of the Bologna Process one of them “Higher Education Institutions and Students” incorporates several directions:

1. Increasing the role of higher education institutions in reforming the system
2. Autonomy of higher education institutions
3. The role of students in managing HEIs
4. Student influence on the content of education
5. Creating appropriate study and living conditions for students

Existing problems

- Increasing the role of higher education institutions in the process of reform is one of the most important questions. Without the active participation of higher education institutions no reform may be implemented. The law of Georgia on higher education requires from the higher education institutions to elect the governing bodies before January 2007 and implement their activities autonomously in line with the law. It should be underlined that there is a certain type of fear and distrust towards the novelties, that is on one hand caused by the lack of information and on the other hand by the confusing management system existing in higher education institutions today. Quite often activities are overlapped.
- It should be taken into consideration that reforms always require additional time and energy. Also there is no independent union of higher education institutions in any form, assisting the higher education institutions in the process of reform;

¹⁵ Berlin Communiqué. Main Documents of the Bologna Process; Tbilisi 2005, p.79

- Student participation in decision-making. Formally it is provided. According to the law students should comprise one third of the senate (Art 17, P. 3; Art 43, p. 1). At the end of 2006 in order to implement the requirements of the law students will also be elected in the senates of the state higher education institutions. But the problem is the confrontation of student unions in the state higher education institutions. Raising doubts that in 2006 elections certain artificial tensions may be provoked;
- As for the private higher education institutions, the law do not cover them and presumably, students of private higher education institutions do not participate in decision-making;
- In most cases students do not understand their self-governance adequately. The functions of student self-governance bodies is stipulated by the article 45 Point 3 of the Law of Georgia on Higher Education;
- There is no national union of students, that would have contacts with the European student unions;
- According to the law students have a right to evaluate their study programmes. In some higher education institutions the newly established quality assurance services made first steps in this direction, but as the practice shows, on one hand there is no culture of evaluating the study programmes and teachers by students and on the other hand the evaluation method should be seriously improved, implying that a research conducted for evaluating the study process should be in compliance with the internationally accepted standards and follow the code of ethics;
- According to the Bologna Process students are not considered as only the customers of the educational processes. It is the governmental duty to assure equal access to higher education for all and on the other hand, create appropriate study and living conditions for students depending on the student assistance system to a considerable extent.
- In order to assure equal access of education in 2005-2006 academic years, 250 socially vulnerable students had been awarded special study grants (The decree of the government of Georgia N147, 25 August, 2005). This was the first attempt to resolve such problem, the limited resources of the state budget reduces the circle of socially vulnerable citizens receiving the assistance. Also it should be underlined that practically there are no student dormitories any longer, creating serious problem to students coming from regions and the system of student loans do not exist also.

Measures to be taken

- Reform can not be implemented without the participation of all the stakeholders: Increasing the role of higher education institutions in making the European higher education area implies timely implementation of the reform initiatives within the institutions. Obviously, initiatives in this direction should be taken by the institutions themselves:
 - Act more actively in order to increase the degree of awareness of students and teachers;
 - It is desirable to set up an association of educational institutions and the rector's conference (where higher education institutions will be united, without regard to organizational-legal status);

The aims of the association and directions of the activities may:

- Promote high quality of study and research at higher educational institutions;
- Promote cooperation among the higher education institution;
- Assist the member institutions to implement the Bologna principles;
- Promote the interests of the member institutions within the society and in the process of decision-making;
- Retain and develop international relations.

- The state higher education institutions and the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia should assist the elections of the senate and other governing bodies through the coordinated activities and in line with the law. The higher education institutions should assure publicity of institutional Charter and provide easy access for academic personnel and students;
- Establishment of a student union at the national level should be supported after formulating the student governing bodies within higher education institutions;
- It is especially important to involve students in the quality assurance processes. The higher education institutions should be guided by the quality assurance standards of the European Association and define the procedures for student participation in quality assurance;
- It is reasonable to set up consultation services in order to guide students in the study processes and facilitate them in selecting modules relevant and interesting to them, structure individual educational programmes and make choice between the academic and professional degrees etc;
- Creating appropriate study and living conditions for students is very important for collecting the reliable data about their socio-economic situation. A database should be created, forming the basis for elaborating the student assistance programmes. The state should assist higher educational institutions in receiving back their student dormitories and rehabilitating them in order to create appropriate living conditions for students.

3.10 SUSTAINABLE FINANCING

Existing situation

Although financing higher education is not outlined as a basic action line in the main documents of the Bologna Process, however this issue is crucial. In the Bergen communiqué it is noted that: “As we move closer to 2010, we undertake to ensure that higher education institutions enjoy the necessary autonomy to implement the agreed reforms, and we recognize the need for sustainable funding of institutions.”¹⁶

Without financing it is impossible to implement the higher education reform and fulfil the Bologna Process requirements. In the document presented at the Bergen Summit "Trends IV" financial support at the national level is referred to as one of the essential factors for the success of the reform. "There was a considerable gap between the aims of the Bologna reforms as stated in political declarations by the ministers, on the one hand, and the means and support given by the state to the institutions to realize these aims, on the other."¹⁷The majority of the Bologna member countries expressed their commitments in the legal framework but did not support the Bologna reforms financially.

While discussing the issue of financing higher educational institutions of Georgia two directions should be particularly underlined:

- Financial support of higher education reform;
- Reforming financing system of education and research (multiple sources, effective use of the budget sources)

¹⁶ Bergen Communiqué; www.mes.gov.ge

¹⁷ Trends IV: European Universities implementing Bologna; EUA Sybille Reichert, Christian Tauch; 2005;

Higher education reform requires additional time and energy. Implementing serious structural and contextual changes (creating new structure of qualifications, introducing new educational programmes, quality assurance etc.) envisages on one-hand formulating new structures (e.g. internal and external quality assurance services, ECTS coordinators), and on the other hand organizing appropriate seminars for academic and administrative personnel. Also it is important to assure transparency of the ongoing reform and organize the targeted information campaign for academic personnel, students, employers, and the whole society. The activities supporting reform requires appropriate state coordination and financing.

The legal framework for financing higher education is stipulated in the Law of Georgia on Higher education article 79. Financing sources are explicitly diversified:

1. *Financing received from the state:*

- Tuition fees which are covered by the state education grant funds;
- Research grants awarded by the state on the basis of competition;
- Special state-budgetary programs designed to encourage the enrollment in those specialties of a higher education institution, which represent priority for the state;
- Program financing allocated by the ministries of a relevant field;

2. *Financing received from private sources*

- Private grant
- Contribution
- Funds received by will
- Revenues from economic activities

- (a) This year from more than 17 000 students enrolled at higher education institutions about 4500 received the state grant; others will pay the tuition fee by themselves. However it should be noted that the same 79th article do not stipulate directly "the tuition fee covered by the students", point "f" of this article envisages "any other sources of income allowed by the Georgian legislation, including the revenues from economic activities". The attempt to distribute the weight of financing between the state and students should have more sophisticated legal basis.

In 2005 the Department of Science and Technology at the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia allocated scientific-research grants to the state higher education institutions on the basis of competitive selection. Out of 349 projects presented 165 had been financed. From the entire sum GEL 1 544 791, 81 456 constitutes the expenses for maintaining the administration¹⁸.

The depth and upshot of the reform of financing education is to a great extent dependent on what the change aims at. Solely diversifying the financing sources hardly implies innovative elements. The five key objectives set as the basis for measuring innovativeness of funding initiatives are defined in a research conducted by the European Union in 2004¹⁹.

1. Increasing absolute levels of funding
2. Diversifying sources of income for universities
3. Making best use of resources (increasing efficiency)
4. Providing extra funding for excellence in research and training and for increasing international attractiveness

¹⁸ http://www.tech.org.ge/science_department

¹⁹ 2004 study on the financing of higher education in Europe;
<http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/policies/2010/studies>

5. Student aids (allowances, grants, loans)

Problems connected to financing the higher education system

- No financing is provided to the activities supporting the reform
- In the Law of Georgia on Higher Education the following point is omitted "the cost of studies, covered by the student". Herewith, it should be taken into consideration that according to the tax code tuition fee unlike the study grant is subject to taxation on profit and property. This situation will cause serious problems to the higher education institutions and faculties having few grant-holder students.
- In 2005-2006 and 2006-2007 academic years master and doctoral degrees cannot be financed by the state. According to the law before January 1, 2007, the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia shall develop the new rules and conditions for financing master's and doctor's programmes (Art 88; P.10). Whereas by the academic year 2006-2007, higher education institutions shall move on providing the master's educational program lasting for not less than two years (Art. 89, P. 7).
- According to the Article 83 point 3 of the law of Georgia on higher education "The state funding for master's and doctor's programs shall be provided through the state Research Grant funds, in accordance with the priorities set by the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia, under a special state program". Taking into view that the study component may comprise 75 percent of the whole content of the master programmes, it is implicit whether it is reasonable to finance it from the scientific-research grant;
- The scientific-research grants will be awarded on competitive basis only for 6 months, it should be taken into view that it is practically impossible to implement any serious research project in such a short period of time. The lack of information on announcing the competition and selecting the projects' criteria caused seriously aggravated the situation in the Tbilisi State University;
- The shortage of student assistance programmes. There is no programme of student loan.

Measures to be taken

- Financing the activities facilitating the reform. A team of the Bologna promoters may be set up²⁰, composed of 5-6 experts who will have the following functions:
 - Collecting information on the ongoing reform, research, analyzing the existing situation and elaborating the recommendations in order to assure the appropriate development;
 - Supporting the activities envisaged by the present document and organizing trainings, seminars in such issues as: developing new educational programmes, modularizing the educational programmes, quality management etc;
 - Organising conferences, supporting the free union of higher education institutions;
 - Informing the society;

²⁰ A team of the Bologna promoters should represent a working group coordinated by the Ministry of Education and Science with a limited number of members, whereas the Bologna supporters group is a voluntary union of the stakeholders.

- Legislative amendments: Point a should be added to the article 79 of the Law of Georgia on Higher Education, with the following wording: "tuition fee covered by a student". Besides, the tuition fee paid by a student is a revenue for the higher education institution (including state) from the economic activity and is subject to taxation on benefit (tax code art. 13;25;170). Whereas the tuition fee and the amount of the grant is the same in the state higher education institutions. Also the organization property is subject to taxation that is used for the economic activity. Accordingly, from the revenue of the tuition fee there should be the allowances on benefit and property taxes;
- The higher education institutions should have appropriate financing policy in order to take the correct decisions in the sphere of management
- It is important to solve the problem of proper remuneration for professors and teachers. Defining the common minimum level of remuneration for the legal entity of public law academic personnel at the state level. Otherwise the brain drain will be irreversible.
- Scientific-research grants – the researches should be financed on the competitive basis and the duration of grants should not be less than the required duration of master's and doctoral programmes and should comprise the following directions:
 - Scientific researches
 - Study component
- It is important to elaborate and discuss widely together with the academic personnel the priority directions of allocating research grants and the methods of evaluating the quality of researches;
- In implementing the student aid programmes a special attention should be paid to supporting the programmes of low-interest study loans.

3.10 CREATING THE FLEXIBLE PLATFORM FOR COOPERATION AND PARTNERSHIP AMONG THE HIGHER EDUCATION STAKEHOLDERS

Existing Situation

Georgian society always had a natural desire for good education (i.e. higher education). Under the influence of cultural-societal factors this desire is cultivated in certain direction and acquires the features of specific expectation that is transformed in to the order based on the ability of a society to pay adequately. It was the case in the Soviet Period, we got the state/societal order in line with the status quo, as a response to it the soviet science and education system had been created.

The system was oriented towards creating certain type of product. The existing resources were adequately mobilised and instruments selected/created (educational curricula, programmes, methods, etc). In 1991 Soviet Social Republics' Union no longer exists as a commissioning body, however the remaining scientific and educational system is still oriented towards it, and like any phantom it has the power of obstructing initiatives at the cost of social phobias.

Therefore, from one side there are no more orders, but in the contemporary Georgia of hectic socio-cultural transition still no new system is formulated. On the other hand the phantom oriented to old system of orders is still at place, with the adequate counter-productive instruments and resources, beside of which and under its strong pressure we have to orient ourselves towards principally new and still amorphous social orders.

Consequently: higher education institutions are facing the most complicated challenges (fight versus phantoms and creating the new instrument), and it is very difficult to overcome them, thus the situation is to some extent disoriented and under threat of committing mistakes.

Problems

The major challenge is the low reflexivity between the scientific and higher education national areas of Georgia and their constituent parts towards the contemporary requirements and accordingly, weak cooperation and lack of agreed national vision on developing common area.

Measures to be taken

- Establish a permanent coordinating group among the interested parties (Bologna promoters) that will be based on the principles of institutional autonomy, sharing responsibilities and facilitate the joint endeavours for overcoming the common problems.
- Within the framework of such cooperation and based on this document national strategy for a framework-programme before 2010 should be implemented.
- Coordinate strategies, assisting the institutions in reform implementation, also in elaborating the joint recommendations (legal etc.), promoting sharing the best national and international practices, translating appropriate documents in the sphere of managing-administrating the reform, conducting researches, assuring international linkages etc.

ANNEX N1

List of Participants

1. Lali Bakradze – Project Director, Civil Society Institute
2. Lika Glonti – Expert, Tbilisi State University
3. Emzar Jgerenaia – Expert, National Library of Parliament of Georgia
4. Irakli Machabeli – Ministry of Education and Science
5. Lela Maisuradze - Ministry of Education and Science
6. George Nachkhebia - Ministry of Education and Science
7. Lia Buadze - Ministry of Culture, Monuments protection and Sport
8. Shalva Nachkhebia – Georgian Technical University
9. Tamaz Kupatadze - Georgian Technical University
10. Lali Gogeliani - Georgian Technical University
11. Marine Chitashvili - Tbilisi State University, Center for Social Sciences
12. Marine Karchava – European School of Management in Tbilisi
13. Irina Kvachadze – Tbilisi State Medical University
14. Bidzina Kulumbegov - Tbilisi State Medical University
15. Irma Margishvili - Tbilisi State Medical University
16. Nato Pavliashvili - Tbilisi State Medical University
17. David Kiziria – State Academy of Fine Arts
18. Tsiala Loladze – State Pedagogical University
19. Manana Asatiani – State Pedagogical University
20. Ketevan Kupatadze - State Pedagogical University
21. Giga Zedania – University of Language and Culture
22. Elguja Dadunashvili – Shota Rustaveli Institute of Georgian Literature
23. George Machabeli – EPPM

ANNEX N2

MEMORANDUM OF THE BOLOGNA SUPPORTERS' GROUP

Tbilisi

December 1, 2005

THE UNDERSIGNED PARTIES CONSIDER THAT IMPLEMENTING BOLOGNA PRINCIPLES UNTIL 2010 REQUIRES ACTIVE EFFORTS AND DIRECT PARTICIPATION OF THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SCIENCE OF GEORGIA, HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS, SOCIETY AND ALL THE STAKEHOLDERS AND AGREE ON THE FOLLOWING:

1. Establish the group of Bologna supporters
 - 1.1 The number and/or composition of the group members may change by the decision of the group with the simple majority of votes;
2. The goal of the group is to support the introduction of the Bologna Process principles in the higher education system of Georgia;
3. In order to achieve this goals the group:
 - 3.1 Elaborates and implements appropriate supporting activities: arranges meetings, conferences, and public debates, holds consultations, facilitates the promotion of the Bologna Process in the country;
 - 3.2 Cooperates with the representatives of the Authorities, civil society and international organizations;
4. All interested parties sharing the goals and spirit of this memorandum may join it, informing the group about his/her decision in a written form by fax or electronically;
5. The undersigned persons may reject the participation in this agreement any time, informing the group members about his/her decision in a written form by fax or electronically;
6. Contact information of the group is:

Email - contact@bologna-supporters.ge

Webpage – www.bologna-supporters.ge

7. The signing parties:

Lali Bakradze – Civil Society Institute

Lika Glonti – Tbilisi State University

Emzar Jgerenaia – National Library of Parliament of Georgia

Lela Maisuradze - Ministry of Education and Science

George Nachkhebia - Ministry of Education and Science

Lia Buadze - Ministry of Culture, Monuments protection and Sport
Tamaz Kupatadze - Georgian Technical University
Marine Chitashvili - Tbilisi State University, Center for Social Sciences
Marine Karchava – European School of Management in Tbilisi
Irina Kvachadze – Tbilisi State Medical University
George Matiashvili - Tbilisi State University of Economic relations
Shota Dogonadze - Georgian Technical University
David Kiziria – State Academy of Fine Arts
Tsiala Loladze – State Pedagogical University
Manana Asatiani – State Pedagogical University
Ketevan Kupatadze - State Pedagogical University
Oliver Risner – EC delegation
George Machabeli – EPPM

ANNEX N3

Bologna Process articles published in newspaper "24 Hours":

1. The Communiqué Signed in Bergen and the Perspectives of Integrating with the European Education Area; Round Table – Dali Kuprava; May 24, 2005;
2. Once Again about the Bologna Process – Emzar Jgerenaia; July 21, 2005;
3. The Major Mechanism of the Bologna Process – European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (Experience of the Tbilisi Iv. Javakishvili State University) – Lika Glonti; November 1, 2005.

The framework of qualifications for the European Higher Education Area

The Bergen Conference of European Ministers Responsible for Higher Education 19-20 May 2005 adopted the overarching framework for qualifications in the EHEA, comprising three cycles (including, within national contexts, the possibility of intermediate qualifications), generic descriptors for each cycle based on learning outcomes and competences, and credit ranges in the first and second cycles. Ministers committed themselves to elaborating national frameworks for qualifications compatible with the overarching framework for qualifications in the EHEA by 2010, and to having started work on this by 2007.

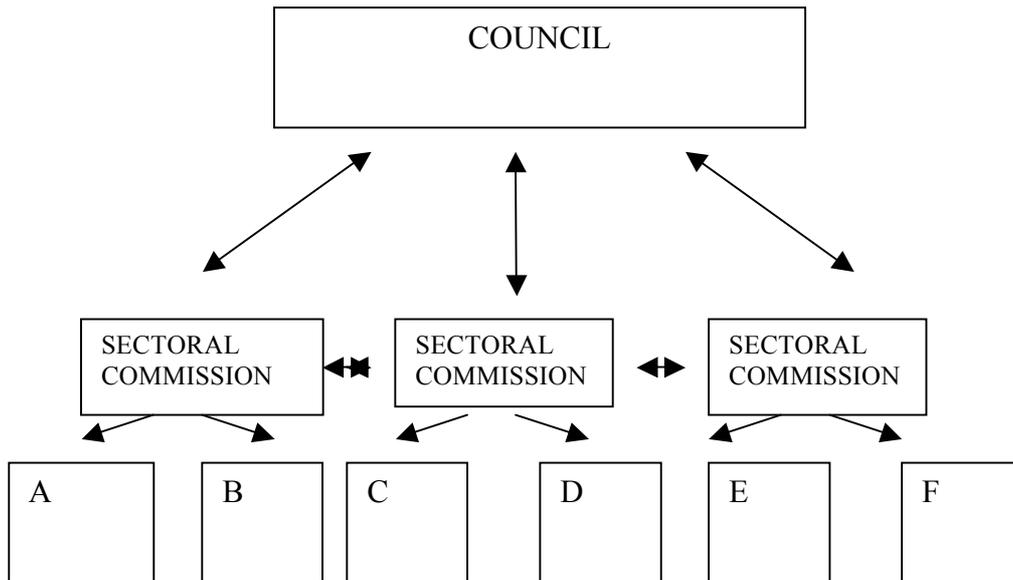
	Outcomes	ECTS Credits
First cycle qualification	<p>Qualifications that signify completion of the first cycle are awarded to students who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have demonstrated knowledge and understanding in a field of study that builds upon their general secondary education, and is typically at a level that, whilst supported by advanced textbooks, includes some aspects that will be informed by knowledge of the forefront of their field of study; • can apply their knowledge and understanding in a manner that indicates a professional approach to their work or vocation, and have competences typically demonstrated through devising and sustaining arguments and solving problems within their field of study; • have the ability to gather and interpret relevant data (usually within their field of study) to inform judgments that include reflection on relevant social, scientific or ethical issues; • can communicate information, ideas, problems and solutions to both specialist and non-specialist audiences; • have developed those learning skills that are necessary for them to continue to undertake further study with a high degree of autonomy. 	Typically include 180-240 ECTS credits
Second cycle qualification	<p>Qualifications that signify completion of the second cycle are awarded to students who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have demonstrated knowledge and understanding that is founded upon and extends and/or enhances that typically associated with the first cycle, and that provides a basis or opportunity for originality in developing and/or applying ideas, often within a research context; • can apply their knowledge and understanding, and problem solving abilities in new or unfamiliar environments within broader (or multidisciplinary) contexts related to their field 	Typically include 90-120 ECTS credits, with a minimum of 60 credits at the level of the 2 nd cycle

	<p>of study;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have the ability to integrate knowledge and handle complexity, and formulate judgments with incomplete or limited information, but that include reflecting on social and ethical responsibilities linked to the application of their knowledge and judgments; • can communicate their conclusions, and the knowledge and rationale underpinning these, to specialist and non-specialist audiences clearly and unambiguously; • have the learning skills to allow them to continue to study in a manner that may be largely self-directed or autonomous. 	
Third cycle qualification	<p>Qualifications that signify completion of the third cycle are awarded to students who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have demonstrated a systematic understanding of a field of study and mastery of the skills and methods of research associated with that field; • have demonstrated the ability to conceive, design, implement and adapt a substantial process of research with scholarly integrity; • have made a contribution through original research that extends the frontier of knowledge by developing a substantial body of work, some of which merits national or international refereed publication; • are capable of critical analysis, evaluation and synthesis of new and complex ideas; • can communicate with their peers, the larger scholarly community and with society in general about their areas of expertise; • can be expected to be able to promote, within academic and professional contexts, technological, social or cultural advancement in a knowledge based society. 	Not specified

ANNEX N5

EXAMPLE

THE COUNCIL ELABORATING THE NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR QUALIFICATIONS



SECTORAL COMMISSIONS OF THE COUNCIL ELABORATING THE NATIONAL FRAMEWORK OF QUALIFICATIONS

(The Council should define the number of the commission and sub-commission members)

1. Exact Sciences
2. Natural Sciences
3. Humanities
4. Art
5. Engineering
6. Agriculture
7. Business and Economics;
8. Political Sciences, Sociology
9. Philosophy
10. Psychology
11. Physical Training

Regulated

12. Medicine / Veterinary

- 13. Law
- 14. Pedagogy

1. BIOLOGY

Profile of the Discipline (introduction to the subject area)

Biology together with Physics and Chemistry is one of the basic disciplines in natural sciences. Traditionally the aim of Biology was to describe and classify the living organisms. To date it is a multidisciplinary experimental science using the most up-to-date and often interdisciplinary methods.

In order to gain (any given level) the qualification in Biology it is necessary to study Math, Physics and Chemistry. The latter must be taught especially intensively because the contemporary biological research conducted at the molecular level is not possible without the in-depth knowledge of chemistry. Interconnection between Biology and Chemistry was also reflected in developing Biochemistry as a separate discipline.

Academic degrees

Typical academic degrees of the discipline

- Teaching for a shorter period within the first cycle – e.g. lab assistant, national professional diploma 120-180 ECTS.
- First cycle: Bachelor of Biology, B.Sc in Biology. The extent of the bachelor's degree ranges between 180-240 ECTS.
- Second cycle: Master of Biology (relevant discipline e.g. Immunology, Botany, Zoology etc.), M.Sc in Biology. Master's programme, as a rule encompasses the research work, the allotted share of research in the programme should not be less than 25%. The master's degree in Europe is defined by 120 ESTC.
- Third cycle: Doctor of Biology, PhD in Biology (indicating the appropriate discipline). The doctoral degree is based on original research. In Europe as a rule the research component is not defined in ESTC, duration of the programme ranges from three to four years.

Field	Level/Cycle (According to the document of the European Commission ²¹)	Cycles, according to the Bologna Process	Degree	Learning Outcomes		
				Knowledge	Skill	Competence
Biology	8	3	Doctor	Given below the table		
	7	2	Master			
	6	1	Bachelor			
	5 (E.g. Lab Assistant)		National Professional Diploma			

²¹ EQF for LLL, http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/policies/2010/consultation_en.html

Learning Outcomes

1. 5th level – National Professional Diploma

- **Knowledge:** Holder of the diploma in Biology knows about the major facts in Biology and has an ability to use them in resolving specific problems.
- **Skills:** Holder of the national diploma can assess biological data and information using the standard laboratory methodology. Can work with the living organisms in laboratories and on a fieldwork and observe the ethical norms and safety rules. Holds standard research operations under supervision.
- **Competence/employment area:** Position of an assistant in a research team. In order to receive the diploma of a laboratory assistant (technical assistant) the programme should not comprise more than 120 ECTS and should be oriented on basic practical aspects.

2. 6th Level – 1st cycle of higher education – Bachelor's Academic Degree

- **Knowledge:** The bachelor has a systemic knowledge of different spheres of Biology. Can use the basic facts, concepts, principles and theories of the discipline, also use the practical aspects under a minimum guidance; has a basic knowledge in other disciplines relevant to Biology.
- **Skills:** bachelor can assess, interpret and synthesize biological data and information within its own competence. Can employ the specific research methods of the field. Can work in labs or on a fieldwork with the living organisms observing the ethical norms and safety rules. Can present the materials in front of informed auditorium in a written form or orally; can work effectively in a team.
- **Competence/employment area:** perform research activity under the guidance of a team leader in academic, clinical and industrial fields. Has enough knowledge and skills to advance on a second level of higher education in biology or in other fields relevant to Biology.

3. 7th Level – Second Cycle of Higher education – Master's academic degree

- **Knowledge:** Master of Biology has an in-depth and systemic knowledge of the field; Can use the basic facts, concepts, principles and theories also, the practical aspects of the discipline; has a good understanding in other disciplines relevant to Biology.
- **Skills:** Master can assess, interpret and synthesize the Biological data and information. Completely masters the research methods specific to the field. Can work in labs or on a fieldwork with the living organisms observing the ethical norms and safety rules. Can present the research results both in a written form and orally; can work effectively both as a team member and a team leader; Master can set and explain future tasks and effectively distribute roles among the team members towards resolving these tasks. master can work independently both theoretically and practically.
- **Competence:** perform research activity in academic, clinical and industrial fields. Has enough knowledge and skills to advance on a third level of higher education in Biology.

4. 8th Level – Third Level of Higher education – Academic Degree of a Doctor

- **Knowledge:** Doctor has the most up-to-date and in-depth knowledge in the given field of Biology; Doctor itself creates new knowledge in the given field, that is based on the original work conducted by her/him. Can use facts, concepts, principles and theories also practical aspects of the discipline both while performing biological or interdisciplinary

research work; has a substantial knowledge in the related fields to biology and uses this knowledge for planning its own research work and interpreting the achieved results.

- **Skills:** Doctor can assess, interpret and synthesize the acquired Biological data and information by using the newest methods. Can work in labs or on a fieldwork with the living organisms observing the ethical norms and safety rules. It has the ability of communicating/imparting the knowledge: Can present the research results both in a written form and orally for the informed and dilettante auditorium; can teach the discipline at each level. Doctor can work effectively as a team leader in Biology and other fields.
- Competence/Employment area: **Planning the independent research work and implementing it in academic, clinical and industrial fields.**

ANNEX N6

Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area

Summary list of European standards for quality assurance

This summary list of European standards for quality assurance in higher education is drawn from Chapter 2 of the report and is placed here for ease of reference. It omits the accompanying guidelines. The standards are in three parts covering internal quality assurance of higher education institutions, external quality assurance of higher education, and quality assurance of external quality assurance agencies.

Part 1: European standards and guidelines for internal quality assurance within higher education institutions

1.1 Policy and procedures for quality assurance: Institutions should have a policy and associated procedures for the assurance of the quality and standards of their programmes and awards. They should also commit themselves explicitly to the development of a culture which recognises the importance of quality, and quality assurance, in their work. To achieve this, institutions should develop and implement a strategy for the continuous enhancement of quality. The strategy, policy and procedures should have a formal status and be publicly available. They should also include a role for students and other stakeholders.

1.2 Approval, monitoring and periodic review of programmes and awards: Institutions should have formal mechanisms for the approval, periodic review and monitoring of their programmes and awards.

1.3 Assessment of students: Students should be assessed using published criteria, regulations and procedures which are applied consistently.

1.4 Quality assurance of teaching staff: Institutions should have ways of satisfying themselves that staff involved with the teaching of students are qualified and competent to do so. They should be available to those undertaking external reviews, and commented upon in reports.

1.5 Learning resources and student support: Institutions should ensure that the resources available for the support of student learning are adequate and appropriate for each programme offered.

1.6 Information systems: Institutions should ensure that they collect, analyse and use relevant information for the effective management of their programmes of study and other activities.

1.7 Public information: Institutions should regularly publish up to date, impartial and objective information, both quantitative and qualitative, about the programmes and awards they are offering.

Part 2: European standards for the external quality assurance of higher education

2.1 Use of internal quality assurance procedures: External quality assurance procedures should take into account the effectiveness of the internal quality assurance processes described in Part 1 of the European Standards and Guidelines.

2.2 Development of external quality assurance processes: The aims and objectives of quality assurance processes should be determined before the processes themselves are developed, by all those responsible (including higher education institutions) and should be published with a description of the procedures to be used.

2.3 Criteria for decisions: Any formal decisions made as a result of an external quality assurance activity should be based on explicit published criteria that are applied consistently.

2.4 Processes fit for purpose: All external quality assurance processes should be designed specifically to ensure their fitness to achieve the aims and objectives set for them.

2.5 Reporting: Reports should be published and should be written in a style, which is clear and readily accessible to its intended readership. Any decisions, commendations or recommendations contained in reports should be easy for a reader to find.

2.6 Follow-up procedures: Quality assurance processes which contain recommendations for action or which require a subsequent action plan, should have a predetermined follow-up procedure which is implemented consistently.

2.7 Periodic reviews: External quality assurance of institutions and/or programmes should be undertaken on a cyclical basis. The length of the cycle and the review procedures to be used should be clearly defined and published in advance.

2.8 System-wide analyses: Quality assurance agencies should produce from time to time summary reports describing and analysing the general findings of their reviews, evaluations, assessments etc.

Part 3: European standards for external quality assurance agencies

3.1 Use of external quality assurance procedures for higher education: The external quality assurance of agencies should take into account the presence and effectiveness of the external quality assurance processes described in Part 2 of the European Standards and Guidelines.

3.2 Official status: Agencies should be formally recognised by competent public authorities in the European Higher Education Area as agencies with responsibilities for external quality assurance and should have an established legal basis. They should comply with any requirements of the legislative jurisdictions within which they operate.

3.3 Activities: Agencies should undertake external quality assurance activities (at institutional or programme level) on a regular basis.

Tbilisi State University, Center for Social Science

International Methodological Conference

Setting up the PhD Programs in the Context of Bologna Process

Tbilisi, 25-26 June 2005

Conference Report & Memorandum

A joint conference of the Tbilisi State University and Center for Social Sciences was held on 25-26 June 2005. Aim of the conference was elaboration of an action plan for the development of PhD programs in Georgia.

Preamble

According to the Law on Higher Education, doctoral programs should be introduced in the Georgian higher education institutions as a third level of higher education from 2007-2008.

Georgia joined Bologna process in May 19, 2005 and thus became a member of the European Higher Education Area. Considering European standards of teaching and research, setting up the third level of higher education and development of doctoral programs in Georgia means development of a principally new type of educational activity. Goal of an international conference “Setting up the PhD Programs in the Context of Bologna Process” (TSU, 2005) was on the one hand, analyze of current situation in Georgia, and on the other hand, to share existing experience of American and European Doctoral education tradition.

Prior to the conference, with the support of the Center for Social Sciences (CSS, Tbilisi) and Open Society Institute (OSI, Budapest), work on the project, which envisages analyzing of the problems connected with introduction of Doctoral Studies and working out of the relevant recommendations, started. In the framework of this project, the “PhD Concept Paper” was developed. Project duration was 10 months (1.03 – 31.12.2004) and it involved several stages:

- On the I stage analyze of the existing academic degree systems in Georgia and other countries (Russia, Hungary, Slovenia, Germany, USA and Baltic countries) was conducted.
- On the II stage the Conceptual Paper was developed – necessary steps for the PhD introduction have been determined, correlation between old and new systems of academic degrees, academic content of PhD programs, institutional preconditions for the transfer to PhD etc.
- On the III stage of the project Concept Paper has been discussed with the involvement of all parties interested. The representatives of the leading higher educational institutions (Tbilisi State University, Georgian Technical University, Caucasus Business School, Tbilisi State Medical University etc.), the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia, Higher Education Institutions Academy of Sciences and NGOs partook of discussion and elaboration of the concept. It must be noted that presentation of the Concept Paper was held on the international seminar “Reconstructing the Doctorate in former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe” (www.ceu.hu/crc/rec_doc.html), held in November 2004 in Budapest, Hungary.

After the local and international discussions the Concept Paper became its final shape and was distributed for the discussion to the higher educational institutions, research institutes of Academy of Sciences, Ministry of Education and Science and non-governmental organizations.

An English version of the document was sent to the foreign universities, namely to the Central European University (Hungary), University of Liverpool (UK), London School of Economics (UK), Open Society Institute and independent experts.

Many very interesting comments were received both from Georgian and also foreign colleagues. For the elaboration of final conceptual view on doctoral programs organization of an international conference was decided.

MEMORANDUM

of an international methodological conference

Setting up the PhD Programs in the Context of Bologna Process

1. The **strategic plan of the university development** shall be elaborated, and goals and objectives of doctoral programs shall be reflected in short- and long-term perspective. The strategic plan shall be in accordance with the recommendations of the Bologna Seminar on “Doctoral Programmes for the European Knowledge Society” (Salzburg, 3-5 February 2005). Embedded in institutional strategy, functioning of the doctoral programs for the 2009-2010 shall be ensured according to the standards of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and European Research Area (ERA). **Professional commissions** shall be involved in the development of the strategic plan. Their main task will be monitoring of the development of PhD programs in corresponding fields of study, determination of possible employment perspectives, integration in the professional community etc.
2. **Evaluation of existing resources** – university shall ensure evaluation of both material and intellectual resources in order to determine priorities and guarantee the development of quality doctoral programs. As noticed at the Salzburg Seminar, resource evaluation has a crucial role in the development of PhD programs. Evaluation shall be carried parallel to the development of university strategy.
3. Two types of doctoral programs – **Doctor of Philosophy and Professional Doctorate** shall be defined and differentiated.
4. Standards of **quality assurance service** (according to the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education – ENQA) shall be main criteria for the development of doctoral programs.
5. Content of the **teaching component of the doctoral programs** shall be defined. In the long-term perspective of the university development, teaching component of PhD programs can be changed. The importance of two main teaching components on the initial stage was underlined at the conference:
 - **High school pedagogy** – The study of high school pedagogy and education management is of utmost importance in doctoral programs. The future Doctors must learn, how to teach a discipline, how to research and present etc. as Doctors are future professors and teachers in the universities. University professors shall be able not only to generate new knowledge, but also to transform it through teaching. Besides high quality research, Doctor shall ensure transfer of knowledge to the next generations.

- **Management and communication** – Aim of the PhD programs is preparing future leaders, and not only for the academic career. Doctors can work in industry, government and in any other field of professional activity. Correspondingly, they must be able to deal with the people of different professions as well as to head crucial interdisciplinary projects. Doctors shall be aware of practical importance of their work.
6. University welcomes and encourages close **collaboration** with research centers and institutes both within the country and internationally, in order to ensure high quality of doctoral programs and support **mobility** of doctoral students. Effective collaboration with partner universities is a necessary precondition for the development of an academic content of PhD programs. Very important is also involvement of foreign experts in the review process of doctoral publications and/or theses – one of the main aims of the doctoral programs is achievement of international recognition, as especially recorded at a conference.
 7. **Sustainable funding** is one of the necessary preconditions for the development of doctoral programs. According to the Law on Higher Education, new rules for financing doctoral programs shall be developed by the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia before January 2007. Before Ministry of Education and Science develops this funding model, university departments shall present calculations of costs of doctoral programs, which shall be reflected in the governmental financing model.

In October 2005 Tbilisi State University launches work on the development of the new doctoral programs according to the above-mentioned principles.