

Minutes on the Meeting of the Coordinating Council

Working Meeting

Minutes of the Meeting №4

Tbilisi

8.12.2023

On December 8, 2023, another meeting of the Coordinating Council of the National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement (hereinafter - the Center) was held via Zoom, which was attended by the members of the Coordinating Council and the representatives of the Center. The meeting was held following the agenda (see Appendix 1, Appendix 2).

The meeting was opened by the Deputy Director of the Center, Lasha Margishvili. He welcomed the members of the Coordinating Council, thanked them for their participation and introduced the agenda to them. He said that the current meeting was the last session of the year of the Coordinating Council and the following issues were to be discussed: the action plan of the Center strategy for the following year, the membership in the European Association of Vocational Education, and results of a thematic analysis of three-year self-evaluation reports, which were presented by higher education institutions as part of both authorization and accreditation. He stated that an interesting thematic analysis was performed on these reports and the staff of the HE Quality Assurance Department in collaboration with the staff from the Planning, Research, and International Relations department, conducted a study to assess the effectiveness of existing mechanisms. A special 60-credit teacher training programme was also supposed to be developed. He pointed out that in 2023, an entry was made to the law- "On Higher Education". enabling institutions to establish a specialized teacher training programme as an independent initiative. Consequently, pertinent updates should be incorporated into the accreditation regulations, which will, for example, determine the fees for accrediting such programmes. Following the agenda, the Center presented the key framework of the 2024 budget at the meeting, outlining the parameters that would determine the Center's budget and financial stability. Furthermore, discussions would cover the Center's document on labor safety policy, the draft of proposed changes to the general education authorization regulation, and the draft of proposed changes to the authorization regulation in the field of vocational education.

Lasha Margishvili pointed out that one of the issues for discussion would be reaching an agreement on the schedule for the meetings of the Coordinating Council in 2024. This is to ensure that members of the Coordinating Council are informed well in advance about the dates of the meetings throughout the year.

Prior to addressing the agenda items, Lasha Margishvili provided the members of the Council with information on the draft report from ENQA. According to the procedure, the Center is required to respond to any factual inaccuracies by December 12. The mentioned project is not currently public, and it will be disclosed after ENQA approves the final conclusion and publishes it on its website. It is expected to happen in February 2024. Lasha Margishvili gave the floor to Lasha Zivzivadze and asked to present the Draft Activity Report 2024 of the Center.

Lasha Zivzivadze welcomed the members of the Council and presented the project of the 2024 Action Plan of the Center. He mentioned that the work on the action plan started in September of this year, involving all structural units of the Center in the process. Public discussions were conducted in each direction, and the feedback received was incorporated into the action plan to the greatest extent possible. The action plan was posted on the Center's website for ten days, allowing all interested parties the opportunity to provide feedback. He pointed out that in comparison to 2023, the number of activities in the 2024 draft action plan has increased (with a total of 104 activities). This rise in numbers was primarily prompted by the findings of research and analysis, with corresponding activities formulated to address them. He noted that the satisfaction survey serves as one of the starting points for the Center's initiatives, and new activities are planned based on its outcomes. He emphasized the significance of adhering to the Center's international obligations, such as the association agreement, which holds great importance. The 2024 action plan incorporates recommendations from various organizations. Additionally, it encompasses initiatives directly from the Services and Management outlined in the draft action plan.

The Center's strategy for a five-year period is structured around seven strategic directions. The initial strategic direction pertains to the organizational and institutional development of the Center. In 2024, the Center plans to implement a system for evaluating employee performance. In 2023, employee evaluations were carried out in pilot mode, and in 2024, the system will be officially introduced. According to the evaluation system, the primary objective is to design developmental activities tailored to individual Center employees. Upon each employee's evaluation, specific activities will be planned in response, representing a significant step forward in the direction of institutional development. The action plan includes an activity focused on strengthening the capacities of the Coordinating Council. Specifically, an external event will be organized to actively engage the Coordinating Council and receive initiatives from its members. Moreover, the year 2024 holds significant strategic importance for the Center, as the mid-term evaluation of the five-year strategy will be conducted. The evaluation of the strategy is planned to involve an international expert. In this regard, communication has already been started with one of the foreign experts who will assess the three-year interim period. The insights gained from this evaluation will be used in planning subsequent activities. The mid-term evaluation will identify the primary challenges, and future actions will be planned based on these findings.

Lasha Zivzivadze noted that monitoring of international obligations is planned for 2024 to assess their implementation status and identify any necessary actions. Additionally, there are plans to study international practices in the field of thematic analysis. He also addressed the Center's annual conference, mentioning that it is scheduled to take place on February 26, 27, and 28, 2024, with a focus on ensuring the quality of general education, early/pre-school, and vocational education. During the event, the primary trends in the development of education quality will be presented.

As part of the second goal of the strategy, which addresses internationalization issues, the Center plans to participate in relevant international conventions within its competence. At this stage, the ratification of the global convention is planned, and the Center is actively involved in the process in accordance with its competence. In addition, it is planned to prepare recommendations on the initiation of changes in regulatory acts for the purpose of introducing and recognizing microcredits. At the initial stage, two consultation and informational working meetings are planned with interested parties. Subsequently, specific recommendations for the introduction and recognition of microcredits will be prepared based on these meetings and submitted to the Ministry of Education and Science.

Regarding participation in Bologna Process working groups and the co-organization of meetings, the Center is currently represented in five working groups within the Bologna Process. These encompass learning/teaching, quality development, social dimension, skills development, and the Lisbon Convention.

The employees of the Center actively participate and contribute their opinions and presentations at the aforementioned events.

"Also, in 2024, there are plans to initiate the referencing process for the National Qualifications Framework and to develop and update the sectoral benchmarks of higher education."

Within the framework of the third objective outlined in the strategic plan, which refers to the development of services, it is crucial to establish consistent and standardized criteria. These criteria should be formulated through an analysis of the practices involved in the recognition of distance education. Furthermore, procedures for recognizing education obtained abroad, it is planned to prepare drafts of amendments to the legislative and by-laws in 2024. He also discussed the development of an electronic platform, which is planned to enable interested individuals to have access to the Center's services in a streamlined manner. This includes confirming the recognition of education, making service payments, and promptly receiving the relevant documents quickly.

Additionally, there is a plan to conduct an annual customer satisfaction survey covering at least 5 service areas. He emphasized the intention to enhance the capacities of professional civil servants and professional educational institutions in terms of quality assurance.

As part of the fourth objective outlined in the strategy, focused on the quality of general education, the authorization process for general educational institutions will continue in 2024. According to the schedule, a minimum of 100 public general educational institutions are to undergo authorization. The role of resource centers is crucial in the authorization process, and there are plans to implement various measures for their strengthening by 2024.

In relation to the capacity of the General Education Institutions Authorization Board, the Center aims to enhance the capabilities of the members of the Authorization Board, the Appeal Board, and the authorization experts.

In terms of ensuring the quality of professional education, activities will be implemented next year to strengthen the capabilities of the system. Specifically, efforts will be directed towards enhancing the capacity of the administrative staff in institutions implementing professional educational programmes. This initiative will encompass approximately 30 educational institutions, including principals, deputy principals, and administrative staff. In addition, there are plans to reinforce the capacity of the Council responsible for granting the right to training/retraining and to enhance the capacity of the Appeals Council. In 2024, there are plans to certify specialists within the quality assurance service of vocational education, with the aim of increasing the number of certified experts.

In terms of enhancing the quality of higher education, there are plans to implement cluster accreditation in the fields of business and administration in 2024. There are plans to enhance the capacities of educational institutions involved in the processes of authorization and accreditation. Training sessions will be conducted for a minimum of 30 educational institutions.

It is planned to initiate a pilot programme for the evaluation of doctoral programmes using new standards for higher education institutions. As he mentioned, a minimum of three higher education institutions will participate in the pilot assessment next year.

In 2024, there are plans to analyze the method of selecting authorization and accreditation councils and to initiate specific changes to the process. It is planned to certify the renewed expert corps for accreditation in the fields of business and administration. The process started in 2023 and will continue in 2024.

Within the framework of the seventh goal of the strategy, focusing on early and preschool education and the quality of education, it was highlighted that the process of self-evaluation in kindergartens is currently underway. Additionally, there are plans to develop a document for the analysis of this self-evaluation.

As it is known, the authorization of kindergartens is scheduled from 2025. In preparation for this, the upcoming year holds significance for kindergartens as the authorization schedule must be developed. This schedule will identify the specific kindergartens that will undergo the authorization process. In addition, specific training sessions and seminars, including simulation processes, are planned for the development of early and preschool institutions. This process is planned to be carried out for at least 200 institutions.

In line with the agenda, as the second item for discussion, Lasha Zivzivadze presented the proposed dates for the Coordinating Council meetings in 2024, with March 28 and December 5, 2024. He mentioned that based on the findings of the 2023 Center Satisfaction Survey, one key observation was the importance of pre-determining the possible dates of the Council meetings. This approach is aimed at ensuring that members are informed in advance, allowing them to be prepared for the meetings. As Lasha Zivzivadze pointed out, besides the two regular sessions, the possibility of convening additional sessions ahead of the schedule during the year is also possible to be held.

Following the agenda, Lasha Zivzivadze provided information regarding the membership of the institution in the European Association of Institutes for Vocational Training (EVBB). He emphasized that every year the center becomes a member of various organizations in terms of internationalization, which is very important for the Center. He highlighted that the organization operates in the field of professional education with the goal of enhancing the quality and delivery of professional education within European countries and at the European level. The organization focuses on ensuring quality in professional education, along with the integration of young people into society. It also aims to promote professional training and the practical implementation of education. 362 organizations from 23 countries, including European countries, are members of EVBB. The annual membership fee is 600 euros, it depends on the number of people, how many people work in the Center. Regarding the benefits, it is crucial for the Center to enhance its visibility and awareness. He also mentioned that the General Secretary of the organization visited Georgia, where he held a meeting with representatives of the Center. Following the meeting, the Center made a decision to join the mentioned organization. After the presentation, Lasha Margishvili addressed the Coordinating Council, inviting them to ask questions regarding the presented.

The Chairperson of the Council, Rusudan Sanadze, thanked Lasha Zivzivadze for the insightful report. She noted that the presentation provided a clear understanding of the priority areas on which the

Center would focus its efforts in the coming year. She said that these issues had been thoroughly discussed on multiple occasions, and she was familiar with all of them. No directions were mentioned that had not been previously addressed. She emphasized that, above all, it is highly significant to join in various international organizations. She expressed interest in understanding the criteria for selecting this particular organization and asked about any future development plans. Additionally, she wanted to know on whether there was a specific vision for joining other organizations in the future.

In response, Lasha Zivzivadze explained that the selection of the mentioned organization was based on the recommendation of ETF. The Center specifically requested ETF to recommend an organization in the field of professional education. ETF representatives recommended two important organizations, including EVBB. In addition, when the EVBB representative arrived in Georgia, they were met by the Center's management. Following the discussion, a decision was reached to pursue membership in the organization. The presentation served as a means to gain the agreement of the Coordination Council on the discussed matter.

In the question-and-answer session, Irma Kurdadze raised a question regarding general education. She inquired whether there is an upper limit determined for the planned authorization of at least 100 schools. She also asked about higher education, specifically in the area of education management. As is known, the sectoral council initiated the transfer of education administration to education sciences. At this stage, a final decision regarding whether the location will be changed or not has not been reached.

Lasha Zivzivadze clarified that the commitment to authorize at least 100 public schools stems from an agreement signed with the World Bank. It was further explained that additional public schools may also be included in this authorization process. In addition, Tamar Ratianidze, the representative of the General Education Quality Assurance Service, provided further clarification. She explained that amendments have been made to the General Education Law, and instead of the originally planned authorization timeline for the 2026-2027 school year, public schools will now undergo gradual authorization before the commencement of the 2030-2031 school year. Regarding the upcoming year, the Center planned to conduct authorization proceedings for at least 100 schools.

If the principal approves, an appropriate initiation will be prepared to make the change in the field of study classifier. Since the programs in the field of administration studies must be presented for accreditation by May 2024, because there are windows for submitting the accreditation application, in the first quarter of 2024, the initiative mentioned in January will already have legal force. As for educational management, it remains unchanged under the field of study of administration.

In response to the second question, Lasha Margishvili noted that in the upcoming year, programmes falling under the field of administration will undergo the cluster accreditation process. Additionally, he mentioned that a project for the sectoral benchmarks of education administration will be presented through external initiative. This initiative includes a proposed change in the field of study for educational programmes leading to the qualification of education administration. In particular, business and administration are moving into an interdisciplinary direction in the field of study of the science of education. As it is known, there are plans to hold a meeting of the sectoral council by the end of the year to discuss this matter. Upon receiving the Council's approval, the document will be submitted to the Director for approval. If the Director approves, the initiation will be prepared. The

programmes in the field of administration studies must be presented by May 2024 as there are windows for submission of accreditation applications, by the end of the first quarter of 2024, the mentioned initiative will already have legal force. As for educational management, it remains unchanged under the field of study of administration.

The next question was asked by Shalva Mekravishvili. He thanked Lasha Zivzivadze for the interesting and comprehensive presentations. Additionally, he noted that one of the points raised was related to strengthening the capabilities of resource centers, specifically in terms of the authorization of educational institutions. He requested further clarification on what is meant by this particular direction. He mentioned that the authorization of general educational institutions is conducted through four standards. Regarding the first, third and fourth standards, he knows the qualifications of the employees at the resource centers and is confident in their ability to handle these aspects. However, the second standard, which refers to the analysis of subject programmes and curricula, is highly specific. He expressed interest to know whether there are plans to strengthen the resource centers in this particular direction as well.

In response, Lasha Zivzivadze explained that Tamar Ratianidze, the representative of the General Education Quality Assurance Service, would provide details about the strategies being developed in this regard. Tamar Ratianidze noted that there are plans for the intensive involvement of resource center employees in the mentioned process. Additionally, training sessions and workshops are scheduled to enhance their capabilities in this regard. However, she mentioned that she does not have information on other details at the moment. In addition, Lasha Margishvili asked Tamar Ratianidze to document the issue and report it to the council in written form after the meeting, which Tamar agreed to. Tamar Ratianidze noted that she would provide more detailed information to the members of the Council in writing after the end of the session.

The member of the Coordinating Council Kai Etzoldi, thanked the speaker for the engaging presentation. He acknowledged that the Center has accomplished a significant amount of work in implementing activities for the current year, with more than 10% of the activities included in the 2024 action plan. He expressed hope that the Center has the necessary resources to successfully implement these plans. He also provided comments on the first objective related to employee evaluation, highlighting the sensitivity of the issue. Drawing from his own experience, he emphasized the importance of careful consideration in determining evaluation indicators. He mentioned that he remembers the activity having been postponed from the current year to the next year. He also asked whether an international expert is included in the process of forming accreditation experts and the overall body of experts. He finally thanked the Center for setting the dates of next year's Council meetings.

Nikoloz Parjanadze, in response, explained that the Center has multifaceted work to perform, and some portions of it have already been implemented. The composition of the corps of experts is consistently being refreshed, and to achieve this, the Center has already initiated the process of attesting the existing local experts in the field of business. At this stage, the documents are reassessed. Attestation involves very intensive cooperation with experts. In this particular case, there will be a business field discussion, followed by intensive training. The next stage involves attestation, where experts will be required to perform specific tasks. Subsequently, there will be an interview stage, ultimately leading to the recruitment of experts into the corps. Nikoloz Parjanadze said that the Center plans to enhance the

involvement of international experts. In this regard, information has been sent to various partner agencies. Information is already posted on the ENQA website, and in case of interest, international experts have the opportunity to apply to participate in the competition. Additionally, a competition will be simultaneously announced across Georgia to attract new local experts.

After concluding the question and answer session, Lasha Margishvili asked Ms. Rusudan to separately vote on each issue: 2024 Action Plan Draft, the 2024 Board Meeting Dates, and joining the EVBB organization.

Rusudan Sanadze, before proceeding with the vote, commented that in relation to the work of the Coordinating Council and the ENQA report with its recommendations, they would discuss the initiative to enhance the capacities of the Coordination Council during a face-to-face meeting. Then, she proceeded to vote on the issues:

An Action Plan of the Center:

Proponent: 9

Opponent: 0

She then presented the proposed dates of the Coordination Council meetings as the next issue: they are: March 28 and December 5 and asked the Council members if they agreed on these dates.

Proponent: 9

Opponent: 0

The third issue, EVBB - joining the European Association of Vocational Education Organizations.

Proponent: 9

Opponent: 0

Lasha Margishvili noted that the Center has recently become a member of INQAAHE, which includes not only European but also various agencies from around the world. In the future, the Center is considering strengthening its efforts in the direction of joining field related associations. There are a number of associations created for a specific purpose and field, they implement programmes in a specific direction. One is the Washington Accord, which brings together agencies that accredit engineering programmes, such as the WFME, in the field of medical education; The Washington Accord specifically pertains to the field of engineering. Lasha Margishvili thanked everyone for their involvement and support and introduced the next speaker, Nikoloz Parjanadze, who presented two issues, the prepared thematic analysis and the proposed amendments to the accreditation regulations.

As the first issue, Nikoloz Parjanadze made a presentation regarding the three-year reports. He explained that once every three years, the Higher Education Institutions present a mid-term evaluation analysis

This refers to both the authorization process and the accreditation process, and accordingly, an interim evaluation document must be submitted within three years of the authorization stage, and the same scenario applies to the accreditation of higher education programmes. It is important to research,

analyze, observe the current processes and study one's own practices to see how efficient and effective the mechanisms they use in the process of external evaluation are. The focus is on the higher educational institutions themselves. To what extent do the existing mechanisms help universities in research and development of their own processes? For this purpose, one of the chosen mechanisms is the thematic analysis of the triennial report, prepared in collaboration with the Planning Research and International Relations Office. The research is based on the methodology prepared within the framework of Twinning. As for the main plot of the research, three research questions were developed and these three questions relate to the effectiveness of the triennial report. Accordingly, three-year authorization reports were combined, as well as three-year accreditation reports, and in the direction of authorization, 13 HEIs were selected. One of the main principles in the selection process was that universities were chosen for which the thematic analysis results had already been established by 2022. Nikoloz Parjanadze explained how the three-year report differs from other interim reports. In the case of a three-year thematic report, the so-called legal result does not emerge for any higher educational institution, and this activity is entirely directed towards development. Accordingly, these conclusions are not discussed at the Council, as already mentioned, nor do they have any legal consequences. As for the three-year accreditation reports, in this case the main emphasis was placed on the fifth standard and quality mechanisms, therefore two main tools are used in this direction - document analysis and in-depth interviews. Also, the quality context of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia was analyzed. He noted that the document is publicly available on the Center's website in Georgian and a relatively small English version, the so-called executive summary.

He briefly spoke about the findings and noted that the institutions' perspective was outlined. Additionally, the perspectives of representatives of quality agencies were considered, and these positions were reconciled. It's worth noting that the entire process has been positively evaluated by many interested parties, and no negative attitudes were identified. In some cases, the resources spent may not be proportionate to the obtained results. In other cases, on the contrary, it is considered to be a very beneficial exercise that is focused on development. Accordingly, specific findings were analyzed, recommendations were developed.

The second issue presented by Nikoloz Parjanadze was related to changes in the law. According to these changes, educational institutions have the opportunity to develop a special teacher training educational programme, which is a 60-credit independent programme. The prerequisites for admission to the programme are established by law in advance, and upon successful completion, a certificate is issued, along with meeting the prerequisites for entry into the teaching profession.

He also emphasized the importance of presenting the amendments to the law on higher education. These specific changes refer to changes to be considered in the accreditation statute and accreditation fees, and these changes refer to the composition of the accreditation expert group and the need to determine accreditation fees. The accreditation statute mentioned the teacher training educational programme, but the special teacher training programme has not specifically been emphasized. Accordingly, it becomes necessary to incorporate the special teacher training programme and determine the fee. The change needs to be reflected in the statute. There is no need to modify specific content details; it is important only to clarify the specific context.

Irma Kurdadze noted that the presented issues are very relevant and the mentioned issue is important for the majority of universities. She asked if the mentioned programme will be similar to the 60-

credit teacher training programme, meaning if a person obtains a certificate, will they attain the status of a senior teacher upon entering the school? Is it a prerequisite for the 60-credit programme to pass the teacher's subject exam? In addition, Irma Kurdadze commented on the first report and noted that the preparation of three-year reports requires a lot of time and resources. It's a good initiative, and it's crucial to define the form since external evaluation serves as an alert.

In response, Nikoloz explained that the certificate, in this case, serves as an opportunity to enter the profession, and if it is issued, the status of a senior teacher is granted. A prerequisite for admission is the successful passing of the subject test of the relevant group and the relevant skills test. As for the reports, he noted that their main motivation was to assess the expediency and evaluate how much the resources invested yield results and contribute to the development of higher educational institutions.

Rusudan Sanadze noted that it is important to take into account the sectoral requirements for the special teacher's educational programme. Regarding the first initiative, the thematic analysis is important for analyzing the dynamics. However, there will be additional work with institutions, such as an annual report based on triennial reports, which will aid in the external evaluation process.

Nikoloz Parjanadze explained that the concept will be developed and discussed with higher educational institutions. The problem was the lack of a unified approach from their side, and from this perspective, they should not discuss the cancellation. However, he noted that the specifics of how this form of assessment will be implemented will be reviewed.

Rusudan Sanadze asked who agreed to consider both issues as information, as a result of which specific changes will be initiated based on the agreement.

Proponent: 9

Opponent: 0

According to the agenda, Maia Kalandadze made a presentation regarding the Center's budget. In particular, a budget was planned for the activities of the 2024 Center Action Plan after the information as presented by all structural units. It consists of both funds receivable from the state and own funds. The amount requested by the Center is 5,175,000 GEL.

As she noted, the center receives income from its own funds in accordance with the services provided. According to the information provided, similar to the current year, there is a 10% increase for full-time and freelance employees, and this is reflected in the budget for the next year. In total, the percentage of the budget and own income is 34% from the budget and 66% from the Center's own sources. The largest cost is spent on labor remuneration.

The Center is obligated to contribute 10% of its own income to the state budget. Additionally, social compensation (maternity leaves, bulletins) - 27% - from the budget and 73% from the Center's own funds. All types of cost parameters are presented in the table.

Maia Kalandadze noted that these parameters will change because the state budget has not yet been approved, and the exact amounts are not known. Therefore, the balances will change at the beginning of the year. As a comment, Lasha Margishvili noted that it is important for the Center to be less

dependent on the state budget from year to year. This was once again confirmed in the ENQA evaluation part as the Center's strategic vision.

In the question-and-answer format, Rusudan Sanadze noted that a critical question raised during the ENQA assessment was how ready the Center is to operate independently. The Center's justification was that the funds provided from outside change dramatically from year to year. In this regard, she requested additional information to illustrate how it has changed compared to the previous year, how it is planned, the percentage change, and the direction in which the Center is trending.

In response, Maia Kalandadze explained that the percentage of the state budget for the current year is 38%, and it is projected to decrease to 34% in the next year's budget. The budget fluctuates annually as fees have become self-sufficient, and the Center strives to minimize its dependence on state budget allocations. The funds may appear increased only when the Center is required to undertake new activities or implement measures mandated by the law. She also highlighted that it was initiated this year and included in the next year's action plan that by 2025, separate budget projects of the main structural units will be prepared.

Rusudan Sanadze thanked Maia Kalandadze and suggested that having a budget distribution aligned with strategic directions and activities would make it more transparent and engaging. Thus, these trends and priorities would be more evident. Maia Kalandadze noted that by engaging all services, they will start identifying risks, and work in this direction has already started.

Irma Kurdadze proposed the initiative that members of the sectoral council should receive a certain remuneration for motivation. If the center's budget permits, this remuneration for members of the sectoral council would apply while working on the sectoral document. Lasha Margishvili mentioned that they are currently deliberating on this initiative, with the Qualifications Development Service also acknowledging it. The outcomes of the discussion will be officially announced at the upcoming Coordinating Council meeting.

Rusudan Sanadze called for a vote on the presented issue concerning the budget, emphasizing that she expects the submission of an additional specified document during the first session of the upcoming year. With these reservations, the Council members unanimously approved.

Proponent: 9

Opponent: 0

As per the agenda, Sophio Mgaloblishvili presented the policy document on labor safety and health protection. She emphasized the importance of the policy document for the Center, encompassing the key directions and principles outlined by the Center. The document also establishes specific goals, with a particular emphasis on the Center's prioritization of health and labor safety protection. This includes the creation of a safe working environment to enhance the life and health protection of employees in the workplace. The labor safety requirements encompass procedures and rules applicable within the Center, designed to ensure the protection of the life and health of employees and other individuals

involved in the work processes. The Center implements an occupational safety and health system for moral, legal, and financial reasons, with an explanation of the importance of each of them.

She also spoke about the model of the labor safety system, which involves planning, implementation, development and evaluation. She also discussed the importance of risk assessment and management. Sophio Mgaloblishvili also addressed the steps of the risk assessment process, the hierarchy of risk control, and the obligations of the employer.

The speaker discussed the investigation of specific incidents and the determination of non-compliance with established requirements. She said that in the investigation of any incident, an employee who witnessed the specific incident is involved, evidence is preserved, and the results are communicated to interested parties, including relevant employee unions, legal bodies, or the Labor Inspection Service. She also discussed the stages of incident investigation, including information gathering, analysis, identification of control measures, and planning corrective actions.

In addition, the focus was on staff training. To hold a certain position, it is also necessary that the employees have a document issued by the relevant state or educational institution, which confirms the relevant qualification of the person. He also focused on the issues of disciplinary policy, measures of disciplinary responsibilities, basic requirements for employees of the center, process monitoring and reporting, which will be submitted to the director of the center.

After the presentation, Rusudan Sanadze put the approval of the presented policy document to a vote.

Proponent: 9

Opponent: 0

In accordance with the agenda, Tamar Ratianidze presented the next presentation about the changes to be implemented in the regulation of the authorization of the general educational institution. From January 1, 2023, important legislative changes were implemented, in particular, 4 new standards of general educational institutions started functioning, on the basis of which the expert corps was formed. It was composed of general education quality assurance experts and subject area experts. Since March 2023, the implementation of large-scale administrative proceedings has begun, the large-scale process of authorization of public schools has also begun. The group of experts evaluating the general educational institution was composed of 11 experts, two of them are general education quality assurance experts, and the rest are 9 subject experts. It is also important to note that quality experts and only natural science subject experts from the subject experts visit the institution on site and during the visit evaluate the institution's readiness in relation to the authorization standards, while the rest of the subject experts are already involved in a remote form using various communication platforms and the institution is evaluated in this format. Based on the above, the possibility of remotely conducting the visit by subject experts was identified. From 2023 on absolutely all administrative proceedings in relation to general educational institutions.

It is an important news that the role of educational resource centers is increasing in the direction of strengthening the mechanisms of external provision of general educational institutions and there is an opportunity to attend the visit in addition to the employee of the center, a representative of the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia, an employee of the resource center, who will participate in the process of the visit, if necessary, will provide technical assistance to the group of experts and

provide effective management of the activities of the group. In case, any procedural violations are detected in the mentioned process, the center will be informed. Also, an important change that is planned is the rule for determining the combined administrative proceedings, which means that if a general education institution wants to add a programme of any level, whether it is a primary, basic or secondary general education programme, and this leads to an increase in the maximum number of places for students, in this case the institution will be authorized, to pay only the prescribed fee for adding the programme, ie if he applies the center for both productions, he will pay only the prescribed fee for adding the programme. Also, if the change of the address of the general educational activity within the same municipality leads to an increase in the maximum number of places for students, in this case the institution will have to pay the specified fee for increasing the maximum number of places for students. The initiated changes serve to protect the interests of general educational institutions, according to which, if there is a case of such administrative proceedings as mentioned above, the scope of assessment of which overlaps and, at the same time, serves a common purpose, it is appropriate for the institution to pay the fee for one administrative proceeding. An important priority direction in this part is that within the framework of the changes, a preferential tariff for the authorization process will be determined for legal entities of private law located outside Tbilisi Municipality. If an institution located outside Tbilisi Municipality wants to apply for a quota of less than 170 students and indicates this in the authorization self-assessment application, it will benefit from a 50% discount rate, and if it wishes to increase the student quota within 2 years and in this case exceeds 169 places, it will have to pay the allowance applied during the authorization.

Within the framework of the changes, it is also planned to calculate the fees to be paid by the general educational institution differently. As mentioned above, subject experts are involved in this process remotely and carry out the assessment of the institution, except for the subject expert of the natural science direction. Also, as noted, the role of involvement of the local resource center is increasing, and all this leads to a reduction of funds, and in this process, in the conditions of the current provision, the part of the money that they have already paid for the authorization fee will be returned to the institutions known as status seekers.

According to the revision of the current regulation, the funds intended for a visit to the region, whether it is hotel accommodation, travel costs, daily travel expenses, are subject to compensation. After the visit, the expert presents relevant evidence in the form of documentation regarding the existence of expenses incurred. As it is known, a significant part of public schools are located in regions where it is difficult for an expert to present a similar type of justification. Accordingly, the method of reimbursement for the expert's travel allowance is changed and, except for Tbilisi, Mtskheta and Rustavi municipalities, the accommodation, travel and daily travel allowance will be given to the expert together with the amount determined by the employment contract.

Within the framework of the planned changes, an important direction is the extension of the term of self-evaluation presentation and also the transition from six-year authorization to nine-year authorization of general educational institutions. Those general education institutions that were evaluated before 2023, before the new evaluation standards came into force, these institutions must ensure compliance with the updated standards from September 1, 2024, and from January 1, 2025, self-evaluation must be carried out on an electronic platform, which is in pilot mode, and from 2025, institutions will have the opportunity. Self-assessment can be done electronically on the mentioned platform. The authorization will be for nine years, and the authorization period will be extended to all

the general educational institutions that will be evaluated within the framework of the new standards from 2023.

Nino Stepanishvili, coordinator of the general education quality assurance service, continued the presentation and explained that he was presenting the planned changes in the authorization regulation. In particular, in accordance with the changes, in relation to monitoring, the forms of monitoring defined by the authorization council and the manner of their implementation will be specified in the regulation. In the current regulation, there is a rather extensive record regarding the monitoring article, which defines the rule/form, although the three main forms are not specified, the visit of the expert group, the study of documents by the expert group (without visiting the school), the submission of documents by the school to the center for their study by the center.

At the request of the council, in case of monitoring with the participation of the expert group, the school will pay the monitoring fee (as the activity of the expert group is remunerated by the center). In the event that the council decides to study documents by the expert group without visiting the school as a form of monitoring, the school will pay only the monitoring fee determined for the municipalities of Tbilisi, Mtskheta, Rustavi, as long as the center does not have the obligation to pay an increased fee to the expert group. In the case of the second type of monitoring, also when the center has the opportunity to verify and/or study the issue, there will be no paid service for the school. The process is as follows, the employees of the center will study the issue, it is possible to ask the representative of the resource center to verify the specific information, a corresponding report will be prepared and presented to the council. This report will be reviewed by the Council and, if necessary, it will have the authority to request an expert study of the issue, appoint a monitoring, visit or study of documents by a group of experts. Therefore, if the production goes in this direction, based on the fact that a group of experts will be involved, this service will be paid.

Nino Stepanishvili also spoke about the changes in the national curriculum and the need for the corresponding changes. He explained that it is planned to change the second standard of authorization of the general educational institution. It is also planned to remove part of the evidence in the current standard. This does not mean that the school does not present evidence, but rather that it determines what kind of evidence it presents based on the indicator.

Nino Stepanishvili spoke about another change, which is related to the formation of the name of the production. In the current authorization provision, there was a procedure for changing the address of the general educational institution's programme area, the rule was under such a name, but based on the fact that it is an independent programme for the purposes of the general educational institution's authorization, a programme to be implemented in another municipality, during this process, when a school, for example, carries out educational activities in Tbilisi and wants to implement it in Rustavi as well, it is already considered a separate programme and the school was entered by adding the programme, this is not a change of programme area, so to be more specific what is meant by a change of programme area, the entry "Rule of activity within the same municipality" was added. The content of the rule itself does not change, it was just specified what is meant by it.

In a question-and-answer format, Irma Kurdadze asked about the resource centers to specify what type of report could be required to be written during the monitoring process. And also, it was assumed that training of resource centers was planned in this direction.

Nino Stepanishvili explained that he could not say in advance exactly in which case the center would need the help of the resource center. She added that it would not be drawing a conclusion, but the resource center would inform the center/clarify the information, which would not require a whole team of experts to go to the place. This may not have been acceptable to the Council and a more in-depth expert assessment was needed. In this case, the center would be given a recommendation from the council and would address it with a petition regarding implementation of monitoring in a specific institution.

The next question was asked by Shalva Mekravishvili regarding the 50% discount on the authorization fee. He was interested in how the Tbilisi school and regional schools would pay the fees during the authorization visit. In response, Nino Stepanishvili explained that the applicant for the status of a general educational institution based in the form of a legal entity of private law outside the Tbilisi Municipality, which indicated less than 170 places in the authorization application, would benefit from the "authorization fee of educational institutions" of 50% of the established fees. with a discount. Those seeking the status of a general educational institution would be able to benefit from this, if it did not function in the city of Tbilisi.

Rusudan Sanadze put the issue of adopting the changes to the vote.

Proponent: 9

Opponent: 0

In accordance with the agenda, Ketevan Tsikhiseli presented the changes in the regulation of authorization of professional educational institutions. The regulation and standards of authorization in the direction of professional education were updated in March 2020. Accordingly, it is the third year that the authorization processes are being carried out with updated standards and regulations, and the course of the processes revealed that certain issues in the mentioned documents need to be reviewed and formulated in an updated form. Accordingly, the first amendment refers to the issue of making changes to the documents and self-assessment report presented by the institution within 5 calendar days after the institution has been notified of the visit order. Due to the fact that professional education and the mentioned system in general are rapidly updated and dynamic, in our opinion, institutions should be allowed to make changes in the documents at any time and submit them to the group of experts before the end of the visit. The information reflected in the self-assessment report is not subject to change. After the end of the visit, neither the expert nor the council will discuss the newly created document and it will not be taken into account when making a decision.

An important change that is planned is the issue of presenting a compliance plan to the center along with presenting an argumentative position to the institutions. This is the plan by which it determines the monitoring terms according to its capabilities, and also, according to the change, the expert group will have the opportunity to reflect in the report information on sharing or not sharing the plan presented by the institution. Accordingly, the expert will have an obligation to justify why he took into account and shared this document, or why he did not take into account and did not share this document. This phase will be included in all proceedings, such as authorization, programme addition, area change, monitoring, integration, etc. During the oral hearing, the Board will consider only the

compliance plan. Any other type of document submitted by the institution will not be taken into account.

According to Ketevan Tsikhiseli, it is important to make changes in the regulations in such a way that the key issues are formulated in the same way in the regulations of both general education and higher educational institutions.

The following change applies to the publication of the schedule of the announcement of the oral hearing, if any member of the Council has a conflict of interest, within 1 working day after the publication of this information, he will be obliged to notify the Center in writing about the conflict of interest. This deadline was set to avoid a quorum problem. At this stage, there are 10 members in the council and meeting this deadline is very important.

In connection with the administrative proceedings, when the quota increase, area change, or integration proceedings are carried out, the scope of the inspection is determined by the order of the director of the center. Accordingly, it is precisely defined which component and which standard the group checks. In the current edition, paragraph 4 of Article 51 regulates the reflection of the fact of violation of other standards by the expert group in the report. The mentioned record will be clarified a little, and also, this kind of records will appear in all administrative proceedings, in the relevant regulatory articles.

Regarding the issue of informing, a small change is included and the institution will be obliged to inform the center during the authorization period in the event that the change concerns the change of the parameter reflected in the decision of the authorization board.

It is planned to implement changes in the monitoring article, to differentiate and establish the types of monitoring. Planned and unplanned monitoring, as well as monitoring at the request of the Council, or at the initiative of the center. The annual plan for scheduled monitoring of general educational institutions is approved by the individual administrative-legal act of the director of the center. The information regarding the aforementioned is sent to the relevant general education institutions within 10 working days after the issuance of the act. Also, at the initiative of the center, the deadlines are specified: The Center Director's individual administrative legal act on establishment of authorization expert panel of the vocational educational institution and on unscheduled monitoring visit to the institution shall be submitted directly prior to the visit or no later than 1 day prior to the monitoring visit. And, the individual administrative-legal act of the director of the center on the creation of the expert group for the authorization of the professional educational institution and the scheduled monitoring visit to the institution is sent to the institution within 2 working days after the order is issued.

Also, according to the planned change, the educational institution will not have the right to apply to the Center for the right to increase the number of places for professional students, to change the place/area of the implementation of the professional educational programme, or to obtain the right to implement the secondary professional educational programme, which integrates the learning results of the secondary level of general education, within the framework of the programme Monitoring is underway.

Keti Tsikhiseli noted that since 2020 they have been working on the introduction of EQAVET indicators and at this stage, they have already identified 8 indicators that have been integrated into various forms of administrative production (e.g. programme addition, reauthorization, etc.). Accordingly, when it comes to authorization standards, according to the proposed change, in the second standard, the professional education programme in component 2.3, which deals with the issue of programme development, the institution will be obliged to use the mentioned integrated EQAVET indicators for programme evaluation and subsequent development.

After the presentation, no questions were asked about the proposed amendments. Rusudan Sanadze addressed the council members and put the issue to a vote.

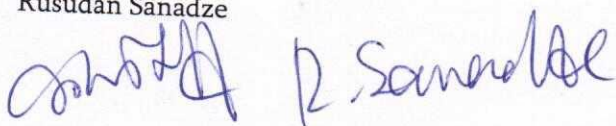
Proponent: 9

Opponent: 0

Lasha Margishvili declared the session over and noted that all the issues included in the agenda were discussed, consent was the most accepted, he once again thanked all the attendees for their questions, recommendations, and advice and said that they will definitely take the recommendations into account, take them into account, and try for the next session to already have their opinions. and, taking into account the recommendations, present issues for further discussion.

Head of the Coordinating Council:

Rusudan Sanadze



Secretary of the Coordinating Council Session:

Tatia Uberi



Annex 1

Name, surname	Position
Rusudan Sanadze	a) Rusudan Sanadze- Head of the Department of Education Sciences of the Faculty of Psychology and Education Sciences at LEPL Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University.
Kai Etzold	international expert in the field of higher education.
Tea Gulua	Swiss Agrarian College Caucasus of the United Nations Development Programme, project expert
Tamar Toloraia	Head of Preschool Education Division of Preschool and General Education Development Department
Shalva Merkvilishvili	Teacher of (LEPL)History and Civil Education of Shota Rustaveli Public School No. 2 in Rustavi
Rusudan Rukhadze	LEPL - Dean of the Faculty of Medicine of Tbilisi State Medical University, Head of the Department of Histology, Cytology and Embryology, Professor
Tamar Samkharadze	LEPL - Deputy General Director of Professional Skills Agency
Tatia Uberi	Representative of the Association of Georgian Student Organizations, PhD student of the Law School of Caucasus University Ltd
Irma Kurdadze	Ptofessor of Samtskhe-Javakheti State University

სსიპ - განათლების ხარისხის განვითარების ეროვნული ცენტრის საკოორდინაციო საბჭოს ონლაინ სამუშაო შეხვედრა

Working Meeting of the Coordinating Council of the LEPL - National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement

შეხვედრის ბმული/meeting link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87605315325?pwd=Zk9PQXNIQGNRVkxudWNMMWYvR0VkQT09>

Meeting ID: 876 0531 5325

Passcode: 470758

15:00-17:20 საათი, 8 დეკემბერი, 2023 წელი

15:00-17:20 December 8, 2023

დღის წესრიგი / Agenda

დრო/Time	განსახილველი საკითხი / Discussion topic	მომხსენებელი/ Presenter	პოზიცია, ორგანიზაცია / Position, Organization
15:00 - 15:05	მისალმება Introduction	თამარ მახარაშვილი Tamar Makharashvili	დირექტორი, სსიპ განათლების ხარისხის განვითარების ეროვნული ცენტრი Director, National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement
		კახაბერ ერაძე Kakhaber Eradze	დირექტორის მოადგილე, სსიპ განათლების ხარისხის განვითარების ეროვნული ცენტრი Deputy Director, National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement
		ლაშა მარგიშვილი Lasha Margishvili	დირექტორის მოადგილე, სსიპ განათლების ხარისხის განვითარების ეროვნული ცენტრი Deputy Director, National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement

			Enhancement
15:05 - 15:20	2021-2025 წლების სტრატეგიის 2024 წლის სამოქმედო გეგმის პროექტის წარდგენა Introduction of the 2024 Action Plan Project for 2021-2025 Strategy	ლაშა ზივზივაძე Lasha Zivzivadze	დაგეგმვის, კვლევის და საერთაშორისო ურთიერთობების სამსახურის უფროსი, სსიპ განათლების ხარისხის განვითარების ეროვნული ცენტრი Head of Planning, Research and Internatioanl Relations Department, National Center for Educational Quality
15:20-15:25	2024 წლის რიგითი საკოორდინაციო საბჭოს სხდომების ჩატარების სავარაუდო თარიღების შერჩევა Selection of the approximate dates for the regular Coordinating Council meetings in 2024	ლაშა ზივზივაძე Lasha Zivzivadze	Enhancement დაგეგმვის, კვლევის და საერთაშორისო ურთიერთობების სამსახურის უფროსი, სსიპ განათლების ხარისხის განვითარების ეროვნული ცენტრი Head of Planning, Research and Internatioanl Relations Department, National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement
15:25- 15:30	პროფესიული განათლების ორგანიზაციების ევროპულ ასოციაციაში (EVBB) გაწევრიანების თაობაზე Membership of European Association of Institutes for Vocational Training (EVBB)	ლაშა ზივზივაძე Lasha Zivzivadze	დაგეგმვის, კვლევის და საერთაშორისო ურთიერთობების სამსახურის უფროსი, სსიპ განათლების ხარისხის განვითარების ეროვნული ცენტრი Head of Planning, Research and Internatioanl Relations Department, National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement
15:30 - 15:35	კითხვა-პასუხი/ Questions and Answers		
15:35- 15:50	თემატური ანალიზის შედეგების გაცნობა: „სამ წელიწადში ერთხელ ცენტრში წარმოსადგენი შუალედური თვითშეფასების ანგარიშების ეფექტურობისა და ეფექტიანობის შეფასების	ნიკოლოზ ფარჯანაძე	უმაღლესი განათლების ხარისხის უზრუნველყოფის სამსახურის უფროსი,

	<p>თემატური ანალიზის შედეგები და რეკომენდაციების გათვალისწინების სამომავლო ხედვა</p> <p>Introduction results of the thematic analysis: "3-year progress reports – their goal, evaluation and efficiency"</p>	Nikoloz Parjanadze	<p>სსიპ განათლების ხარისხის განვითარების ეროვნული ცენტრი</p> <p>Head of Higher Education Quality Assurance Department, National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement</p>
15:50 - 16:00	<p>კანონში განსახორციელებელი ცვლილებების წარდგენა: „სპეციალური მასწავლებლის მომზადების საგანმანათლებლო პროგრამის აკრედიტაციასთან დაკავშირებით აკრედიტაციის დებულებაში განსახორციელებელი ცვლილებები“</p> <p>Introduction of the Changes on the "Changes to be implemented in the Accreditation Regulation regarding the accreditation of the special teacher training educational program"</p>	Nikoloz Parjanadze	<p>უმაღლესი განათლების ხარისხის უზრუნველყოფის სამსახურის უფროსი, სსიპ განათლების ხარისხის განვითარების ეროვნული ცენტრი</p> <p>Head of Higher Education Quality Assurance Department, National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement</p>
16:00- 16:05	კითხვა-პასუხი/ Questions and Answers		
16:05- 16:15	<p>ცენტრის 2024 წლის ბიუჯეტის ძირითადი პარამეტრების პროექტების წარდგენა</p> <p>Introduction of the main parameters of the Center's Budget 2024</p>	<p>მაია კალანდაძე</p> <p>Maia Kalandadze</p>	<p>ფინანსური უზრუნველყოფის სამსახურის უფროსი, სსიპ განათლების ხარისხის განვითარების ეროვნული ცენტრი</p> <p>Head of Financial Department, National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement</p>

16:15 - 16:20	კითხვა-პასუხი/ Questions and Answers		
16:20 – 16:30	<p>შრომის უსაფრთხოების და ჯანმრთელობის დაცვის პოლიტიკის დოკუმენტის პროექტის წარდგენა</p> <p>Draft Introduction of the labor safety and health protection policy document</p>	<p>სოფიო მგალობლიშვილი</p> <p>Sophio Mgaloblishvili</p>	<p>შრომის უსაფრთხოების სპეციალისტი, სსიპ განათლების ხარისხის განვითარების ეროვნული ცენტრი</p> <p>Labor safety specialist, National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement</p>
16:30 – 16:35	კითხვა-პასუხი/ Questions and Answers		
16:35 – 16:50	<p>ცვლილებების პროექტის წარდგენა: „საგანმანათლებლო დაწესებულებების ავტორიზაციის დებულებისა და საფასურის დამტკიცების შესახებ“ საქართველოს განათლებისა და მეცნიერების მინისტრის 2010 წლის 10 ოქტომბრის №99/ნ ბრძანებაში ცვლილების შეტანის შესახებ“ საქართველოს განათლებისა და მეცნიერების მინისტრის პროექტი</p> <p>Introducation of the draft amendments: "On the provision of authorization of educational institutions and the approval of fees" by the Minister of Education and Science of Georgia, dated October 10, 2010 No. 99/N</p>	<p>თამარ რატიანიძე ნინო სტეფანიშვილი</p> <p>Tamar Ratianidze Nino Stefanishvili</p>	<p>ზოგადი განათლების ხარისხის უზრუნველყოფის სამსახურის უფროსის კოორდინატორი, ზოგადი განათლების ხარისხის უზრუნველყოფის სამსახურის უფროსის კოორდინატორი სსიპ - განათლების ხარისხის განვითარების ეროვნული ცენტრი</p> <p>Coordinator of General Education Quality Assurance Department, Coordinator of General Education Quality Assurance Department LEPL – National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement</p>
16:50- 16:55	კითხვა-პასუხი/ Questions and Answers		
16:55 – 17:10	<p>ცვლილებების პროექტის წარდგენა: "საგანმანათლებლო დაწესებულებების ავტორიზაციის დებულებისა და საფასურის დამტკიცების შესახებ" საქართველოს განათლებისა და მეცნიერების მინისტრის 2010 წლის 1 ოქტომბრის №99/ნ ბრძანებაში დაგეგმილ ცვლილების შესახებ</p>	<p>ქეთევან ციხისელი</p> <p>Ketevan Tsikhiseli</p>	<p>პროფესიული განათლების ხარისხის უზრუნველყოფის სამსახურის უფროსის მოადგილე, სსიპ - განათლების ხარისხის განვითარების ეროვნული ცენტრი</p>

	<p>Introduction of the draft amendments: "On the provision of authorization of educational institutions and approval of fees" on the planned changes in the order of the Minister of Education and Science of Georgia, dated October 1, 2010 No. 99/N.</p>		<p>Deputy Head of VET Quality Assurance Department, LEPL - National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement</p>
17:10 – 17:15	<p>კითხვა-პასუხი / Questions and Answers</p>		
17:15– 17:20	<p>სამუშაო შეხვედრის შეჯამება / Wrap Up</p>		