

ANNUAL REPORT 2022

LEPL-National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement



With the support of the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	4
Chapter I. Institutional Development	4
Coordination Council	4
Action Plan for 2023	5
Human resource management and capacity building	5
Document Management	6
Strategic communications	6
Provision of Hardware and Software	7
Information Security	8
Law making	8
Personal data and Public Information	10
State Internal Financial Control System	10
Management of Financial Resources	11
Development of Internal Quality System	12
Research and analytical documents	13
<i>Service Customer Satisfaction Survey</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>The Analysis of the Development, Monitoring and Evaluation Process of Strategy and Action Plan</i>	<i>15</i>
Analysis of International Cooperation	16
Annual International Conference of the Center	17
Chapter II. Higher Education Quality Assurance	17
Development of Authorization and Accreditation Processes	17
Experts' Visits to Higher Education Institutions, Administrative Proceedings	18
Support Activities for Higher Education Institutions (Training, Consultations, Workshops, Textbooks, etc.)	21
Experts Corps of Authorization of Higher Education Institutions and Accreditation of Higher Education Programms	21
Other Significant Activities	22
Chapter 3. Vocational Education Quality Assurance	22
Expert Visits to Educational Institutions, Administrative Proceedings	22
Auxiliary Manuals, Forms Required for Administrative Proceedings	23
Performed Training, Consultations, and Workshops	23
Corps of Experts for Authorization of Vocational Education Institutions	24

Informal Education	24
Other Significant Activities	25
Chapter 4. General Education Quality Assurance	26
Reform of the General Education Quality Assurance System	26
Institutional Self-assessment Development Sub-programme of General Education Institutions	28
Expert Visits to Educational Institutions, Administrative Proceedings	31
Developed Documents	31
Methodological documents/guidelines	31
Authorization Expert Corps of General Education Institutions	31
Chapter 5. Ensuring the Quality of Early and Preschool Education	32
Quality Assurance Reform in Early and Preschool Education and Care	32
Initial Registration of Early and Preschool Educational and Care Institutions:	32
Maintaining the Quality Assurance Framework for Early and Preschool Education and Care	32
Promotion of institutional self-assessment of Early and Preschool Educational and Care Institutions-	33
Development of the Concept of Training and Certification of Certified Quality Assurance Specialists	33
Chapter 6. Evolution of National Qualifications	33
Administration of Higher Education Sectoral Councils	33
Management and Monitoring of National Qualifications Framework	33
Developed Documents	33
Workshops and Consultations	33
Other Significant Activities	35
Chapter 7. Evolution of Educational Services	35
Statistics of Educational Services for 2022:	36
Accreditation of Professional Development Programme of Professional Civil Servant	36
Chapter 8: Internationalization	37
BFUG	37
WFME	38
CEENQA	38
ETF	38
SICI	38
International Projects	39
ERASMUS +	40

Cooperation and Visits with Quality Assurance Agencies _____	40
Signed Memorandums _____	41
Chapter 9: Analysis of Fulfilled Activities of the 2022 Action Plan _____	41

Introduction

The document presents the 2022 activity report of the LEPL National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement (hereafter referred to as the Center). The report was carried out within the strategic cycle of the Center for 2021-2025 and includes the activities implemented to ensure the quality of early and preschool, general, vocational, higher education, the development of national qualifications, the provision of educational services, the measures implemented for internationalization and institutional development of the Center.

The document includes the perspectives of the coordinating unit of planning, monitoring and evaluation processes and Center management, and the feedback from the involved parties.

Chapter I. Institutional Development

Coordination Council

In accordance with the statute of the Center, the Coordination Council is a collegial body created to ensure the involvement of stakeholders in the processes of Center management, its activities and the development of mechanisms for ensuring the quality of education. During 2022, it discussed and agreed on a number of important issues for the education system and the Center as an institution. Meetings of the Coordination Council were held based on the invitation of the Director of the Center. During the year, three meetings were held in online format, where the members of the Council discussed and agreed on 19 topics, namely:

- ✓ 2021 Annual Report of the Center;
- ✓ Amendment to the Rule on "Authorization and Accreditation Experts' Selection, Activities and Termination of Membership of Experts' Pool";
- ✓ Rules for Fee of Members of the Experts' Pool of Authorization of General, Vocational and Higher Education Institutions and Accreditation of Educational Programmes;
- ✓ Updated Fees for accreditation of Higher Education programmes and educational programmes grouped in a Cluster of Educational programmes;
- ✓ Information Security Action Plan 2022;
- ✓ Amendments in the Center's Provision - review of the information security policy document of the Center;
- ✓ Center reorganization - in order to create a quality assurance service for Early and Preschool Education and Care Quality Assurance Department and transform it into a department of the financial assurance division;
- ✓ Amendments to the Center's 2021-2025 strategy and 2022 action plan;
- ✓ Amendments in the Center strategy and the rules of implementation, development, monitoring and evaluation of the strategy;
- ✓ The internationalization opportunity in the direction of general education - The Standing International Conference of Inspectorates (SICI);
- ✓ Presentation of the draft standards for the authorization of a general education institution;
- ✓ Review of the information security policy document of the Center;
- ✓ Amendment to the Rule on "Authorization and Accreditation Experts' Selection, Activities and Termination of Membership of Experts' Pool"
- ✓ Amendment to the remuneration rules for the activities of the members of the experts' pool of accreditation of general education, vocational and higher education programmes;
- ✓ Overview of issues/activities regarding the progress and implementation of the cluster accreditation process;
- ✓ Review of the 2021-2025 strategy of the Center and 2023 Draft Action Plan;

LEPL - NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATIONAL QUALITY ENHANCEMENT

- ✓ Review of the draft of the temporary rule for the authorization of the early education and/or preschool education institution, as well as the suspension and termination of the institution's authorization; review of the draft standards for authorization of early education and/or preschool education institutions;
- ✓ The draft amendments to be made in the authorization regulation, which is related to the amendments made in 2022 in the Law of Georgia "On Education Quality Enhancement" and in the Accreditation Regulation;
- ✓ Presentation of the 2023 staff list and draft budget of the Center;

In relation to the above-mentioned issues, the Council supported all the presented topics. The minutes of the coordinating council meetings and information about the members are public and available on the [Center's website](#).

NCEQE Action Plan for 2023

In September the Center started working on development of the 2023 action plan of the Center's 2021-2025 strategy. All structural units and management of the Center were involved in the process. In the first stage, the matrix of the action plan developed in 2020 was changed, namely, in the field of "funding source", the "full budget of the activity", "the Center budget" field and "the donor" field were added.

The mentioned framework document was sent to all services to plan the activities for 2023 and write down the relevant activities. The structural units of the Center, in agreement with the curators, developed and presented the initial working versions of the next year's activities. At the next stage, with the support of the European Union project Public Administration Reform (PAR), the relevant employees of the structural units attended a two - day workshop where the initial working version of the action plan was revised. The policy planning expert and relevant services discussed the 2023 draft action plan of the 2021-2025 strategy, with relevant activities, indicators, and budget. At the seminar, the challenges faced by various structural units of the Center in the mentioned process were highlighted. The participants of the seminar received relevant recommendations from the expert.

At the next stage of the action plan, the working version was revised, agreed with the departments and the Center management. In November, the draft action plan was presented to various stakeholders via the online platform Zoom. About 200 people attended the meetings, including representatives of early and preschool education, general, vocational and higher education institutions, associations of kindergartens, representatives of resource Centers, members of the councils and members of the experts' pool of the Center, representatives of LEPL - Education Management Information System. The final draft was presented to the Center's Coordinating Council for approval, and the Council members endorsed the draft action plan. The final draft of the 2023 action plan was presented to the Director of the Center on December 9, 2023, and on December 23, the document was approved by the relevant order and published on the Center's website.

Human Resource Management and Capacity Building

In the direction of human resources management, in 2022, the Center was developing the employee performance evaluation system. In order to support the evaluation of the activities of the Center's employees, a meeting was held with the representatives of the EU-funded project - Public Administration Reform in Georgia. Within the framework of the same project, the Center contacted an assessment expert and established an active cooperation with him, provided financial and technical support for the necessary trainings, namely, two trainings were conducted with their support.

LEPL - NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATIONAL QUALITY ENHANCEMENT

By the order of the Director of the Center, the "Rule of evaluation of the activity of the employee of the National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement" was approved. The rule establishes the general principles of evaluating the employee's activity, the evaluation procedure, the evaluation method, periodicity, as well as the rules for evaluating documentary material and interviews, assigning evaluation points, calculating the final result, the rights and duties of subjects participating in the evaluation, and the rules for appealing and reporting evaluation results.

Until December 31, 2023, the employee performance evaluation system will be launched in pilot mode, only for the implementation of formative evaluation.

As a result of the reorganization caused by the addition of a new direction to the Center, a new structural unit was added to the Center - Early and Preschool Education and Care Department. The mentioned department was staffed with personnel having relevant qualifications.

During the year, nine competitions were announced for the staff positions of the Center, seven new employees were selected, two employees were appointed according to the rules of career movement.

Document Management

In 2022, an electronic system for booking a visit to the Center was developed and implemented in the direction of document management, and was placed on the Center's website.

In order to increase the satisfaction of the users of the Center, a training was conducted for the employees of the Center (document management) in the direction of effective service (service +).

Strategic Communications

At the beginning of 2022, the Center published the second e-journal "Education Quality Digest", which was published on the Center's official website, and information about the publication was also spread on the Center's Facebook page. The journal presents articles related to the processes of educational quality enhancement, examples of the best practices at the local and international level, a brief analysis of amendments in the legislation and various interesting information for interested and involved parties. It should be noted that the editorial board of the electronic journal was created by the order of the Director of the Center, the members of which are employees of different structural units of the Center. The articles prepared by the editorial board members and other staff of the Center were published in the electronic journal.

A media communication plan for 2022 was developed. In this process the Center was guided by the 2022 action plan document. The media communication plan lists all the important activities to be implemented by the Center. During 2022, the Center cooperated with various means of media, including: interpressnews.ge, newspaper "Akhali Ganatleba" ("New Education"), radio Imedi, TV company Imedi, TV company Rustavi 2 and public broadcaster. The director, deputies and employees of the Center were invited to various thematic programmes. Also, articles and news prepared by the staff of the Center about the activities, achievements and future plans of the Center were disseminated.

In addition, the Center organized a cycle of meetings with students of higher education institutions across Georgia beginning from March 2022, ending in December 2022, the purpose of which was to acquaint students with the Center's activities, achievements, current and future projects, both locally and internationally. Meetings were held with students of Batumi Shota Rustaveli State University, Shota Meskhia State Teaching University of Zugdidi, Caucasus International University, Akaki Tsereteli State University, Georgia Technical University, Georgian - American University (GAU), Black Sea International University and Ilia State University. At the

LEPL - NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATIONAL QUALITY ENHANCEMENT

meetings, the Center made a presentation related to the Center's activities, students' rights and forms of their involvement in educational quality assurance issues, internationalization of the education field and opportunities to continue studying abroad, as well as quality assurance mechanisms of higher education institutions.

It should be noted that during 2022, the information on the Center's website was constantly updated in both Georgian and English languages.

In addition, in 2022, a general brochure of the Center was developed in Georgian and English, which includes the Center's mission, vision, values, mandate and main functions. The main goal of the mentioned brochure was to provide basic information about the Center to all interested parties.

Provision of Hardware and Software

In the direction of purchases and material - technical provision, in 2022, a study of the compliance of the Center's hardware and software was carried out, in relation to the functions and duties of all structural units of the Center. The purpose of the study was also to determine the satisfaction of the Center's staff with the material resources, working environment, supply of necessary stationery and office equipment, maintenance of computer equipment, office furniture and other needs. In addition, software resources were studied and additional needs for structural units of the Center were determined to fulfill their assigned tasks. The research was conducted in the period of April-June with a questionnaire created in the Microsoft Forms platform. The study identified the existing needs in terms of material resources, developed recommendations and initiated the implementation of the necessary procedures.

On the basis of the law of Georgia on general education and the law of Georgia on education quality enhancement, the Center started the process of authorization of public general education institutions. In addition, based on the amendments made to the law on Early and Preschool Education and Care, a new function was added to the Center in the direction of authorization of preschool institutions, which in turn meant the material and technical provision of a new structural unit. Such major changes, which are also caused by the existing international obligations, led to the need to strengthen the institutional capacities of the Center, including its infrastructure. The Center had sufficient office equipment and peripheral equipment to create appropriate workplaces, but the computer equipment in the Center was not sufficient. 40 (forty) units of stationary desktop computer sets (system unit, mouse, keyboard) and 20 (twenty) units of portable computers (laptops) were purchased by the Center for the immediate implementation of new powers through state procurement. The total purchase price was 104,000 (one hundred and four thousand) GEL.

In addition, an electronic tender was announced for the purchase of an electronic platform for self-evaluation of early and/or preschool and/or only school readiness institutions.

In order to increase the awareness of Georgian educational institutions /the programmes implemented by them abroad and to simplify the processes of recognition of Georgian educational documents, in order to build a search register of higher education institutions on the Center's website, the Center made a state purchase of software services. Also, relevant services were purchased in order to digitalize (scan) and catalogue archival documents stored in material form. Within the framework of the mentioned service, 20,500 cases were scanned, the scanned documents and cases were annotated, documents were returned to the case and systematized.

In order to provide technical support for the electronic platforms in the Center, eliminate emerging technical gaps, develop the electronic platforms and add new functionality to them, the Center strengthened human resources in the software direction, which is responsible for the technical support and development of the following programmes: electronic system of diagnostic self- evaluation; electronic system of expert management, management register of educational institutions, electronic system of diploma management, website of the Center www.eqe.ge; electronic monitoring system, electronic booking system booking.eqe.ge.

LEPL - NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATIONAL QUALITY ENHANCEMENT

It should be noted that the Center signed 118 state procurement contracts, the total value of which amounted to 694,922 (six hundred and ninety-four thousand nine hundred and twenty-two) GEL.

Information Security

Since 2022, the Center has been a subject of the first category of critical information system, which implies the introduction of an information security management system in accordance with the order N35 of December 21, 2021 of the Head of LEPL Operational- Technical Agency of the State Security Service of Georgia. Within the framework of this, a new action plan for the introduction of the information security management system was developed and approved in 2022, according to which the system should be implemented in 24 months (including monitoring and audit). In accordance with the mentioned plan, in 2022, the Information Security Council was renewed, the policy and scope of the Information Security Management System was developed and approved, which was presented to the Operational Technical Agency, as well as a document defining the context, needs and expectations of the stakeholders of the Center. The Center is actively working on asset identification, value determination and impact assessment, for which the methodology of asset description and management was approved in 2022. The description of the assets according to the respective owners and influences was completed in January 2023. In addition to the above, the information security manager obtained the certificate of LEPL-Digital Governance Agency. During the reporting period, the information security manager and the computer security specialist worked actively to ensure the security of the Center's computer and network systems. It is important to note that in 2022, the information security manager held workshops to raise awareness among employees, including council members, and presented a brief overview of planned activities. All of the above helps to effectively implement Information Security Management in accordance with the established requirements of the Center.

Law Making

During the reporting period, a number of important changes were initiated with the involvement of the structural units of the Center. In order to change the accreditation system of higher education programmes and, accordingly, to implement cluster accreditation, from 2022 it has become appropriate to implement amendments in the *Law of Georgia "On Education Quality Enhancement"*. Also, as a result of the amendment, the component of verifying the authenticity of a qualification document issued by a higher education institution remained only when considering the issue of recognition of higher education received abroad, while the same component was removed when recognizing a qualification document issued by a general education or vocational education institution.

In accordance with the change in the accreditation system of higher education programmes from 2022, in order to implement the Cluster Accreditation model, the changes made in the Law of Georgia "On Education Quality Enhancement" made it necessary to make certain changes in the Law of Georgia "On Higher Education".

An amendment was made to the Order No. 98/N of the Minister of Education and Science of Georgia of October 1, 2010, "On the confirmation of the authenticity of the educational documents issued in Georgia and the approval of the rules and fees for the recognition of education received abroad". As a result of the amendment, in order to recognize the education received abroad, the Center is authorized to contact the authorized body of the relevant country and/or the educational document issuing institution, as well as to request additional documents confirming the person's life abroad.

In addition to the above, the need to implement the amendment was caused by the fact that it became necessary to bring the order into compliance with the legislation of Georgia, as well as to introduce more flexible approaches. The need for amendments was also highlighted in the following section "Confirmation of authenticity

LEPL - NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATIONAL QUALITY ENHANCEMENT

of educational documents issued in Georgia, recognition of education received abroad and the fees for state recognition of higher education received by persons enrolled in a licensed higher education institutions". In particular, it became necessary to describe a case when a person has already carried out the procedure of authentication of an educational document at the Center, and then, due to the visual form of the document, he/she was refused the apostille certification/legalization of the said document, since the Center has already conducted administrative proceedings on the said document. In this case, the presented project established that it is appropriate to provide the free service on the modified educational document.

An amendment was made to Order No. 67/N of April 2, 2019 of the Minister of Education, Science, Culture and Sports of Georgia "On determining the fee for obtaining the right to implement the vocational training programme and professional retraining programme".

In addition, the *draft order of the Minister of Education and Science of Georgia "On approval of the procedure for issuing a veterinary certificate" was approved.* The amendments implemented in the Law of Georgia "On Higher Education" contributed to the timely issuance of veterinary certificates to the graduates of the educational programme of veterinary training.

An amendment was made to Order No. 69/N of the Minister of Education, Science, Culture and Sports of Georgia of April 10, 2019, "On approval of the National Qualifications Framework and the Classifier of Fields of Study".

The purpose of making the amendments is to make changes to the study field classifier, the need of which is caused on the one hand by correcting technical inaccuracies in the field of higher education, which implies the inconsistency of the Georgian and English names of the field of study and/or qualification, as well as the correction of other technical issues that do not lead to the change in the content of the field of study. Also, the field of study of graphics and graphic arts was transferred from the field of study of audiovisual methods to the field of study of fine arts. In addition, the general designations of the corresponding qualifications of the bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees provided for in Article 4 of the Classifier are being corrected and will be established in the form provided by the presented project. It should be noted that the above-mentioned changes mainly refer to the following fields of study - audiovisual methods and media production; applied arts/crafts; music and performing arts; visual art; language acquisition.

Through external initiation, on April 6, 2022, the Center registered the project of the subject benchmark of higher education in "conflictology" developed by the working group organized by LEPL- Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University, on the basis of which, the sectoral council of higher education of conflictology issued a positive recommendation to the Director of the Center to approve the subject benchmark of higher education in conflictology. Accordingly, it became necessary to make a corresponding change in Order No. 69/N of April 10, 2019 of the Minister of Education, Science, Culture and Sports of Georgia (hereinafter - the Order) "On Approval of the National Qualifications Framework and the Classifier of Fields of Study. In addition, correcting the content and technical deficiencies in the "Classifier of Fields of Study" (hereinafter - the Classifier) approved in subsection "b" of the first article of the order.

Subsequently, in order to satisfy the request of the initiating party, promote the implementation of international joint higher education programmes and bring the national classifier closer to the international classifier (ISCED - F 2013), it was appropriate to make changes to the "classifier of fields of study" approved in subsection "b" of the first article of the order (Appendix No. 2) adding the following item to the list and the first column of the detailed field - Database and Network Design and Administration (code - 0612) provided in Article 3: "0612.1.2 Information Technology Security."

An amendment was prepared in *Order No. 89/N of the Minister of Education and Science of Georgia of September 14, 2010 "On the creation of the legal entity of public law - the National Center for Education Accreditation through the reorganization of the legal entity of public law - the National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement and its Statute",* the main purpose of which is to bring the functions and duties stipulated by the

LEPL - NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATIONAL QUALITY ENHANCEMENT

statute of the Center into compliance with the regulations established by the statute of the newly established NNLE - "Vocational Skills Agency".

An amendment was prepared to "Amendment to the Order N99/N of the Minister of Education and Science of Georgia dated October 1, 2010" in the Order N99/N of the Minister of Education and Science of Georgia dated October 1, 2010. The aim of the presented amendments is to bring the "Educational Institutions Authorization Regulations and Fees" approved by Order No. 99/N of the Minister of Education and Science of Georgia on October 1, 2010 into compliance with the amendments made to the laws of Georgia on "Education Quality Enhancement" and "General Education".

Personal Data and Public Information

The structural units of the Center were trained on important issues of personal data protection. Relevant documents were created and recommendations were written on the problematic topics identified within the meeting. Among them, a recommendation on personal data protection was developed for the Center's hotline operators, which detailed the basic principles and legal bases of data collection, disclosure and storage. Also, for the relevant service of the Center, "a draft expert consent form" was developed to ensure the safety of further data processing.

In order to meet the needs of users of the Center's website to a high standard, a special email address will be created for receiving public information, which will be embedded in the contact email field on the website, from which users will be able to directly send their request without registering it in the Eflow system. In some cases, including, depending on the purpose of the user's request for public information, it is possible to forward the incoming correspondence to info@eqe.ge to ensure registration in Eflow.

State Internal Financial Control System

According to the Law of Georgia on State Internal Financial Control and international audit standards, in December 2021, taking into account the tasks and goals of the organization, the main risks of the organization/current processes were assessed, as a result of which the change in the strategic plan for 2021- 2023 and the annual action plan for 2022 were approved. Accordingly, in 2022, it was planned to conduct 5 audits (2 system audits, 2 compliance audits and 1 efficiency audit). In accordance with the annual plan, 3 audits were carried out.

Since the Center is a critical information security subject, the internal audit service, according to the legal requirement, also conducts an information security management system compliance audit, which was also provided for in the annual plan. However, since the regulatory legislation was changed in 2022 (minimum information security requirements for entities of critical information systems of the first and second categories), the above audit will be conducted in 2023. However, in order to effectively implement the processes, the monitoring of the implementation of the recommendations issued within the framework of the audit of the information security management system implemented in the previous year was carried out.

In addition to audits, in order to effectively implement controls, the Center monitored the implementation of recommendations issued within the framework of audits, namely in 2022, the implementation of recommendations issued within the framework of 6 audits was monitored, the results of which were reported to the Director of the Center.

In 2022, the risk register of internal audit processes was developed in cooperation with the Internal Audit Division of the Internal Audit Department of the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia.

LEPL - NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATIONAL QUALITY ENHANCEMENT

In order to implement the international standards of internal audit, in close cooperation with the Internal Audit Division of the Ministry, a pilot of the quality assessment system of the internal audit department was developed and implemented, within the framework of which a self-evaluation of the internal audit department of the Center, an assessment of the audit department from the side of the audit object, as well as an assessment of the quality of the consulting services were carried out. As a result of the pilot, the following documents were developed: a draft of amending the internal audit department regulation, an internal audit quality assurance and development programme, a draft of internal audit activity documentation and procedure rules, a document defining the consulting assurance activity, a form of signature of the auditors' independence and absence of conflict of interest, the monitoring form of the implementation of the recommendations developed by the internal audit department (relevant document), an assessment form of audit object, an assessment form of the quality of audit implementation. In addition to the above, the internal audit department assessed the risks in the organization and developed the annual plan for 2023, which also includes the recommendations of the Ministry, the results of the external assessment of the Ministry.

Management of Financial Resources

During 2022, the Center administered 3,668,837.00 GEL received from the state budget and 5,150,000.00 GEL from its own source of income, thereby providing quality assurance of higher education, quality assurance of vocational education, quality assurance of general education, quality assurance of early and preschool education, necessary works to be carried out in the direction of service development and for proper functioning of the Center.

During the reporting period, the Center prepared the 2022 budget, staffing schedule, the cost of fuel to be purchased and the limits of the communication (telephone and cellular communication) expenses and the funds to be allocated for the salary and material incentives of employees (employed in permanent and freelance positions), which was agreed with the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia.

The Center also prepared the corresponding annexes to the Center's budget, staff list and salary fund to be negotiated with the Government of Georgia, the drafts of granting an exception to the limitation provided for by the law of Georgia to the decrees of the Government of Georgia "On remuneration of labor in a public institution". Decrees of the Government of Georgia were issued on the mentioned exceptions. In accordance with the requirements of Articles 35 and 36 of the "Budget Code of Georgia", the budget application forms for 2023- 2026 were prepared and agreed with the Ministry. The information required for the development of the medium-term action plan for 2023- 2026 was submitted to the Ministry, also, based on the agreement on the provision of services within the budget programme, 3, 6 and 9 month reports on the activities performed by the Center in accordance with the medium- term plan were prepared, and the business process of monitoring the implementation of the budget plan of the Center was written out.

During 2022, the reports on the implementation of the State budget for 3, 6, 9 months and for 2021 were submitted to the Ministry of Education and Science. The 2021 financial statement with appendices (balance sheet) was also prepared and submitted to the Ministry, the quarterly plan was monitored.

The following projects funded by donor organizations were administered: PROFFORMANCE - Assessment Tool and Incentive Systems for Developing Higher Education Teachers' Performance; United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) "Modernization of Agricultural Vocational Education and Training (VET) System in Georgia (VET Phase 2)"; the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) project "Georgian school feeding programme concept"; the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the project "Promoting the implementation of the law and state standards of early childhood and preschool care and education at the national level through the creation of an authorization system for early childhood education and/or preschool care and education institutions"; the

LEPL - NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATIONAL QUALITY ENHANCEMENT

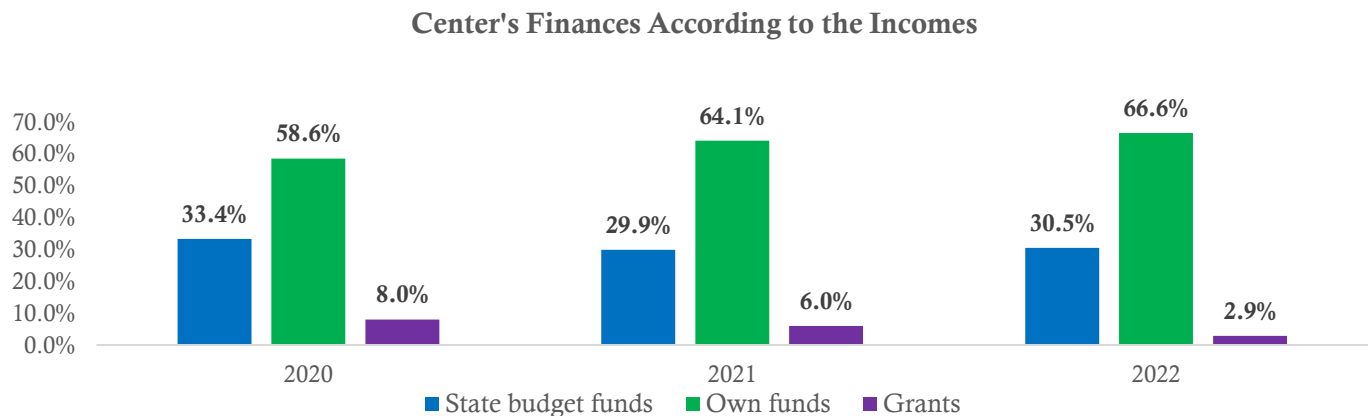
project coordinated by Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University - "Strengthening the Quality and Relevance of the Third Mission in Georgian Universities" (SQUARE).

In addition, the following were calculated and written out: a) the draft fee for obtaining the right to implement the training programme in the State language; b) the draft fee for increasing the number of trainees during the implementation period of the programme; d) the draft fee during the correction of the defect by the Council.

Also, the tax requirements for the amounts to be returned to individuals and legal entities were created in the electronic service system of the State Treasury of Georgia. An analysis of 3, 6, and 9 months of its own revenues on the Center's treasury account was carried out - distributed according to the provided services. Agreements were prepared with the LEPLs in the building of the Center in order to determine various expenses, such as: water distribution expenses, outdoor lighting expenses. In order to install a pay box, an auction was held and a relevant contract was signed. The cash and actual incomes of 2022 were determined according to each month and types of income. The following tax declarations were submitted to the Revenue Service within the relevant deadlines: monthly income tax declaration, monthly VAT declaration, monthly profit declaration and annual property declaration.

An annual Statistics Questionnaire Form was prepared and submitted to the National Statistics Office of Georgia. Agreements, as well as primary documents and invoices related to transfers, were registered in the electronic system of the State Treasury. The accounting-computer programme "Oris" reflected the accounting operations on a daily basis according to the sources of financing (budgetary, own income and targeted grant).

Graph 1:



Development of Internal Quality System

In 2022, based on Deming's PDCA (Plan-Do-Check-Act) basic quality management model, the Center continued to develop the internal quality assurance system, to identify, describe, analyze and implement changes for the improvement of the processes in the Center. 29 business processes were analyzed and described by structural units. Changes were made in the appendix of the Center's internal quality assurance policy document - The list of the main and supporting business processes. After the changes made, as of December 2022, it outlines 48 main and 48 supporting processes.

Simultaneously with the description of the business processes, the development of mechanisms supporting the perfect implementation of the internal quality assurance PDCA cycle was taking place. Namely, a draft process self-evaluation methodology was prepared and two business process self-evaluation were carried out in the pilot mode using this methodology. As a result, both documents were amended and their updated, second versions

were prepared. Also, for the purpose of external evaluation, the described business process form was used in pilot mode by the internal audit service of the Center and gave recommendations for its improvement.

Research and Analytical Documents

Service Customer Satisfaction Survey

During the reporting period, a service customer satisfaction survey was conducted. The purpose of the survey was to study the level of satisfaction of individuals and legal entities receiving the services identified for the survey in the following directions: flexibility of processes, timeliness of fulfilling the Center's obligations; the work performed by groups involved in the implementation of the Service; justification of the Center's decisions; consultations offered by the Center; the quality of the Center's work in the direction of strengthening the institutions' capacities and promoting the introduction of a quality culture; and the quality of the Center's supporting activities. Also, identifying the improvement components of the services and developing relevant recommendations.

Within the framework of the survey, the satisfaction level of the users of the Center's higher education quality assurance department, vocational education quality assurance department, educational services development department and qualification development department was studied. As well as the satisfaction of the members of the councils and experts' pool working in the Center regarding the supporting activities of the Center.

The survey was conducted using quantitative methodology, electronic and telephone survey methods. The target groups were consumers who applied to the Center during the survey period (from August 1, 2021 to August 1, 2022) to receive the services identified for the survey. In the services section, a general set of users were invited to participate in the survey; and among the users of those services, the total number of whom is high, the selection procedure of survey participants was carried out. The data was processed with statistical data software programme - IBM SPSS, using descriptive statistics.

In most services, the flexibility of the processes - the simplicity of the process of submitting the application to the Center is confirmed by the majority of respondents. The process of obtaining the right to implement the vocational training/vocational retraining programme, as well as submitting the application through the electronic system (QMS) for the purpose of registration, is of average difficulty for the majority of participants. Based on the respondents' comments, to simplify the process, it is appropriate to consider providing more flexibility of the QMS system - improving the functions of the process of entering information about programme inventory/equipment (possibility of copying; separation by programmes; possibility to upload as an attached file); updating system usage instructions; the accuracy of the database and the possibility of changing information in the system.

The received evaluations regarding the timeliness of the fulfillment of the Center obligations are positive - the participants generally agree with the opinion that the fulfillment of the Center's obligations takes place within the time frame provided by the process.

The results of the evaluation of the work performed by the groups involved in the implementation of the service are as follows:

- the work performed by authorization and accreditation expert groups participating in the quality assurance services of higher and vocational education is evaluated highly in accordance with its components. The evaluation of experts in the direction of ethicality is particularly high. The relatively low rate of evaluation corresponds to the quality of examination of university resources by experts.
- The assessment of the quality of the work performed by the Authorization and Accreditation Council of Higher Education Institutions, according to the components of the activity, is also high. Along with the ethical quality of the council, the average indicator of the Council's ability to present its position to the

LEPL - NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATIONAL QUALITY ENHANCEMENT

institution and the quality of the study of materials is particularly high. And, among the presented components, a relatively low rate corresponds to the validity of the opinions and assessments presented by the Council. The quality of the work performed by the Authorization Council of Vocational Education Institutions, according to the constituent components of the activity, is evaluated as high.

- The quality of the work performed by the Council's apparatus and the expert group within the framework of the process of obtaining the right to implement the vocational training/vocational retraining programme was evaluated as high quality in accordance with its constituent components. The evaluation rate of experts in the direction of compliance with ethics norms is particularly high; and, the relatively low rate of assessment corresponds to the quality of checking the resources of the institution.
- In accordance with all the presented components of the activities of the sectoral councils, the work of the council is evaluated highly. Among them, giving the initiator the opportunity to present his/her own position is highly valued. Among the components, the relatively low rate (although of high-quality rank) corresponds to the investigation by the members of the council of the circumstances of the subject benchmark and importance for the discussed issues within the framework of the council meetings. In the direction of the activity of the council, the members of the council name the selection criteria of the members as areas to be improved; also, more communication between council members; facilitation of working meetings from the side of the Center; sharing international experiences in the field and others.
- The evaluation of the competence and ethics of the employees hired by the Center are high. The rate of evaluation is particularly high in the part of ethics. The issues to be improved regarding service at the reception were mainly the training of employees to provide the customer with the necessary information, increase the level of employees' interest in the customer's needs, and prevent and regulate the long queues at the reception.
- Within the scope of consultations offered in accordance with the services at the Center, the component of ethics and competence of the person/persons providing the consultation is very high and highly rated. The evaluation of the ethicality of the persons providing the consultation is particularly high.

The quality of the Center's work in the direction of strengthening the institutions' capacities and promoting the introduction of a quality culture, according to the services, is also evaluated as high quality. The need for frequent consultations was identified as an issue to be improved by the Center in terms of strengthening the institutions' capacities and promoting the introduction of quality culture; in terms of compliance with authorization standards of Vocational Education Institutions, as well as the necessity of using internal quality mechanisms for higher education institutions, conducting trainings and sharing good practices of implementing a quality culture for relevant institutions.

In relation to the Center's educational services (in the part of education recognition services), in general, the clarifications received within the scope of the open questions regarding the improvement of the quality of both the documentation submission process and the reception service, as well as the Center's activity, are mainly aimed at the dissatisfaction with the issue of providing information from the side of the Center. It is appropriate if the Center investigates the reasons to what extent the users are informed about the production stages, procedures and scope of responsibility of the Center, according to the current practice.

It is appropriate to discuss the improvement of the existing information dissemination mechanisms by the Center (e.g., increasing the channels and frequency of information dissemination; improving the contact information base of the stakeholders) based on the views presented on the issues to be improved regarding the effective implementation of the public discussions of the subject benchmark project, in order to increase the involvement of the stakeholders in the meetings.

Analysis of the Development, Monitoring and Evaluation Process of Strategy and Action Plan

The analysis of the strategy and action plan development, monitoring and evaluation process was carried out within the framework of the 2022 action plan. The main goal of the analysis was to identify good practices, weaknesses and areas for improvement in the process of development, monitoring and evaluation of the 2021-2025 strategy and its action plans.

The first part of the analysis was devoted to the description of the strategy planning, action plan development and monitoring and evaluation practices existing in the Center. For this purpose, the method of development, monitoring and evaluation of the Center's strategy and strategy implementation action plan, as well as the guidance document of the electronic monitoring system were evaluated, and the existing practices in the Center in terms of the processes were reviewed. The second part of the document is devoted to the feedback about the process received from the structural units of the Center and the deputy curators. Interviews were conducted with focus groups, in- depth interviews, which included representatives of the departments that annually work to develop activities and prepare reports. Also, in- depth interviews were conducted with activity evaluators, deputy directors of the Center.

At the stage of developing the action plan, several areas for improvement were identified. Namely, at the stage of formulating activities, the main hindering factor on the part of the departments was the wrongly written out activity. During the analysis, it was revealed that the activity implied more functions than the specific service actually had. As a result of the analysis, insufficient time resources allotted to perform specific activities was most often observed. The responsible persons were incorrectly indicated in the activities presented to the departments. This problem was mainly observed in the case of the supporting departments. As a result, non-performance of the activity was marked as the responsibility of another department. In addition, the status of partially fulfilled and unfulfilled activities was also caused by the absence of regulatory documents, which did not depend on the structural units of the Center. Due to the fact that a number of legislative amendments, which were planned for a specific year, could not be adopted, the structural units of the Center could not implement certain planned activities. While evaluating the reporting process on the portal, the representatives of the department noted that the technical task of the portal needs refining and the functions need increasing. The methodology for preparing the rating of departments in terms of evaluation was named as an area to be improved. It was noted that if the activity could not be performed for objective reasons, it should not be reflected in the ratings.

The electronic monitoring portal was also evaluated during the analysis process. Practice has shown that each department representative works easily on the portal, filling in the appropriate fields with the help of the manual. However, it should be noted that there is a constant need to send a reminder to report activities. Also, the content of the reports remains a problematic issue. The activity report should cover two main issues, the process of how the activity was carried out and its content. The report should be based on the activity performance indicator and relevant evidence, so that during the evaluation process the evaluator has a clear picture of how the department performed the activity and whether the indicator was taken into account. The analysis shows that in some cases, the reports contain descriptive information, which is less important for the evaluator, while the performance of the activity, according to the indicator, is not shown. In such cases, the evaluator has to additionally contact the person in charge of the activity in order to clarify the issues. In addition, the departments do not fully upload the evidence specified in the approved action plan. Accordingly, information is clarified during additional communication with the departments. It is worth noting that during the assessment, it is no longer possible to assign a full percentage to the activity, because after the deadline, the system no longer allows the performer to change and upload an additional document.

Stakeholders evaluated the strategy development, action plan development and monitoring process. From their perspective, some areas for improvement were named. It was noted that they are fully represented in the 2021-

2025 strategy with appropriate competence. The role of each department has increased both in the development of the strategy and in its implementation process. They noted that the involvement of the EU Twinning project at all stages of the document development was an important support for them. The role of the project in terms of sharing international experience gave special importance to the strategy. The strategy development process was carried out in accordance with the recommendations of Twinning experts. Also, the working group focused on the implementation of ENQA recommendations. In addition, the coordination process was assessed as flexible, time-bound and result-oriented. Also, the resource allocated in the process of planning, monitoring and evaluation was assessed as relevant. Designing activities in line with the goals and objectives and focusing on the final outcome made the strategy more valuable. The existing document is not only of a formal nature, but the processes are planned around it and it allows the departments to develop from year to year. It was mentioned here that the development of strategy, according to goals and objectives, planning and executing activities acquire special importance through the monitoring system existing in the Center, in which the deadlines of the activities are written out and their evaluation is carried out with the help of the system. In the strategy planning process, insufficient experience of working on this type of documents in the Center was identified as a weakness. The respondents evaluated the process as complex, but interesting.

The process of developing the action plan was discussed in more detail by the structural units in the focus group format. The process, as well as the consultations from the planning, research and international relations services at all stages of the development of the action plan, were evaluated positively. The activities assigned to the Center in the action plans of various agencies were named as a general challenge, because the Center is hardly involved in their definition. In the process of developing the action plan, the communication part was evaluated as productive by the representatives of the departments. On the part of the departments, it was noted that at the planning stage they more or less know what obligations they have to fulfill for the next year. However, it was also noted that there may be a need for changes in the 10 stages of activity performance, because the circumstances may change, which does not directly depend on the department. The representatives of the supporting departments mentioned that they have a link, direct or indirect, with all the main processes in the provision of resources or in other directions. It was noted that when the departments work on the action plan for the year, they do not always agree on terms and tasks with the supporting structural units. Consequently, they face unplanned processes during the year.

When evaluating the process of preparing the annual report, the respondents noted that the document includes the main directions of the Center's activities. Department employees are involved in the process of its development and prepare performance reports in accordance with the subsection of the reporting framework.

In an in-depth interview format, the deputy directors of the Center discussed both the planning and monitoring processes from their perspective. From the evaluator's perspective, the process of developing an action plan, which is timed in stages, was evaluated as effective and reasonable.

As a result of the main findings, recommendations were written in the direction of planning, monitoring and evaluation, also recommendations (in the technical direction) for the electronic portal. Taking into account the mentioned recommendations will improve the planning, monitoring and evaluation practices in the Center. It should be noted that the Center took into account the results of the mentioned analysis while developing the 2023 action plan.

Analysis of International Cooperation

As part of the analysis of international cooperation, the concept of the analysis of international cooperation was initially developed, the list of target organizations, the list of contact services/responsible persons was prepared for the analysis. In order to request the necessary information for the analysis, communication was established

LEPL - NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATIONAL QUALITY ENHANCEMENT

with the Departments of Educational Services Development, Qualifications Development, Higher Education Quality Assurance of the Center. Further work was devoted to the analysis i.e. the analysis of the information received from the contact departments/persons, as well as from the relevant documents in the Center (memorandums/partnership documents, projects, annual reports of the Center), the information presented on the relevant official website. In addition, the prepared analysis documents were shared with those involved in the processes for feedback. As a result, the prepared analysis document covers the issues of international cooperation of the Center in the following 7 directions: Participation in the Bologna Process, cooperation with the European Information Centers and the National Academic Recognition Information Network (ENIC- NARIC Network), membership of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), registration of the Center in the European Quality Assurance Register of Higher Education (EQAR), partnership with Estonian Quality Agency for Higher and Vocational Education (EKKA), joining the Standing International Conference of Inspectorates (SICI) and partnership with institutions implementing the international general education programme (International Baccalaureate (IB), Quality School International (QSI), Cambridge Assessment International Education, SABIS) . The opportunities available within the international cooperation of the Center, the benefits received and expected from the cooperation, both in terms of the Center's activity and the educational quality enhancement system at the national level, have been analyzed.

Annual International Conference of the Center

On January 26, 27 and 28, 2022, the Center held its annual international conference online using the ZOOM platform. The first day of the conference was dedicated to the quality assurance of higher education. The 2021 results and future prospects of quality assurance of higher education were presented at the conference. The speakers discussed the achievements and challenges in the direction of the development of the quality assurance system of higher education, mechanisms for promoting internal quality assurance of higher education institutions, through external quality assurance, the importance of clinical teaching, challenges related to the ratio of students, patients and teachers, the updated subject benchmark of medicine according to 2020 standards of the World Federation of Medical Education (WFME), and the European Higher Education after the pandemic. They discussed the development of the quality of doctoral education - modern European perspectives, the role of universities in the development of regions. They discussed the concept and mission of the 21st century university. The following topics were discussed - high school to support the development of general and vocational education; the importance and development of the third mission of universities in higher education; student challenges during the pandemic; prospects of connecting vocational and higher education; the 5 most important aspects of leadership revealed in 2020: communication, transparency, inclusiveness, action and well-being.

Representatives of international partner organizations of the Center took part in the conference: David Gordon, President of World Federation of Medical Education (WFME), Goran Dakovic, representative of European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), Colin Tuck, Director of the European Higher Education Quality Assurance Register (EQAR), Michael Goebel, Director of Higher Education Policy Department of the Association of European Universities (EUA), Alexander Hasgall, Chairman of Doctoral Education Council of European University Association (EUA), Meral Nur, representative of European Student Union (ESU), John Pijanowski, Professor of University of Arkansas and Karen Edge, Professor of University College London Institute of Education.

The second day of the conference was devoted to the discussion of general education issues. Achievements and challenges in terms of development of quality assurance system of general education were discussed at the conference. They discussed the activities implemented in 2021 to ensure the quality of general education, the cooperation between Estonia and Georgia in the field of general education, the implementation of the third generation national curriculum and the future vision, the electronic platform for self-evaluation of general

education institutions, the implemented and planned changes in the direction of teacher qualification and professional development, they discussed a safe school, features of different curriculum, practice and experience in European schools and specifics of their implementation, features of Waldorf curriculum. Representatives of the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia, higher, vocational and general education institutions, resource Centers, as well as other local and international partner organizations, members of authorization and appealing councils and other stakeholders took part in the conference.

The third day of the conference was dedicated to quality assurance of vocational education. Mounir Baat, senior human capital expert of the European Training Foundation (ETF), spoke about the introduction of European standards of vocational education quality and the current and future prospects of cooperation with Georgia in this regard. In addition, at the conference, the results of the Center's activities in 2021 were presented, achievements and challenges in terms of the development of the quality assurance system of vocational education were discussed. Among them, they presented the results of the United Nations Development Programme "Modernization of Vocational Education related to Agriculture in Georgia Phase 2", the role of cooperation between the Vocational Skills Agency and the Center in quality assurance of vocational education, the electronic portal of the self-evaluation report of educational institutions implementing vocational education programmes.

Besides, during the conference, two memorandums of cooperation were signed: between the Center and LEPL-Environmental Information and Education Center and between the Center and LEPL - State Employment Promotion Agency.

Chapter II. Higher Education Quality Assurance

Development of Authorization and Accreditation Processes

The year 2022 was distinguished for the higher education system with important initiatives and results, which are essential for encouraging and consistent development of quality assurance processes of higher education. The innovations are mainly related to the introduction and implementation of the cluster accreditation system in order to harmonize it with the unified European system of higher education. Within the framework of cluster accreditation, educational programmes operating in predetermined fields will be evaluated annually.

The model of the cluster accreditation system will allow us to make the planning of external quality assessment processes by the Center more effective, following which, the experts' pool will be given the opportunity to carry out assessments at the system level in terms of analyzing the similarities and peculiarities of the programmes. The mentioned approach even more clearly shows the connections between the programmes of one field within the university, their individual and common signs, and clearly shows the needs and opportunities for the development of the field at the level of the institution.

Cluster accreditation is the first stage of modernization of external quality assurance mechanisms in accordance with the vision of the Center. Following the transition of the system to cluster accreditation, it is planned to develop mechanisms for institutional authorization and external quality assurance of doctoral level educational programmes.

In connection with the transition to the cluster accreditation system, on March 30, 2022, the Parliament of Georgia adopted amendments to the Law of Georgia "On Education Quality Enhancement" and the Law of Georgia "On Higher Education", which created the legal basis for the launch of cluster accreditation. In addition, updated accreditation procedures, accreditation standards, accreditation fees and the procedure for grouping educational programmes into a cluster were developed.

LEPL - NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATIONAL QUALITY ENHANCEMENT

The updated accreditation regulations and fees were approved by Order No. 83/N of the Minister of Education and Science of Georgia "On amending the order" #65/N of the Minister of Education and Science of Georgia dated May 4, 2011 "On approval of the regulations and fees for accreditation of educational programmes of general education institutions and higher education institutions".

In accordance with the amendments made in the legislation, the Center was granted the authority to carry out international evaluation of higher education institutions and educational programmes operating abroad.

During 2022, the development of subject benchmarks of the humanities significantly encouraged the development of quality assurance of educational programmes in the fields of humanities.

In order to fulfill the obligations in the field of education within the framework of the Association Agreement between Georgia and the European Union, it was planned to improve and develop the quality assurance mechanisms of PhD programmes and the scientific-research component. Accordingly, based on the feedback received from the institutions, the project of the quality assurance framework document for the evaluation of doctoral level educational programmes was revised, and is planned to be approved by 2023.

As a result of the amendment made in the legislation in 2022, the accreditation of educational programmes became mandatory. Accordingly, the mentioned amendment has led to the need to revise the authorization standards of higher education institutions.

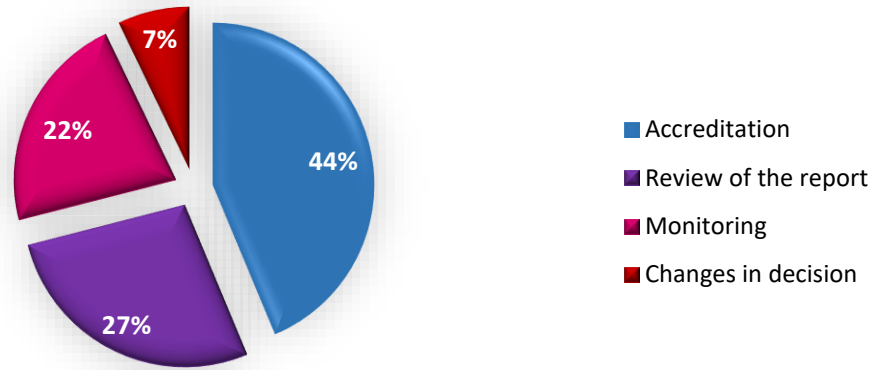
Experts' Visits to Higher Education Institutions, Administrative Proceedings

In 2022, due to the risks of the COVID-19 pandemic, authorization and accreditation visits were conducted both in hybrid and on-site visit modes, which involves conducting interviews online via the Zoom platform and visiting the physical resources of the institution, while the council meetings were conducted remotely.

During the reporting period, meetings of the Authorization, Accreditation and Appealing Councils were held, including 14 meetings of the Authorization Council of Higher Education Institutions, 83 meetings of the Accreditation Council of Educational Programmes and 3 meetings of the Appeals Council. The Accreditation Council of Educational Programmes reviewed 488 issues, and, subsequently, made the following decisions: Accreditation was granted to 193 educational programmes; conditional accreditation was granted to 13 educational programmes; accreditation was denied for 2 educational programmes; as a result of the monitoring, proceedings were stopped for 104 educational programmes; the review of the submitted report on the implementation of recommendations was carried out in relation to 130 educational programmes; 34 decisions were amended.

Accreditation Productions of Higher Education Programmes:

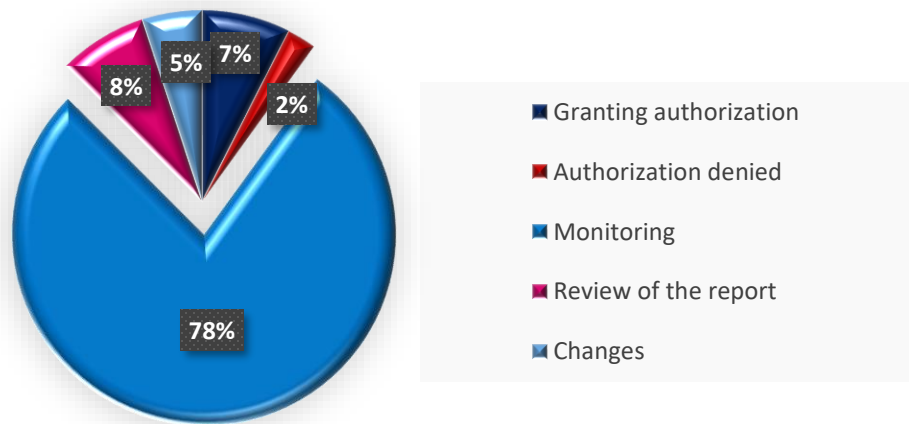
Graph 2:



The Authorization Council of Higher Education Institutions made 41 decisions, including: 4 decisions on granting authorization to higher education institutions, 1 decision on refusal to grant authorization, 31 decisions on termination of administrative monitoring proceedings; 3 decisions on acceptance of the report on the implementation of the recommendations issued by the authorization council; correction of a technical error in the decision - 2 cases.

Authorization Productions of Higher Educational Institutions:

Graph 3.



The Appeals Council made 3 decisions; 1 decision referred to the return of the decision taken by the Accreditation Council of Educational Programmes to the Accreditation Council; 1 decision related to the acceptance of the appeal submitted to the decision made by the Accreditation Council of Educational Programmes, and 1 decision was the refusal to accept the appeal submitted to the decision made by the Accreditation Council of Educational Programmes.

Supporting Activities for Higher Education Institutions (Training, Consultations, Workshops, Textbooks, etc.)

In March and April 2022, a cycle of workshops was held online with representatives of higher education institutions that had to submit accreditation applications to the Center in the form of higher education programmes grouped in a cluster in the field of humanities.

Meetings were held with up to 15 higher education institutions and were attended by more than 200 participants. Within the framework of the meetings, a number of issues were discussed, including the main amendments to the Law of Georgia "On Education Quality Enhancement", the main approaches to the clustering of higher education programmes by the institution, projects of updated standards and procedures for the accreditation of educational programmes, approved subject benchmarks in the fields of humanities, as well as self-evaluation of accreditation (individual cluster) and forms of conclusions of the accreditation expert panel.

In December 2022, the Center organized a cycle of trainings for HEI operating in Georgia on the following topics:

- ✓ HEI, the State and the labor market - close cooperation of stakeholders;
- ✓ Involvement of students and academic staff in internal quality assurance process;
- ✓ Academic freedom assessment practices in the quality assurance assessment process;
- ✓ Doctoral Programme Evaluation Practices in European Countries, Quality Assurance Trends and EQAF Reports.

Following the changes in accreditation standards, the Accreditation Standards Assessment Guide has been updated and made public.

Experts' Pool of Authorization of Higher Education Institutions and Accreditation of Higher Education Programmes

In 2022, the rules of activity of experts were updated and their remuneration was consistently increased. Within the framework of the changes in cluster accreditation, "Procedure for the selection of experts for the authorization of higher education institutions and accreditation of higher education programmes, termination of their activities and membership of the experts' pool" was approved by the Order No. 964009 of August 30, 2022 of the Director of the Center in an updated form.

The updated rule of remuneration of experts was approved by Order No. 1149787, 23/09/2022 of the Director of the Center on making changes to the Order No. 169 of March 06, 2018 of the Director of the Center "On the approval of the remuneration rules for the members of the experts' pool for the authorization of general education, vocational and higher education institutions and the accreditation of educational programmes".

In order to adapt to the cluster accreditation format, the forms of self-evaluation reports (individual, cluster) and experts' reports were approved, which were published on the Center's website.

In order to improve the effectiveness of the external quality evaluation and the development of the expert's pool, in 2022, the attestation of accreditation experts in the field of humanities was held. 132 experts were added to the authorization and accreditation experts' pool, including 26 international and 5 education experts.

For the purpose of professional development of accreditation experts, on July 15 and 18, 2022, meetings/trainings were held for accreditation experts in the field of humanities and for experts in accreditation of higher education programmes. The participants of the meetings got acquainted with the updated cluster accreditation standards and procedures, and also, in the working group format, discussed the specifics of the cluster assessment of educational programmes and the formation of approaches.

Other Significant Activities

Within the framework of the TAIEX project, on December 15-16, 2022, the Center allowed the majority of higher education institutions operating in Georgia to attend a seminar organized with the financing of the European Commission, which was dedicated to the topics of quality audit and internal quality assurance of the institution. Within the framework of the project, Helka Kekalainen (Head of Higher Education Service of FINEEC) and Mark Fredericks (Policy Advisor of NVAO) visited Georgia.

Chapter 3. Vocational Education Quality Assurance

Expert Visits to Educational Institutions, Administrative Proceedings

In 2022, 8 State-based educational institutions underwent re-authorization (with a total of 138 programmes), 5 private institutions (with 18 programmes) underwent re- authorization, and one new authorized college emerged with 1 programme. 18 educational institutions added 28 new programmes (including 6 programmes added by 6 private colleges). According to the data of 2022, 68 dual vocational educational programmes are being implemented, including 6 dual programmes implemented by private colleges.

In 2022, integrated programmes were added, and as of 2022, 85 integrated programmes have been implemented in the system in 26 educational institutions, the number of places in these programmes is 2,760.

The total number of administrative proceedings carried out by the department during the year is 127. Among these, 15 authorizations, 40 monitoring and 72 other administrative proceedings (addition of vocational educational programmes, in total - 27; addition of integrated programmes - 4; increase of the number of vocational students in the programme - 31; change of place/area of implementation of vocational educational programmes - 10).

During the year, 29 authorization council meetings were held and 158 issues were discussed.

In 2022, in addition, 167 vocational training and retraining programmes were authorized or registered, of which 101 were registered/confirmed, and 66 were added through the acquisition of rights, and an application was made by 12 new legal entities.

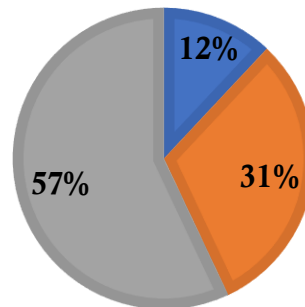
In 2022, 4 educational institutions additionally gained the right of recognition, and as of 2022, 8 educational institutions have gained the right to recognize non-formal education in 11 educational fields: Business and Administration, Information and Communication Technologies, Personal Services, Engineering, Security Services, Education, Healthcare, Architecture, and Construction, Agriculture, Production and Processing, and Arts.

21 meetings of the Council granting the right to implement vocational training and vocational retraining programmes were held, at which 116 issues were discussed and the following decisions were made - obtaining the right - 69, refusal to implement the programme - 8, correcting within the one-month deadline - 15, monitoring - 8, increasing the limit number - 4. Total 96 decisions were made.

Graph 4.

TOTAL NUMBER OF ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEEDINGS - 127

■ Authorization ■ Monitoring ■ Other Administrative proceedings



Auxiliary Manuals, Forms Required for Administrative Proceedings

The Center developed the drafts of application forms to be submitted to the Center by the institutions for the purposes of administrative proceedings determined by the Provision of Authorization of Vocational Education Institutions and the drafts of the expert panel's report form; in total - 8 forms. The drafts of the above-mentioned forms have been developed with the involvement of all interested parties, considering their feedback.

Performed Training, Consultations, and Workshops

In July and October 2022, training was held in order to strengthen the capacity of the Authorization Council granting the right to implement the vocational training/retraining programme. The training contributed to the introduction of the same approaches and the same perception of the standards and facilitated the improvement of the rationale for the Council's decisions.

Also, on July 8 -9, 2022, a working meeting/seminar was organized by the Center in Bakuriani- on "Strengthening the Capacities of the Authorization Council of Vocational Education Institutions". The aim of the seminar was to introduce the changes that were planned in the regulations of authorization of vocational education institutions and to share opinions. The seminar was held in an interactive mode, where the participants shared their opinions about the planned changes in the authorization regulation, and planned future activities that will directly affect the development of mechanisms for assuring the quality of vocational education institutions. Also, within the framework of the seminar, the members of the Council talked about the challenges identified during the activities of the past years and about the importance of changes that are to be made in the provision. Amendments to the provision of authorization of vocational education institutions will be submitted to all interested parties to discuss. On July 26, 2022 the Center organized an online meeting to strengthen the capacities of educational institutions implementing vocational education programmes. Based on the topicality of the issue and the relevant requests from the institutions, the issues of the state document confirming vocational education - diploma and completing the diploma supplement were discussed within the framework of the meeting, as well as the issues on completing the supplement of the certificate of the vocational training programme and vocational retraining programme. The meeting, with 100 people, was held in an interactive mode. Presentations were shown to the attendees and the existing experience regarding the issues was shared. The participants of the meeting were provided with relevant guides, which are also posted on the website of the Center.

LEPL - NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATIONAL QUALITY ENHANCEMENT

On February 22 of this year, the Center organized a meeting online for representatives of educational institutions and legal entities that implement vocational training/retraining programmes. The problematic issues of developing/uploading vocational training/retraining programmes and applications in the electronic system of www.tvet.emis.ge (QMS) were discussed at the meeting. Within the framework of the meeting, in a question-and-answer mode, the representatives of the education management information system and the Center provided comprehensive information to the attendees regarding important issues. Also, system deficiencies were identified by the Center for proper functioning of vocational training/vocational retraining electronic system (QMS). Suggestions for improving the system have been prepared and initiated. 94 people from 50 institutions attended the meeting.

on March 28 of this year, the Centre organized a meeting/training online in order to strengthen the capacities of the educational institution/legal entity in the direction of quality assurance of vocational training/vocational retraining programmes. The following issues were focused on at the meeting: 1) labor market analysis/research; 2) methodology for determining compliance of learning outcomes of vocational education standard, vocational training / retraining programmes with descriptors of the level of the national qualifications framework; 3) quality assurance mechanisms. Within the framework of the meeting, in a question-and-answer mode, the representatives of the Center provided comprehensive information to the attendees regarding important issues. 87 people from 45 institutions attended the meeting. The topic of the meeting was based on the research conducted by the Center in 2021. On September 28, 2022, a working meeting was held via Zoom to strengthen the capacities of vocational education institutions/legal entities. 100 people from 40 institutions attended the meeting. The issues on completing the certificate and the certificate supplement of the vocational training programme and vocational retraining programme as well as the procedural issues of language correctness of the certificate and its supplement were discussed at the meeting. The institution was provided with comprehensive information regarding important issues in a question-and-answer mode.

Also, in parallel with the innovations introduced in the system in 2022, the Center offered various types of information meetings to the representatives of vocational education institutions.

Experts' Pool of Authorization of Vocational Education Institutions

During the reporting period, within the framework of the United Nations Development Programme project, a conference of experts on quality assurance in vocational education was held. The aim of the conference was to promote further professional development of quality assurance experts in vocational education, share best practices, identify challenges and present ways and recommendations for dealing with identified challenges. Presentations prepared by representatives and experts of the Center were presented at the conference. Along with quality experts, experts from the field of vocational education also participated in the conference, who joined the working panel together with quality experts. Various topics related to the activities of experts and educational institutions were discussed at the panel.

In order to improve the performance of experts, their performance is evaluated. In 2022, the updated system of evaluating the experts was fully implemented. The activity of experts is evaluated through questionnaires developed in advance and approved by the Director of the Center, evaluated by the scoring system. The expert is valued by almost all interested parties: a) the institution where a specific expert carried out administrative proceedings; b) the Center employee responsible for specific administrative proceedings; c) Also, peer evaluation of the group of experts is carried out - the chairman evaluates the member(s) of the group and vice versa. Expert evaluation by institutions is paper based, and for the rest, electronic evaluation forms have been developed by the Center, where all evaluators enter their scores according to the criteria and the points are summed up automatically. The criteria include the planning of the visit, the study and analysis of documentation, the process

LEPL - NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATIONAL QUALITY ENHANCEMENT

of allocating work to group members, conducting the visit, timely completion of the draft report preparation stage, also, the completeness of the draft report, the substantiated study of the argumentative position and the timely presentation of the report, the quality of the presentation of the conclusion at the meeting of the Council. In the reporting period, the analysis of experts' assessments was carried out. The analysis showed that experts' assessments range between 70 to 100 points, which means that s/he has demonstrated the necessary competence and skills for expert work and performed the duties assigned to him/her in an exemplary or perfect manner; the process was conducted with high professionalism and responsibility. In rare cases, there are assessments within the range of 60-70 points, which can be considered satisfactory. The fact that the experts' reports are no longer only descriptive and do not suffer from a lack of analysis was considered to be a strong point of the activities of experts in the quality assurance of vocational education. Based on the authorization standards, experts assess the institutions in terms of scale and institutional development. Full understanding of authorization standards by experts, detail orientation and concentration on technical issues still remains as weak point of their work. In the case of experts in the field, the competence and skills required for carrying out expertizing activities are relatively low, there is a lack of responsibility and significant errors are noted in the process.

Based on the assessment of the experts' activities and the analysis of the processes, the Center planned and conducted training for experts in the field for their professional development, which included practical tasks based on real cases.

The Center conducted a number of consultation meetings for the members of the expert' pool in order to establish a unified practice of perfect management and evaluation of the processes related to the implementation of vocational education activities, as well as for the professional development of experts.

In 2022, the Center selected the specialists in those fields, in which, field experts could not be selected within the framework of competitions held in previous years and introduced them to the Director of the Center to include them in the experts' pool, in order to strengthen the experts' pool of the authorization of vocational education institutions and the vocational training/retraining programmes. In particular, experts in the fields of musical art, adventure tourism and applied art were added to the experts' pool. Currently, the experts' pool includes 42 experts in quality assurance of vocational education and 142 field experts.

Informal Education

During the reporting period, re-certification of nine certified consultants was carried out on the basis of the Order of the Director of the Center dated October 7, 2019 No. 931/i "On granting status to certified consultant of recognition of non-formal education". Consultants were selected and recertified based on an analysis of their work.

Five certified consultants refused to participate in the re-certification process, while the remaining four successfully passed the certification process and were again granted the status of a certified consultant of recognition of non-formal education for the next five years.

In 2022, four additional legal entities gained the right to recognize non-formal education, and currently the number of institutions with the right to recognize non-formal education is eight. Informal education recognition services are available in 11 areas: Business and Administration, Information and Communication Technologies, Personal Services, Engineering, Security Services, Education, Healthcare, Architecture, and Construction, Agriculture, Production and Processing, and Arts.

The process of recognition of non-formal education took place in two educational institutions. One out of 21 people seeking recognition of non-formal education was refused recognition, 19 people obtained partial recognition and the learning outcomes necessary for the achievement of the qualifications specified by the vocational educational standard were fully confirmed by 1 seeker, and the institution issued a document

confirming the qualifications - a diploma. Recognition of non-formal education has been implemented in the fields of Engineering and Engineering Work and Personal Services.

The working group created by the Order of the Director of the Center No. 493747 of May 16, 2022 (amendment - No. 841782 of July 27, 2022, No. 909840 of August 16, 2022), including representatives of all interested parties, held a number of remote meetings, within the framework of which the following were worked on and prepared:

1. Draft amendments to the Resolution No. 459 of September 20, 2019 of the Government of Georgia "On Approval the Rules and Conditions for Obtaining the Right to Recognize the Non-formal Education and the Fee for Obtaining the Right to Recognize the Non-formal Education",
2. Draft amendments to the procedures for Selection, Certification and Status Termination of consultants of recognition of non-formal education,
3. Recommendations and suggestions for improvement.

In 2022, the Center prepared an annual report on the activities of consultants. The work performed by the consultants responsible for the administrative proceedings of the recognition of non-formal education was studied, for which the information displayed on evet.emis.ge - the filled-in forms by the consultants - was studied. The study of the consultants' activities and their descriptive part revealed that the certified consultants carried out their activities in accordance with the Order of the Director of the Center No. 837/i September 16, 2019 "Rules for the Selection, Certification and Termination of Status of Consultants for the Recognition of Non-formal Education" and the functions defined by the internal regulation of the relevant educational institution. The counseling stages were conducted correctly and the functions assigned to them were performed thoroughly. Their activity was evaluated positively by the Center. However, some weaknesses were identified, which are planned to be improved next year.

Other Significant Activities

In 2022, in order to share the best European experience during the introduction of the Center's Vocational Education Quality Assurance System, work on the analysis of the Vocational Education System through the indicators of the European Quality Assurance in Vocational Education and Training (EQAVET) was started according to the methodology developed in 2021. The indicators of the European Network for Quality Assurance of Vocational Education (EQAVET) were interpreted taking into account the reality of the Vocational Education system of Georgia, the sources and methods of data retrieval were defined, information was requested from relevant agencies, according to five indicators, which was studied and the 2022 analysis document of the evaluation of the Quality Assurance System of Vocational Education was prepared according to the five indicators of EQAVET.

Chapter 4. General Education Quality Assurance

Reform of the General Education Quality Assurance System

As part of the reform of General Education, on April 6, 2022, important legislative changes were made in the laws of Georgia "On General Education" and "On Education Quality Enhancement" to improve the quality of General Education, in terms of developing flexible and effective quality assurance mechanisms and process development. The amendments included the following main issues: names of the updated standards for Authorization of General Education Institution; changes in the accreditation process for General Education Programmes and integration of the mentioned mechanism in the authorization process; identifying different authorization approaches for state-based schools in terms of legal consequences; the possibility of the school adding a General Education Programme, as well as depriving the right to implement the programme; development of self-evaluation and monitoring processes; the possibility of using other textbooks in addition to graded textbooks in the learning process; recognizing the need to develop quality assurance indicators of the general education system; Also, the provisions of the laws came into compliance with the terms of General Education Quality Assurance. Based on the legislative changes, the draft order of the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia on making amendments to the Order № 99/N of the Minister of Education and Science of Georgia of October 1, 2010 on "On the Approval of the Regulation and Fees for Authorization of Education Institutions" was developed with the wide involvement of the interested parties. The amendments entered into force on December 29, 2022 and were extended to legal relationships arising since 2023.

The presented changes should contribute to the development of internal and external quality assurance mechanisms of the general education system by establishing new authorization standards and procedures. The amendments included:

1. new standards for authorization of general education institutions;
2. updated procedures for authorization of general education institutions;
3. updated fees for authorization of general education institutions.

The current three standards for the authorization of General Education Institutions (educational programmes; material resources; human resources) have been replaced by four new standards, which will concern: 1. School philosophy; 2. School curriculum; 3. Administrative and infrastructural support of the learning process; 4. Student support. The system of assessment of standards is changing - the current assessment which is two-level (complies/does not comply) will be replaced by a four-level, differentiated evaluation system, which will be flexible and focused on the development of the institution (complies/substantially complies/partially complies/does not comply); In order to obtain authorization, it is sufficient for an institution to be assessed at least as "partially complies with the requirements of the standard" in respect of all standards, except for the school curriculum standard - where at least substantial compliance is required.

The updated framework for ensuring the quality of general education also takes into account the actual self-evaluation of the processes taking place in the institution, which will lead to the transformation of self-evaluation as a powerful tool for school development, in contrast to previous years, when it had a formal character. According to the changes, schools will no longer have the obligation to submit a self-evaluation to the Center, but they will carry out an annual self-evaluation on a special electronic portal, and their annual action plans will be based on the results of the self-evaluation.

The changes in the framework of the relevant administrative proceedings took into account the possibility of adding a separate general education programme. For purposes of authorization, an independent general education

LEPL - NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATIONAL QUALITY ENHANCEMENT

programme is: a) elementary school programme; b) basic school programme; c) secondary school programme; d) a programme implemented in a foreign language; e) programme implemented in different municipalities.

The changes are also focused on the development of monitoring processes. Institutions will have the opportunity to apply to the Center on their own initiative for monitoring. It is also news that schools are informed in advance about the approval of the annual monitoring plan of the Director of the Center within 10 working days after the approval of the plan. The scope of the decision of the General Education Institutions Authorization Council is also worth noting. The institution, depending on compliance with the standards, will be given appropriate recommendations and deadlines (maximum 24 months) to ensure compliance with the relevant required level of the standard(s).

Decisions on adding/removal of programme (for private school), change/addition of space were added to the Decisions of the Council. The evaluation standards of public and private schools are presented in an identical form. The difference will be only within the framework of the Council's decisions, in particular, in the case of a negative evaluation for the public school / its programme (when there will be circumstances for the cancellation of the institution / programme), the Council will make a decision on the petition to the Ministry of Education and Science regarding the appropriateness of the functioning of the school/its programme.

The case of changing the place/area of implementation of the General Education Programme was established as a separate rule, which was carried out within the framework of the administrative proceedings of monitoring according to the previous regulation.

Other planned changes in the procedural issues of authorization are also focused on the development of processes, such as: the institution will be able to present, together with the argumentative position, the proofs of the correction of the shortcomings outlined in the draft report and/or the compliance assurance plan. The group of authorization experts will have to give the information about sharing / not sharing the argumentative position in the final report.

The above-mentioned issues were discussed in detail with general education institutions. In particular, in order to receive feedback, the mentioned documents were presented at public hearings with representatives of public and private (including recognized abroad and schools implementing foreign language general education programmes) educational institutions. The document was finalized based on the feedback received from them. Public discussions were held in: Tbilisi, Rustavi, Gori, Telavi, Akhaltsikhe, Rustavi, Zugdidi and Batumi. Representatives of Resource Centers took part in public discussions together with school representatives.

It is important to note that the representatives of the relevant department of the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia along with representatives of legal entities of public law included in the system of the Ministry, who are in contact with the presented issues, were actively involved in the development of the draft amendments to be implemented in the Provision.

In connection with the implementation of the updated standards for the Authorization of General Education Institutions and the management of the authorization process of public schools, a representative coordinating group was created based on the order of the Director of the Center dated February 28, 2022. The group included the representatives of all interested parties involved in the process, namely, the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia, the Center, the National Center for Professional Development of Teachers, the Education Management Information System, Educational Institution Mandatory Service, Educational and Scientific Infrastructure Development Agency. An appropriate action plan was determined by the coordinating group. As part of group meetings, an outdoor event was also organized with the involvement of other interested parties, where the standards and procedures for authorization of general educational institutions were once again reviewed and a number of issues were clarified.

LEPL - NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATIONAL QUALITY ENHANCEMENT

In connection with the implementation of the updated mechanisms for ensuring the Quality of General Education, a study visit was made to Estonia with the involvement of the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia and the employees of the Center. As a result of the visit, the important and successful practices shared by foreign colleagues during the study visit were considered. It is worth noting that the new authorization standards and procedures were successfully validated when shared with the Estonian colleagues. Feedback from Estonian colleagues regarding the implemented and planned changes was positive.

Institutional Self-Evaluation Development Sub-programme of General Education Institutions

In 2022, by the order of the Director of the Center No. 44980 of January 20, the sub-programme for the development of institutional self-evaluation of general education institutions was approved. Within the framework of the sub-programme for the development of institutional self-evaluation of general education institutions, new authorization standards were developed by the relevant specialists and revised and approved with the involvement of interested parties. The basis for its approval was the entry in the Law of Georgia on General Education, which provides for the gradual authorization of public schools by the Ministry before the start of the 2026-27 school year.

At the beginning of 2022, the piloting of the diagnostic self-evaluation of schools and the large-scale diagnostic self-evaluation began, which ended with the creation of a public-school authorization plan based on data collection and analysis.

Training and certification of quality specialists was completed within the framework of the sub-programme. From the certified specialists, self-evaluation specialists were selected according to the territorial location, that played a decisive role in conducting the self-evaluation process of schools. In addition, through pre-developed indicators, a group of analysts simultaneously assessed schools and grouped them in the authorization schedule, according to their readiness for authorization. The implemented activities created the basis for receiving the first authorization applications from 2023.

The key principles and visions on which the self-evaluation system of the general education institution was based were developed. The characteristics that transform the self-evaluation system into an action and an inseparable natural process of school life have been determined. In particular, openness and honesty, encouragement of efforts without blame, a strong support system to promote professional development and share successful experiences, shared responsibility for quality education by the school community, an effective accountability system underpinned by achievement and proficiency management, an effective evaluation and management system that makes clear what is working and what is not, integrating it with the school's strategic planning and improvement cycle.

Based on the requirements of the four accreditation standards - school philosophy, school curriculum, administrative and infrastructural support of the learning process, and student support - a self-evaluation tool was developed. When determining the provisions of the self-administered questionnaire, the following principles were taken into account:

- Provisions are directional/tracking;
- Provisions are not very specific/product based;
- The idea defined by the Provision is clear and unambiguous;
- Provisions give schools the chance to operate with a high degree of freedom.

In the process of self-evaluation, a school evaluates itself on a five-level scale:

- *0 - Zero*
- *1 - Beginner - initial phase - single attempts, trials, without any analysis and reflection*

LEPL - NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATIONAL QUALITY ENHANCEMENT

- *2 - Evolving - in developing process – single efforts with measurement, feedback, process evaluation and school community involvement.*
- *3 – Sustainable - solid, reliable, reliable approach/process/condition - the core processes in the school are managed in the given way, but need to be refined in terms of systematicity and holistic.*
- *4 - Successful - systemic mechanism - a systemic vision functions in the school according to the given orientation and the processes are managed in an integrated manner and with the coordinated involvement of the school community.*

An electronic self-evaluation platform was developed, with the help of which the electronic system of the self-evaluation process will be launched. It allows the schools participating in the process to collect all the data in one space that will be useful later, both in planning and evaluating their own development path, as well as in the authorization process. Each school, through its unique code, has the opportunity to enter the platform and work on self-evaluation. The platform stores all the entered information and only the school has access to this information until the school confirms its desire to share its work by pressing the button at the bottom of the questionnaire. Only after confirmation of the information's publicity, outsiders, including the Center's employees, will have access to the material uploaded by the said school. To simplify the process of logging into the platform for the school, all school data have been pre-entered into the platform. Each school assigned a person responsible for displaying information on the platform, who administered the process of using the platform within the school.

After the development, the platform went through both content and technical testing stages. On the basis of content testing, the tool was refined, corrected and the content of the provisions became more understandable for the reader.

In addition, a guide for the diagnostic self-evaluation electronic platform was developed (including a video), which was also provided to all schools/ people expressing support. Schools were additionally provided with recommendations on the protection of personal data.

146 people received the quality assurance certification. It was from them that the diagnostic self-evaluation support specialists were selected, who were trained directly before the process, both on working on the platform and on the specifics of filling out the self-evaluation. Specialists worked in May-December period, 77 specialists participated all together.

Specialists conducted presentations, trainings, workshops in the schools of their area according to a pre-made plan, both remotely and on-site. Specialists gradually reported to the self-evaluation coordinator, provided him/her with audio/video and photo material of remote meetings, the presentation used, information about the members of the self-evaluation group, as well as a list of the main issues that were discussed during the meetings. Methodological documents provided to specialists during certification and additionally during training were used for presentations/working meetings (before implementation of support). A total of 2,074 schools were supported, among which 3 schools were involved in the piloting of the diagnostic self-evaluation platform and underwent the self-evaluation process within the framework of the above mentioned process. No self-evaluations were carried out within the framework of the sub-programme by already authorized public schools.

Based on the self-evaluation analysis, the authorization schedule of public schools for the years 2023-2026 was prepared. Based on the analysis of the self-evaluation, as a result of the cooperation with the relevant legal entities of the public law included in the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia, databases on the infrastructural and material resources of public schools were prepared, on the basis of which the needs of public schools were determined for purposes of authorization. Accordingly, there are development plans for individual schools at the system level.

LEPL - NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATIONAL QUALITY ENHANCEMENT

It should be noted that within the framework of the sub-programme, 9 training sessions were conducted for general education institutions and interested parties on the topic "Peculiarities of the recognition of General Education received abroad during learning periods"

Expert Visits to Educational Institutions, Administrative Proceedings

In 2022, in accordance with the current standards for the Authorization of General Education Institutions, the following activities were carried out: the administrative procedure for the reauthorization of up to 120 private general education institutions, 5 administrative procedures for increasing the maximum number of places for students, 8 administrative proceedings of the verification (monitoring) of the fulfillment of authorization conditions. And also, administrative proceedings of accreditation of 4 general education programmes and 1 administrative proceeding of recognition of general education programme recognized abroad in Georgia. 33 sessions of the General Education Institution Authorization Council, 1 session of the Accreditation Council of Educational Programmes and 2 sessions of the Appeals Council were held.

Developed Documents

On the basis of legislative changes, with the wide involvement of interested parties, a project of the Minister of Education and Science of Georgia was developed, "On the Amendment of the Order of the Minister of Education and Science of Georgia No. 99/N of October 10, 2010, on the approval of the provision and fees of Authorization of Educational Institutions". The project was presented in the format of face-to-face meetings to both public and private General Education Institutions, Educational Resource Centers across the country, as well as schools implementing general education programmes recognized abroad. After the final feedback received from them, the Center submitted the project to the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia for the purpose of initiation. At the end of 2022, the initiated amendments were approved, which came into force from 2023.

Methodological Documents/Guidelines

In parallel with the work on the authorization standards, the work on the guidelines to the authorization standards and the development of methodological materials/documents was going on. The guide was developed by an internal team of the sub-programme; Also, in December of this year, with the support of the World Bank, the verification of the first and fourth standard guidelines was carried out with the involvement of interested parties. The guideline for the draft authorization standards includes the name of the standard, the component, relevant indicators and evidence. The guideline explains what is meant by the components and criteria of the standards and their corresponding indicators.

In order to ensure compliance with the standards of authorization of general education institutions, supporting methodological materials/guidelines were prepared: including mission, vision, values and strategic planning methodology; human resource management policy and bylaws; regulation of protection of legal rights of student, staff, parent/legal representative; the procedure for enrolling students, overcoming the level, mobility, status suspension and termination; school curriculum development methodology.

Authorization Experts' Pool of General Education Institutions

In 2022, on the basis of certification, 146 persons were awarded the status of quality assurance specialist in General Education. Also, 331 people became subject experts in accordance with different subject groups through the competition announced for the selection of subject experts for Quality Assurance of General Education.

At the end of 2022, in connection with the introduction of updated mechanisms for ensuring the quality of general education, a training cycle has been launched to support professional development and to strengthen the capacity for general education quality assurance specialists, who have expressed their desire to be granted a status of quality assurance expert. The objectives of the initiated training cycle are to train experts to implement the authorization process in accordance with updated standards and procedures. In order to successfully carry out expert activity, it includes such important issues as self-evaluation analysis, types of evidence and how to obtain them, interview techniques, issues on professional ethics of experts, writing a argumentative position, offering developmental recommendations for the institution. The cycle of trainings of general education quality assurance experts was supported by the World Bank programme "Innovation, Inclusion and Quality Project - Georgia 12Q (IBRD)" and was organized by a consulting consortium led by the international company IBF International, with the involvement of international experts and the Center's employees.

Chapter 5. Ensuring the Quality of Early and Preschool Education and Care

Quality Assurance Reform in Early and Preschool Education and Care

In 2022, the implementation of an important reform began in the field of Early and Preschool Education and Care. In particular, on February 15, an amendment was made to the Law of Georgia on Early and Preschool Education and Care, according to which the period until January 1, 2030 was defined as a transitional period for authorization purposes. During this period, the Center was tasked to maintain a quality assurance mechanism for early and/or pre-school care and education institutions and to carry out authorization of kindergartens. For this purpose, Quality Assurance Department of Early and Preschool Care and Educational was created in the Center.

Initial Registration of Early and Preschool Educational and Care Institutions:

In 2022 initial registration of Early and Preschool Education Institutions began. Piloting of the platform and training of the institutions regarding the registration process were conducted together with the Education Management Information System. More than 1,900 private and public institutions have registered on the platform. A legislative change was made - individual entrepreneurs who provide early and/or pre-school care and education services will be given the opportunity to register on the platform until March 31, 2023.

Maintaining the Quality Assurance Framework for Early and Preschool Education and Care

With the support of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and inter-agency cooperation, the temporary rules for the authorization of early childhood education and/or preschool education institution, as well as the suspension and termination of authorization of the institution, the authorization standards and the projects of requirements for the arrangement of the infrastructure and material-technical base of the institution's building were developed in order to maintain a Quality Assurance Framework for Early and Preschool Education and Care.

The prepared documents were discussed with the members of the coordinating group created to ensure the implementation of the authorization process of Early and Preschool Education Institutions, also with public and private institutions providing Early and/or Preschool Care and Education, with representatives of the Municipality's Mayor's Office, associations of institutions and resource centers. Draft legislative documents were submitted to the Government of Georgia for approval.

Promotion of institutional self-evaluation Early and Preschool Care and Education Institutions

In order to promote the institutional development of Early and Pre-School Care and Education Institutions, work has been started to introduce self-evaluation of institutions. A pilot version of the electronic self-evaluation platform was developed with the support of the UNICEF. Adapted self-evaluation questionnaires were prepared, which includes questionnaires for the institution's administration, educational staff, technical staff and parents.

Development of the Concept of Training and Certification of Certified Quality Assurance Specialists

The concept of training and certification of certified quality assurance specialists was developed in order to promote the implementation of self-evaluation of Early and Preschool Education and Care Institutions and to implement external quality assurance of institutions. A draft rule for the selection of experts for the authorization of the early care and education institution and/or preschool care and education institution, was also prepared including their activities and termination of membership of the experts' pool. The mentioned documents were discussed at the meeting of the coordinating group created to ensure the implementation of the authorization process of early and pre-school education institutions.

Chapter 6. Development of National Qualifications

Administration of Higher Education Sectoral Councils

In 2022, 12 subject benchmarks of higher education were approved, among them: art education programmes within the framework of cluster accreditation, in the field of arts 9 subject benchmarks of higher education were developed with the involvement of academic staff of higher education institutions, sectoral ministries, associations and sectoral unions, as well as representatives of the employment market: among them applied arts/crafts; theater studies and choreology; theater directing (drama, musical theater, pantomime theater, puppet theater); acting arts (drama and film actor, musical theater actor, pantomime theater actor, puppet theater actor); choreography; fine arts ("fine arts, painting, graphics/graphic arts and sculpture); of audiovisual art ("audiovisual art, "cinema-television art and directing (feature film, documentary, clip, animated film, sound, TV); Visual Communication/Media Arts ("Visual Communication", "Media Arts/Digital Media", "Multimedia Design", "Graphic Design" and "Print Media/Typography"); design, industrial design, fashion design, textile design. Subject benchmarks in the direction of management, conflictology and lexicography were also approved.

The following two subject benchmarks of higher education were renewed: Medicine and language fluency; The given subject benchmark statement of Medicine differs both in content and format from the valid benchmarks approved in 2018, due to a number of important international and national conceptual innovations, which are reflected in the relevant documents. The most important of them are two global standards developed by the World Federation of Medical Education (WFME) - Global Standards for Pre-Diploma Medical Education (2020) and Distributed and Distance Learning in Medical Education (2021). Also, in 2021, the results of the thematic analysis of medical education programmes in the country conducted by the National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement are published on the official website of the Center - <https://eqe.ge/ka/page/static/946/umaghlesi-ganatilebis-kvalifikaciebis-ganvitareba>.

Management and Monitoring of National Qualifications Framework

The referencing/self-certification action plan of National Qualifications Framework was developed in accordance with the 10 reference criteria defined in Annex 3 to the Council of Europe Recommendation dated 22 May, 2017

LEPL - NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATIONAL QUALITY ENHANCEMENT

on the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning (EQF-LLL); The document was discussed and agreed upon with the Advisory Council created for the purpose of implementation and development of the National Qualifications Framework and Classifier of Fields of Study (hereinafter - the Advisory Council). The recommendations received from the Advisory Council were reflected in the document and sent to the Director of the Center for agreement. The Center organized training session for the experts in the field of Arts/Humanities.

Developed Documents

Guide to the National Qualifications Framework was developed and published, which aims to familiarize stakeholders with the structure and content of the objectives of the National Qualifications Framework, understand and use it as an effective tool;

The guide has been agreed with the Advisory Council established for the implementation and development of the National Qualifications Framework and Classifier of the Fields of Study. The guide will be regularly reviewed and updated by the Center in accordance with the relevant legal regulations and analysis of the qualification system at the national level.

The National Qualifications Framework Guide will have a recommendatory character and will be an important supporting tool for Higher Education Institutions. The guide can be found on the following website: <https://eqe.ge/ka/page/static/295/sakhelmdzghvanelo-dokumentebi>.

Workshops and Consultations

The representative of the Qualifications Development Department participated in the MICROBOL final international conference, where the results of the two-year (2021-2022) Erasmus + project funded by the European Union were discussed in relation to the possibilities of introducing small-volume (microcredit) educational programmes in the Higher Education. Within the framework of the project, a unified framework of microcredits in the field of Higher Education was developed. At the national level, work continues in the direction of the introduction of microcredits within the thematic expert group for the development of the Bologna Process Qualifications Framework (TPG A on QF), in which Georgia is represented as a co-chairing country.

Also, in May, the Center's representative, together with other partner countries, experts and practitioners from the European Union, attended the webinar organized by the European Education Foundation (ETF). The content of the guideline document to be developed was discussed at the working meeting, which will further provide the interested countries with familiarization and promotion of the possibilities of building and developing small credit programmes.

A meeting was held with representatives of the Ministry of Education and Science, who made a presentation on the content of microcredits, its implementation features and international experience.

12 consultation meetings were held with the members of the Sectoral Council of Higher Education. Also, 4 trainings were held with experts in Quality Assurance of Higher Education.

At the invitation of the Bologna Thematic Working Group on Quality Assurance (TPG on QA), the Center participated in the meeting of the Micro-credentials Quality Assurance Working Group organized by the Department of Education of the Flemish Government in Brussels. The mentioned working group was initiated within the framework of the project - "Introduction and innovation in QA through mutual learning" (IMINQA) - implemented in partnership with the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA). 22 consultation meetings were held with Higher Education Institutions and interested persons.

Other Significant Activities

Content and technical changes were made in the Classifier of Field of Study approved by the order of the Minister of Education, Science, Culture and Sports of Georgia No. 69/N dated April 10, 2019.

More than 500 questionnaires and Master's degree programme annotations were examined/validated.

A training was held for higher education institutions of Georgia on "Compatibility of National Qualifications Framework and Learning Outcomes of the Programme".

In order to update the methodology, an amendment was made to the order of the Director of the Center dated July 31, 2019 666/i "On Approval of the Rule of Management, Development and Monitoring of the Classifier of the Field of Study" and in the Order 476/i of June 11, 2019, "The Rules for the Development, Updating and Approval of the Subject Benchmarks of Higher Education, Creation and Activity of Sectoral Councils, and Sectoral Working Groups".

Chapter 7. Development of Educational Services

A number of important activities were carried out in the Center in the direction of development of educational services. It is worth noting that in 2022, the number of citizens applying for the recognition of education received abroad, has doubled.

During the reporting period, a register of Higher Education Institutions was built on the Center's website, which became available from 2023. The open electronic register will allow interested persons (citizens, employers or foreign organizations) to search through the search engine using various variables (such as: name, identification number, date of establishment, change of the name, period of implementation of state-recognized/unrecognized programmes and etc.) to find the desired institution and detailed information about it, in Georgian and English. It is also possible to download the information in the registry as a PDF file.

The Center has digitized 52,000 samples of signatures and seals of approximately 4,000 institutions, stored in physical form, for use in issuing apostille attestation/legalization services. The oldest samples date back to the 1920s.

In addition, a concept was developed on how to make it possible, electronically, from anywhere in the world, to apply to the Center for the recognition of education received abroad and based on recognition continue to receive education in a Georgian educational institution through the principle of one window. The concept involves the creation of an electronic portal, on which users will have the opportunity to register electronically, and on the other hand the Center will ensure to integrate all the steps in the portal and will involve all the participating parties who are currently involved in the procedures for the recognition of the education received abroad and granting the right to teach. In particular, translator service, electronic payment mechanisms, the possibility of receiving a ready-made document or various types of documentation electronically, and the role of educational institutions and the Ministry of Education and Science are defined. It should be noted that in 2022, a document was created that analyses all the services provided by the Center.

In the direction of educational services, the Center participated in various international formats. In particular: June 9-10 in Paris, in the meeting of the subgroup B of the Bologna implementation coordination group; June 19-21, in the 29th annual meeting of the representatives of "European Information Centers and National Academic Recognition Information Network" (ENIC-NARIC Network) in Dublin; November 15 in Strasbourg, in the regular 9th session of the Lisbon Recognition Convention Committee; December 15-16, in Baku, Azerbaijan, in a meeting organized by TKTA Education Quality Assurance Agency, on the issue of recognition of education received abroad.

Statistics of Educational Services for 2022:

For the reporting period, information was provided to the LEPL - State Service Development Agency regarding the apostille certification/legalization of 17,263 documents

22,576 decisions were made on the recognition of education received abroad, of which 22,175 were positive, and 401 negatives

Certificates on the status of about 456 foreign educational institutions were prepared

3,606 decisions were made on proving the authenticity of the educational document issued in Georgia, out of which 3,169 were positive, and 263 were negative

23 positive and 1 negative decisions were made concerning the state recognition of higher education received by persons enrolled in licensed higher education institutions

24 decisions were made on the issue of recognition of education received by internally displaced persons (IDPs) from the occupied territories of Georgia, 11 of them were positive, and 13 were negative

358 decisions were made concerning the recognition of the education received in liquidated or terminated educational institutions, of which 231 were positive, and 127 were negative

49 diplomas of higher education and 19 diplomas of vocational education were prepared

In terms of linguistic accuracy, the Center processed 111 drafts of strict accounting documents, a positive conclusion was issued regarding the draft of 58 forms, and a deficiency was identified regarding the draft of 53 forms

Accreditation of Professional Development Programme of Professional Civil Servant

In the reporting period, the form of the institution's self-evaluation report was developed and approved in order to examine the conditions of accreditation of the vocational development programme of the professional civil servant, within which the accredited institutions, in order to verify the conditions of accreditation, must present a description and self-evaluation of their activities in the three-year period after granting the accreditation, both in the context of existing practice and in accordance with the accreditation standards and the regulations in force

in the institution. In order to promote the self-evaluation report submission process and institutions, 6 accredited institutions were consulted on the issues of filling and submitting the self-evaluation report form through modern means of remote communication.

During the reporting period, the self-evaluation report of one accredited institution was presented to the Center, the study and analysis of which is planned in 2023 for the feedback.

Accreditation of civil servant professional development programmes was not carried out in 2022. However, 6 remote consultations were carried out with the institutions wishing to implement the programme.

Chapter 8: Internationalization

Internationalization is an important process for the Center, and in this regard, the Center has planned various activities for higher, vocational and general education every year. Within the framework of the second goal of the 2021-2025 strategy, activities and events are planned every year, in particular, in order to bring Georgia's education quality assurance system closer to European and international standards, the Center actively uses the best international experience, cooperates with various international partners and within the framework of memorandums, actively participates in international projects. Among them, in "Erasmus +" projects, which should ensure the formation of a quality education system in the country.

ENQA

By the decision of the Governing Council of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), on April 20-21, 2023, the Center will host the annual international forum of ENQA members, in which the following will participate: the heads of 55 quality assurance agencies from 32 European countries, the employees of the agencies, the heads and representatives of the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR), the Association of European Universities, the European Student Association, and the Bologna process working group. Holding the ENQA Forum in Georgia is important in terms of the awareness of the country, development of the quality of higher education and internationalization.

BFUG

In 2022, the Center was represented in five working groups of the Bologna process. When joining the working groups, the functions and strategic goals defined by the Provision of the Center were taken into account. In 2022, the Center was represented in five working groups of the Bologna Process, namely the Thematic Working Group on the Development of the Qualifications Framework, the Thematic Working Group on the Lisbon Recognition Convention, Quality Assurance Thematic Working Group, Learning and Teaching Working Group and Social Dimension Working Group. Representatives of the Center actively participated in the workshops of the thematic experts' panels of the Bologna Process;

In order to fulfill the main recommendations of the Bologna process and the commitments made in the working formats, by the order of the Director of the Center, a working group was created to promote the fulfillment of the main commitments of the Bologna process in the higher education system of Georgia. Preparation of the document on the submitted recommendations was defined as one of the main tasks of the working group. In addition, during the current year, the group held three internal working meetings in the Center and also a working meeting with representatives of the Department of Higher Education and Science Development and the Department of Strategic Planning and International Relations of the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia.

LEPL - NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATIONAL QUALITY ENHANCEMENT

WFME

The annual report of the World Federation of Medical Education (WFME) was prepared, which reflected the main activities carried out during 2021, changes in the direction of quality assurance of higher medical education. Also, in the report, the Federation was provided with information about the main plans of the current year;

CEENQA

On September 23-24, 2022, the Center participated in the Central and Eastern European Network of Quality Assurance Agencies (CEENQA) General Assembly meeting and seminar in Istanbul, Republic of Turkey. The first part of the presentations and discussion at the workshop was about the general challenges of independence and autonomy, and the second part was directly about the independence of education quality assurance agencies. The President of the European Association for Quality Assurance of Higher Education, the Director of the Network of Central and Eastern European Quality Assurance Agencies and other speakers gave reports. The general assembly and the voting process was held on September 24, where the representative of the Center also participated. The following decisions were made in accordance with the agenda: consent to join Quality Assurance Agency of the Republic of Turkey ECZAKDER in the network; consent to exclude quality assurance agencies of the Russian Federation: NCPA, ARSA from the network; to receive a financial report; to adopt the budget of 2022;

To leave the membership fee unchanged (600 euros for full members, and 300 euros for observer members); The following were elected as members of the Executive Board: Franci Demšar (extended), Peter Lakatos, Vesna Dodikovic-Jurkovic, Dincay Koksal; Franci Demšar was elected as a director for a renewed term; Members voted to hold the next event in Astana, Kazakhstan.

ETF

Based on the application made to the European Training Fund (ETF) of Georgia, in 2022, the Center was given the opportunity to host the ETF's annual forum, which was held in Tbilisi on December 6-8. At the initiative of the Center, the evaluation of the effectiveness of the training/retraining system in **vocational education** of Georgia was carried out by the representatives of ETF member countries. Representatives of up to 20 ETF member countries and all interested parties in the direction of vocational education training/retraining in Georgia participated in the assessment. Holding an event of this scale in Georgia is important in terms of the development of vocational training/retraining in the country and is a step forward in the direction of deepening cooperation with the European Union, which will contribute to the improvement of the education system of Georgia and its approximation towards the European standards.

SICI

In the direction of the Internationalization of **General Education**, with the full consent of the members the Center was elected as the 43rd member of the organization at the 27th General Assembly of the Standing International Conference of Inspectorates (SICI) held in the Republic of Ireland on November 16-17, 2022. SICI is an Association of National and Regional Inspectorates of Education in Europe. Its main objective is to promote the improvement of education through the improvement of inspection processes. Membership of SICI is an important step for the country in terms of Internationalization of General Education, involvement in important

LEPL - NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATIONAL QUALITY ENHANCEMENT

research for Georgia regarding external evaluation, sharing of advanced international experience in the field of external evaluation, and increasing awareness of the Center's activities.

International Projects:

A project - "Modernization of the Vocational Education and Training (VET) system related to agriculture in Georgia"

During the reporting period, the Agency, with the support of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), implemented a project to modernize the Vocational Education and Training (VET) system related to agriculture in Georgia. The main goal of the project was to strengthen/develop Quality Assurance Mechanisms and capabilities in the direction of vocational education.

Within the framework of the project, a conference of experts in Quality Assurance of Vocational Education was held, the purpose of which was to promote the professional development of experts in quality Assurance of vocational education, where the following interested parties participated: representatives of the Centre, Vocational Education Institution, representatives of the Ministry of Education and Science, United Nations, Vocational Skills Agency.

Also, a seminar was held under the title Review of the Standards and Procedures for Authorization of Vocational Education Institutions. Within the framework of the project, strengthening the capacities of the Vocational Education Institutions Authorization Council was carried out, where the changes that are planned in the Vocational Education Institutions Authorization Regulation was discussed.

It should be noted that various seminars were held within the project: on professional development of the Accreditation Council of Vocational Training/Retraining Programme, capacity building of Quality Assurance experts and job descriptions and mandatory qualification requirement document for Vocational Programme Heads/Managers of Educational Institutions/Colleges. All interested parties attended the seminars.

UNICEF

In accordance with the agreement signed in 2022 between the Center and the UNICEF, a project was launched at the Center "Promoting the implementation of the law and state standards of Early and Preschool Care and Education at the national level through creation of an authorization system for Early and Preschool Care and Education Institutions." The implementation of the project started in August and will complete in April 2023.

During 2022, with the support of UNICEF, the draft "On temporary rule on the authorization of Early and/or Preschool Care and/or Educational Institutions, as well as the Suspension and Termination of the Institution's Authorization" was prepared, thus effectively creating a legal framework for Quality Assurance in the early and preschool education system. The draft of the prepared rule was initiated to the Government of Georgia for approval.

With the support of UNICEF, the development of an electronic platform for self-evaluation has started. For this purpose, a technical assignment was prepared within the project, a tender was held and the winning company started developing an electronic self-evaluation platform. A self-evaluation questionnaire was prepared for the administration and its adapted version for three target groups: for parents, technical staff and educational staff.

A draft of the rules for the selection of experts for the authorization of the early care and education institution and/or preschool care and education institution, was also prepared including their activities and termination of membership of the experts' pool.

In addition, in July 2022, a grant agreement was signed between the United Nations Children's Fund and the Center within the framework of the development of the concept of school meals.

LEPL - NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATIONAL QUALITY ENHANCEMENT

In accordance with the agreement, working groups were formed, which included health, agriculture, national Center for disease control, quality assurance specialists and lawyers.

In the mode of intensive cooperation with the interested parties, an analysis of international practices related to school food services was carried out, a model of the school food supply infrastructure in general education institutions of Georgia and a draft of the spatial planning manual were developed; analysis of the current legal framework has been carried out and necessary legislative changes have been identified, the project of school standards regarding the provision of school food services is in the final stage.

ERASMUS +

With the participation of the Center the final conference of the PROFFORMANCE program was held in Budapest which summarized the teaching staff evaluation tool developed within the program, the best teaching and learning practices were identified and awarded, including those from Georgian Higher Education Institutions. In addition, the Center officially joined the subsequent PROFFORMANCE+ program as a partner.

Within the framework of the Erasmus+ program SQUARE, the Center's employees were on a business trip to France, to the National Conservatory of Paris (Le CNAM), where they got acquainted with the local experience regarding the development practices of the third mission of the Higher Education Institutions. In addition, in June 2022, within the framework of the same program, the Center's employees were on a business trip to the University of Turku in Finland, where they studied the local experience of developing the third mission of Higher Education Institutions and integrating them with the strategic plan.

Within the framework of the Erasmus+ program RURD, representatives of the Center attended meetings at the University of Kaunas and the University of Santiago de Compostela, where they learned about the role of LLL in terms of regional development.

Within the framework of the Erasmus+ program INTEGRITY, the representative of the Center participated in the conference in Batumi regarding plagiarism and challenges arising during distance learning.

Cooperation and Visits with Quality Assurance Agencies

In 2022 (November 28-December 3), the representative of the Higher Education Quality Assurance Department of the Center was on mobility at the Quality Assurance Agency operating within the framework of the Hungarian Accreditation Board (MAB) in Budapest, Hungary. The working visit was co-financed within the framework of the Staff Mobility Programme (IMINQA) of the Bologna Quality Assurance Thematic Group (TPG C on QA). The standards and regulations in force in MAB, which are used for the external quality assessment of PhD programmes in Hungarian higher education institutions were shared with the representative of the Center. In addition, beyond the predetermined agenda, other important issues were shared, including issues relevant to the Center (affiliation and maintenance of academic staff with Higher Education Institutions, electronic evaluation system, etc.) and there was a valuable process of cooperation between representatives of both agencies. Within the framework of the visit, a meeting was planned at the office of the Hungarian Erasmus+ and TEMPUS public foundation, which implements the PROFFORMANCE/+ project together with the Center. At the meeting, they discussed the progress of the current and planned activities, the potential of cooperation both with the Center and with the universities operating in Georgia. The mobility project envisaged the assessment of the visit and the preparation and submission of a detailed report. The report will be submitted to the organizing party of the project within one month after the end of the mobility, and the document will be shared with both the Center and the Hungarian host party for feedback. It will discuss results achieved, challenges identified, best practices, findings and a plan

LEPL - NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATIONAL QUALITY ENHANCEMENT

for outreach to other stakeholders. It should be noted that after the end of the mobility, the Hungarian Accreditation Board (MAB) expressed its full readiness to increase and deepen future cooperation with the Center. In addition, during 2022, the employees of the Center participated in international conferences on various topics and presented reports on relevant issues of competence.

Signed Memorandums

In 2022, the Center signed a Mutual Cooperation Agreement with three Quality Assurance Agencies. In particular, a Memorandum of Cooperation was signed between the Center and Association for Evaluation and Accreditation of Turkish Teacher Education Programs (EPDAD). Within the framework of cooperation, the parties will plan joint events, conferences, mobility of employees and experts, in the direction of issues of Quality Assurance of Higher Education.

In 2022 the Center signed a memorandum with the Azerbaijan Education Quality Assurance Agency (TKTA), the purpose of which is mutual cooperation and sharing of information, experience and best practices in quality development of higher and vocational education.

A Memorandum of Cooperation was signed between the Center and Croatian Agency for Science and Higher Education (ASHE), the purpose of which is mutual cooperation in the issues of higher education quality development. It is important to share information, experience and best practices between the parties.

In 2022 the Center signed a Cooperation Agreement with the Estonian Center for International Development (ESTDEV). Within the framework of the partnership, the Estonian side will make a significant contribution to the development of the quality of General Education in Georgia, in particular, through the development of the quality assurance framework and mechanisms, to the improvement of the quality of general education.

During the reporting period, the Center signed a memorandum of cooperation with the LEPL State Labor Inspection Service. The main purpose of the memorandum is to ensure cooperation in the areas assigned to the competences of the parties, expert cooperation in the process of obtaining the right and monitoring of programmes implemented within the framework of formal education of legal entities implementing vocational training and retraining programmes, as well as verification of the conditions of authorization and authorization of general, vocational and higher education institutions implemented by the Center.

The Center also signed a memorandum of cooperation with the Union of Accountants (NNLE). The aim of the memorandum is to promote the professional development of accountants, their training, retraining, and the training of qualified human resources in this or that problematic issue, the promotion of qualification confirmation processes for existing specialists, and the development of the quality of education in this direction.

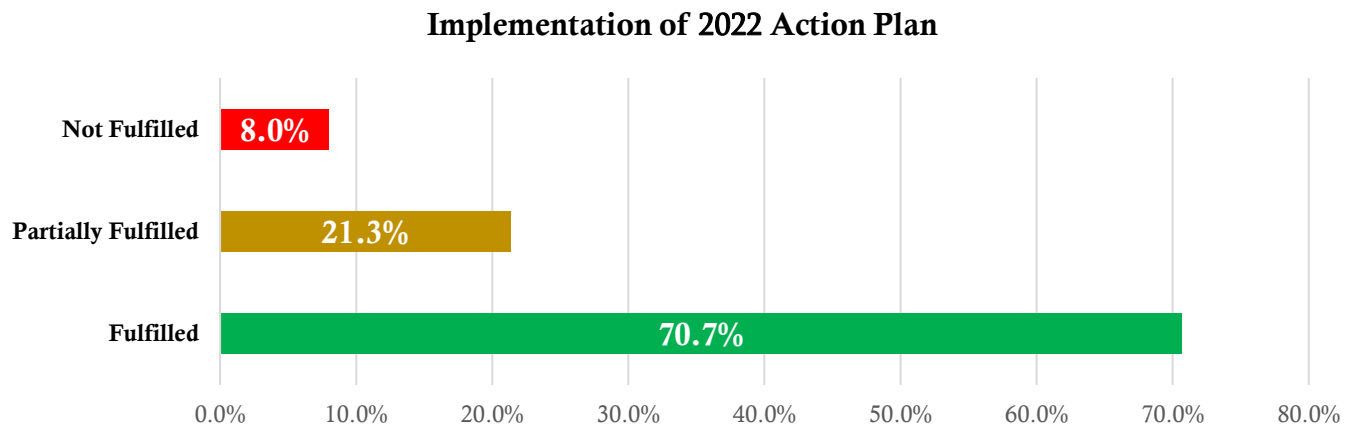
Chapter 9: Analysis of Fulfilled Activities of the 2022 Action Plan

Within the framework of the 2022 action plan of the Center, the relevant departments planned to implement 75 activities of 28 tasks under 7 goals. It should be noted that in September 2022, an amendment was made to the Center's 2021-2025 strategy and 2022 action plan, and the 7th goal was added which is the following: external mechanisms for ensuring the quality assurance of early childhood and preschool education have been established, taking into account national characteristics and best international practices.

In the period of January-December 2022, 53 activities were fully fulfilled, 16 activities were partially fulfilled, and 6 activities not fulfilled.

The percentage distribution of the implementation of the action plan is as follows:

Graph 5.





LEPL - National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement

Address: 2, Merab Aleksidze Street, Second Lane; Phone/Fax: +995 322 200 220 (*3599) Postal code: 0193

e-mail: info@eqe.ge