

**Athens Institute for Education and Research
ATINER**



**ATINER's Conference Paper Series
COLEDU2018-2498**

**Aspects of Vocational Studies in Georgian Educational
Policy**

**Tamar Kakutia
Public Administration and State Governance Bachelor Program
Coordinator
International Black Sea University
Georgia**

An Introduction to
ATINER's Conference Paper Series

Conference papers are research/policy papers written and presented by academics at one of ATINER's academic events. ATINER's association started to publish this conference paper series in 2012. All published conference papers go through an initial peer review aiming at disseminating and improving the ideas expressed in each work. Authors welcome comments

Dr. Gregory T. Papanikos
President
Athens Institute for Education and Research

This paper should be cited as follows:

Kakutia, T., (2018). "Aspects of Vocational Studies in Georgian Educational Policy", Athens: ATINER'S Conference Paper Series, No: COLEDU2018- 2498.

Athens Institute for Education and Research
8 Valaoritou Street, Kolonaki, 10671 Athens, Greece
Tel: + 30 210 3634210 Fax: + 30 210 3634209 Email: info@atiner.gr URL:
www.atiner.gr
URL Conference Papers Series: www.atiner.gr/papers.htm
Printed in Athens, Greece by the Athens Institute for Education and Research. All rights reserved. Reproduction is allowed for non-commercial purposes if the source is fully acknowledged.
ISSN: 2241-2891
27/08/2018

Aspects of Vocational Studies in Georgian Educational Policy

Tamar Kakutia
Public Administration and State Governance Bachelor Program
Coordinator
International Black Sea University
Georgia

Abstract

By present article we attempt to describe the current reality of vocational duties in Georgia where the reforms in this field have started since 2004 as a part of total educational system. It has already been more than 10 years since the changes have been undergoing which now require certain analysis. In this article I would like to stress the downsides which we face today in vocational study system. Finally, after analyzing the mentioned problems, I will present my vision as to how to solve them thus what results to achieve. I will also touch upon as to what types of regulations are necessary to implement in order to liberate the vocational education from the string of limitations it now has and make it easy, comprehensible and useful for every beneficiary to further enhance their knowledge and skills in their desired professions on an ongoing basis.

Keywords: Multiculturalism, Cultural Reflexivity, Interdisciplinarity, Integration

Introduction

For ten years in a row the changes in the direction of vocational education are occurring continuously. And today it is time to evaluate those results which we obtained by reforming of the system and, at the same time, to draw attention to those problems that were outlined upon the analyzing of these results. Despite the constant reformation of the system this direction having an importance for the country requires more academic and financial resources. It is very important to enhance the vocational education for the development of the future of the country. In order to improve the state or business sector a country requires the professional personnel. That is why the enhancement of the vocational education has to be one of the main priorities of the country.

There was developed several regulatory documents by the state for the purpose to fully develop the system. I would like to present the actual situation whether what place does the vocational education occupies in the united Georgian educational filed precisely through this study and analysis of this legal base and to discuss those aspects which supposedly impedes the proper function of the system. First of all these problems will be directly reflected on the user, pupil, student. And the system that exists today challenges a person's significant need – to be given the opportunity to learn throughout the lifetime, to develop constantly and to strive for perfection – about what we will talk in the present work. In the present article first of all we would like to evaluate whether how accurate and consistent the state policy is in the direction of the vocational education and how adequately the introduction process of the policy declared by the state is going on.

Vocational Education Strategy of the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia

In 2013 the Ministry of Education and Science with support of the European Union and the participation of the parties interested developed the strategy of the vocational education reform (2013-2020). The implementation of the action plan had begun. Compared with previous years in 2014 the budget of the vocational education was doubled and it became possible to initiate the systemic changes. It became possible to receive the professional education at the state educational institutions with full state funding.

The execution of the programs of the professional training began for the convicts as well. In 2013-2014 academic year up to 100 beneficiaries received the professional education and the relevant skills for the purpose of reintegration and resocialization into the society.

For the purpose of connecting with the requirements of the labor market of the vocational education system, with the participation of the employers reprocessing of the professional standards begun by the methodology recommended by Technical Assistance project of the European Union.

In 2013 within the frames of the Technical Assistance project of the European Union there was established the vision of the reform of the professional educational

programs which provides the development-execution of the flexible, competency based, modular educational programs. By the resolution No. 244 of the government of Georgia of September 19, 2013 there was determined the rule for financing of the professional education and the amount of a voucher for one vocational student was calculated according to a specialty which significantly improved the situation in the mentioned direction.

The voucher financing was not accompanying the student. By the resolution No. 244 of the government of Georgia of September 19, 2013 the aforementioned flaw was being regulated and the institution admitting the vocational student implementing the mobility will get the voucher financing from the subsequent quarter of implementation of the vocational students mobility.¹

The decision to be made regarding the determination of the admitting contingent occurs by the educational institution, which is also an effectual step taken towards the decentralization.

The persons who are willing to obtain the vocational education have opportunity to pass the registration not only by going at place, informational centers, resource-centers and professional educational institutions, but also via using of the informational technologies.

In order to reach the strategic goal set in the vocational education the successive continuation of the reform is essential for the ministry and to execute the approved action plan according to the following four main tasks:

- to increase the flexibility and attractiveness of the system;
- to focus on the requirements of the labor market of the vocational education system and promoting the social partnership;
- the institutional development of the professional educational establishments;
- to ensure the equal accessibility to the professional education.

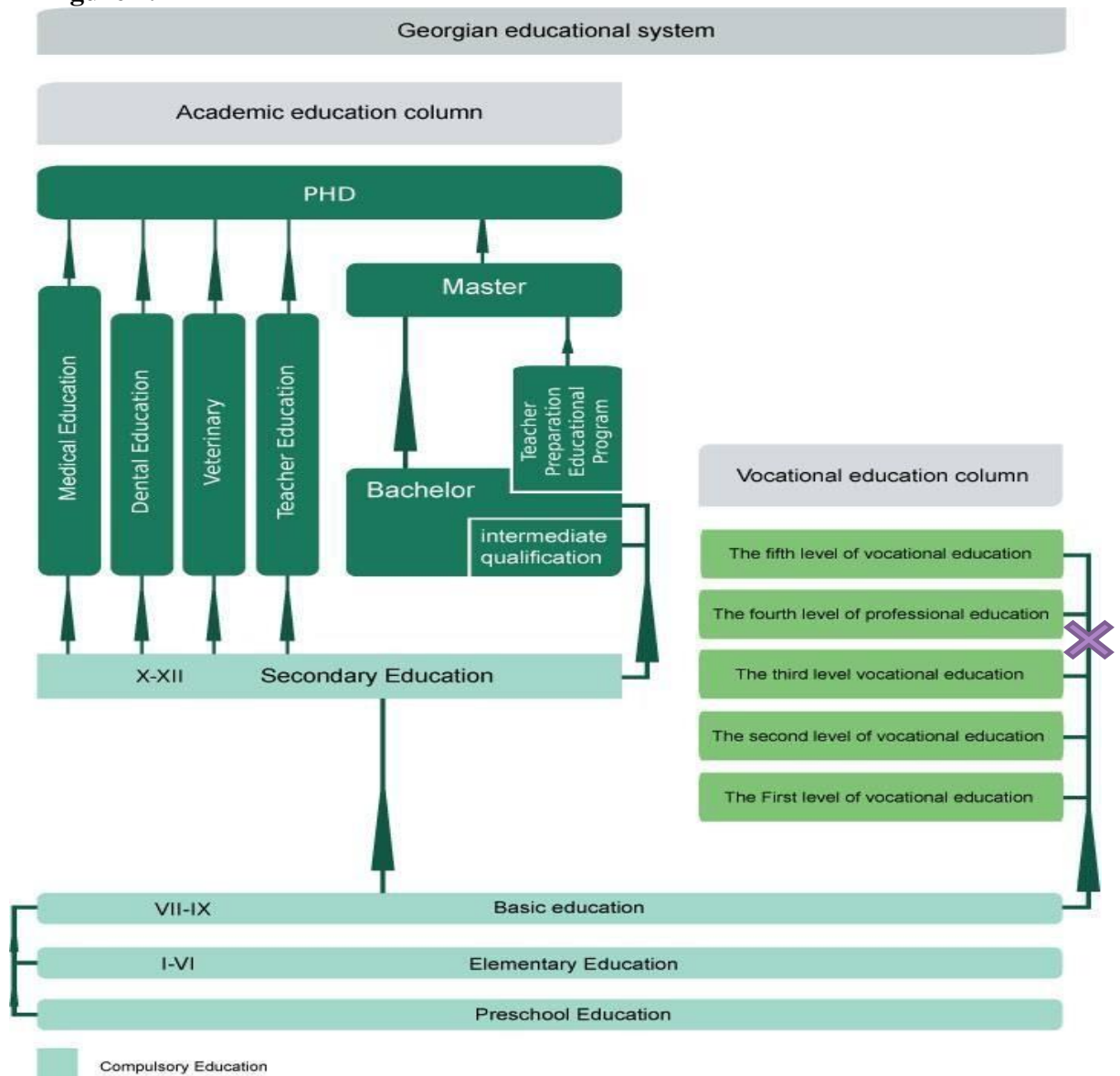
Actual Situation in Vocational Education, Problems and Ways of Their Solving

As of today approximately 166 educational institutions are functioning in Georgia which implements the educational programs. Out of these 52 are the public institutions (vocational or community colleges, and higher educational institutions), there are also the institutions being under the joint private and state establishment, but in small quantities and the rest of them represent the Legal Entities of Private Law.

Below we present a scheme which reflects the Georgian education system. On the scheme there are given the relevant levels of primary general, vocational and higher education and the opportunities to move from level to level. The scheme partially correspond the scheme created by and placed on the webpage of the Legal Entity of Public Law - National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement of the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia, although there are made correction to it according to the real norms established by the law.

¹The government of Georgia, resolution No. 244, September 19, 2013

Figure 1.



Source: <https://eqe.ge/>

Note: There are made corrections to the above given scheme of the Georgian educational system which clearly reflects the today's system.

The law of Georgia “on professional education” aims to determine the function and place of the professional education in the country, and to create the professional education system that will quickly satisfy the constantly changing requirements of the labor market. It establishes the terms of implementation of the professional educational activity in Georgia, determines the types and levels of the professional education and the principles of financing. Accordingly, the state policy is distinctly and adequately established in this direction.

Types of Professional Education: the professional education in Georgia is divided in two parts: as formal so informal professional education. The formal professional education is obtained at the educational establishments implementing

the professional education. The professional educational program includes: theoretical training, learning or/and industrial practice and ends by issuing a professional diploma certifying the qualification of the relevant level of the professional education. The informal professional education is a vocational education that the individual obtained independently from the professional educational institutions. The state recognition of the informal professional education occurs under the order established by the legislation of Georgia and aims the verification of the knowledge, skills and values of the person with informal education. Order No. 8/N of the Minister of Education and Science of Georgia of February 3, 2011 “on establishing the terms and rule for recognition of the informal professional education”, although the precedents for recognition of such kind of education in practice are very few because the state regulation is general, and the institutions due to these reasons do not undertake the risk in order to establish the rule by itself, because the different interpretations of the definitions of the provisions generally established by the state depends on the specific functionality.

Types of Institutions Executing Professional Educational Programs

The establishments having the right to implement the professional education are:

- general education institution;
- vocational college;
- community college;
- Higher educational college.

Legal Status of Institution Implementing Professional Educational Programs

The professional educational institution can be established with the following legal form:

- LEPL – Legal Entity of Public Law;
- N(N)LP – Non-Entrepreneurial (Non-Commercial) Legal Entity;
- LTD/LLC – Limited Liability Company.

In order to obtain a status of the professional educational institution and the implementation of the relevant educational activity is possible only under the order established by the provision on authorization of the educational institutions in the event of undergoing of authorization.

Distribution of Responsibilities – Procedure of Granting the Status of Professional Educational Institution

Authorization is a procedure for obtaining the status of the professional educational institution the goal of which is to provide the satisfaction of the standards necessary for the implementation of the relevant activity in order to issue a document certifying the education recognized by the state.

As a result of the authorization the institution acquires the status of the professional educational institution and is authorized to issue a professional diploma confirming the qualification.

In accordance with the law “on enhancing the quality of education” the term for the authorization of the educational institution is determined by 6 years.² Upon undergoing of authorization the institution pays the relevant fee. The standards for authorization are: a) educational programs; b) material resource; c) human resources.³

Distribution of Responsibilities – Process of Accreditation of the Professional Educational Programs

Accreditation is a procedure of determination of the relevance of the educational program of the professional educational institution with the standards of accreditation, the goal of which is the promotion of the development of the mechanisms of ensuring the quality of education and by which it is connected the implementation of several educational program provided by this law, as well as receiving the state funding.

The conduct of the accreditation of the professional educational programs is ensured by LEPL National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement.⁴

The implementation of the educational programs of Georgian Language and Liberal Education is possible only in case of passing the accreditation.

The funding of the state governmental organs is being issued only for financing of that educational program of the professional educational institution which passed the accreditation. It should also be noted that this provision of the mentioned law is not launched till today and the state finances only the authorized professional institutions established/co-established by it.

The standards of accreditation are:

- a) Goal of the educational program, educational outcomes and correspondence of the program with them;
- b) Methodology and organization of teaching, adequacy of assessment of program mastering;
- c) Achievements of the students, individual working with them;

²Parliament of Georgia, Law of Georgia “on enhancing the quality of education”, July 21, 2010, No.3531-RS

³The Minister of Education and Science of Georgia, order No. 99/N, 2010

⁴Parliament of Georgia, Law of Georgia “on enhancing the quality of education”, July 21, 2010, No.3531-RS

- d) Providing the teaching with resources;
- e) Opportunities for enhancing the quality of education.

The term of accreditation is determined by 7 years. Upon passing the accreditation the educational institution pays the relevant fee established by the law.⁵

Professional Educational Program

The elaboration of the professional educational program occurs on the basis of the professional standard:

Professional Standard is a document by which the relevant professional qualification and professional knowledge and skills are being determined, also the additional requirements which are established based on the specification of a profession.

Professional Educational Program: is an educational program which is oriented on elaboration of the practical knowledge and skills and terminates by granting of the relevant professional qualification. The program combines the educational courses/modules necessary for granting of the professional qualification. The aims of the program, educational outcomes, the load of professional student in credits, teaching methods and assessment forms are determined by the program.

From 2013 the National Center for Education Quality Enhancement initiated innovative educational standards of the educational programs and frame-document professional educational program with Technical Assistance Project of the European Union; methodology of developing of the professional standards and the professional educational programs were prepared, which provides execution, preparation/processing of action plan of 2015 of professional education strategy of professional standard with the active participation of the employers on the basis of the standard methodology (DACUM).

Rule of Elaboration of Professional Standard, Frame-Document of Educational Program and Module

More than 250 professional standards are approved by the state. Simultaneously there undergoes working on developing of the projects of new professional standards and reviewing of already approved ones. Nowadays in the field of vocational education we encounter two rules for program elaboration. According to first rule the state approves the professional standards, and on the basis of the aforementioned standards the institutions in their turn will develop the program and submit to the National Center for Quality Enhancement for the purpose of authorization and accreditation. The National Center for Quality Enhancement also administers and coordinates the process of preparation and approving of modular programs. The initiator (party interested, any physical or legal entities) is authorized to prepare a

⁵The Minister of Education and Science of Georgia, order No. 65/N, 2011

project of professional standard by following the methodology of standard creation. The elaboration of the project of standard includes the discussing within the working group and external assessment/expertise. The working group consists from the field experts.

The initiator is authorized to develop a project of frame-document of the professional educational program based on the professional standard according to the law of Georgia “on vocational education”, as well as “on approving the national qualification frame” determined by the order No. 120/N of October 01, 2010 of the minister of Education and Science of Georgia according to one of the professional qualification. In the process of creation if the frame-document there also should be engaged the experts of the relevant field/sphere and education. By the frame-document of the professional educational program the list of obligatory modules and the number of credits allotted for the optional modules are determined. The initiator is also authorized to elaborate the project of module of the professional educational program. The initiator submits to the center the frame-document of the educational program or/and module project of the professional standard for the discussion, which are discussed by the Field Board and according to the established order is approved by the director of the Center.⁶

The aforementioned documents must be in force after their approval for the period determined by the standard (3-5 years). Although the requirements of the labor market are changing so quickly, that before the time modular programs will be developed and approved there are already revealing the need for changes as a result of a research in the professional educational programs. It is also important the circumstance when due to the constantly being busy or for other reasons in the terms of the labor market the connection with the professional educational programs is weak. Accordingly, it is hard to provide their constant engagement in the process of preparation of the modular programs. Also the engagement of the pedagogues of various fields and regions upon the preparation of one educational frame-document and modules is confusing. The process is stretched in time and quite confusing, also the individuality of the prepared product becomes suspicious. As of today the modular programs are in the piloting mode. Many positive tendencies are outlined in the process but there are flaws as well. At the given stage there are prepared and approved 119 standards of modular programs and frame-documents. **A Frame-Document of the Professional Education Program** is a document by which the number of credits required for granting of the relevant professional qualification, the educational outcomes to be reached, and the unity of those modules of which reaching the learning outcomes is necessary for granting the professional qualification, also the preconditions of admitting at the relevant professional educational program and program implementation, and alternative list of methods of selective teaching and evaluation system are determined.

Module is independent, consequential block of teaching which is oriented on the learning outcomes to be reached. By the module there is determined the interconnection of educational topics and educational outcomes and the information

⁶Director of the National Center for Quality Enhancement, order No. 1095, 2016

concerning the teaching and evaluation organization of the professional student, although until the piloting mode will not end the more substantive reasoning on the mentioned issues is too early. And as for the approaches of establishing the state policy itself the provision of standard, centralized preparation and establishment of the frame-programs similar for everyone where individually it is possible to prepare only the educational resources, in my opinion, will significantly hinder the movement of the institution towards decentralization and the development process itself.

Also it should be noted that during the quality control the experts require a research from the educational institution only taking account whether how demandable is this or that profession (specialty) on the labor market and without consideration whether with what knowledge and skills this or that specialist should be distinguished.

And as a result, in most cases the requirements of the local market do not correspond to the knowledge and teaching skills of the educational program. The mentioned problem could be solved through the research of the local labor market and establishing different methods of its modification.

State Control of Professional Educational Institution

The managing organs of the professional educational system are:

- Government of Georgia;
- Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia;
- Ministry of Culture and Monument Protection of Georgia and Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs of Georgia;
- Relevant ministries authorized in the field of education of autonomous republics of Abkhazia and Adjara;
- Local Self-Governing Organs;
- Legal Entity of Public Law – National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement;
- Legal Entity of Public Law – National Center for Teacher Professional Development.

In the field of vocational education the Managing Organs of the professional education system **implement their activity based on the educational-entrepreneurial principle which means cooperation with employers, professional associations and educational institutions for the purpose of development of the professional education in the country.**⁷

⁷President of Georgia, Law of Georgia “on Vocational Education”, March 28, 2007, №4528_IS

Professional Testing and Student Enrollment at an Establishment

The rule and terms of conducting the professional testing are regulated by the order No. 152/N of September 27, 2013 of the minister of Education and Science of Georgia “on approving of the provision about conducting the professional testing”, according to which the enrollment occurs in a centralized way on the basis of the testing which as for today is an adequate solution for ensuring the transparent performance of the process and without corruption risks.

Inclusive Professional Education in Georgia

From 2013 for the purpose of studying on the professional programs the state approved a new program on the basis of which there were implemented a number of activities for teaching of the persons with special need and disabilities. It is indisputable and complimentary the fact that according to the strategy of the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia of 2014 (“strategic directions of the development of the system of education and science”) and the strategy of the professional educational reform (of 2013-2020) one of the main activities of the current reforms in the educational system of Georgia is establishment of the inclusive professional education in the system. The mentioned approach means the development equal opportunities of professional education for the persons with special educational needs and with restricted abilities.

The mentioned initiative along with the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia is implemented by the Ministry of Education and Research of Norway by intensive cooperation. Also it should be noted that it is precisely the obligation assumed by the state to promote the realization of the rights of education and labor for the persons with special educational needs and with restricted abilities.

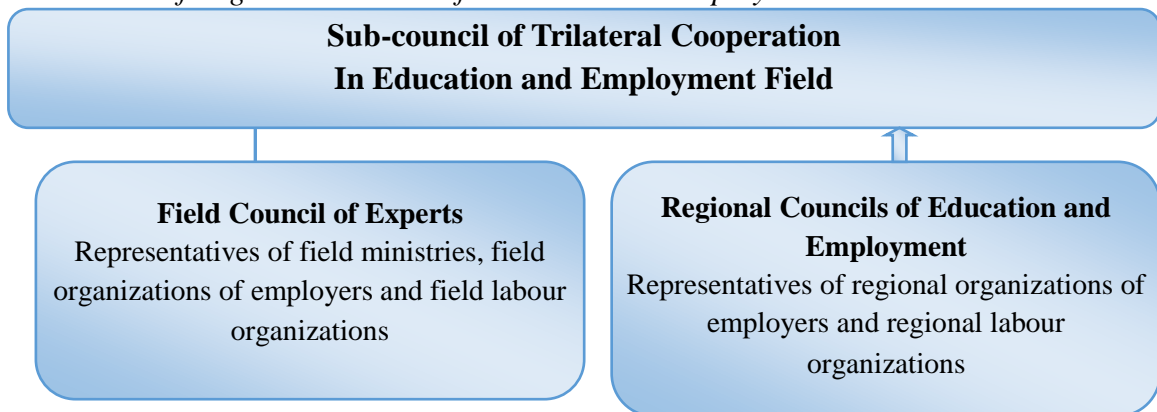
Taking into account the individual abilities of the persons with special educational needs and with restricted abilities for the purpose of their studying on professional educational programs, the multidisciplinary groups establish the educational needs of a person after which the persons with special educational needs and with restricted abilities are granted with the right to be enrolled on the professional education programs via an examination of alternative format. For the purpose of regulating the issue in the order of the Minister of Education and Science of Georgia of September 27, 2013 “on establishing the provision about conducting the professional testing” the procedure of testing of the persons with special educational needs and with restricted abilities are established with different regulations. Although, herewith it should be noted, that the policy elaborated by the state has certain problems in the process of establishing of this direction. The abovementioned persons are choosing their professions more based on their or their parent’s desires and not according to their capability and at the same to their desire which creates certain problems for the process of their future employment. And the purpose of the state policy is to create due conditions for such persons in order to learn, get employed and to be able to somehow maintain themselves in the future. Also it should be noted here that the process undergoes

from 2013 and as of today it was not possible to obtain the statistics of the persons with special needs in the educational institutions.

Social Partnership in Vocational Education

The state recognizes the importance of engagement of the social partners in the process of development of the professional education and provides the engagement of the social partners in the planning and development of the professional education on the legislative level.

Figure 2. *Engagement of Social Partners on the Level of Field and Regional Level Tasks of Regional Councils of Education and Employment*



2013-2020 professional education development strategy underlines the importance of the engagement of the social partners as equal parties in the process of establishing, implementing and assessing the policy of the professional education. The strategy makes emphasis on strengthening the social partners on every level of professional education system formation:

Social Partnership on Macro Level – National Professional Council

The National Professional Council of Professional Education (hereinafter - the council) is a consultative organ based on the principles of social partnership in the field of professional education field, the purpose of which is to support the development of the professional education field.

Taking into account the parity principle the parties of the council are: the government of Georgia, employers' associations/unions, trade unions of employees, representatives of civil society.

Social Partnership on Meso Level – Field Councils

The functions of field councils are:

1. Promoting the process of ensuring the relevance between the professional education and labor market;
2. Discussing the initiatives about the need to elaborate the professional standards, frame-documents of the professional educational programs;
3. Discussing the projects of the professional standards and frame-documents of the professional educational programs;
4. Developing the recommendations about the lifetime education or/and the policy of the professional education.

The format of field councils is based on the principle of the social partnership. The field councils were established in 11 directions in which there are enlisted in total 97 members. These directions are: art, education, humanitarian; social, journalism and mass communication; business administration, law; engineering; industry, food processing; construction, architecture; informational communicational technologies; agricultural, forestry, fishery, veterinary; healthcare, social protection; service area; transportation.

The professional standards positively assessed by the field councils are approved by the director of the Center.

Social Partnership on Micro Level – Supervisory Councils

It is important for the supervisory councils to obtain the information in connection with the following issues:

1. Financing of colleges; effective budgeting process;
2. Social partnership; public-private partnership;
3. Details about the requirements of the labor market;
4. Georgian law on the professional education; regulating documents; reforms and structure of professional education;
5. Participation of the private sector in the management of the professional schools;
6. Quality ensuring – in the process of self-evaluation.

Despite the above given established provisions which has to be introduced by support of the state policy, it should be noted, that due to subjective and objective reasons the mentioned approaches and more specifically the activity of the persons participating in various councils is very scarce and carries more formal nature. And the reasons in every specific case is different, lack of public awareness, paucity of the persons having the relevant qualification, incorrect planning and distribution of resources, certain nontransparent processes and in most case incorrectly selected persons. And that in my opinion is a separate subject for research and requires distinct evaluation criteria in the process of introduction.

Vocational Education Financing

The rule and terms of professional education financing are determined by the resolution No. 244 of September 19, 2013 of the government of Georgia “on determining the rule and terms of professional education financing and the establishing of the maximum amount of the cost of educating in the educational institutions established by the state implementing the vocational educational programs”. The professional students of the institutions implementing the professional education established/co-established by the state are receiving the voucher financing. The voucher financing are divided in two groups: modular programs – in this case the whole financing of the program in this case consists of the total of financings of the separate module and the funding of the professional education program which includes the whole program.

The voucher financing would be given to the institution for rendering the expenses necessary for the performance of the educational process, including, for the reimbursement of the labor of a teacher of the professional education.

On getting the program financing are authorized: a) professional educational institutions; b) institutions implementing the professional education programs; - that are established by the ministry.

The program financing would be issued quarterly for the administrative expenses; the professional education could be financed by the private persons.

Except the financial means of the institutions implementing the professional education there exist other financial means in the favor of the professional education, which are counted in different organizational parts of the Ministry of Education and Science.

Except the abovementioned financial means existing in the state budget for the Ministry of Education and Science there exist a four-year program of the professional education supporting the sectoral policy of the European Union and for the training sector, the total amount of which is 27 million euro.⁸

Problems in Vocational Education and Ways for their Solution

On the basis of the legislative material and our practical experience in terms of the professional education we could outline several important problems which are not fully regulated even on the level of the state policy:

1. Interruption of the connection between the professional education and general educational institution – as of today, the legislation of Georgia does not provide the issuance of a certificate confirming the general education by the professional educational institutions. This situation has significantly lessened the number of the persons desiring to study at the professional school with 9 grades base, because, somehow, the way towards the higher institution was blocked for a citizen. From 2004 the reform of the educational system had begun. The general

⁸German Society for International Cooperation [GIZ], 2011

education component had disappeared in the vocational schools. By the mentioned decisions the disintegration of the union between these two levels of education had begun. In 2006-2010 in the eleventh and twelfth grades the school was able to offer an industrial educational program to the pupil instead of the optional academic subjects after passing of which he/she would get the certificate confirming the full general education. In 2010 as a result of the legislative change in the national plan of study the pupils were restricted from such possibility, because the vocational programs were completely removed from the list of the optional subjects. By the mentioned decision for that period the connection between the school and professional education was finally torn.

Besides, the new national plan of study of 2011-2016 does not consider the professional teaching in the school. In case if the school has desire to implement the professional programs, for this it must obtain the additional consent from the state. The private schools, independently from the national plan of study, they itself have passed the authorization on these programs and they themselves teach the school pupils different professions. And nowadays in the public schools such kind of studies is not undergoing.⁹

In my opinion, in such situation it is very important to consider the professional programs or teaching their component separate modules as separate subjects in the general educational institutions. Taking onto account that an adult completes his/her studies approximately at the age of 18 it is absolutely unjustified that there is no possibility in the general educational school that a pupil could get familiar with different professions, to select out of those the one desirable for him/her and to master it along with other subjects. The work in the mentioned direction has to be actively started in order to be presented the vocational programs at least as optional subject in the schools. It would be more effective if at the middle stage of learning the professional programs will take place among the obligatory subjects. The aforementioned is bilaterally favorable and will benefit as the private sector so the pupil who immediately upon the completion of the general education will manage to get employed, if he/she will not want to continue to study. With this the additional resource will be also saved as in regard of time so the financial. It will be more beneficial for the pupils if they will get familiar, learn, obtain different profession from school age, school environment, will receive more information about themselves and will actively be engaged in the professional programs. Such approach will significantly increase as basic so that number of pupils which after the completion of the middle stage will continue to study on the vocational programs. In confirmation of this we can provide the examples from foreign countries – the whole number of European countries (England, Germany, etc.) simultaneously of mastering the general education level, offer the wide specter of vocational programs to the pupils in the tenth-twelfth grades, in order to have the opportunity to immediately get employed, in case of desire, after graduating from general education school. As of today, the government of Georgia has initiated and implements the short vocational education programs for the public, general education institutions, which can possibly have only introductory fragmented nature of the profession. The mentioned

⁹T. Kakutia, “Place of professional education in Georgian educational field”, 2016, p. 320

approach somehow is an attempt for restoring the connection, although if it does not get the systemic nature and more distinct steps would not be taken by the governmental policy for the purpose of restoring the links, the small, fragmented programs will not draw the essential result.

2. *So called legal deadlock existing in the education system of Georgia* - the persons who are studying on the vocational programs, are restricted from the opportunity to study from the third state to the next stage or/and higher educational programs without getting the document confirming the full general education. In particular, if the school student decides at the certain point of his/her life (after completion of nine classes) that for him/her as of today it is more important to learn the profession and he/she mastered it without getting the full general education, after the certain period his/her desire – to continue the studies on higher level (higher education) will become a big problem. He/she will have to return back to the general educational institution or to receive the certificate confirming the getting of general education under the external order. And by this, it is possible that, besides the psychological problems he/she can also face the problem of time and material resource proceeding from the reality of our country as of today. Accordingly, the mentioned deadlock is one of the most important problems and its elimination will significantly promote the proper work of the system.

I think that in order to eliminate this problem the new idea for school model arrangement will do. The mentioned model was proposed by the education research association.

“The new model for school arrangement means the teaching system according to which the obligatory education continues during 10 years, and at the middle level the pupils would be able to choose between general academic (2 years) and general vocational (2-3 years) directions. On the stage of obligatory basic education level there should be occurred the development of those main competences which are important for active and full engagement into the community life of the youth and to deal with everyday challenges.

According to the proposed model, after completing obligatory school education, in order to obtain a diploma confirming reaching of the minimal competences the pupils are passing the general attestation examination in the main disciplines. After finishing the middle level in order to continue studying at the higher institution the enrollee passes the united national examinations. There should be discussed the opportunity of establishing one and the same standard at the united national examinations for ones who desire to study at higher academic and higher vocational colleges, which will create a possibility to move from one system to another in the event of transferable credits.

It is desirable that after completion of the middle professional education that the obtained diploma to become equal to the diploma obtained upon completion of the academic direction: after completion of the vocational field of study a student has to be able to make chose between the higher vocational and higher academic directions¹⁰.

¹⁰“Conception of School Education“, 2013, Association of the Education Policy and Researches

Although I do not share the idea of the present offer was the only way for the solution of the mentioned problem. But the position of division as vocational, middle and higher professional education of the professional education system, but the arrangement of the system, which means “10+12” transfer, in my opinion will finally resolve the problem of the legal deadlock.

Also there is undergoing a discussion on re-returning the general education component in vocational colleges, although the aforementioned would be connected with considerably big material resource and in order to establish it there would be required significantly important human and time resource. Herewith it is necessary to calculate the whole number of risks which could definitely make us to give up this idea. I anyway will take the side of “10+2” model and I think that after 10 grades the pupil transferred to the further vocational college would have even a theoretical chance after completing the studying to continue the studies at the higher institution.

3. *Financing Vocational Education* – 166 educational institutions are functioning in Georgia, which implement the professional teaching. At this stage the state finances only the institutions implementing the vocational programs established/co-established by it. As for the private schools, according to the law, they should receive financing only for the accredited programs, although as for today it is not happening so. In the paragraph 4 of the article 20¹ of the law of Georgia “on vocational education” there is indicated that the “the financing of the state government organs would be issued only to the financing of the vocational education institution for the educational program which underwent the accreditation”¹¹, although the resolution #244 of September 19, 2013 of the government of Georgia does not consider to finance the private educational institutions.

From 2011 the vocational education transferred to voucher financing which means that there was allocated the sum by the state required for studying on one vocational student. But, with its contents, this rule of financing could not be deemed as voucher financing, because the voucher was given not to the student but to the establishment. Until December 18, 2014 it was unacceptable to finance one and the same person twice. By the resolution No. 683 of December 18, 2014 of the Government of Georgia the mentioned article was removed from the rule of the financing of vocational education. Accordingly, the vocational student can study on unlimited number of programs and on every time to get financed by the state. Proceeding from the expenditure of the budget money means and efficiency the vocational student has to study only once at the expense of the state (by voucher financing). And as for the financing of the private vocational educational institutions if the approach of the state is such that the voucher belongs to the student and not the establishment, then the student has to be given to the student itself regardless where the person will be studying, at private or public institution. For example we can show the general educational institutions, where the financing is given to all the pupils no matter whether he/she studies at private or public institution. The same approach is in the higher vocational institutions, the

¹¹President of Georgia, Law of Georgia “on Vocational Education”, March 28, 2007, №4528_IS, article 20¹, paragraph 4

student is given grant obtained according to the received result, but it does not matter does he study at private or public university. At this stage the state was not able to establish the consistent policy in terms of funding in the field of vocational private and public institutions.

4. *Quality control in the vocational education* - In the vocational education the program accreditation is implemented through the National Center for Education Quality Enhancement. After the issuing the authorization for the educational institutions the establishment is given the right to conduct the educational activity. And receiving an accreditation on the program means the delivery of the qualitative education. But if we take glance over the standards of authorization and accreditation, the questions will be definitely arise to us: which is the essentially differing request between these two regulations? And based on which criteria do the experts establish the relevance of the mentioned requirements in the educational establishment with the existing reality? What qualification should have the expert certifying the relevance of the requirements of the mentioned regulations.

This and many other questions connected with the today's educational system are arising towards direction of the quality control. The steps taken for the purpose to rectify all these will clearly promote the enhancement of the quality of vocational education quality, and the clear and distinctly determined requirements will definitely shed light over the blur process of authorization and accreditation, which, in its turn, will give an opportunity to the relevant experts for wide interpretation in the process of evaluation of the establishment.

5. *Protected and Reliable Data Bases* – in the century of modern technologies in the vocational education there is no united data base, which significantly hinders the work process and increases the probability for defects and errors.

As of today the data collection occurs by almost all the institutions existing in the education system. It is clear that without united data base there will always be the problem of correctness and adequacy of the data. Also it is interesting whether based on which data are the different types of documents being prepared in this field by the state.

The state should take care of creating the united, protected and perfect base by means of which there would be prepared the whole number of analytical and action documents. For the purpose of data update, it is possible that the various establishments could have the access to it, but we should have the united and non-homogenous base. It should be protected in one establishment, in my opinion, it is logical to be placed in the informational system of education management, where in some form the data are still there now, but nowadays none can be liable for their protection, and, most importantly, on the reliability. Along with it, it is desirable, that the analytical service could work nearby, which could summarize the existing data and based on them would be able to outline different specific or general issued connected with the positive and negative tendencies (identification of problems, defects, etc. and delivery of such information to the relevant structures). Upon working in bases it is recommended not only to fulfill the technical works, but to read the existing data and analyzing. In this field of study

it is possible to create many documents, which will significantly benefit the system.

6. *Insufficient Professional Orientation* - In 2014 in the “provision of legal entity of public law school mandatory service” there was implemented a change according to which the division of professional orientation and career planning was established in the mandatory service. In 2017 according to the changes implemented in the provision, the division of professional orientation and career planning was abolished with its functions.¹² According to the sub-paragraph “b²” of the paragraph 3 of the article 7 of the National Study Plan, the obligation of a headmaster is “to give lessons on vocational orientation and career planning at basic and middle levels, particularly, in IX grade and XI or XII grades in accordance with the professional orientation and career expert of LEPL – Educational Institution Mandatory Service”. In 2018 changes were implemented in the National Study Plan according to which above mentioned entry was removed.¹³

It is true that the mentioned changes touched the national study plan, but I could not deem this novelty in the contents of teaching as the introduction to this field. The question is whether how much is the competence of the mandatory service to introduce the professions to the pupils in schools, keeping the bases of employers and other activities.

The strategy of today’s vocational education provides many changes, including, considering the general educational component in the vocational colleges. This way is unjustified for eradication of the “Legal Deadlock”. However there is still represented the certain approach. The strategy did not turn out to be the viewpoint that is so important in the century for rapidly changing and emerging technologies.

From 2013 a new program for persons with special needs and with disabilities is implemented by the state.

By the knowledge and skills obtained in the vocational schools the persons with special needs and with disabilities are given the opportunity, in case of correctly chosen profession, to get employed at the enterprises or to establish an enterprise by them.

For nowadays this is truly impressive and important, but herewith I would mention that as the most important challenge remains the professional orientation/consulting, which should be given a special attention. And the purpose lies in the following: the persons with special needs and with disabilities have to feel themselves as independent and plenipotentiary members of the society. And to reach the mentioned goal without active professional orientation system which in its turn should constantly react according to the requirements of quickly changing labor market requirements and approaches is practically impossible.

7. *Educational Resource* - Upon the vocational teaching there acutely stands the problem of textbooks. Colleges mainly use the textbooks manufactured by the international organizations or the personal workbooks. You can often see a

¹²The minister of education and science of Georgia, “provision of legal entity of public law school mandatory service”, order No. 74/N, 2010

¹³Minister of Education and Science of Georgia, “National Study Plan”, order No. 36/N, 2011

pedagogue which via dictation makes a student to write the material. As for the textbooks prepared by the international organizations, they are created not for the diploma programs, but for the retraining. Also the studying/teaching using the informational technologies is scarce, which, in my opinion, proceeding from the reality of the nowadays has a bad influence over the quality of the education.

From 2015 simultaneously with the introduction of the vocational educational program modules, there was started the creation of the textbooks relevant to the vocational modules for the students and the creation of the guidebooks for the teachers, although the problem of the educational resource stays as one of the main challenges in the vocational education. Due to the existence of the consistent strategy, the quality and use of the textbooks, informational technologies and other teaching resources is unsatisfactory, the share of the teaching resource in the process of the studying-teaching is less diverse.

8. Reasons for Students Outflow from Vocational Educational Institutions - The interesting statistics was found in the National Service of Georgia. It turned out that in the academic years of 2012-2013 and 2013-2014, 48.73% of students enrolled in vocational programs in Georgia and 33% of them has no diploma confirming the completion of studies. Why is the percentage of students who did not continue or were not able to study - so high? The studies at the vocational institutions established/co-established by the state is financed by the state and the percentage index of the students with suspended status are higher at the state institutions than at the private.

Speaking of the reasons for the alleged spreading, the representatives of the public vocational institutions and vocational colleges note that the adult citizens, compared to the youth are better developed upon choosing the profession, most of them even work by the relevant profession and only wants to deepen the knowledge and improve the skills, or turn the informal education into the formal and to receive the relevant diploma. And the school student despite the fact that they have basic education or secondary, are less aware of their choice and they choose the profession by the recommendation of others or by requirement of the parents.¹⁴ Upon speaking with the employees of the vocational schools there also turned out that the students of good academic performance rapidly adapt to the profession chosen by them and also rapidly go out in the labor market. Is the reason of the students outflow to the vocational colleges the social situation of the vocational student or not? And what type of problem are we talking about if we consider the fact that the educational fees are not paid by the professional students? In order to respond this question along with one of the authorized vocational college in Georgia (N(N)LP Vocational College “Ikaros”) there was conducted the research the aim of which was to establish the reasons for suspension of the status and termination after the enrollment of the applicants at the vocational institutions. As a result of the research it was turned out that almost 60% percent of the expelled students were living either in regions or in order to reach the college they required at least one hour to reach it. In the research conducted in 2014 more than thousand students of the vocational institutions

¹⁴T. Kakutia, “Place of professional education in Georgian educational field”, 2016, p.60

established/co-established by 18 states participated. As a result it turned out that most of the surveyed students had social problems and for them the free vocational teaching was significantly important, although rendering such expenses which they have to spend in order to reach the college is often problematic for them. Accordingly, we can assume that due to their missing is a reason of their expelling which once again remain complicated social situation and the students are not able to avoid the transportation fee and moreover the housing. Accordingly, the state should take care of the students of this category and to try to resolve the aforementioned problem by creating the programs specifically for them. Becoming active in several directions and an attempt to solve the problem will significantly decrease the outflow of the students from the vocational educational institutions. However proceeding from the scale and importance of the mentioned issue the problem of the outflow of the professional students has to become the subject of the further research.

9. Inner Evaluation of the Educational Institution (administration, pedagogue, student) - From 2014 in the survey financed by Shota Rustaveli Scientific Foundation implemented within the doctoral grant there were participating 394 pedagogues of the vocational schools established/co-established by the state; 18 representatives of the administration and more than thousand students.

The main purpose of the survey was to find out whether how and in what degree of adequacy were they assessing the educational environment/infrastructure of the school, the informational-communicational resource, sanitary/hygienic situation of the school and the situation in the field of trainings and master classes.

As a result the assessment of the institution by the pedagogues and administration did not turn out the relevant to the situation existing in the colleges. We took look on the resource of all the public vocational/community college and several state universities which was included in the questionnaire. It turned out that the evaluation of the establishments with highest point with such percentage index should not have been implemented, because the situation existing at place was not given in accordance with the assessment of the answers. On the basis of the research we can conclude that it is important that the pedagogues working in the establishments and the representatives of the administration to be released from the influence of the directorate and their answers to the question were given honestly and freely. It is also important to have more opportunity for objective assessment and comparison as in the terms of the work conducted by the establishment (infrastructure: library, internet, computer techniques, etc.), so in terms of getting familiar with the novelties in this learning process by directly planning, implementation of the own activity. The critical thinking is one of the main factors for the advancement of the institution. It is also interesting whether how the students evaluated their vocational training facility. Three general parameters have been allocated to evaluate student attitudes towards vocational education: Assessment of student services and related administrative and support staff activities, evaluation of the quality of teaching - pedagogical resources and training programs and evaluation of the material-technical base.

The results have shown that during the assessment the students relatively freely expressing their attitude towards all the issues. General infrastructure: library, situation in audience, computer classes, practical training - play a substantial role for

students;¹⁵ It is also possible to say that the students pay serious attention to the conditions favorable to the training process. Unlike the administration of a Vocational Education Institution and Teachers, they more freely evaluate the basic components of the learning process. They have a very clear attitude formed towards professional institution and are more critically evaluating the training situation and function of. However, they should also be able to get acquainted with the diversity of content and infrastructure of professional institutions both within and outside the country. Consequently, they will be able to give more objective assessment and comparison. Finally, on the basis of the conducted researches we can conclude that it is important that all the links of the vocational institution could actually assess the situation in the educational institution's quality improvement and advancement.

Teacher in Vocational Education

We deem that the topic on teacher is so important that we decided to make even a brief overview on this issue. The society agreed and agrees that the teacher requires special conditions, but the result is not as good as we would like it to be.

I am presenting those innovations and challenges that were planned and implemented for the development of teachers in vocational education. I would also like to give you some opinions regarding professional teacher.

According to the law of Georgia “on the professional education”, a teacher of the vocational education could be an owner of the qualification of the 4th or 5th grade of the Higher Education or Vocational Education, or a person who has the at least 3 years of experience of working by the relevant profession. The teacher of vocational education having the 4th level qualification has no right to teach within the educational program of the 5th stage.¹⁶ It should also be noted that by the relevant professional standard the additional requirements could be established.

From 2013 there is being implementing different researches regarding the vocational teachers by the National Center for Teacher Professional Development. It would be interesting the answer to the question – how many pedagogues does a vocational education have with the practical experience? That means how many of them came to the training institution from the private sector and how many among them are who simultaneously continues to work even today? Unfortunately the analysis made in this field is not visible. And in the research of the local labor market conducted by us the employers indicate the necessity of the tight contact of the teachers with training practice at the study institutions with the labor market as one of the important factors, because nowadays an employer precisely needs the personnel having the knowledge and skills required by the labor market, and the mentioned requirements best of all are known by the personnel having the practical experience, the personnel who simultaneously to studying are working in the private sector, because they think that he/she kept the pace with the rapidly changeable requirements of the labor market, only this way it is possible. Precisely

¹⁵T. Kakutia, “Role of the Local labor market in the development and planning of Vocational Education” 2017, Georgian National Library, p.178-184

¹⁶President of Georgia, Law of Georgia “on Vocational Education”, March 28, 2007, №4528_IS

the practical pedagogue can to permanently be flexible and adequate towards the requirements of the labor market, which, in its turn, provides the teaching relevant to the high standards in the vocational education. We think that from the side of the employers such requirement is adequate. In 2015 we got familiar with the expertise of Schwerin city, Germany, in the terms of the vocational education. According to the legislation of Georgia, a person has the right to study at the vocational institution, if he/she obtained the relevant professional qualification. A pedagogue, together with whom the vocational students are undergoing the practical course, is a worker of the private sector, who at the same time has the specific authorization granted by the state.

For the purpose of the professional development of the teachers out the events implemented by the state it is important to outline two-step training – “teaching based on work”, of teachers and entrepreneurial instructors conducted in collaboration with MCA:

First step – teacher training;

Second step – Training of the entrepreneurial trainers;

In 2014 practical trainings for teachers of vocational education institutions were conducted in the field of 8 professional programs of tourism, hotel and restaurant job. Country wide the representatives of 14 vocational institutions of all the regions, 61 teachers took part in the practical training.¹⁷

From 2015 till today the trainings of the teacher of vocational institutions took more large-scale character. The trainings of the teacher of vocational institutions were conducted in the enterprises, modern technologies – in the field of modular vocational programs to be introduced.

For more efficient planning and implementation of the training process it is important that the process of retraining, planning and implementation should be conducted by the institution itself or directly, as the institution is well aware of the needs and opportunities of teachers. The state should ensure the decentralization of educational institutions and, therefore, to entrust the process to the establishment, is more justifiable in terms of effective redistribution of resources. Centralized processes significantly hinder the events in time and, in some cases, are less adequate. Indeed, if the teacher needs retraining at the moment and if it is in the direction of which I think, does a teacher require retraining for the given moment and if he/she does in what direction, in my opinion the pedagogue itself and the establishment where the teacher works should decide, and moreover, depending on the needs, which is the actual for the institution and teacher for the moment. Here, the intervention of third parties is not an effective decision. As for the provision of educational services, it is important to involve higher education institutions that are preparing teachers by themselves. There should be restored the historic and correct tradition at the universities, which is called the preparation of the teacher and retraining, and if the competence is insufficient, they should be created and developed precisely within the university walls and not elsewhere.

¹⁷National Center for Teacher Professional Development, Program “Development of Vocational Education Teachers”, 2015, http://tpdc.gov.ge/?action=page&p_id=880&lang=geo

Conclusion

And for conclusion I would like to summarize and mention that in this article we have discussed some important aspects of Vocational Education system, which I think hinders the system to work properly. Here we also reviewed really good steps which has been taken by the government in last two years. But still I would like to emphasize that the mechanisms created by the state for the functioning of various institutions in the education system should serve one main goal - Citizen's rights to get high quality education throughout life.

References

- The government of Georgia, resolution No. 244, September 19, 2013
Parliament of Georgia, Law of Georgia “on enhancing the quality of education”, July 21, 2010, No.3531-RS
The Minister of Education and Science of Georgia, order No. 99/N, 2010
The Minister of Education and Science of Georgia, order No. 65/N, 2011
Director of the National Center for Quality Enhancement, order No. 1095, 2016
President of Georgia, Law of Georgia “on Vocational Education”, March 28, 2007, №4528 IS
German Society for International Cooperation [GIZ], 2011
T. Kakutia, “Place of professional education in Georgian educational field”, 2016
Association of the Education Policy and Researches, “Conception of School Education“, 2013
The minister of education and science of Georgia, “provision of legal entity of public law school mandatory service”, order No. 74/N, 2010
Minister of Education and Science of Georgia, “National Study Plan”, order No. 36/N, 2011
National Center for Teacher Professional Development, Program “Development of Vocational Education Teachers”, 2015, http://tpdc.gov.ge/?action=page&p_id=880&lang=geo
T. Kakutia, “Role of the Local labor market in the development and planning of Vocational Education” 2017, Georgian National Library, p.178-184