

**Questionnaire on
the relationship between the realization of the right to work and the enjoyment of all human rights by young people, with an emphasis on their empowerment, in accordance with State's respective obligations under international human rights law.**

1. Detailed information on challenges and good practices in relation to the right to work and the enjoyment of all human rights by young people, with an emphasis on their employment

Unemployment is the most acute social and economic problem and actual challenge in Georgia. The youth are the dominant among the unemployed population, which further increases the social risks and threaten the future of the country.

Supporting the Employment through necessary measures of improvement of the business environment, as well as the efficient functioning of the labour market is of the utmost importance for intensifying the economic growth as well as for solving the current social problems of the country.

The Government of Georgia (GoG) has developed some components of the School to Work Transition process for disadvantaged youth. There are nascent employment services as well as accessible public vocational colleges, for instance. However, there is no mechanism/ institution responsible for providing transversal skills, such as Core Work Skills (ILO definition) for them.

Since 2015, LEPL Children and Youth Development Fund (CYDF) has been supporting those Youth Organizations, which develop disadvantaged youth Core Work Skills through informal education in the context of Social Enterprises. CYDF tries, in coordination with other agencies, to make these skills provision an institutionalized part of the School to Work Transition process in the country.

As a part of its attempt, in 2014, CYDF initiated annual conference dedicated to youth employability issues (Youth Employment – Opportunities and Challenges), which soon became the most important forum for the relevant youth led and youth focused organizations. However, since 2016, the Government attempts to implement fiscal austerity policies have resulted in shrinking state funding for the CYDF (as well as for other state entities involved in youth policies implementation) making grounds for this activity discontinuation. At present CYDF, through international donors support, tries to revive the activity and introduce various other platforms/forums for involving youth and youth organizations in public policy dialogue on the topics of disadvantaged youth employability.

2. Detailed information on the legislative and policy measures adopted by your country to ensure that young people have equal opportunities for productive and gainful employment on the open labour market

Since 2013 the Government of Georgia took numerous steps in terms of supporting employment/youth employment in the country through implementation of Active Labour Market Policy and elaboration legislative framework.

Active labour market policy in Georgia includes:

- Training and retraining – human capacity development according to the labour market demand;
- Supportive employment – employment support of vulnerable and less competitive groups, particularly Youth;
- Job fairs - In different regions of Georgia;
- Vocational counseling Consultations and Career Guidance
 - Elaborating the national standard;
 - Providing professional consultations in every region of Georgia.

All these mentioned activities are being carried out in frames of state programs, in particular:

The Government of Georgia is implementing State Program on Vocational Training and Qualification Raising of all Job Seekers aimed at raising the competitiveness of job seekers in demanded professions through education and training to increase their employability. The programme is implemented by the LEPL Social Service Agency of the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Labour, Health and Social Affairs of Georgia, and is supported by the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia that provides private and public vocational institutions with the information on this initiative and will also coordinates the process of developing short-term professional programmes for educational institutions. The citizens of Georgia who are older than 16 and able to work, as well as the stateless having status in Georgia, persons with refugee or humanitarian status are entitled to use the programme. A person interested in the programme must be registered as job seekers in the Labour Market Management System www.worknet.gov.ge.

Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport of Georgia is responsible for youth affairs and has the mandate to develop and coordinate implementation of youth policy.

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- Possibility of youth to be involved in social, economic, cultural and political life
- Appropriate and high quality education, employment and professional growth opportunities
- Establishment of a healthy lifestyle and access to health services
- Raising youth's awareness on civil rights and duties, establishment of a safe and secure environment for young people, protection of their rights and supporting youth with special needs.

These goals respectively represent the four strategic directions of the policy: (a) participation, (b) education, employment and mobility, (c) health, and (d) support to vulnerable youth. The National Youth Policy Action Plan defines large number of activities (programmes, projects, events), which should support Georgian youth in obtaining high quality education, employment and professional growth opportunities.

Moreover, the Ministry runs other important activities through the Children and Youth Development Fund (CYDF) and Children and Youth National Center (CYNC).

Children and Youth Development Fund's (CYDF) main objective is to support youth school-to-work transition through promoting social entrepreneurship and skills development of youth.

CYDF coordinates its activities with the Supported Employment services (oriented on PWDs) of the Social Services Agency (SSA) as well as other programs facilitating disadvantaged youth employment (e.g state program for job seekers vocational training and capacity building).

CYDFs own grant-giving program - Employment Support and Non-formal Education – is of affirmative character oriented on disadvantaged youth such as young persons with disabilities or young persons belonging to other specific minority groups.

Since 2013 Georgia started VET sector reform and adopted the strategy of VET sector reform (2013-2020) together with its action plan. Main goals of the reform are:

- Increasing relevance of vocational education system to social-economic challenges of the country; fulfilling the current and future requirements of the labor market;
- Enhancing life-long learning opportunities, social inclusion, and personal and professional development of individuals;
- Approximation of Georgian VET system to European education system;

Within the framework of the strategy the reform of the VET programs has been started since 2014. New vision of reforming the VET programs has been formed anticipating the introduction of flexible, competence based modular programs. Modular programs are not only oriented on development of professional skills, but include interpersonal skills such as: communication, foreign language, civic education, literacy, numeracy etc. Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport worked on establishment of modular programs into the system during past years and respectively up to 40% of programs implemented in the system are already modular. From 2019, the institutions will fully switch to modular teaching.

Apart from modular programs ministry also actively started to implement work based learning in the VET system. In 2015 Ministry, adopted the concept on establishment of Work Based Learning approach. From 2016, implementation of the action plan started with the support from the international partners: As a result students were enrolled in 10 WBL programs of agricultural, tourism, transport field.

Special attention was paid to strengthening entrepreneurial learning in new VET programs for facilitating the self-employment opportunities. All adopted new modular programs consist of entrepreneurship competence as obligatory part of the program. Entrepreneurship and innovative learning is also supported by innovative labs (Fab Labs) in 14 colleges that are used for strengthening the new ideas and start-ups.

Since 2014, MoES started implementation of Tracer Study that is a good instrument for assessing the reform implementation since the study identifies the employment rate of the graduates after completion of the courses. As a result in 2014, 42% of employment rate was identified, the next round revealed 47% of employment and the last study in 2017 identified that 56,2 % of graduates are employed.

In 2015-2017, a new draft law on “Vocational Education and Training” was prepared. New draft law ensures the development of the sector in line with the strategy goals, eradicates the dead ends existing in the system, ensures life-long learning principle, increases the access to VET for all groups of population etc. The document also envisages the requirements of EU-Georgia Association agreement and approaches of Copenhagen process. Adoption of new law would enable the system to improve the quality, become more flexible and establish the linkages with other levels of education. The Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport presented it to the Parliament of Georgia on the spring session 2018 and the adoption is expected in 2018.

The draft law proposes forming a new system of vocational education and contains the following major changes:

- Integration of the secondary level general education components into VET and creating opportunities for VET students to continue their studies to the higher education institutions;
- Formation of a higher vocational education programs and a “short-cycle” programs; Creating the opportunity to transfer credits obtained at the vocational education level to a higher education level;
- Defining appropriate form of Work-based learning and prioritizing it;
- Creating opportunities for implementing joint- and exchange programs;
- Development of training and retraining system – development of adult education;
- Introduction of systemic approaches to inclusive education;
- Granting the right to carry out economic activities for state VET institutions, including realization / reimbursement of products created in the learning process;
- Development of professional orientation, counselling and career planning system in formal education;
- Development of a system, which includes VET teachers training, their professional development and career advancement;
- Creating the opportunity of non-formal and formal education recognition.

- 3. Information on affirmative action programs, incentives and other measures, if any, that your country has developed to promote employment opportunities for young people, including measures to increase employment opportunities for young people belonging to vulnerable groups (e.g. young persons with disabilities, young persons belonging to a specific minority group).**

The Government of Georgia is implementing the State program on employment support services- job mediation services. The aim of the program is to develop/implement active labour market policy and employment support services; and increasing employment opportunities for people with disabilities and youth (new component). Implementation of the labour market policy will be resulted in development labour market infrastructure, reduce unemployment, reveal labour market demands, analyze labour force structure and skills, raising professional education and skills, increasing competitiveness in accordance with the labour market demands, etc.

New State Program on Employment Support Services envisages wage subsidy for young job seekers. The target group of the program together with persons with disabilities is young job seekers (16-29). The objective of the component is to make an agreement with employers having vacancies, employ registered job seekers and subsidize wages. While young persons in frames of the program are employed, the state is paying 50% of the wage (up to 470 GEL). The program obliges employers to employee program beneficiaries by signing an employment contract for not less than 6 months.

Draft Employment Service Act has been elaborated with support of EUVEGE¹ project. The Act shall govern employment-related activities and institutions competent for employment affairs, Active Labour Market Policy measures, rights and obligations of the unemployed persons and employers, and other matters relevant to employment, in order to raise employment, to combat and prevent long-term unemployment in Georgia. The disadvantage group includes young persons (16-29 years old).

Youth Policy Management Department under the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport of Georgia approves Youth Policy Development Programme in the beginning of each year. In 2018 the “Youth Development Programme” has 5 key directions: Professional Orientation and Career Development; Entrepreneurship Promotion, Supporting Vulnerable Youth Groups; Developing Youth Work; and Supporting Regional Development Programmes.

Within the framework of the “Entrepreneurship Promotion” programme, “Entrepreneurship Regional School” project in selected municipalities of Georgia is implemented. The aim of the program is to develop entrepreneurial, innovative skills and competencies in youth, initiate startups and promote self-employment.

“The Georgian volunteer” is another program aimed on young people’s skills development and promotion of volunteering.

¹ EU Technical Assistance Project on VET and Employment Reforms in Georgia

Under the framework of the “Professional Orientation and Career Development” programme, career guidance web-portal myprofession.gov.ge was created and is operating. The web-portal contains wide range of self-administrated, self-assessment tests, guidebook on career guidance, description of professions (both textual and videos), case studies and regular updates about the news in the world of work. The portal also contains links to educational and training institutions.

CYDF coordinates its activities with the Supported Employment services (oriented on PWDs) of the Social Services Agency (SSA) as well as other programs facilitating disadvantaged youth employment (e.g state program for job seekers vocational training and capacity building).

CYDFs own grant-giving program - Employment Support and Non-formal Education – is of affirmative character oriented on disadvantaged youth such as young persons with disabilities or young persons belonging to other specific minority groups.

4. Information on measures your country has introduced to enable young people to access to educational, technical, and vocational guidance programmes, placement services and vocational and continuing training.

Government of Georgia has carried out several measures to this direction. As For the CYDF, its Employment Support and Non-formal Education program provides opportunities of continuing training (including vocational training) through non-formal education means to the groups of disadvantaged youth describe in the Youth Policy Document as youth of Special Needs. This is achieved through supporting Civil Society Organizations (Youth Organizations) for their projects prioritizing School to Work Transition process support and Social Enterprises Development.

One of the main goals of the strategy of VET sector reform (2013-2020) is increasing the geographical and financial accessibility to vocational education.

Within the framework of the special attention was paid to the accessibility of Vocational Education. Since 2013, GoG started full funding of VET students in state vocational education institutions. Precondition of entering the programs was defined with 25% threshold at state exams. Different enrolment procedures were introduced for the persons with disabilities.

In order to expand the geographical coverage of VET institutions, in 2013-2018, 7 new colleges were founded and 10 new locations (in municipalities) were added to the existing network; Rationale behind enlarging the coverage was the assessment of the socio-economic and demographic situation as well as employment/self-employment opportunities in particular region/municipality.

In 2015, Ministry developed the mechanisms assisting the ethnic minorities to have access to VET. Also within the Memorandum of Cooperation between the Ministry of Education, Science Culture and Sport and the Ministry of Correction, VET colleges started provision of retraining courses in the prisons for the inmates. The courses are designed according to the demand and interest of the beneficiaries. From 2013 ministry started to implement inclusive vocational education. All public

VET institutions are adapted to the needs of persons with special needs. Principles of universal design has been elaborated in the projects with the help of Norwegian government and as a result 4 buildings are rehabilitated and fully adapted to the needs of persons with special education needs according the universal design principals. Apart from the infrastructural improvement, additional services are available in the colleges to support inclusive education: sign language teachers, orientation trainers, inclusive education teachers and assistants are applicable for the beneficiaries with full state funds. Teaching materials have also been adapted and are used in the teaching process within the individual education plan.

It should be noted that the VET institutions are also providing short term courses for job seekers within the state program implemented by Ministry Labor, Health and Social Affairs.

Professional orientation service is a cross cutting issue between Ministry of Labor, Health and Social Affairs and Ministry of Education, Science Culture and Sport. Ministry of Education, Science Culture and Sport started implementation carrier guidance service for VET students, based on the concept and action plan adopted by Government of Georgia. With the assistance from the EU, the following assistance has been provided to the system: methodological support to the institutions, capacity building of the professional orientation managers, development of guidelines and handbooks etc.

Also Ministry of Education, Science Culture and Sport has launched Vocational Skills Development Program since 2017. The program facilitated strengthening the collaboration of general schools and VET colleges for the provision of professional orientation services for school pupils. Projects developed jointly by VET colleges and schools, envisaged the arrangement of necessary workshops at school facilities and coteaching from school teachers. The beneficiaries of the programs are graduate level schoolchildren and according to their interest they are involved in different VET skills development courses at school.

5. Please provide recent statistical data on the number of young people employed in the public and private sector, disaggregated based on age and sex.

N/A.

6. Detailed information on international cooperation programs related to the promotion of work and employment opportunities for young people. Please, describe the ways the programs are inclusive and accessible to young people.

European Union is actively supporting the Government of Georgia. "Better Skills for Better Jobs is the motto of the 2,7 million Euro technical assistance project that was officially launched on 5th of March 2015. The EUVEGE (EU Technical Assistance Project on VET and Employment Reforms Project) project is financed by the people of the European Union to support the people of Georgia in poverty reduction and social cohesion.

The EU-project works together with the Ministry of Education and Science and the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Labour, Health and Social Affairs and various Donors. Both ministries are currently implementing challenging reforms in their sectors; one is the Education Development Strategy for 2012-2020 and its corresponding Action Plans, the other the Labour Market Formation Strategy and Implementation Action Plan 2015-2018. The EUVEGE-project provides technical assistance and support in skills development and in managing and monitoring policies, evaluation of reform activities and human resources management. The reforms are implemented by the Ministries and the project supports them in reaching the best results. All the state programs and sub-programs, together with the employment service act draft have been elaborated with the support of experts from EUVEGE project. In the frames of the project various documents such as career guidance, active labour market policy strategy and its action plan, draft employment service act, etc.

In the framework of its Employment Support and Non-formal Education program LEPL Children and Youth Development Fund (CYDF) developed substantive international cooperation. In 2015-2017 CYDF together with Czech Development Agency funded and implemented project – Support for social Integration of Youth with Disabilities (200 000 Euro worth). In 2018 CYDF began to implement EU funded (150 000 euro) international project (Erasmus + program) - Social Entrepreneurship for Disadvantaged Youth Social Integration. At the same time, they started partnership with the Save the Children International within the framework of its project (1,5 million Euro worth) - Youth UP 4 Change: Better Skills for Successful Transition CYDF implement substantial component of the project dedicated to Georgia's disadvantaged youth development (about 200 000 euro worth). All these projects are oriented on local capacities development, but also involve all of the important stakeholders (including relevant ministries) in respective public policy discussions/ development giving voice to the target youth, first of all.