

UPDATE REPORT ON VET SYSTEM GEORGIA

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Introduction

The Update Report on Vocational Education and Training (VET) system in Georgia outlines the conceptual, legal, policy and statistical basis for the sector¹ analysis (period 2005-2007).

A desk study was conducted collecting and analyzing data from reports, studies and other written materials concerning situation on vocational education in Georgia.

Altogether up to 10 representatives from different organizations were interviewed. Interviews and meetings were conducted with representatives of Ministry of Education and Science, aid organizations, educational NGOs (see annex 2 for details).

Main problem of the study was lack of reliable statistics; sometimes controversial data from different sources or outdated information, so data should be interpreted with caution. The problem was aggravated by the dynamics of system reform: at the moment VET system in Georgia is in transition process, so data change daily.

The report is divided into chapters according to the guidelines/questions defined in ToR.

Economic and social context

The collapse of the Soviet Union at the beginning of 1990s brought about radical political, social and economic changes. Georgia suffered deep economic recession, which was further exacerbated by armed conflicts.

But in the past few years economic growth has been fast – real GDP growth rate was 9.3 per cent in 2005 and 7.5 per cent in 2006, although the legacy of 90's continues to constrain development of the country. Georgia's average standard of living, as measured by GDP per head in US\$ adjusted for purchasing power parity (PPP\$), was lower in 2005 than that of any country in the Europe and Central Asia region except Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Moldova (IMF World Economic Outlook database, www.imf.org). According to recent findings, 54 per cent of Georgians earned less than \$PPP2 in 2005 (www.cia.gov). A marked improvement occurred in early 2006, particularly in rural areas, but the poverty problem is still severe.

In these circumstances, it is not surprising that a significant proportion of Georgians seek work abroad. On one estimate, between 250,000 and 300,000 were working abroad in the early 2000s, of whom around 200,000 in Russia (Meladze, Kutelia). According to IOM data, among persons interested in work abroad clearly prevail people aged between 20 and 30 – 42,6 per cent (www.iom.ge). Despite high net migration, demographics in Georgia are marked by decreasing natural growth. Between 1991 and 2006, the number of 3-6 year olds is estimated to have fallen by 46 per cent, that of 7-15 year olds by 38 per cent and that of 16-18 year olds by 24 per cent and of 19-24 year olds by 19 per cent (UNICEF, TransMONEE database 2006). Consequently, population above 65 years has a very high share – 13,5% and the share of working age (15-64) population represents 68% of the population in 2006 (www.statistics.ge)

According to the Department of Statistics (www.statistics.ge), in 2006 the activity rate of the population was about 63% (for details see annex 3).

¹ Sector - the whole vocational education and training system, public and non public, all levels and forms.

Educational landscape

- **Reform process**

The dramatic reduction of GDP in 90's caused decline of education expenditures as well. After almost 16 years of independence, education funding in Georgia is still far below international standards (up to 2.6% of GDP in 2006). But the Government of Georgia is fully aware that human capital formation is key to political and economic development and thus is committed to education reform: despite the hard legacy, scope and pace of Georgian education reform since 2003 are unique in the region.

In particular, reforms mean:

- new **legislation** – Parliament of Georgia has adopted new laws on higher education (2004), general education (2005) and vocational education (2007);
- reforms of **financing and governance** of educational institutions - introducing the *per capita* financing principle of 'money follows the student' in general and higher education; same approach is planned also for VET;
- introduction of **unified entrance examinations**, held in 2005 and 2006, using sophisticated testing methods across a range of subjects, administered by a new agency, the National Examination Centre;
- establishment of the **National Education Accreditation Centre** in 2006 and carrying out institutional accreditation of higher education institutions - number of authorized HEIs has already been reduced from 227 in 2004 to current 43; Institutional accreditation of general schools and program accreditation of both higher academic and professional programs is planned;
- introduction of three-cycle degree system and ECTS in line with the **Bologna Process** principles;
- encouraging active learning through introduction of new curricula by the **National Curriculum and Assessment Centre**, established in April 2006;
- developing standards and qualification requirements for teachers, to conduct a process of accreditation of teacher training and retraining programs and to introduce a system of teacher certification through newly established (2006) **Teachers' Professional Development Centre**;
- the **Deer Leap Program** – computerization of schools; providing Internet access, educational software and services and technical support; upgrading the ICT skills of teachers and students; integrating ICT into the curriculum through computer-aided instruction in a wide range of subjects; and computerization of the Education Management Information System (EMIS) at school, local and national levels;
- physical **rehabilitation** of educational institutions;
- establishment of Georgian National Science Foundation; pilot programs for inclusive learning; early childhood programs, special programs for ethnic/linguistic minorities, etc.;

The speed with which education reforms were initiated after 2003 owes much to the ground that had been laid since 2001 by the Education System Realignment and Strengthening Program, since renamed the **Ilia Chavchavadze** project, financed by a World Bank credit of \$26 million. US and European donor agencies are also involved in education reform process – MoES actively seeks support through different donors and UN agencies and works closely with the NGO community.

- **Structure of education system**

Considering last reforms, basic structure of education system of Georgia has changed. A simplified picture of the present state of formal education and training is presented on the Diagram 1.

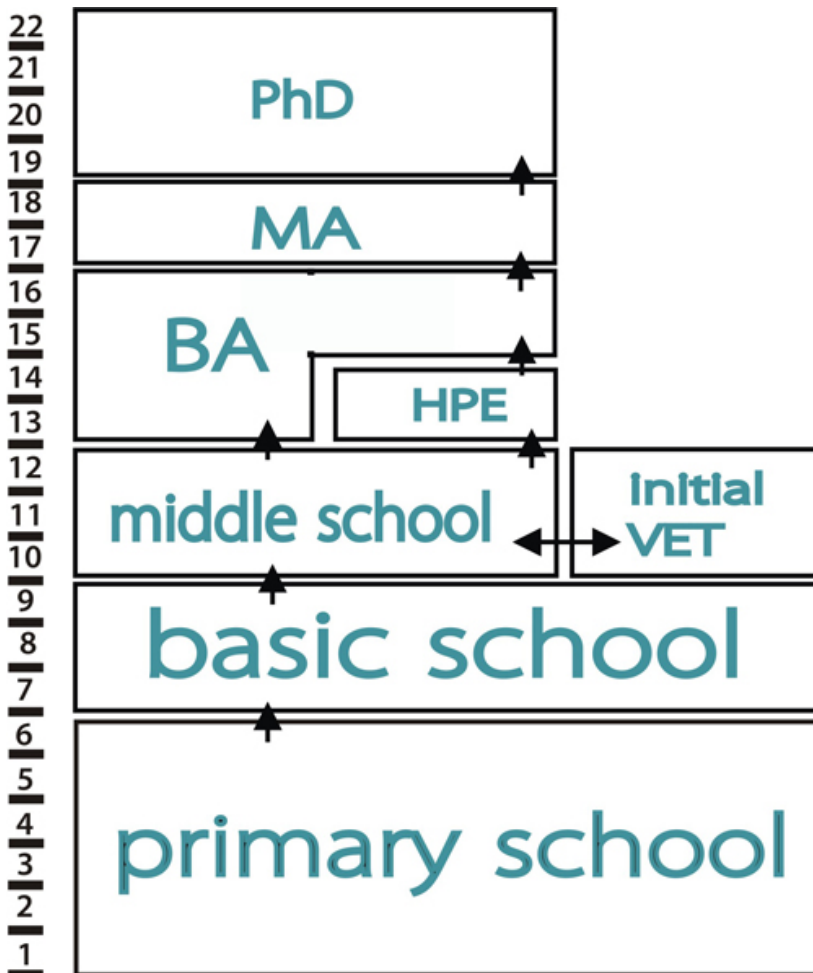
First 9 years of school education (6 years – primary school, 6 + 3 = 9 years – basic school) are compulsory. Graduates from grade 9th, aged 15, could choose between initial vocational education (apprenticeship) or middle school.

Duration of the apprentice training program doesn't exceed 2 years (Law on VET, article 7) and these programs doesn't provide general secondary education. After obtaining the certificate for a specialist certifying completion of apprenticeship, a graduate may be employed at the labour market, but in case of wish, he/she

won't be able to complete neither academic nor higher vocational educational programs without having completed general education program (at present, 11 years, starting for 2008/2009 teaching year – 12 years) that is the precondition for acquiring higher education. This means, that students, wishing to continue their education further, shall combine secondary general education in schools with professional training in VET centres or return back to the middle school after completing their apprenticeship. In order to avoid this risk of dead end and in line with modern tendencies of integrating secondary and vocational education, it is planned to introduce vocational training courses at the upper secondary level of general education – the courses offered by vocational training centres will be incorporated in national curricula. Another approach designed to prevent this problem is granting the opportunity to young people to complete general secondary education concurrently with vocational courses as external students.

Thus, new vocational training centres will offer training to students with complete basic education and to adults for retraining new skills/profession or qualification improvement courses. In line with the life-long learning principles, there is no upper age limit set for initial vocational education.

Diagram 1. Education system of Georgia²



First cycle of higher education is divided into two types: academic programs, leading to bachelor' degree, and higher vocational/professional education, leading to diploma specialist. Admission to the higher VET programs is pared down compared with those to academic programs and comprises from only one exam – general abilities, while otherwise at least three entrance exams must be passed (Georgian language and literature,

² HPE – higher professional education; MA – master of arts; BA – bachelor of arts; PhD – doctor of philosophy; Primary and basic school are compulsory, according to the constitution.

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foreign language and general abilities are minimal requirements for admission to higher academic programs. Additionally exams in mathematics, natural sciences and/or history and social sciences could be added according to the program of study). First admission to the higher VET programs will be held in summer 2007.

Thus, according to the new law, formal vocational education is divided into two levels: 1) initial vocational education (apprenticeship) and 2) higher VET.

Initial vocational education will be offered by vocational training centres, while accredited HEIs will be offering professional higher education to be regulated by the Law of Georgia on Higher Education.

Status of the sector policy framework: key legislation; policy proposals in discussion and adopted at central and local levels, or specific to economic branches; main problems and gaps. Place of the sector VET within the overall education agenda and relations to other sector policies (employment) and to cross-sector policies (local development, poverty reduction, economic competitiveness in a globalised economy).

The reformist approach of the government of Georgia towards the vocational education had been reflected in the conception “on vocational education” that was passed by the government of Georgia in August 31, 2005, resolution #150. Heretofore, in May 27, 2005, based on the resolution of the government of Georgia # 30, a governmental commission for social partnership in the sphere of vocational education had been created³.

Based on the concept paper, the draft law on vocational education has been elaborated and placed on the website of the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia for public discussion in autumn 2006. Together with local specialist, expert group of European Commission was involved in the law elaboration process⁴.

“The Law of Georgia on Vocational Education” has been signed by the President of Georgia on April 23, 2007 and came into force on May 8, 2007. At the same time “Law on Initial Vocational Education”, adopted in 1998, became invalid.

In the transition period (its duration is not determined) all problems/issues of VET, such as setting up admission rules, licensing of new VET schools, restructuring old ones, etc., will be regulated by the orders of Minister of Education and Science of Georgia – appropriate resolution of Georgian government is being prepared. In the meantime MoES prepares all necessary regulatory documents.

At the moment following deeds have been in the process of elaboration:

- typical statute of the VET schools – prepared by the law department of MoES;
- admission rules to the initial vocational education – prepared by the law department of MoES;
- amendments and changes to the law on licensing have been already done – newly founded (or re-founded) VET centres as entities of public law must be newly licensed. Licensing rules are in process of elaboration by the licensing department of MoES. At the same time rules for licensing higher VET schools – colleges – will be changed meaning: simplification of licensing criteria in comparison to academic HEIs.
- approval rules for VET curricula are in process of preparation by the National Centre for Curriculum and Assessment (*first draft has been presented in the middle of May 2007*).
- VET funding scheme is in process of elaboration.

Generally spoken, work on all above mentioned deeds is in progress. Presumably they will be approved by the ministerial order at the end of June 2007.

Importance of VET for economic development and social welfare is increasingly acknowledged. At the current stage, the most important target is to give a professional opportunity to the population, mostly to young

³ Commission for social partnership has been abolished in May 2007.

⁴ EU/TACIS Project “Support of the Development of a Strategic and Legal Framework for the Reform of the Georgian VET System”

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generation, to reduce unemployment and poverty, and also migration tendencies. This issue has been awarded a political priority as well.

Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Program (EDPRP), approved in 2003, emphasizes the need to improve employment policy and introduce flexibility in the labour market. The programme also focuses on the need for improvements in education. Actions to raise the quality of education and labour liquidity are considered as major components for increasing labour market efficiency.

In the EDPRP chapter “Employment and Professional Education” one can read:

“One of the most significant aspects of the poverty reduction is professional education. This means professional training for young people without qualifications, improving professional qualifications and re-training.

To establish an effective system of professional education, it is necessary:

- To improve the system of professional education, and ensure its compliance with the need for a qualified work force;
- Establish close links between the professional education system and production;
- Prescribe new professional and educational standards in conformity with international standards.”

But despite these statements, not much has been done after adoption of EDPRP. Actually, reform of VET system has begun in spring 2007 and still, there is no specific action plan for the linkage of VET system with labour market since no comprehensive labour market research has been conducted yet (see below).

EDPRP progress report from 2006 states, that:

“Professional education of Georgia is in the phase of radical transformations...New professional education policy in Georgia is based on principles of skilled labor movements on the EU territory and establishment of such conditions in Georgia, when the country develops the economy through its own specialists”.

Parallel to the Euro-integration, progress report focuses also on local developments:

“In rural and especially mountainous areas social infrastructure should be developed, qualified ... education should become accessible (especially for the poor), development of human capital should be fostered, and professional education expedited, so that the rural population is prepared to enter the general labour market in the light of expected social changes”.

But there are still no mechanisms developed to assist the poor in education.

At the same time it must be mentioned that on January 15, 2007, governmental general strategy on internally displaced persons (IDP) in Georgia (www.mra.gov.ge) has been published⁵. Special focus is made on the vocational education and training (VET) provision for IDP children in order to enhance their employment chances on the labour market: VET is considered as a tool for better social integration. There are some special training programs for adult IDPs (f.e. in Tbilisi is a VET centre, providing courses in mechanics, etc.), but not on the systematic basis. Special strategy on VET education for IDPs is in process of development. This is only a preparatory document with general statements: a detailed action plan as well as financial issues has not been elaborated. Special attention shall be paid to the funding issues, considering hard social conditions of IDPs. The implementation of the governmental strategy is the responsibility of the relevant ministries with involvement of relevant NGOs (Norwegian Refugee Council has already start its activities in the field).

Key issues in the VET debate. Examples: relevance of VET, quality, employability of graduates, qualifications, modernisation of catalogue of professions, school conditions, teachers, corruption, gender, inequality, others.

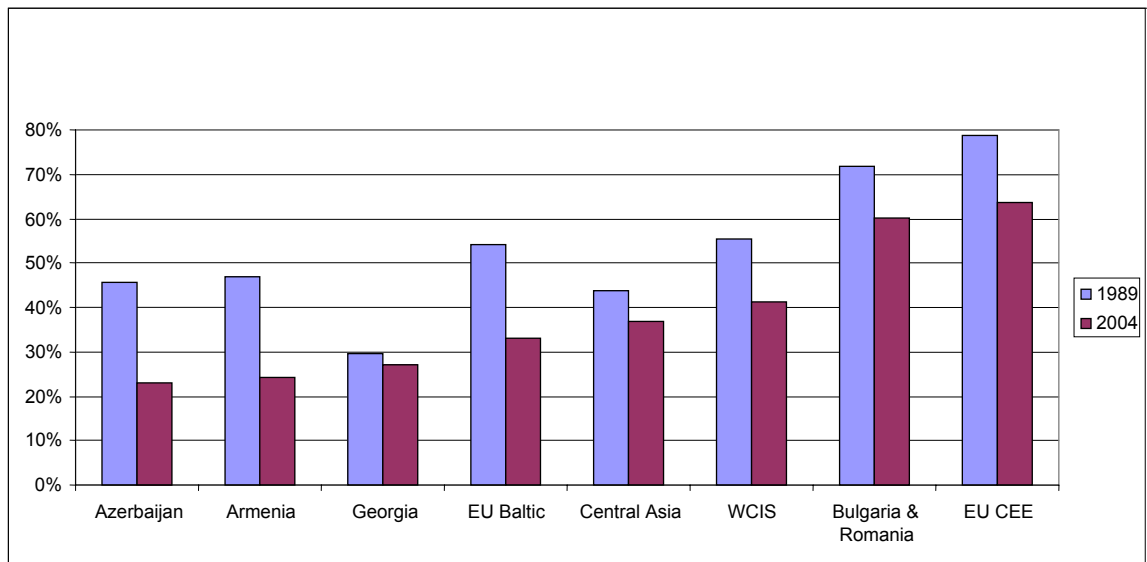
⁵ After two local conflicts in 90's there are ca. 240 000 IDPs in Georgia (see annex 3).

The reform of education system has provoked severe discussions and controversies in the Georgian society and mass media. But main attention was driven to the reform of general and higher education – reform of VET system has been somehow neglected by the society partly due to its traditionally low prestige, partly because of the lag of reform itself.

Although the draft law was placed on the web-site of the MoES, and ministry encouraged stakeholders to participate in discussion, there was no notable public discussion on this issue, compared with hot debates on general and higher education reforms, thus reflecting little interest of civil society to this sector. Numerous NGOs support reforms in secondary and higher education. Unfortunately, support of non-governmental sector in vocational education is negligible, whereas the success of this sector is a cornerstone of the reform. It is worthwhile to note that the vocational education is of interest of only some non-governmental organizations, which of course participated in the law elaboration and discussion alongside with trade unions and donor organizations.

At the same time importance of creation of effective VET system is being increasingly acknowledged by governmental and non-governmental structures and other stakeholders in the context of development of flexible and sustainable education system: the enrolment rate in upper secondary education in Georgia is currently estimated by some sources at 73.11 per cent (gross)⁶. Thus there is the need to provide opportunities for professional development for those who leave schools after the completion of basic level. On the other hand, it is expected that enrolment in vocational education (which compares unfavourably with some of the successful Western countries – see Figure 1) will increase through providing high-quality courses corresponding to international standards and thus improving chances of employment on the labour market and responding to the increased demand on professional staff.

Figure 1. Vocational/ technical enrolment as % of total upper secondary enrolment, Georgia in a regional context, 1989 & 2004



Low prestige of the VET sector has been reflected also in the lack of specific VET centred research:

- Information about the employability of VET graduates is not available – there is no specific research conducted so far.
- List of vocations doesn't exist yet. According to the "Law on Vocational Education" list of vocations and its corresponding professional standards must be elaborated by the National Professional Agency. This Agency will be established in June 2007 (preliminary data).

⁶ www.unicef-irc.org/databases/transmonee

- There is no specific survey on corruption in the VET system – all previous surveys were focused on corruption in the higher education.
- There is no reliable data on enrolment of ethnic minorities in VET schools.
- There is no specific data on gender issues in VET system, although data on female students by field of study in secondary VET schools are available (Table 5). But analyze of these data has not been conducted, although at the first glance prevalence of female students in traditionally female dominated fields of medicine, education and art is obvious. There is also no data on gender structure of VET teachers and instructors.
- Conditions of VET schools have been studied by the MoES – no state investments have been made in the VET infrastructure since 1986 - the need of rehabilitation has been reflected in the special presidential program, which is coordinated by the MoES. For the renovation and equipment of VET schools in 2006 was spent 4 Mio GEL, in 2007 – already 7 Mio GEL in the framework of the presidential program.

Main steps / outcomes of VET reform in the period 2005-2007. Examples: new catalogue of vocations adopted, proposal for VET school rationalisation, draft for new financing policy, VET school rehabilitated, social partnership enhanced in relation to VET in certain economic branches, adult education concept adopted, new centre for VET development established, others.

As already mentioned above, VET system is in the transition. Actually, the reform has started after the Law on VET came into force (May 2007). So, many actions have been planned, but not implemented so far. Correspondingly, not much has been done since 2005 – rehabilitation of VET schools on the one hand and development of new legislation count as main results of VET oriented activities in last two years.

In December 2005 MoES (namely department for Strategic Development) has elaborated plan of rationalization of vocational schools (document's name: "Centres of vocational education and training in Georgia"). According to this document new regional centres for vocational education and training must be founded (at the moment the list comprises of 11 centres – 4 in Tbilisi and 7 in different regions of Georgia) and existing VET schools must be optimized by the consolidation or abolishing (see statistical data below).

On the basis of above mentioned document, on April 30, 2007, Minister of Education and Science has issued order № 303 "About approval of main criteria for optimization, liquidation and founding of VET schools", which must regulate the process of optimization.

Presidential program on rehabilitation of vocational schools is in progress (see above). Schools, which must be re-founded as legal entities of public law are renewed.

Catalogue of vocations has not been adopted yet (see above) – this is responsibility of National Professional Agency.

Financing policy is in process of elaboration by the respective department of MoES.

At present, there is no coherent system for adults' education, training and retraining in the country; however, against the background of economic development, the conception of lifelong learning (LLL) is a matter of special urgency. Development of the national strategy and action plan for LLL is currently under way. An important part of these activities will be the elaboration of National Qualifications Framework allowing translation of qualifications across different levels and forms of education not only in the country but abroad as well. Currently there are no accurate data available for the rate of non-formal or adult training and education. However it may be assumed that there are not enough opportunities for retraining and qualification improvement for adults to meet new requirements emerging on the labour markets. Therefore there is the

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need to develop a coherent and efficient approach for supporting life-long and non-formal education in the country.

Planning of life-long learning in Georgia will be consistent with the European Neighbourhood Action Plan - the tool to carry out European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) of the European Union to which Georgia became a party in 2004. Support to life-long learning is one of the priorities of ENP.

At the current very initial stage several measures have already been taken to support both adult learning and non-formal educational:

- Adult training has been receiving significant consideration and support both from the government as well as from donor agencies. Specifically several initiatives were launched for the education of minority population. A school of public administration established in 2005 provides training programs for minority population and trains about 450 public officials annually. The program helps not only capacity development among government officials but fosters civic integration of minorities.
- Adult training centres are established in Samtskhe-Javakheti – the region populated by Armenian minority through financial support of European Commission and the German Government. OSCE Office of the High Commissioner on National Minorities supports the operation of Language Houses in Samtskhe-Javakheti and Kvemo Kartli regions. These institutions will proceed with their activities and further measures will be taken to enlarge the adult educational network through the establishment of two more adult training centres.

Institutional setting of the sector: involved state institutions, respective roles, issues of inter-institutional co-operation and inter-sector co-operation. Leadership.

At the moment we face certain overlapping and fragmentation of functions and responsibilities, which makes coordination of VET reform more difficult.

From May 1, 2007 The Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia is in the process of being re-structured—new structural units have been established.

Vocational education is governed by the №2 division of MoES for “Higher and Vocational Education Programs” Division has now 9 positions, one of them is vacant. Division is responsible for coordination of both, higher and vocational education programs and projects; there is no work separation and specialization of functions and responsibilities among its staff: so there is no extra expert for vocational education at the MoES.

According to the internal regulation of MoES, staff from other ministerial departments can be involved in the work on VET issues.

There is certain fragmentation of functions and responsibilities among MoES structural units:

- general coordination of VET programs and projects is responsibility of above mentioned №2 division;
- licensing of VET schools & centres must be conducted by the department for licensing;
- all legal issues on VET are regulated by the department of law;
- VET funding is regulated by the budgetary division of MoES.

According to the article #10 of the “Law on Vocational Education”, following structures are governing bodies of VET system in Georgia:

1. Government of Georgia
2. Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia;
3. Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Welfare of Georgia;
4. Ministries of Education of Abkhaz and Adjara Autonomous Republics;
5. Institutions of local governing;

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6. Legal entity of public law National Professional Agency (*will join the process after establishment in June 2007*);
7. Legal entity of public law National Education Accreditation Centre (*in autumn 2007 plans program accreditation for higher vocational education*);
8. Legal entity of public law National Curriculum and Assessment Centre (*develops and approves curricula for initial vocational education*);
9. Legal entity of public law Teachers' Professional Development Centre;
10. National Examinations Centre (*conducts Unified Entrance Examinations for the purpose of selecting the best students for higher vocational education*).

The most important governing structure will be soon to be established National Professional Agency.

According to the article #16 of the "Law on Vocational Education", among other functions, the agency shall:

- elaborate and approve professional standards for all occupations from the national qualifications framework;
- conduct labour market research;
- set up information data base on occupations;
- elaborate rules for recognition of non-formal learning.

Thus, National Professional Agency will assume not only operational functions in the VET system, but also to a certain extent determine strategic development of the sector policy.

Social partnership – status, role, problems and perspectives.

Notwithstanding the fact that the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia and mass media make great efforts to inform public, the representatives of academic circles and potential employers about the aims and objectives of the ongoing reform of VET system, still there is a lack of comprehensive information on the reform of vocational education. A lot still needs to be done in this direction in first place to inform all stakeholders and potential partners about the reform and involve them in the process itself. This task is not easy to fulfil, especially considering weak or even absent linkage between VET system and employers in Georgia.

It is absolutely clear, that one of the most efficient ways of improving the governance of vocational training centres as well as labour market outcomes is fostering cooperation and partnership with the private sector and the government stakeholders. The National Professional Agency, responsible for the elaboration and approval of the list of professional qualifications and professional standards, will be composed of the representatives of ministries, professional associations, employers' associations and vocational schools and colleges. Educational-entrepreneurial partnerships will be strengthened through the establishment of professional councils, composed of employers, professional associations and line ministries.

The problem is lack of professional associations, although there are some of them (bookkeepers association, barmen's association, etc), and most actives are even already involved in process of setting up professional standards and curriculum development - association of Georgian employers has elaborated 12 standards for constructing and agribusiness fields (supported by UNDP); bookkeepers association has proposed its support in development of curricula; etc.

Considering social partnership, there are some single activities, mostly initiated and supported by NGOs and international organizations (DVV-international, FHRD), but the overall situation is far away from optimal: some constructing companies provide practice and even job placements for VET students; local hotels provide opportunities for practice for tourism students, etc.

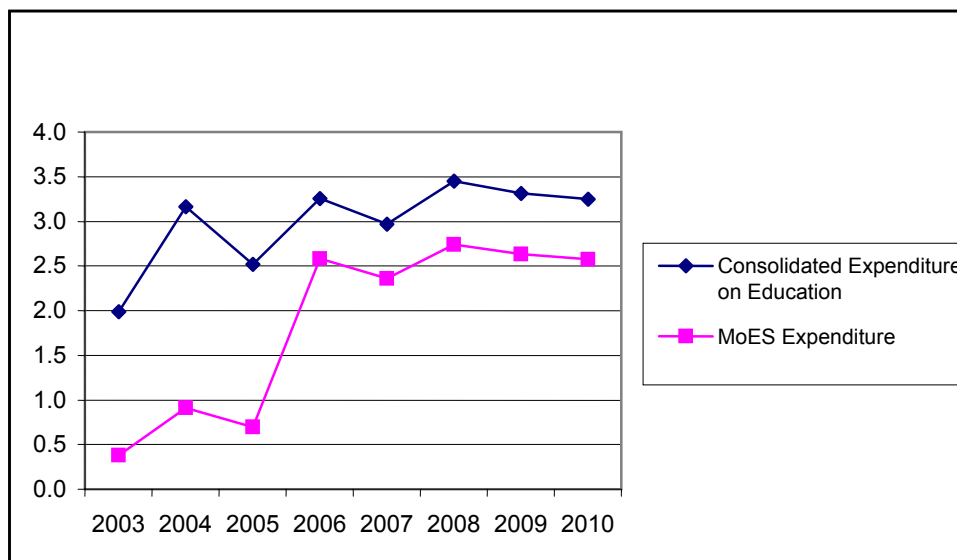
Despite all difficulties, there are promising tendencies in establishment of social partnership, most notable due to engagement and initiative of VET school directors, who are increasingly aware of its importance.

Sector budgets and medium term expenditures framework: is there a link of expenditure and sector policy? Reasons and effects. Perspectives. Analyse sector MTEFs (*Medium Term Expenditure Framework*) since 2003. Share of sector expenditure (in education, in total) in dynamics⁷.

After the Rose Revolution in 2003, the state budget has augmented significantly. Correspondingly, funding of all sectors of education had increased. However, funding of education is still only 2.6 per cent of GDP. For 2010 according to MTEF increase of GDP share on education up to 3 per cent is planned.

The following diagram (diagram 2) shows the dynamics of public expenditure over last few years and medium-term projections⁸.

Diagram 2. Dynamic of Public Expenditure on Education.



The diagram 3 displays support to vocational education out of MoES budget in the medium-term projection⁹. This component includes current expenditure on vocational education as well as funds allocated for rehabilitation of initial vocational training centres and community colleges.

Funding of state professional schools was assured generally by the central state budget. Traditionally, share of VET funding in the total education funding was between 2.5 – 3 per cent (only salary for VET teachers and administrative staff). Salary debt reached from 1997 1,6 Mio GEL. It was fully covered only in 2004.

At the moment share of VET funding in total education budget is only 1 per cent (3,9 Mio GEL). Compared to Azerbaijan, where VET funding is 5% out of total education funding, it is extremely low number. However, according to strategic plan, in 2009 at least 20% out of total education funding will be spent on VET sector.

State education budget in 2006 could be broken down as follows:

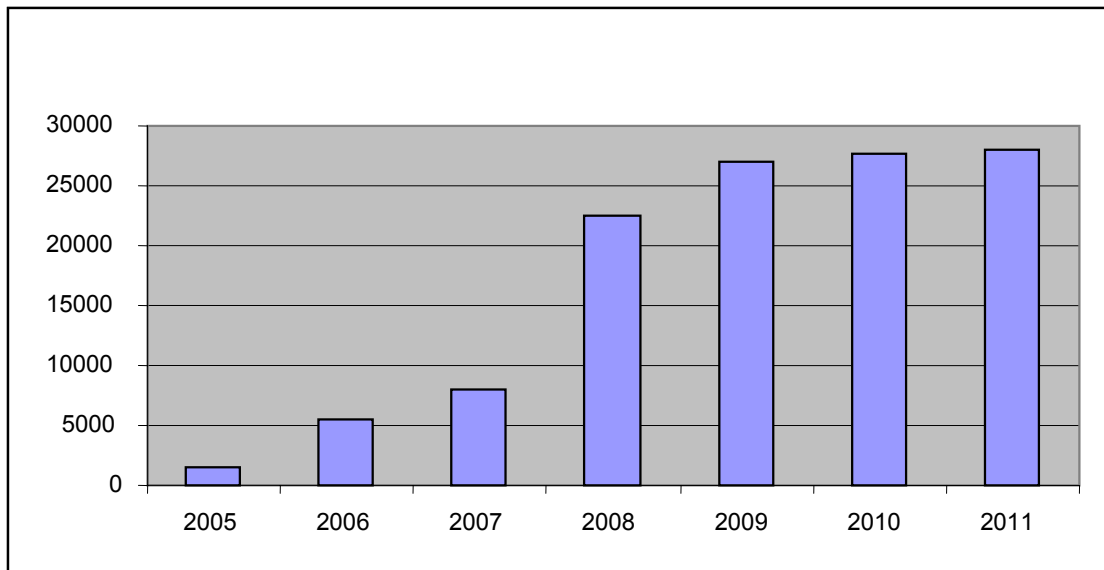
1% - VET, 23% - school buildings rehabilitation (among them 1,59 % - VET schools), 53% - general education, 9% - higher education, 12% - other programs, 1%- ministerial staff (management fees).

⁷ Source: MoES: Georgia: Education Strategy and Action Plan (2007-2011).

⁸ Figures from 2003 to 2006 are actual figures. Figures for 2007 are approved in 2007 budget and for 2008 onwards are MTEF projections. No estimates available for 2007-2010 for expenditure other than MoES budget, it is assumed that the ratio of MoES budget to consolidated public expenditure on education will remain unchanged throughout the future period.

⁹ In these diagrams figures for 2005 and 2006 are actual expenditures, figures for 2007 are approved in 2007 budget and figures for 2008 through 2011 are based on MTEF projections.

Diagram 3. Vocational Education Support Program (Mio GEL)



Considering VET funding scheme, same approach will be introduced, as already in general and higher education: in order to ensure efficient funding of vocational education, voucher funding – the money follows the student model – will be introduced: instead of allocating lump sums to individual institutions, funding will be provided on a per capita basis. The size of the voucher will vary according to specializations and will reflect program-specific requirements. Details will be elaborated by MoES.

Institutional and human capacity of the leading institutions: policy formulation / implementation and monitoring. Reform.

On the way towards reforming the vocational schools in Georgia, dearth of up-to-date programs, textbooks, shortage of material and technical base and outdated teaching methodologies is an important impediment. Lack of specially trained teachers and instructors is another problem: the new education reality needs especially trained pedagogical staff.

In the Soviet time, higher pedagogical institutions were educating staff for VET schools – now HEIs are not working in this field any more, there are no specific educational programs. Accordingly new methodology of teaching/instructing for VET centres is not developed.

Despite of shortage of specially trained pedagogical staff, there is a lack of specialists of vocational education policy both at the ministerial and institutional levels. Training of specialists shall become subject of special discussion.

Donor co-ordination: key donors involved in the sector (education and VET), inputs, co-ordination, problems.

Main donors active in the field of vocational education are USAID, UNDF, EU, Eurasia Foundation, and other NGOs or embassies of foreign countries. List of donors, provided by the MoES is as follows:

- British Council in Georgia
- Delegation of the European Commission to Georgia (DECG)
- Department for Technologic Education in Oklahoma (USA)
- Embassy of Netherlands in Georgia
- Embassy of the United States in Georgia
- Eurasia Foundation

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- European Training Foundation (ETF)
- Foundation for Development of Human Resources (FDHR)
- Georgian Employers' Association
- Georgian Technical University
- Georgian Institute for Public Administration (GIPA) (*support for agricultural VET sector*)
- Gesellschaft fuer Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ)
- Government of Greece
- International Organization for Migration (IOM) (*career planning*)
- International Labour Organization (ILO)
- Institute for International Cooperation of the German Adult Education Association – Project Office Tbilisi
- Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) (*school rehabilitation*)
- Netherlands Senior Experts PUM
- United Nations Development Program (UNDP)
- United States Agency for International Development (USAID)
- USA Association “Community Colleges for International Development” (*in April 2006 signed memorandum with MoES*)
- World learning/Start (USAID/Caucasus)
- World Vision Georgia
- United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)

Donor support ranges from rehabilitation of VET schools to elaboration of occupational and professional standards and policy development in the field of VET.

There is a problem of coordination of donor activities, which is quite usual for Georgia – certain issues are covered by many donors at the same time, while other problems lack attention and support.

On May 10, 2007, Eurasia Foundation South Caucasus Cooperation Program (SCCP) has announced ENP Policy Research Grant Competition on Vocational Education¹⁰ aiming development of analysis and policy options on VET.

New studies, researches issued on VET development

As already mentioned above, in last years no specific research has been conducted on problems of vocational education, despite ETF reviews. A short research has been conducted by request of the Georgia Adult Education Association (AEAG) and funded by the Georgian Branch of the Association of National Universities of Germany in 2006 (see annex 5).

Labour Force surveys or other surveys (household budget, or living standard measurement surveys) carried out and their main results.

Labour force & labour market surveys are responsibility of National Professional Agency. Till its establishment, ETF seems to be the only one organization interested in and conducting research on labour market and employment. The last and most actual labour market research has been conducted in 2006 by independent expert (see annex 5) on the request of ETF.

In the framework of UNDP supported project “Integrated Employment Generation and Small and Medium Enterprise Development Program” Employers Association of Georgia has conducted labor demand research in some regions of Georgia for agriculture and constructing sectors.

At the moment, National Accreditation Agency is conducting labour market research together with the British Council, but focusing on the needs for higher education.

¹⁰ www.eurasia.org.ge; www.efscpp.org

Statistical update (2005-2006) on:**a. admission, enrolment (total, by specialties, by regions). Non-public VET**

Generally, exact statistical data on VET are not available, since the situation is changing daily. Besides, EMIS has not even special forms/questionnaires for data collecting on VET – it just starts its work in the field.

All data provided below are from Statistical Department of Georgia (www.statistics.ge).

All tables represent data on secondary professional (VET) schools – institutions, which now operate in a special regime. Since the new law on VET recognizes only two levels of vocational education – apprenticeship and higher VET – secondary VET schools must be re-structured. Some of them will be newly established as centres for vocational education (see above), some of them have an ambition to be established as colleges – type of higher education institution, which provides first cycle of higher education: academic programs leading to a Bachelors' degree and higher vocational programs.

A network of community colleges will also be established in the regions on the basis of existing institutes and colleges.

Before the restructuring, secondary VET schools are not allowed to admit students. Graduates of secondary VET schools will be awarded diploma of specialist, thus equalized with future graduates of higher professional programs.

Table 1. Number of students admitted to secondary professional schools

	at the beginning of school year, unit
State VET schools	
2002	7 004
2003	6 153
2004	7 465
2005	7 312
2006	4 745
of which fee-paying students	
2002	2 260
2003	1 764
2004	2 831
2005	3 198
2006	2 130
Private VET schools	
2002	2 293
2003	2 007
2004	2 454
2005	3 172
2006	4 138

Latest data on enrolment and graduation by speciality are only from 2000 – 2004 (tables 2 and 4).

Table 2. Admission by speciality

	State VET schools				Private VET schools			
	2000/ 2001	2001/ 2002	2002/ 2003	2003/ 2004	2000/ 2001	2001/ 2002	2002/ 2003	2003/ 2004

Admitted, total	7 081	7 392	7 004	6 153	2 030	2 106	2 293	2 007
Industry and Construction	473	417	487	417	-	-	-	-
Transport and Communication	557	725	425	244	-	-	-	-
Agriculture	301	342	343	217	-	-	-	-
Law and Economy	1 215	1 039	794	1 019	182	310	333	129
Medicine and Sport*	1 520	1 608	1 712	1 495	1 693	1 613	1 846	1 675
Education	525	590	598	544	28	30	20	19
Multiple-discipline	1 650	1 812	1 726	1 394	40	81	62	150
Art and Cinema	840	859	919	823	87	72	32	34

* Despite the fact that medical and sports schools are grouped together, according to the available data, in 2000-2004 years all students were studying in medical schools and none of them – in sports schools.

Table 3. Graduates from secondary professional schools

	persons
from state VET schools	
2002	6 300
2003	5 456
2004	5 457
2005	4 937
2006	5 580
of which fee-paying students	
2002	1 997
2003	1 865
2004	2 020
2005	1 797
2006	2 067
from private VET schools	
2002	1 629
2003	1 679
2004	2 178
2005	2 102
2006	2 656

Table 4. Graduation by speciality

	State VET schools				Private VET schools			
	2000/ 2001	2001/ 2002	2002/ 2003	2003/ 2004	2000/ 2001	2001/ 2002	2002/ 2003	2003/ 2004
Graduates, total	7 445	7 489	6 300	5 456	1 460	1 272	1 629	1 679
Industry and Construction	470	494	315	276	-	-	-	-
Transport and Communication	474	440	543	309	-	-	-	-
Agriculture	199	237	271	221	-	-	-	-
Law and Economy	1 499	1 350	967	733	45	82	28	26

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Medicine and Sport	2 036	1 724	1 536	1 395	1 297	1 084	1541	1 538
Education	528	657	546	468	42	24	26	28
Multiple-discipline	1 500	1 828	1 419	1 406	58	48	10	20
Art and Cinema	739	759	703	648	18	34	24	67

Latest data on enrolment by specialty are from 2004, when number of state VET schools was 85, and private VET schools – 65.

Table 5. Enrolment in secondary VET schools by speciality and gender

	State VET schools	Number of pupils	Of which female	Private VET schools	Number of pupils	Of which female
VET schools, total	85	20 355	12 456 (61%)	65	5 414	4 347 (80%)
Industry and Construction	6	1 153	597 (52%)	-	-	-
Transport and Communication	6	943	218 (23%)	-	-	-
Agriculture	4	747	270 (36%)	-	-	-
Law and Economy	12	2 796	1 206 (43%)	5	350	189 (54%)
Medicine and Sport	12	3 998	3 656 (92%)	48	4 549	3 805 (84%)
Education	2	2 553	2 275 9 (89%)	2	59	55 (93%)
Multiple-discipline	23	5 089	2 174 (43%)	6	351	223 (64%)
Art and Cinema	20	3 076	2 060 (67%)	4	105	75 (72%)

b. VET schools (total and by region) with indication of the number that effectively works / provides VET services. Non-public VET

Within the framework of Revitalization of Vocational Educational Institutions program, 11 new centres of initial vocational education will be opened in Georgia in 2007: 4 in Tbilisi and 7 in seven different regions of the country. These centres cover a wide range of subjects including ICT, tourism, transport, agriculture, applied art and construction. The first one – Vocational Education Centre of Information Technologies - (www.itvet.ge) has been officially opened on May 25, the rest will be opened during the next three months. All new schools are legal entities of public law.

Nothing is known yet about the establishment of private centres of initial vocational education.

Table 6. General secondary professional schools and number of pupils

	State VET schools	Number of pupils
2002/2003	85	22 618
2003/2004	85	20 355
2004/2005	87	20 682
2005/2006	86	20 904

2006/2007	79*	18 242
of which fee-paying students		
2002/2003	26	5 972
2003/2004	26	5 299
2004/2005	32	6 394
2005/2006	26	6 839
2006/2007	26	6 658

* According to latest data, 46 professional schools have been re-founded as legal entities of public law. From the rest, 26 VET schools have been placed under Ministry of Culture, Monument Protection and Sport, status of 13 medical schools is not clear yet (medical education will be restructured, since medicine, alongside with law and pedagogy, is a regulated profession).

Table 7. Private secondary professional schools

	Private VET schools	Number of pupils
2002/2003	63	5 555
2003/2004	65	5 414
2004/2005	66	6 220
2005/2006	67	7 491
2006/2007	78*	10 578

* An increased number of private secondary VET schools in 2006 (78 compared with 67 in 2005) was a surprise even for the Ministry of Education and Science. Official representatives of MoES couldn't explain the emergence of new private schools, but Department of Statistics has recently placed this information on its official web-site (www.statistics.ge). This fact corroborates once again the chaotic situation on statistical data in the transition period.

Table 8. Enrolment by regions

	State VET schools	Number of pupils	Private VET schools	Number of pupils
Georgia, total	85	20 355	65	5 414
Tbilisi	23	8 050	18	1 318
Abkhazia AR	4	406	2	194
Adjara AR	8	2 714	8	535
Guria	5	948	2	102
Imereti	12	2 730	16	2 040
Kakheti	7	975	7	342
Mzkheta-Mtianeti	2	583	2	25
Racha-Lechkhumi and Kvemo Svaneti	1	67	-	-
Samegrelo and Zemo Svaneti	10	1 850	3	316
Samzkhche-Javakheti	4	426	1	35
Kvemo Kartli	4	907	4	433
Shida Kartli	5	699	2	74

Latest data on enrolment by regions are from 2004, when number of state VET schools was 85, and private VET schools – 65.

According to MoES, up to date data on number of really active VET schools of all levels will be presumable available by the end of 2007, after the process of restructuring and re-founding will be finished.

c. Ratio students/teachers

Data on student/teacher ratio are not available officially. But since there are data on number of pupils (tables 6 & 7) and teachers in VET schools (table 9), ratio could be calculated.

Table 9. Number of teachers of secondary professional schools

	State VET schools				Private VET schools			
	2003/ 2004	2004/ 2005	2005/ 2006	2006/ 2007	2003/ 2004	2004/ 2005	2005/ 2006	2006/ 2007
Teachers, total	3 813	3 608	3 462	3 158	1188	927	1211	1 646
Of which:								
full-time	2 800	2 478	2 489	2 197	585	345	349	617
part-time	1 013	1 130	973	961	603	582	862	1 029

Table 10. Student/teacher ratio in state and private VET schools.

	State VET schools		Private VET schools	
	2006	2007	2006	2007
Number of pupils	20 904	18 242	7 491	10 578
Number of teachers	3 463	3 158	1 211	1 646
Student/teacher ration	6/1	5,7/1	6,1/1	6,4/2

Data are provided for 2006 and 2007 years.

It must be mentioned, that same teachers could teach in more than only one school, so the absolute number of teachers can be not representing the facts.

Annex 1. Acronyms and Abbreviations

AR	Autonomous Republic
DECG	Delegation of the European Commission to Georgia
DVV	Deutscher Volkshochschulverband
EDPRP	Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Program
EED	Evangelischer Entwicklungsdienst
EMIS	Education Management Information System
ENP	European Neighbourhood Policy
ETF	European Training Foundation
FDHR	Foundation for Development of Human Resources
GEL	Georgian Lari (national currency)
GIPA	Georgian Institute for Public Administration
GTZ	Gesellschaft fuer Technische Zusammenarbeit
HEI	Higher Education Institution
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
LLL	Lifelong Learning
MoES	Ministry of Education and Science
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
PUM	Netherlands Senior Experts
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USD	United States Dollar
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
VET	Vocational Education and Training
WB	World Bank

Annex 2. List of organizations/persons interviewed

1. Bakradze Lali
Head of Association “Education Development Institute”
2. Chubinidze Nino
Head of National Accreditation Centre
3. Dalakishvili Nana
Head Division of Higher and Vocational Education Programs
Ministry of Education and Science
4. Khantadze Irine
Head of CTC - Consultation and Training Centre
5. Kitiashvili Ani
National Curriculum and Assessment Centre
VET Coordinator
6. Klotz Ludmila
Expert
Foundation for Development of Human Resources
7. Kutateladze Nino
Education Expert
World Bank Georgia
8. Levan Kvachadze
Head of Georgian Office DVV-International
9. Giorgi Machabeli
Head of International Institute for Education Policy Planning and Management
10. Reisner Oliver
Project Manager
Delegation of the European Commission to Georgia and Armenia

Annex 3. Country Profile

Table 11.

Data	#
<i>General information</i>	
Total population	4 401 300
Female population	2 310 500
Child population (under 18 years)	1 127 400
Total adult literacy rate	99
% of the population below the poverty line ¹¹	54%
Unemployment rate	13.8%
Active population (labour force)	2 023 900
Average monthly income (GEL)	204
GNI per capita (USD)	1 350
Net migration rate ¹²	-4.54 / 1 000
IDPs	237 069
Refugees	1 334
<i>Number of children (% of total child population)</i>	
IDP children	45 000 (3.9%)
Refugee children	245 (0.02%)
School age children living in conflict zones	7 637 (0.67%)
Children in boarding institutions ¹³	2 490 (0.22%)

¹¹ Data on poverty refer to 2005 www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook

¹² CIA fact-book (2006) www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook

¹³ Boarding institutions (otherwise also called special general education institutions) are for children with mental or physical disabilities, children deprived of family care or for children from socially vulnerable families.

Annex 4. Basic education data¹⁴

Table 12.

Category	#
Number of children attending kindergarten	242 000
Number of kindergartens (public & private)	1 214
Number of school children	1 080 000
Number of schools (public & private)	2 744
Number of teachers	68 992
Primary school attendance rates (%)	99
Secondary school attendance rates (%)	80
Adult literacy rates (%)	99
Number of HEIs (public & private)	42 ¹⁵
Number of students at HEIs	144 300

¹⁴ Source: MoES

¹⁵ Only accredited HEIs; number of non-accredited, but licensed HEIs in Georgia is 129 (www.nea.ge)

Annex 4. NGOs active in education

- Association “School, Family, Society” (SFSA)
- Centre for Training and Consultancy (CTC)
- Centre for Studying Youth Problems
- DVV international
- Education Development Institute (EDI)
- Education Policy Planning and Management Institute (EPPM)
- Foundation for Human Resources Development
- Institute for Policy Studies
- Liberty Institute
- Teachers Union “Education and World”

Annex 5. List of attached documents

- Georgia: Education Strategy and Action Plan (2007-2011)
- Vocational Education in Georgia: Problems and Prospects
- Informal Employment in the Georgian Labour Market – Volume, Mobility, Prospects, Obstacles to be Surmounted and Development of Abilities” Final Report

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