

The purpose of this brochure is to provide information for asylum-seekers, refugees, and humanitarian status holders<sup>1</sup> on the enrolment procedures in kindergartens, the Georgian language preparatory programmes, public schools, universities and vocational education in Georgia as well as about the recognition of education - both formal and non-formal.



The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, gives all children<sup>2</sup> the right to education. This right is also guaranteed by the Constitution of Georgia and the law of Georgia on “International Protection”, which grants asylum-seekers, refugees, and humanitarian status holders equal rights to preschool and general education as Georgian nationals. Access to higher education is granted in accordance with the relevant Georgian legislation (see below).

## **I. Enrolment procedures in kindergartens**

In order to register an asylum seeker, refugee, or humanitarian status holder child in a kindergarten, relevant request should be registered with the Department of International Protection under the Ministry of Internal Affairs (hereinafter – the Ministry).

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<sup>1</sup> This brochure does not apply to persons under temporary protection.

<sup>2</sup> For the purpose of this brochure, the child refers to asylum seeker, refugee, or humanitarian status holder below 18 years of age.

Tbilisi City Assembly Resolution<sup>3</sup> facilitates access of pre-school aged asylum-seeker, refugee, and humanitarian status holder children to kindergartens located within Tbilisi Municipality. The Division of Education, Sport, and Youth Affairs of Tbilisi City Hall (the Division of Education) is the responsible body ensuring access of pre-school aged asylum-seeker, refugee, and humanitarian status holder children to kindergartens located in Tbilisi municipality.



To register pre-school aged asylum-seeker, refugee, and humanitarian status holder children in a kindergarten, the Division of Education should receive a referral notice from the Ministry. A referral notice should be accompanied with a copy of an identity document of the pre-school aged child and of his/her legal guardian(s).<sup>4</sup>

Tbilisi Kindergartens' Management Agency (the Agency) is the responsible body ensuring electronic registration and other technical issues related to the enrolment of pre-school aged children at kindergartens.

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<sup>3</sup> Resolution 2-5 (03.02.2015) of the Tbilisi City Assembly.

<sup>4</sup> Temporary identification cards for asylum-seekers or temporary residence permit cards for refugees and humanitarian status holders.

### Important Note

In case there is no place at a respective kindergarten indicated in the Ministry's referral notice, the Agency ensures placement of a child at an alternate kindergarten if the interested party agrees.

Pre-school aged asylum-seeker, refugee, and humanitarian status holder children benefit from the same kindergarten services, including electronic registration, enrolment, and dropout procedures as Georgian nationals.

Asylum-seekers, refugees and humanitarian status holders who wish to register their children in the regions should address local municipalities and kindergartens for registration.

## **II. Georgian language preparatory programme for Minors**

### **1. General rules**

To access Georgian public schools, asylum-seeker, refugee, and humanitarian status holder children must demonstrate sufficient knowledge of the Georgian language.

To facilitate Georgian language learning, the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport (MESCS) adopted a decree on Enrolling Asylum Seekers and Humanitarian Status Holders in Preparatory Courses in Georgian lan-

guage, Program content, Implementation Terms and Financing Rules.<sup>5</sup>

The programme is designed for asylum-seekers, refugees, and humanitarian status holders from 6 to 18 years age group.

The programme is divided into two modules:

- Module I – beginner knowledge A1 level for children 6 to 11 years of age.
- Module II - beginner and elementary knowledge (A1 and A2 levels) for children 11 to 18 years of age.

Asylum-seekers, refugees, and humanitarian status holder children will be enrolled in the program twice a year - not later than September of the relevant year (if the Ministry of Internal Affairs submits the list to the MESCS before 30 July) and no later than January next year (if the list is submitted before November 30).<sup>6</sup>

The program starts on September 15 and finishes on June 15.<sup>7</sup>

Children have the option to pass language exams before completion of a full year to proceed with the enrolment in public schools.

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<sup>5</sup> Ordinance 193/n (12.12.2017) of the Ministry of education and science of Georgia.

<sup>6</sup> Ordinance 193/n (12.12.2017) of the Ministry of education and science of Georgia, Annex 1, article 5.

<sup>7</sup> Ordinance 193/n (12.12.2017) of the Ministry of education and science of Georgia, Annex 1, article 6.

## 2. Completion of the programme<sup>8</sup>

After successful completion of the Georgian language preparatory programme, children can be enrolled in schools given that the following requirements are met:

- Beginner Stage - successful completion of the programme at A1 Level.
- Basic Stage - successful completion of the programme at A2 Level.
- Intermediate Stage – successful completion of the programme at A2 Level.

Programme is considered as complete in case the exams (test and interview) held by the respective school is passed successfully. Once the above requirements are met, the director of the respective school issues a certificate.



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<sup>8</sup> Ordinance 193/n (12.12.2017) of the Ministry of education and science of Georgia, Annex 2.

### **3. Other opportunities to learn Georgian Language**

#### **Integration Center for Refugees**

LEPL Zurab Zhvania School of Public Administration of the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport, implements State Language Teaching Programme for any interested person, including refugees and persons holding humanitarian status. Classes are held at Integration Center functioning under the Ministry of IDPs, Labor, Health and Social Affairs of Georgia. The programme offers level A1, A2 and B1 Georgian language courses. The teaching method is based on special module that has been tested for years with significant success. In case of passing the exam successfully, the beneficiaries are relevantly certified.

Zhvania School of Public Administration, in collaboration with UNHCR Regional Representation, has prepared a project "Learn Georgian with Audio Lessons" (CD of 12 audio lessons with illustrations), intended to assist persons under international protection, asylum-seekers and stateless persons to master basic Georgian. Audio lessons are available on the official web-site of Zhvania School – [www.zspa.ge](http://www.zspa.ge)



Additionally, MESCS carries out the programme “Teaching Georgian as a Foreign Language”. Teaching and methodical materials (levels A1-B2+), created within the framework of this programme, are available on the website [geofl.ge](http://geofl.ge). The programme offers package of teaching / learning materials to any learner of Georgian, as a foreign language.

### **Reception Centre for Asylum-Seekers**

Asylum-seekers who reside in the reception centre for asylum-seekers (in Martkopi village) can attend free Georgian language courses on site. These courses are designed for children and adults.

### **World Vision International**

The Multi-service Centre (Centre) withing the project “Community Mobilization and Participation” funded by UNHCR in partnership with World Vision is the space for the community mobilization of asylum-seekers, refugees, humanitarian status holders and stateless persons in Georgia. The Centre provides Georian language course to their beneficiaries that is also delivered by the LEPL “Zurab Zhvania School of Public Administration”. The aim of the given classes is to fill the gap and offer free of charge Georgian language classes to those beneficiaries who cannot benefit from the state services so far.

### III. Recognition of education and placement exams

#### 1. Recognition of general education

The Legal Entity of Public Law (LEPL) - National Centre for Educational Quality Enhancement (the Centre) is responsible entity for the recognition of general education received abroad.

For recognition of general education received abroad, the holder of an education document<sup>9</sup>, the legal guardian<sup>10</sup>, or other interested party should complete an application at the Centre and include the following documents:

1. An application<sup>11</sup> (application form);
2. A copy of the applicant's identity card (in case of a foreign citizen, the notarized translation of the copy of Passport);
3. In the case filing an application by another person, the

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<sup>9</sup> Any educational document that proves the fact that a person received the education, e.g. primary or higher education - diplomas, grade sheets, or other relevant documents.

<sup>10</sup> Parents or relatives are generally legal guardians, as well as legal guardians appointed by the Social Service Agency (SSA) in case of unaccompanied minors. Other interested party might be any physical or legal party whose interests might be affected.

<sup>11</sup> If submitted application form regarding the recognition of foreign education has been prepared in a non-state language, applicant shall present a notarized translation of the application to the Center.

<sup>12</sup> Educational documents are: Certificate of complete general education and its supplement; certificate of base education and its supplement, certificate of primary education and its supplement (official transcript of grades)

- Vocational Diploma and its supplement (official transcript of grades)
- Higher Education Diploma and its supplement (official transcript of grades)
- A document certifying the awarded academic qualification

document certifying the authority thereof (power of attorney);

4. In the case filing an application by a parent, the notarized copy of child's birth certificate shall be presented;

5. A translated and notarized copy of an educational document<sup>12</sup>;

6. Application fee payment receipt (regular procedure of one month) - 40 GEL; Expedited procedure of Recognition of - education acquired abroad (15 business days) - 80 GEL; 5 business days - 120 GEL; 1 business day - 250 GEL;

7. In case of foreign Higher Education acquired by distance learning, live abroad proving documents shall be presented.<sup>13</sup>;

8. Conclusion of the receiving educational institution on establishing the compatibility of education attained during the period of study.

### Important Note

Any foreign language document is subject to the notarization of its translation into Georgian language.

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<sup>13</sup> National centre for Educational Quality Enhancement  
<https://eqe.ge/eng/static/213>

Refugees unable to provide their educational or qualification documents, should attach to the application all available documents certifying the acquired education or/and make reference to any information related to these documents.

The negative decision of the Centre can be appealed at the Tbilisi City Court within one month.

### Important Note

A child is enrolled at the respective public school based on the Centre decision on recognition or the refusal of recognition. If this Centre decision does not determine the respective level, enrolment takes place according to the child's age or at a lower level if the applicant agrees.

### Placement exams

The purpose of the placement exams is to help children complete particular class/classes/semesters, as well as, subjects introduced in particular classes/semesters.

If the Centre is unable to recognize the educational document of the asylum-seeker, refugee, or humanitarian status holder child,<sup>14</sup> on the basis of above-mentioned person's application, the respective school is authorized (but not obliged) to schedule and conduct placement exams.

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<sup>14</sup> Ordinance 98/N (01.10.2010) of the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia.

Placement exams are conducted in written form and can only be passed in the Georgian, Russian, Armenian, and Azerbaijani languages. Placement exams are conducted by the respective school,<sup>15</sup> which is responsible to provide the child with proper consultation and allow him/her to use its library, school literature and technical facilities.

Each school may distribute an individual action plan for children to facilitate their completion of missing subjects or semesters.

## **2. Recognition of Formal Education**

Persons having international protection in Georgia are eligible to have their diplomas of formal education recognized even in the absence of relevant documentation. LEPL –National Centre for Educational Quality Enhancement recognizes the education acquired abroad by the international protection status holders only in case if they are unable to submit a document certifying the education received abroad.<sup>16</sup>

### **Assessment of the knowledge**

After the application is submitted, the centre starts collecting of the information for establishing the education obtained abroad. With this aim the centre may conduct verbal hearing with the applicant and/or refer to the relevant educational authorities. The educational institution

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<sup>15</sup> With the exception of placement exams for 12th grade, which is held in centralized manner by the LELP education management information system operating within the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia.

<sup>16</sup> Article 5 (1) of the Ordinance 98/N (01.10.2010) of the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia.

selected by the applicant, shall conduct the exam to identify if a person possesses relevant knowledge, skills and competences specified in the application. The exam is conducted in Georgian or any foreign language, based on the agreement between the educational institution and the applicant.

Based on the results of the exam, the Center will (i) recognize, (ii) partially recognize or (iii) reject the education received by the applicant abroad and issue an information card indicating the following:

1. Date of issuing the card;
2. Personal data (name, surname, etc.) of the person having international protection status;
3. Data of the assessment of the qualification;
4. Additional information provided by the applicant (knowledge of foreign languages, work experience, etc.);
5. Information on the assessment procedure, the educational institution conducting assessment and the assessment results.



### **3. Recognition of Informal Education**

In Georgia it is allowed to recognize non-formal education even in absence of the relevant documents, after passing relevant professional exam. In addition, verbal and/or written examination can take place depending on the subject and sphere of recognition.

#### **Required documents**

The application should include the following information:



- 1) personal data and juridical and factual addresses;
- 2) contact information (email, phone);
- 3) date and time of submitting the application;
- 4) request of education recognition;
- 5) signature and supporting documents.

#### **Assessment**

After submitting the application, the applicant is provided with the counselling on the procedure of recognition of the non-formal education. The consultant refers the application to the relevant commission with the information

regarding the applicant and submitted documentation. The commission may request the applicant to submit additional document(s) and/or to organize the examination (including on-the-job observation/examination) and/or other type of assessment.

The decision on recognition of non-formal education should be rendered within three months.

#### **IV. Enrolment procedures for public schools**

##### **1. Online enrolment in the first grade**

Online registration for enrolment is available once a year and is divided into several steps. The exact period of online registration is announced annually on the MESCS WEB - [www.mes.gov.ge](http://www.mes.gov.ge) in the Georgian and English languages. Requirements for online registration may vary every year. Foreign nationals can also use online registra-



tion, however the registration itself is only available in the Georgian language.

Generally, enrolment in the first grade does not require recognition of education documents and the Georgian language exam. However, the respective school may ask the child to pass the Georgian language test or may organize an interview.

## **2. Enrolment in public schools during online registration**

During the online registration, a person can apply at the respective school for enrolment of a child.<sup>17</sup> The application shall be accompanied by the following documents:

- 1 a notarized copy of the child's birth certificate or identity document; and
2. a document issued by the Centre on the recognition/refusal of recognition of education (III / 1 Recognition of Education).

The respective school may request additional documents. The above-mentioned documents are kept by the respective school for the duration of studies.

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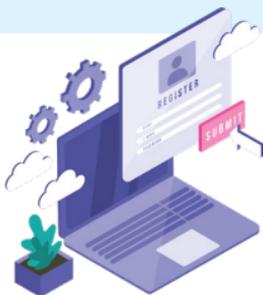
<sup>17</sup> Ordinance 675/ (16.08.2007) of the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia.

<sup>18</sup> Ordinance 675 (16.08.2007) of the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia.

<sup>19</sup> Generally, a response can be received within one week.

### 3. Enrolment in public schools after the deadline for on-line registration

After the deadline for online registration, an adult in person or in case of the child, his/her legal representative must submit a written statement to the MESCS, requesting permission for enrolment.<sup>18</sup> The MESCS should respond in 15-30 days in written form.<sup>19</sup> If the response from the MESCS is positive, it can be used for enrolment in any Georgian public school. The application shall be accompanied by the following documents:



1. a letter from the MESCS with positive response;
2. a notarized copy of the child's birth certificate or identity document; and
3. a document issued by the Centre on the recognition/refusal of recognition of education (III / 1 Recognition of Education).

The respective school may request additional documents. The above-mentioned documents are kept at the respective school for the duration of studies.

## V. Enrolment procedures for universities

### 1. General rules

In accordance with the Law on Higher Education, Article 52, para. 3 and Article 52<sup>1</sup>, para. 7, foreign citizens and citizens of Georgia, as well as stateless persons who received full secondary education, or its equivalent, outside of Georgia as well as those, who study/studied and obtained credits/qualifications in a foreign country from Higher Education Institutions recognised as such in accordance to the legislation of that country<sup>20</sup>, are exempt from the Unified National Exams<sup>21</sup>, and may proceed to bachelor's studies in Georgia.



Persons who are exempted from the Unified National Exams due to the above mentioned rule and who will be enrolled in higher educational institutions of Georgia and will obtain bachelor's degrees, have the right to proceed without the Unified Master's Exams in higher educational institutions of Georgia for master's studies.

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<sup>20</sup> This rule does not apply to students participating in common higher and exchange educational programmes.

<sup>21</sup> Unified National Exams are considered as pre-requisite exams for enrolment into bachelor's studies in Georgia.

In addition to that, persons who have received respective certificate for higher education abroad, as well as persons who study/studied and obtained credits/qualifications in foreign countries (in institutions of higher education (master's studies) that are recognized as legitimate higher educational institutions by the legislation of that country<sup>22</sup>) are exempted from the Common Master's Exams<sup>23</sup> and may proceed with master's studies in Georgia.

For the above-mentioned exemptions to be processed, the respective educational document(s) must be recognized by the Centre.

Persons who have completed secondary school or bachelor's education in Georgia, have the right to take the Unified National Exams to enter bachelor's studies or the Unified Master's Exams to enter master's studies in Georgia.

## **2. State scholarship and state master' scholarship**

Every year, the MESCS announces a call for applications for state scholarships and state master's scholarships for foreign citizens, who were enrolled in Georgian higher educational institutions through the Unified National Exams or Common Master's Exams. Foreign citizens, who are enrolled in Georgian universities but did not pass Uni-

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<sup>22</sup> This rule does not apply to students participating in common higher educational programme.

<sup>23</sup> Common Master's Exams are considered as pre-requisite exams for enrolment into master's studies in Georgia.'

fied National Exams or Common Master's Exams, are not eligible for the mentioned scholarships.

To apply for this scholarship, a student must first pass the Unified National Examinations or Common Master's Exams, and then approach the MESCS to submit an application.

Registration for the mentioned exams is available once a year.<sup>24</sup> Detailed information and online registration is available at the National Assessment and Examination Centre - [www.naec.ge](http://www.naec.ge).

Asylum-seekers, refugees, and humanitarian status holders can also approach universities of their choice and check respective entry requirements.

## **VI. Vocational Education**

The Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport opens registration for vocational training programmes twice a year - in spring and autumn. Vocational education is free of charge for persons having international protection and thus if applicant surpasses minimal competence barrier set for the tests, he/she is eligible for the State funding and free vocational education.

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<sup>24</sup> In general, on-line registration is conducted in spring.

For registration applicant should present identification document and school diploma (if available) in resource centers and Vocational Education Training (VET) available throughout the country. Online registration is also feasible at: <http://www.vet.emis.ge>. Applicants should pass entry exam arranged by the National Assessment and Examination Centre (NAEC) of the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia. Samples of the tests are available at: web-page of NAEC. Entry test are available in Georgian, Armenian, Azerbaijani and Russian languages. In addition, applicants may be required to pass foreign language or specialized test.

VET institutions deliver their programmes in Georgian language. Non-Georgians who pass the entry tests are eligible to receive intensive Georgian language training (2-3 months duration) at the beginning of the study and continue with vocational education in Georgian language.





## Contact information



### **The Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA)**

Address: 16, Mikheil Gakhokidze Street, Tbilisi, Georgia

Working hours: Monday-Friday/09:00 - 18:00  
Hotline: (+995) 598 080097



### **Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport of Georgia (MESCS)**

Address: 52, Dimitri Uznadze Street - 0102  
Tbilisi, Georgia

Working hours: Monday-Friday / 09:00 - 18:00;  
Hotline: (0 32) 220 02 20



### **Tbilisi Kindergartens' Management Agency**

Address: 29-29a, Mitskevichi Street - 0194  
Tbilisi, Georgia

Working hours: Monday-Friday /  
10:00 - 19:00  
Telephone: (032) 237-82-43



### **Integration Center**

(IDPs, Ecomigrants and Livelihood Agency)

Address: 15, Mikheil Tamarashvili street, Tbilisi, Georgia

Working hours: Monday - Friday/ 09:00-18:00

Telephone: (032) 2 140242



### **World Vision Georgia**

World Vision Georgia Multi-Service Centre

Address: 67B, Zhiuli Shartava street, Tbilisi, Georgia

Working hours: Monday - Friday/ 10:00-19:00

Hotline: (+995) 577045645



### **Rights Georgia**

Address: 11a Akaki Gakhokidze Street, 0160, Tbilisi, Georgia

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