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I. Legal Education

In recent years Georgia has undergone a fundamental reform of legal education system. The objective of the reform was both to improve legal education within university and to implement the standards of the instruments adopted within the Bologna Process.

According to the requirements of the Law on Higher Education (in force since January, 2005) the three-stage (cycle) educational programme was developed.

Bachelor's Programme

The first stage of study is Bachelor of Law programme. The curriculum for the Bachelor of Law degree is designed to prepare graduates for the basic demands of legal practice. All students are required to complete courses that serve as the foundation of a legal education (required courses, amounting for 40% of the program) and benefit from wide range of elective courses offered (60% of the program). To graduate students need to earn at least 240 credit points.

The necessary amount of required and elective courses are established in four groups of modules:

- ✓ Private Law,
- ✓ Public Law,
- ✓ Criminal Law,
- ✓ Basic Principles and Methods of Law.

Particular attention is accorded to the teaching of foreign languages (in amount of 24 credits). In other (non-legal) courses, at the student's option, it is admissible to accumulate not more than 24 credits.

Curriculum Outlines of Bachelor's Program:

- ✓ Required (Basic) Modules 96 credits
- ✓ Elective Modules 78 credits
- ✓ Fundamentals and Methods of Law 18 credits
- ✓ Foreign Language 24 credits
- ✓ Non-legal Courses 24 credits

Master's Programmes

The second stage (Master's programme) is oriented on training the higher level specialists (judge, prosecutor, counsellor) and scholars. The Master of Law program effectively integrates knowledge with practice and offers its students the substantive knowledge and professional skills necessary to enter legal profession. An academic emphasis is placed on clinical courses, which sharpen student's skills and knowledge while engaging in legal practice outside traditional classroom environment. To graduate, students are required to earn at least 120 credit points including Master's Thesis.

It is mandatory for the elements of the training programmes oriented on the development of

practical skills to make at least 30% in one of the following directions:

- ✓ Private Law (with the elements of Administrative Law)

  The Master's programme in Private Law is oriented on the development of skills for judges and counsellors specialising in private law as well as notaries;
- ✓ Criminal Law

  Master's programme in Criminal Law is oriented on the development of skills for judges and counsellors specialising in criminal law as well as prosecutors;

- ✓ Constitutional and International Law

  Master's programme in Constitutional and International Law will is oriented on the development of skills of a constitutionalist (including a judge of the constitutional court), of a high level diplomat and public official.

In addition, the element of scientific research is a part of the training programme, which counts for 30% of the total programme.

Doctor's Programme

The third stage is Doctor's programme. It is the integrity of academic courses and scientific research, which aims at the preparation of the academic personnel and ends up with the award of the academic degree of a Doctor of Law.

A precondition for the admission to the programme is the solicitation of a supervisor, which should include the assessment of the relevance and importance of the chosen topic.

To earn a Doctor of Law degree one must acquire 180 credit points. A precondition for the commencement of final procedures is the:

- ✓ drawing up of two seminar thesis in the field, a doctoral student writes his/her doctoral thesis in;
- ✓ completion of a doctoral thesis, which shall reflect the well-founded results of theoretical or/and experimental research, and shall contribute to the development of science;
- ✓ upholding of doctoral thesis, i.e. public presentation of the topic followed by scientific disputation.

In the case of passing each stage of the university education, the law department of a higher educational institution will grant the respective academic degree to a graduate (Bachelor, Master or Doctor). Granting of an academic degree does not depend on taking the state certification examination.

A precondition for taking an office (of a judge, prosecutor or counsellor (attorney)) is possession of a Master's academic degree and taking the state certification examination.

Faculty

A professor manages the training process and directs the scientific-research work of assistant-professors and students. His/her independence is restricted only due to effective conduct of the training process. He/she is authorised to associate with other professors in a larger training or scientific-research unit (e.g. institute) for pursuing common objectives (e.g. Master's Programme).

Further teaching-staff consists of associate professors (the person having a doctorate, who participates in the basic training process and in the scientific-research work), assistant professors (the person, who has a doctorate or is admitted to a doctorate programme and conducts seminar or practical courses) and invited practicing lawyers.

Student

The Law Faculty curriculum secures the mobility of students both within the country and abroad. Furthermore a student is to decide by him/herself which course to hear with which professor and in which semester. However his/her freedom is restricted by the provision of required courses and the interrelationship between the courses within or between modules. In the choice of individual training programmes a student is assisted by a respective tutor.

A student is the integral part of the department and participates in the adoption of any decision personally or through a selected representative, including the process of disposal of financial and other technical resources of the department. He/she is entitled to assess the work of the academic personnel on an annual basis.

II. **Judicial reform**

The new wave of large-scaled judicial reform has been underway in Georgia since 2005. It aims at the creation of an independent judicial system.

According to the Chairperson of the Georgian Supreme Court, Mr. Kublashvili: "The main directions of the reform are:
– Refinement of the mechanisms for combating corruption in the judicial system and ensuring the effectiveness of their functioning;
– Institutional reorganisation of the judicial system, the creation of a consistent and functionally well-balanced system and, consequently, ensuring the principle of the sequential order of instances;
– Specialisation of judges at the courts of all instances;
– Increase of the number of judges to at least 400;
– Increase of the remuneration of judges and the strengthening and enforcement of guarantees of social and legal protection;
– Perfection of the criteria for the selection of judges and an improvement of the system of their appointment;
– Creation of the system for training candidate judges and permanent retraining of practicing judges and the elaboration of relevant long-term programmes and training courses and putting them into practice;
– Securing opportunities for judges based on career principle;
– Logistics and financial provision of courts;
– Introduction of the institute of Court *Mandaturi* (a person in charge of keeping order) for keeping order at courthouses and session halls;
– Improvement of the organisational functioning of courts, refinement of the system of court management and a mastering of qualification of the court personnel and improvement of their performance;
– Creation of the integrated virtual network of the judicial system, the improvement and perfection of the quality of case proceedings and ensuring the transparency and publicity of court activities through posting public information on the Internet;
– Solution of the problem of protracted court proceedings and minimisation of the practice of

cases moving in a circle;
– Refinement of the mechanisms of legal proceedings at the High Council of Justice and of the disciplinary administration of justice, increase of the number of judges therein in order for at least half of the members of this Council to be judges, and also ensuring the effectiveness of their performance;
– Enhancement and improvement of the relationship of the judiciary with the media and a strengthening of social control over the activities of the judiciary" (*Kublashvili*, *Konstantin*, The Main Trends of Judicial Reform, Georgian Law Review, 2005, 265, www. http://geplac.org/eng/glawreview.php?id=13).