

STUDY OF THE HIGHER EDUCATION MINORITY QUOTA SYSTEM POLICY IN GEORGIA

2010-2019

Tbilisi, 2020



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Study of the Higher Education Minority Quota System Policy in Georgia

Research Report

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Acknowledgements

This research is the first attempt to summarize the higher education minority affirmative action policy introduced in 2009. The study explored 10 years' experience with the policy and its success stories and identified its problems and challenges as well. This document is an important resource for analysis, revision, and improvement of the policy on national minorities.

This research is a result of the valuable input and efforts of its authors, as well as many other individuals involved. It would have been impossible to carry out the research without their commitment and motivation. Therefore, we would like to express our great appreciation to all of them.

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We believe that the issues the research raised will be addressed appropriately by the policymakers, as well as the management of the university faculties and heads of the programs. Implementation of the recommendations provided in this research will contribute significantly to improve the affirmative action policy's effectiveness and ultimately, advance national integration.

Introduction

This document is a report on the research that was undertaken by the Center of Civil Integration and Inter-Ethnic Relations (CCIIR) and financed by the United Nations Association in Georgia within the project, “Promotion of Integration, Tolerance and Awareness (PITA) in Georgia” funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The research was designed to evaluate the affirmative action policy for ethnic minorities in Georgia.

The first chapter of the document reviews the ongoing affirmative action policy in Georgia’s higher education admission system from 2005 to the present. The second chapter describes the research methodology, and the third chapter presents the development and elaboration of the One-Year Georgian Language Program from its first accreditation to the present. The program elaboration process is described for each of the higher educational institutions (HEI) of Georgia that implement the program. The fourth chapter overviews the process of ethnic minorities’ enrollment in Georgia’s HEI in 2010-2019, the students’ grants distribution by ethnic groups based on their General Skills exam results, the dropout rates in university undergraduate studies, and ethnic minority students’ choice of programs. The fifth chapter presents 12th graders’ level of preparation for enrollment in Georgia’s HEI, and also presents the patterns in post-school plans of graduates of non-Georgian schools. It overviews as well the process of university entrants’ recruitment and the local population’s level of awareness of the affirmative action policy. The sixth chapter describes the planning, implementation processes, and instructional practices in the One Year Georgian Language Program and their effectiveness in providing students with a proper learning environment. This chapter presents the results for each HEI involved in the study and makes comparisons as well with studies conducted in 2013 and 2016. The seventh chapter focuses on ethnic minority students' challenges and problems in undergraduate study programs. The eighth chapter addresses university graduates' challenges in finding employment and integrating into society, while the final chapter offers recommendations to improve the affirmative action policy's effectiveness.

Chapter 1. Overview of Affirmative Action Policy in Georgia's Higher Education

Different types and forms of affirmative action policies for higher education admission have been implemented in Georgia since 2005. The reform of Georgia's higher education began in 2005 and unified national exams introduced in the admission system were one of the most important reforms in the field. Before 2005, Higher Education Institutions (HEI) were responsible for the administration of entrance exams in Georgia. Since then, a new system of united national entrance examinations based on standard tests of skills has been developed. The education reform policy the Ministry of Education and Science introduced in 2004 was designed to ensure equal admission exams for all applicants. The unified national examinations system was developed and implemented within the reform's framework and required every entrant to pass three tests: Georgian Language, General Skills (in the Georgian or Russian languages), and Foreign Language. The first year of the reform had considerable negative effects on ethnic minorities. For example, in 2005, only two of the applicants to Akhalkalaki were admitted, only one was admitted from Ninotsminda, and only 17 were admitted from Marneuli. These statistics were significantly lower than the enrolments before the formal establishment of the united national entrance exam system.

"An affirmative action" policy for ethnic minority applicants was implemented in the first year of the formal establishment of Georgia's united national entrance exams. However, the forms, methods, and approaches to this policy changed constantly between 2005-2010, and in 2010, a quota system for ethnic minorities was introduced. The system was also changed and amended between 2010-2019. This chapter will describe all of these efforts briefly.

Article 43.1.E of the Law on General Education provides state stipends for students in the form of financial or material aid that the institution or any other sources grant. In special cases, the government provides social programs for financially underprivileged students as well (Articles 6.1C and 52.8), including providing funding for students from non-Georgian schools from 2005-2009. Within the social program's framework, the Government has funded 15 students annually from Kvemo Kartli, 15 from Samtskhe-Javakheti, and 10 from Tbilisi. This regulation is in force today and non-Georgian students receive financial assistance, although no additional support was provided to minorities in the admission process. Thus, the main challenge was admissions rather than financial aid.

The Ministry of Education and Science (MoES) made certain changes in the forms of affirmative action to ameliorate the negative effects of the 2005 united national entrance exams. The MoES modified the regulations and allowed applicants to take the general skill tests as well as elective

tests in Russian. At the same time, non-Georgian school graduates, including those from Russian language schools, were eligible to take Russian for the foreign language test. In addition, training courses were offered in Ninotsminda and Akhalkalaki's Language Houses with the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities' support (Tabatadze and Gorgadze, 2013; Tabatadze and Gorgadze, 2017). As a result of these interventions, the number of national minorities who enrolled increased significantly in 2006, when 25 students were enrolled from Kvemo Kartli and 31 from Samtskhe-Javakheti (Tabatadze and Gorgadze, 2016).

The MoES had to take additional significant steps to support ethnic minority applicants in 2008. Specifically, the regulation of unified national exams was modified, and national minorities were given the option to take the general skills tests in the Armenian and Azerbaijani languages. Preparatory courses were also provided for university applicants. The foundation and authorization of Akhalkalaki College, a new legal entity of the public law, on the basis of the Javakheti Branch of Ivane Javakhishvili State University, was an important intervention in the process of supporting ethnic minorities enrollment in Georgian higher education. 2008 was an important year with respect to the general educational reform cycle, as 11 years of schooling were replaced with a schooling cycle of 12 years in Georgian language schools. Georgian schools did not have school graduates in 2008 and it increased national minorities' opportunities to enrol in HEI. All of the abovementioned increased the number of registered and enrolled national minority students in 2008. For example, 113 applicants took the general skills test in Armenian, and 46 (40.7%) enrolled successfully. 250 applicants took the test in Azerbaijani, of whom only 29 (11.6%) enrolled successfully. Statistical data indicated that allowing applicants to take the exams in their national language has increased the number of both registered and enrolled national minority students, particularly Armenian applicants. In 2009, non-Georgian Language schools also had no graduates, which gave applicants a good opportunity to prepare better for the united national entrance exams of 2010.

As mentioned above, the MoES has implemented different tools of affirmative action since 2005 to increase ethnic minority applicants' enrolment in HEI. The measures undertaken have had some positive effects; however, they still were not sufficient to increase ethnic minorities' access to higher education. Given the experience with the unified national exams between 2005-2009, the Government of Georgia (GoG) decided to introduce a quota system for ethnic minorities' admissions to Georgia HEI. Specifically, the November 19, 2009 amendment to the Law on Higher Education stipulated that HEI, which are to admit students based on the results of the general skills tests alone (administered in the Azerbaijani, Armenian, Ossetian, and Abkhazian languages), must allocate 5-5% of admissions for Armenian and Azerbaijani students, and 1-1% for Ossetian and Abkhazian students, from the total number of students admitted (Article 52.5¹). The quota system was a temporary measure and its timeframe was limited to the 2018-2019 academic year, which was the year in which students who entered Georgian schools in 2007 graduated. This

marked the starting point of the general educational reform of non-Georgian schools. The idea was that the reformed schools would prepare graduates who were competitive in the unified national exams and hence, the quota system would not be needed after 2019.

The Georgian Language One-Year Program was introduced in most of Georgia's public HEI in 2010, and its goal was to develop students' reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills to the extent required to study at the Bachelor's, Medical, or Veterinary Diploma levels. The Program is a 60-credit course (Article 47.2) and is mandatory for students in the first academic year. After completing the Georgian training program, the HEI issues a certificate of completion. After completion of the program, the students are able to choose any BA programs and continue their undergraduate studies.

A funding mechanism was also introduced for the program. The Georgia government took the responsibility to finance 100 Armenian and 100 Azerbaijani students' tuition based on their general skills tests results. Equal funding was provided for these students; however, it should be noted that there are twice as many Azerbaijani language students than Armenian students.

The MoES ensured the accreditation of Georgian Language Training programs before the academic year 2012-2013. The HEI obtained accreditation to administer these programs, and the Georgian Language One-Year Program was reaccredited in 2019. Chapter 3 will discuss the process of these programs' elaboration in different HEI in 2010-2019.

Chapter 2. Research Methodology

Research Objective and Questions

This study was designed to assess the effectiveness of the quota system introduced in Georgia's HEI admission system in 2010, and posed the following research questions:

- How effective are the recruiting strategies implemented in 2010-2019?
- How appropriate and relevant is the affirmative action policy with respect to its effect on minority students' educational outcomes at the tertiary level?
- To what extent are the minority students participating in the One-year Georgian Language Program prepared for tertiary education?
- How successful is the One-year Georgian Language Program with respect to academic performance, infrastructure, and other important components?
- What problems do ethnic minority students studying at the Bachelor's level in Georgia's HEI face?
- What academic, social, and civil integration challenges do students enrolled through the quota system face?
- What are the specific reasons for the high dropout rates of students enrolled through the quota system?
- How prepared are HEI graduates to be engaged actively in social, economic, political, and cultural life?
- What employment problems and challenges do graduates face?
- What legislative and policy changes have been made in the quota system?
- How has the One-Year Georgia Language Program's accreditation process been elaborated from its beginning to the present?
- What factors have influenced the One-Year Georgia Language Program's changes and amendments?
- What are the quota system's statistical outcomes in students' application, enrollment, and dropout rates from 2010 to the present?

Research Methods

Mixed methods were used to achieve the study's research objectives. Specifically, the following research methods were used: (1) Survey of 12th graders in non-Georgian schools; (2) Survey of the students in the One-Year Georgian Language Program; (3) Focus group discussions with BA

program students enrolled through the quota system in Georgia HEI; (4) focus group discussions with graduates of the 1+4 program; (5) In-depth interviews with lecturers and heads of Georgia HEI programs, and (6) Desk research. Each research method explored specific topics.

1) Survey of 12th graders in non-Georgian schools

- To assess the achievement of non-Georgian schools' General Education Goals
- To assess students' language skills and competences based on self-assessment tools
- To assess the social skills students developed in non-Georgian schools based on self-assessment tool;
- To assess non-Georgian school graduates' subject skills and competences based on self-assessment tool;
- To assess the factors in, and rationale of students who choose the country for higher education, as well as specific HEI and programs

2) Survey of the students in the One-Year Georgian Language Program

- To study the appropriateness and relevance of the affirmative action policy in terms of its effect on minority students' educational outcomes at the tertiary education level
- To determine the extent to which minority students participating in the policy's special One-Year Georgian language program are prepared for tertiary education
- To observe, monitor, and evaluate the process of learning/teaching with respect to academic performance, infrastructure, and other important components in affirmative action's success
- To study the affirmative action policy's general effect on the minority community groups living in Georgia

3) Focus groups with Bachelor's students enrolled through the quota system

- To study the problems of ethnic minority students at the Bachelor's level in Georgia's HEI
- To evaluate the academic, social, and civil integration challenges of students enrolled through the quota system
- To assess the specific reasons for the high dropout rates of students enrolled through the quota system

4) Focus groups with university graduates enrolled through the quota system

- To assess HEI graduates' preparation to engage actively in social, economic, political, and cultural life
- To identify graduates' employment problems and challenges

5) Interviews with program heads and teachers/ (6) Desk research

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- To describe the quota system's legislative and policy changes
- To assess the elaboration of the One-Year Georgian Language Program's accreditation process from its beginning to the present
- To identify factors that have influenced the changes and amendments in the One-Year Georgia Language Program
- To analyze statistically the application, enrollment, and dropout rates of students enrolled through the quota system from 2010 to the present

Methods of Sampling and Data Collection

1) Survey of 12th graders

Sampling of 12th graders

The sampling was performed separately for Armenian and Azerbaijani language schools. This approach was selected because of the objective to generalize the research results to specific ethnic groups. A sample of Armenian language schools' 12th graders was selected from the following schools and populations:

Table 1: Number of Armenian language Schools by size and by number of students in target districts

District	# of Schools	Small	Medium	Large	# of students in small schools	# of schools in medium-size schools	# of students in large schools	Total Number of Students
Akhalkalaki	42	21	15	6	1533	1958	2148	5639
Ninotsminda	22	7	11	4	472	1520	1003	2995
Akhaltzikhe	9	6	1	2	300	108	822	1230
Tsalka	9	5	4		297	543		840
Marneuli	5	3	1	1	215	115	229	559
Bolnisi	2	1		1	59		206	265
Tetritskaro	1	1			82			82
Aspindza	1		1			187		187
Borjomi	1	1			97			97
Total	92	45	33	14	3055	4431	4408	11894

There are 950 12th graders in Armenian language schools and 274 were selected for the survey. In total, 33 Armenian schools and 274 12th graders were sampled for the survey. The distribution of the total and sampled students' population by school size categories was as follows:

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Table 2. Sample of students from Armenian Language Schools

	Small	Medium	Large	Total
Total Population of 12th graders in Armenian language Schools	242	355	353	950
Students Sampled	75	100	99	274

The distribution of schools sampled by the district was as follows:

Table 3: The distribution of sampled Armenian schools by districts

District	Small schools	Medium	Large	Total
Akhalkalaki	7	5	3	15
Ninotsminda	4	3	2	9
Akhaltzikhe	2	1	1	4
Tsalka	1	1	0	2
Marneuli	1	1	0	2
Bolnisi			1	1
Total	15	11	7	33

The same approach was applied to sampling Azerbaijani language school students for the survey. The sample of 12th graders in Azerbaijanian language schools was drawn from the following schools and populations.

Table 4: Number of Azerbaijani language Schools by size and by number of students in target districts

District	# of Schools	Small	Medium	Large	# of students in small schools	# of schools in medium-size schools	# of students in large schools	Total Number of Students
Marneuli	36	20	11	5	3280	3712	3130	10122
Bolnisi	16	13	3	0	2122	1037	0	3159
Dmanisi	7	6	1	0	877	361	0	1238
Gardabani	10	4	4	2	657	1423	1693	3773
Sagaredjo	3	0	1	2	0	384	2178	2562
Lagodekhi	2	0	1	1	0	362	511	873
Total	74	43	21	10	6936	7279	7512	21727

There are 1250 12th graders in Azerbaijani language schools and 293 were selected for the survey. In total, 20 Azerbaijani schools and 293 12th graders were sampled. The distribution of the total and sampled students' population by school size categories was as follows:

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Table 5. Sample of students from Azerbaijanian Language Schools

	Small Schools	Medium	Large	Total
Total Population of 12th graders in Azerbaijani language Schools	400	418	432	1250
Students Sampled	94	98	101	293

The distribution of schools sampled by the district was as follows:

Table 6: The distribution of sampled Azerbaijanian schools by districts

Districts/Schools	Small	Medium	Large	
Marneuli	5	3	1	9
Bolnisi	3	2	0	5
Dmanisi	2	0	0	2
Gardabani	1	1	1	3
Sagaredjo	0	1	1	2
Total	11	6	3	20

Further, some schools were selected to substitute for the school sampled in case a school or students declined to participate in the survey.

Conducting the Survey of 12th Graders

The interviewers were selected for the fieldwork based on three important criteria: (1) Experience working as interviewers; (2) Experience working in the Kvemo Kartli, Samtskhe-Javakheti, or Kakheti region, and 3) Knowledge of State and minority languages. The fieldwork activities were conducted from December 9-20. In total, 570 12th graders were interviewed from the Kvemo Kartli, Samtskhe-Javakheti, and Kakheti regions of Georgia.

The questionnaire was developed, which consisted of seven sections: The four sections were the same for all survey participants and focused on the following topics: (1) The self-assessment of students on the achievement of Goals of General Education; (2) Self-assessment of students language skills; (3) Self-assessment of subject knowledge, academic achievement and social skills; (4) Future-post-graduation plans of graduates; The section 5-7 were different for different groups. Section five was designed for those 12th graders, who plans to continue the higher education in Georgia. The sixth section of the questionnaire was for 12th graders planning study abroad and the seventh section was devoted to 12th graders aspiring to get vocational education.

2. Survey of Students of One Year Georgian Language Program

Sampling the population of One-Year Georgian Language Program Students

The sampling approach was developed to be able to generalize the survey results for specific universities. Accordingly, the number of students sampled was determined based on the number

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of students in each university. Table 7 below illustrates the number of survey populations and the number of students sampled per university

Table 7. Sample of One Year Georgian Language Program

University	Number of Students in One-Year Georgian Language Program	Number of Students Sampled
Tbilisi State University	310	172
State Medical University	68	62
Sukhumi State University	70	64
Georgian Technical University	308	169
Samtskhe Javakheti State University (Akhaltzikhe and Akhalkalaki Branches)	70	64
Ilia State University	280	162
Batumi State University	5	5
Kutaisi State University	11	11
Telavi State University	8	8
Gori State University	8	8
Police Academy of Georgia	11	11

Conducting the survey of One-Year Georgian Language Program students

The interviewers were selected for fieldwork based on three important criteria: (1) Experience working as interviewers; (2) Experience working in Kvemo Kartli, Samtskhe-Javakheti, or Kakheti region, and (3) Knowledge of State and minority languages. A total of 29 interviewers were selected. Seven staff members of Centre for Civil Integration and Inter-Ethnic Relations (CCIIR) were in charge of the fieldwork.

The fieldwork activities were conducted in Tbilisi from December 16-20 and in the regions of Georgia from December 23-30. In total, approximately 700 students in the One-Year Georgian Language Program were interviewed.

Developing, piloting, and verifying the survey questionnaire

The questionnaire was developed, which consisted of four sections: (1) Assessment of teaching process (General evaluation of the program; Teaching methods and strategies teachers use; extra and co-curricular activities, etc.); (2) Assessment of infrastructure, resources, and equipment; (3) Activities for social and academic integration, and (4) Plans after program completion.

The draft version of the questionnaire was piloted and tested at Tbilisi State University and at Samtskhe-Javakheti State University. Several changes were made after the piloting. Specifically: (1) The formulation of the answers was clarified; (2) The names of the teaching strategies were elaborated, and (3) Some teaching strategies were unified under a larger strategy. The new version of the questionnaire was then printed.

3) *Focus group discussions of students of BA Programs*

Five focus group discussions of students studied at the undergraduate level were organized. The students were from the following universities: Samtskhe-Javakheti State University, Tbilisi State Medical University, Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University, Georgian Technical University, Ilia State University. Focus groups were conducted in February 2020. The focus group discussions were recorded and transcribed later.

A total of seven students, including 3 males and 4 females, participated in the focus group discussion of the undergraduate students of Samtskhe-Javakheti State University. Three undergraduate students (all three females) participated in the focus group from Tbilisi State Medical University. Seven undergraduate students of Tbilisi Ivane Javakhishvili State University participated in the focus group discussion (1 male and six females). Four students took part in the focus group discussions of the Georgian Technical University (1 female and 3 male). Four participants (all of them are female) were in Ilia State University focus group.

The semi-structured protocol was developed for focus group discussions and facilitators followed the protocol while conducting the focus group discussions.

4) *Focus groups of graduate students*

Two focus groups were conducted with the graduates of the 1 + 4 program as a part of the study. The first focus group was held at Samtskhe-Javakheti State University. A total of 3 graduates, all three girls, participated in the focus group. The focus group was held in February 2020. Graduates of Tbilisi State University, Medical University, Georgian Technical University and Ilia State University participated in the second focus group of graduates. Two from the Medical University, three from Iliauni, two from the Georgian Technical University, and two graduates from TSU. Two of them were females and seven were males. The focus group was conducted using the Zoom electronic platform due to the restrictions followed by the Covid-19 pandemic, in March 2020.

5) *Interviews with Lecturers, Program Leaders and Administration of the bachelor studies*

In the framework of the study, focus groups were also planned with professors and implemented in the following five universities: Samtskhe-Javakheti University, Medical State University, Tbilisi State University, Georgian Technical University, Ilia State University. Focus groups were conducted in February 2020. A total of 5 professors, 1 male and 4 females, participated in the focus group at the Georgian Technical University. Six lecturers, one male and five females took part in the study at TSU. Five female lecturers took part in the focus group at the Medical State University. As for Iliauni, 4 lecturers took part in the focus group.

In addition to the focus groups, in-depth interviews were conducted with the heads of various study programs and representatives of the administration in the target universities. Representatives of the undergraduate program were selected in advance. 2-3 programs were selected from each university. The selection criterium was the number of ethnic minority students enrolled at the programs.

In-depth interviews were conducted in February 2020 in SJSU. Heads of Programs of Georgian Philology Program and Business Administration were interviewed. In-depth interviews were conducted at Tbilisi Ivane Javakhishvili State University, Heads of Business Administration and Multilingual Education Programs participated in the study. At Tbilisi State Medical University, the heads of One Step Educational Program for MD and bachelor program in pharmacy were selected to take part in the study. Heads of the programs of Faculty of Mining and Geology participated in the study from Georgian Technical University and Head of the educational process of the School of Law and the expert of the Curriculum of the Anglistics Program from Ilia State University were interviewed in the framework of the research.

The semi-structured interview questionnaire was developed in the framework of the study. All interviews were conducted based on the developed semi-structured interview questionnaire. All interviews were transcribed, coded and analyzed. Theme based coding approach was utilized in the study.

6) *Desk research and statistical data analysis*

The desk research was also conducted during the reporting period. The legislative changes from 2009-2019 were studied. The elaboration of the One-Year Georgian Language Program from 2009-2019 was also studied for each university. The statistical data on exam admissions applications, enrollment, and dropouts were obtained from the MoES, the National Exams and Assessment Centre, the National Centre for Educational Quality Enhancement, and from the HEI.

Data Collection and Analysis

Given the goals and objectives of the research and the information obtained from the questionnaires, the decision was made that, in addition to descriptive analysis, *t*-tests and parametric statistical analyses would be used, which would allow us to use cross-tabulation to compare data with different parameters. The quantitative data were analyzed with SPSS v. and the qualitative data were transformed into transcripts and analyzed with “Atlas.”

Chapter 3: Elaboration and Transformation of the One-Year Georgian Language Program Between 2010-2019

As mentioned above, the accreditation of the One-Year Georgian Language Program was undertaken before the 2012-2013 academic years. Although the program was scheduled to be reaccredited in 2016, it was postponed several times and finally, the program's validity was confirmed on December 31, 2019, and the HEI were obliged to reaccredit the program between July 1, 2019, and December 31, 2019 (Decree of Government of Georgia #1109 issued on May 18, 2018). Based on these regulations, most HEI reaccredited the program, which will be implemented beginning in 2020.

The new reaccredited programs were based on sectoral characteristics that the National Educational Enhancement Centre adopted on May 3, 2018. The document was developed by a university network of One-Year Georgian Language Programs that the CCIIR established in the PITA program's framework. The university network consists of 11 members.

The sectoral characteristics for this program were not developed until 2019. The document incorporated local needs and assessment results as well as international practices. The reaccredited programs took into consideration the following aspects highlighted in different research studies on the One-Year Georgian Language Program's effectiveness, specifically:

- Development of an instrument to assess Georgian language competences, and its integration in the One-Year Georgian Language Program;
- Introduction of a system for teachers' professional development in the One-Year Georgian Language Program, organization of teacher training to incorporate ICT in the teaching process, assessment of students' needs, differentiated instruction, and methods to develop students' social skills;
- Development of learning materials based on levels of Georgian language competences;
- Development of intensive language courses for students based on their language needs;
- Equipping program with technological instruments and incorporating e-learning platforms in the teaching process;
- Development of an individual consultant system for students;
- Development of a tutoring program in the One-Year Georgian Language Program

It is worth mentioning that all of the activities listed above are innovative and were not part of the programs accredited in 2012-2013.

The new sectoral characteristics considered several crucial issues: First, preprogram testing was introduced officially. HEI are obliged to test students and assign them to different groups based on their level of language competences. Second, the program is designed differently for students with different language competences. Intensive courses, more teaching hours, as well as a tutoring program, are provided for students with low language competences; third, sectoral competencies are based on the language competences framework.

These changes and new sectoral characteristics for the program made it possible to design more flexible, and more comprehensive programs. All HEI were accredited for seven years in 2019. In total, 20 programs were accredited and the following HEI are authorized to implement the One-Year Georgian Language Program today:

1. Tbilisi Ivane Javakhishvili State University
2. Tbilisi Vano Sarajishvili State Conservatory
3. Georgian Technical University
4. Shota Rustaveli Theater and Film State University of Georgia
5. Tbilisi State Medical University
6. Akaki Tsereteli State University (Kutaisi)
7. Ilia State University
8. Sokhumi State University
9. Samtskhe-Javakheti State University (Akhaltsikhe, Akhalkalaki)
10. Euroregional Training University (Gori, Tbilisi)
11. Iakob Gogebashvili Telavi State University (Telavi)
12. Shota Meskhia Zugdidi State Teaching University (Zugdidi)
13. Tbilisi Apolon Kutateladze State Academy of Arts
14. Batumi Shota Rustaveli State University (Batumi)
15. Batumi Art University (Batumi).
16. Gori State Teaching University (Gori)
17. Tbilisi Teaching University (Tbilisi, Signaghi)
18. Kutaisi Music College (Kutaisi)
19. Davit Agmashenebeli Georgian National Defense Academy (Gori)
20. Higher Education Academy (Tbilisi)

Here we will describe the main directions in the program's changes and amendments for the primary HEI.

* * *

Tbilisi Ivane Javakhishvili State University made important modifications in the program. The new program consists of 28 course syllabi. The first semester includes 6 courses, each of which has 5 credits; however, students with different levels of language competences take different courses (modules). The second semester consists of 4 mandatory courses that are designed to develop different language competences: Grammar; syntax and orthoepy, and functional writing, listening, and speaking skills. The special course "Diversity and Tolerance" is given in the second semester with the goal to develop students' intercultural sensitivity. This course uses content

and the language-integrated learning approach develops language skills, teaches about the diversity in Georgia, and develops important social and intercultural skills and competences. The second semester includes a group of elective courses that are intended largely to develop reading skills. Students can choose courses that are designed to develop subject-specific language knowledge and skills based on their interest and future BA program.

* * *

Ilia State University also made important changes and modifications in the One-Year Georgian Language Program:

- The differentiated approach was applied and different modules were developed for students with different language competences
- The programs have mandatory, as well as elective/mandatory courses, for learners with different levels of language competences. Teaching materials were also developed for the new courses
- The assessment system was modified
- Pretesting, as well as diagnostic testing in speaking, was added to the program
- The courses “Mini-project 1” and “Mini-project 2” were modified. The titles of the courses were also changed and now are entitled as follows: “Integration 1” and “Integration 2.” New teaching materials were developed and the tutoring program’s role in these courses was increased

* * *

Tbilisi Medical State University also introduced several innovative approaches for the second accreditation, and sectoral courses were added to the program (Biology and Anatomy), and the course on “Diversity and Tolerance” was introduced in the second semester as well. The courses are based on the content and language integrated learning approach. The new internet portal: Cqool.ge - was developed with learning resources and materials for students. The assessment system was also revised. The component “attendance” was replaced with the component “peer assessment,” and students’ language competences are assessed at the beginning of the program. Students are then assigned to different groups based on their language competences and different groups have different courses (modules).

* * *

The Georgian Technical University also introduced differentiated modules for students with different language competences. Students' language competencies are assessed at the beginning

of the program. As above, students are then assigned to different groups based on their language competences and different groups have different courses (modules). The course "Diversity and Tolerance" was added to the program beginning in the second semester. There is also a group of elective courses that are designed largely to develop subject-specific language knowledge and develop reading skills, and students can choose courses based on their interest and future BA program.

* * *

Sokhumi State University also elaborated its reaccreditation program, which consists of 23 courses. The first semester includes 6 courses, each of which has 5 credits; however, students with different levels of language competences take different courses (modules). The second semester consists of 4 mandatory courses designed to develop different language competences: Grammar; syntax and orthoepy, and functional writing, listening, and speaking skills, and "Diversity and Tolerance" is given in the second semester. The courses are based on content and the language integrated learning approach.

* * *

Samtskhe-Javakheti State University also has 6 mandatory courses in the first semester. Students with different levels of language competences take different courses (modules). The second semester includes the course, "Diversity and Tolerance" described above. The university offers the following elective courses on "Sectoral Terms and Vocabulary" in the second semester: (1) Humanities; (2) Economics; (3) Law and Legal Studies; (4) Math, and (5) Teacher Education.

* * *

Telavi Iakopb Gogebashvili University also modified its program based on the experience in 2010-2019. The new program consists of 23 courses. The first semester includes 6 courses, each of which has 5 credits, and students with different levels of language competences take different courses (modules). The second semester includes 5 mandatory and 1 elective course. The mandatory courses are designed to develop different language competences: Grammar; syntax and orthoepy, and functional writing, listening and speaking skills. "Diversity and Tolerance" described above is offered in the second semester. Elective courses are designed largely to develop reading skills, and students can choose courses based on their interest and future BA program. These elective courses are designed to develop subject-specific language knowledge and skills and include six courses: (1) Philology; (2) History; (3) Math; (4) Law; (5) Biology, and (6) Business Administration/Economics.

* * *

Batumi Shota Rustaveli University made changes in its program in 2019 for reaccreditation purposes. The Writing course was modified and a dictation component was

added to it, and new course, such as “Communicative Aspects of Georgian Language 2,” was introduced. The program has 60 credits, of which 55 credits are mandatory courses and 5 are elective. The first semester consists of 6 courses, each of which has 5 credits; however, students with different levels of language competences take different courses (different A and B modules). The A module is intended for students with low language competences and has more teaching hours, while the B module is for students who demonstrated better language performance in pretesting. The A module courses have 4 teaching hours a week, while B module courses have 3 contact hours of teaching. This approach allows the gap in language competences to be filled in the first semester of study. In the second semester, students take the same courses, but without different modules. These courses develop language skills, and focus as well on tolerance, working on academic texts, and developing the skills necessary at the BA level in general. The second semester includes elective sectoral courses that focus on developing academic language skills and give the students the opportunity to learn lexical units for their academic field of interest (business, economy, education, social sciences, and math and science, etc.). The course "Diversity and Tolerance" is also given at the beginning of the second semester. This course was developed in partnership with NGO CCIIR and the project was funded by OSCE HCNM.

* * *

Kutaisi Akaki Tsereteli State University began to implement the One-Year Georgian Language Program in 2012. The program was modified during its implementation and was revised substantially for reaccreditation purposes. The following revisions were made in the program:

- Assessment system was elaborated
- The courses “Georgia Language 1” and “Georgian Language 2” were divided into smaller courses, and the course content was also revised
- Different credit hours were allocated to different courses. Today, there are 4, 5, and 6 credit hours courses in the program. For instance, the program courses “Tolerance and Diversity” and “Vocabulary and Sectoral Terminology” are 4 credit hours courses.
- The program has two different modules in the first semester: Module A and Module B, as described above.

The program consists of 60 credit hours and has only mandatory courses. 30 credit hours are taught in the first semester and 30 in the second semester. Further, the program has an enriched library with new teaching materials.

* * *

Gori State Teaching University also introduced the One-Year Georgian Language Program in 2010 and modified it several times. The following revisions were made in the program in 2014-2018:

- The course “Diversity and Tolerance” was developed and became part of the program
- Amendments were made in the regulation of the HEI credit calculation system enacted on September 1, 2016, and the program was revised based on this new regulation
- Computer and technological equipment were provided for the program
- The following changes were made in the program in 2019:
- Two courses, “Language Communicative Aspects 1” and “Language Communicative Aspects 2,” were unified
- Course expected results section was modified and now are presented in a more comprehensive and complex manner
- The assessment system was modified
- New teaching and learning materials were developed

* * *

The Defense Academy of Georgia also implements the One-Year Georgian Language Program. The program was revised in 2019 and the following changes were made:

- The program introduced two different modules in the first semester: Module A and B, as described above.
- Development of intercultural competences became part of the program. Accordingly, the course “Diversity and Tolerance” was introduced in the program.

Conclusion

HEI revised their One Year Georgian Language program substantially. The revisions their based on results of different research studies on the One-Year Georgian Language Program's effectiveness as well as on experience on each university and international practice. There are some important innovative approaches in revised programs and these innovations are reflected in programs of all HEI, specifically (a) Students with different levels of language competences take different courses (different A and B modules). The A module is intended for students with low language competences and has more teaching hours, while the B module is for students who demonstrated better language performance in pretesting. (b) The special course “Diversity and Tolerance” is given in the second semester with the goal to develop students’ intercultural sensitivity; (c) Introduction of elective courses in the second semester to develop subject-specific language knowledge and skills based on their interest and future BA program; (d) Incorporation

of extracurricular activities in course syllabi; (e) Organization of extracurricular activities and establishment of centres to support student's academic and social integration; (f) Introduction of a system for teachers' professional development in the One-Year Georgian Language Program; (g) Development of educational resources and enrichment of program library with new teaching materials.

Chapter 4. Overview of the Situation During the Implementation of the Quota System in 2010-2019

During the period 2010-2019, a total of 8,163 university entrants, 5,510 Azerbaijanian and 2,653 Armenian fellows, were enrolled in the one-year Georgian language program. It should be noted also that the registration of Azerbaijanian university entrants was quite high, 11,755. However, because of the barriers associated with the school exit exam, only 9,555 were allowed to take the exam, and of these, only 6,563 university entrants obtained the minimum score required. There was a total of 4,362 Armenian university entrants, among whom 3,673 took the exam, and 2,851 were able to meet the exam's minimum requirement. The tables below depict the detailed information by year for those students who registered for the exams, met the minimum requirement, and were enrolled in the program during 2010-2019.

Table 8. Number Azerbaijanian students who registered for the exam took the exam and passed the minimum requirement in 2010-2019

Year	Registered for the Exam	Took the Exam	Passed the Minimum Requirement	Qualified for one-year Georgian language program
2010	335	303	194	178
2011	377	351	262	250
2012	579	541	407	386
2013	1189	1083	737	704
2014	834	742	479	456
2015	1181	888	556	522
2016	1610	1121	717	660
2017	1703	1203	727	673
2018	1866	1438	1166	788
2019	2081	1887	1318	893
Total	11755	9557	6563	5510

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Table 9. Number Armenian students who registered for the exam took the exam and passed the minimum requirement in 2010-2019

Year	Registered for the Exam	Took the Exam	Passed the Minimum Requirement	Qualified for the one-year Georgian language program
2010	253	188	137	123
2011	277	238	188	179
2012	290	262	207	198
2013	270	248	190	186
2014	345	307	219	217
2015	427	355	244	219
2016	535	435	345	300
2017	658	506	388	373
2018	664	561	474	422
2019	643	573	459	436
Total	4362	3673	2851	2653

Analysis of these statistical data over the nine years revealed the following patterns: (1) In 2013, when school exit exams were not administered centrally and assessments were performed at the school level, the number of Azerbaijani students who both registered for and took the exam increased significantly. However, this pattern was not maintained in the number enrolled; (2) The number of Armenian university entrants during the period 2014-2019 increased significantly, which can be explained by the information survey that was conducted in the Armenian community, and (3) one can observe a large difference between the number of students who registered for and took the exam, as 18.7% of the registered students could not take the exam during 2010-2019.

Student Distribution by HEI

Analysis of the distribution of those students enrolled through the quota system suggests that the majority enrolled in the following five universities: Tbilisi State University (TSU), Ilia State University (ISU), Georgian Technical University (GTU), Tbilisi State Medical University (TSMU), and Samtskhe-Javakheti State University (SJSU). Among these, TSU has the greatest number of students. In addition, 42% of the quota system students choose to enrol in TSU. The table below provides detailed information about the distribution of the students enrolled during 2010-2019.

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Table 10. Students' Distribution by Higher Educational Institution, 2010-2019

	Year											
Higher Educational Institution	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	ყველა	%
Tbilisi State University (TSU)	177	304	367	337	314	309	342	387	438	455	3430	42%
Ilia University	7	5	58	214	114	140	229	183	244	262	1456	17.80%
Georgian Technical University (GTU)	22	29	31	180	123	172	224	255	276	294	1606	19.70%
Tbilisi Medical State University (TMSU)	20	40	50	67	52	52	67	89	87	84	608	7.50%
Samtskhe-Javakheti State University (SJSU)	30	42	38	48	54	52	55	97	102	87	605	7.40%
Sokhumi State University (SSU)	10	4	18	22	5	8	16	27	34	88	232	2.80%
Other HEI	35	5	22	22	11	8	27	8	29	59	226	2.80%
Total:	301	429	584	890	673	741	960	1046	1210	1329	8163	100.00%

The table shows the following patterns: (1) Both TSU and TSMU have had stable enrollment over the years; however, the latter is enrolling far fewer students compared to the numbers allocated through the quota system; (2) in the beginning stage of the quota system, ISU and GTU had low enrollments; however, these numbers increased significantly and they are accepting quite a large number of students today; (3) with few exceptions, private universities have not implemented the quota system, and these universities' participation could have increased the system's effectiveness with respect to the quality of education, as well as contributed to strengthening the private sector in general. This can be achieved in the future, as beginning in 2020, private HEI have been engaged in the quota system through the accreditation process, and (4) regional HEI have not been fully participating in the quota system (with the exception of SJSU). It should be noted that they have been allocated a large number of quota places that the Azerbaijani and Armenian students are not using.

This information about the distribution of Armenian and Azerbaijani students across different universities can help these HEI plan and implement recruiting policies successfully.

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Table 11. Distribution of Armenian Students by Higher Educational Institution, 2010-2019

Higher Educational Institution	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	სულ	%
Tbilisi State University (TSU)	62	110	125	101	113	116	160	181	203	211	1382	52.10%
Ilia University	3	3	7	10	7	18	38	36	52	69	243	9.10%
Georgian Technical University (GTU)	7	8	8	10	24	18	16	17	23	28	159	6%
Tbilisi Medical State University (TMSU)	6	14	8	14	14	15	25	39	38	35	208	7.80%
Samtskhe-Javakheti State University (SJSU)	30	42	38	48	54	52	55	97	102	87	605	22.80%
Sokhumi State University (SSU)	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0.15%
Other HEIs	13	2	10	3	5	0	6	3	4	6	52	1.05%
Total:	123	179	198	186	217	219	300	373	422	436	2653	100.00%

Analysis of the distribution of Armenian students across different HEI reveals several patterns: (1) 52% select TSU as their preferred university; (2) Armenian students select SJSU as their second choice, which can be explained by the university's geographic location. Few students select GTU and ISU, while TMSU is in slightly higher demand; (3) Armenian students prefer private and regional universities least, and (4) the number of Armenian university entrants overall, as well as its growth trend was lower compared to Azerbaijani students during 2010-2014; however, this pattern changed to a significant increase during 2015-2018.

Table 12. Distribution of Azerbaijani Students by Higher Educational Institution, 2010-2019

Higher Educational Institution	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	სულ	%
Tbilisi State University (TSU)	115	194	242	236	201	193	182	206	235	244	2048	37.20%
Ilia University	4	2	51	204	107	122	191	147	192	193	1213	22%
Georgian Technical University (GTU)	15	21	23	170	99	154	208	238	253	266	1447	26.30%
Tbilisi Medical State University (TMSU)	14	26	42	53	38	37	42	50	49	49	400	7.30%
Samtskhe-Javakheti State University (SJSU)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00%
Sokhumi State University (SSU)	8	4	16	22	5	8	16	27	34	88	228	4.10%
Other HEIs	22	3	12	19	6	8	21	5	25	53	174	3.10%
Total:	178	250	386	704	456	522	660	673	788	893	5510	100.00%

The distribution of Azerbaijani students has the following characteristics: (1) The students are distributed equally across 4 large universities; (2) the number of university applicants, as well as enrollments, is increasing steadily, and (3) the number of both university applicants and enrolled students was highest in 2013. This could be explained by the fact that the schools administered the school exit exams in a given year. As a result, a larger number of students could receive school certificates. In the following years, school exit exams were administered centrally and created barriers for the graduates to pursue higher education. The table below contains detailed information about the distribution of the Azerbaijani students by year and university.

Student Distribution across the Programs

One of this study's goals was to explore from which faculties and programs 1+4 program students graduated during 2015-2019. According to our findings, Humanities and Business Administration programs were the most popular among the 1+4 program students (Humanities faculty: TSU – 23.2%, ISU – 33.3%, SJSU – 22.8%). The faculty of Business Administration is one of the most popular among the students, including those at GTU (Business Administration faculty: TSU – 20.54%, ISU – 29%, SJSU – 48%, GTU – 38%). Compared to these two faculties, faculties of Law and Social and Political Sciences are less appealing. As an illustration, the following proportion of the 1+4 program participants graduated from the faculty of Law: TSU – 14.2%, ISU – 10.8%, SJSU – 9.8%. The distribution is similar for graduates of the faculty of Social and Political Sciences.

The breakdown of the enrollments in the Humanities faculty reveals that the Georgian language major is the most popular. The fact that this major is associated with the profession of a teacher of the Georgian language and literature that has quite high employment prospects may explain this preference. Given this, we may assume that the education major is popular among 1+4 program graduates; however, they do not possess appropriate information about the qualifications they need to enter the teaching profession. Therefore, these students believe that selecting the Georgian language and literature as a major is the correct way to become a teacher. However, graduating with a major in the Georgian language does not qualify them to become teachers, even upon completion of an education program as a minor. Therefore, this uninformed choice becomes very problematic for these graduates.

The following fact supports the assumption above: In 2015, TSU opened a multilingual education program as part of the education and psychology faculty, yet interestingly, 10% of the 1+4 program participants selected this program. This matter is of great importance, particularly if we analyze the opportunities in the labour market for teachers. Problems associated with this will be discussed further in the next chapters. Table 13 provides detailed information about the program choices 1+4 program graduates made.

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Table 13. Graduates Distributed by Universities and Programs, 2015-2019 (EMIS Data)

HEI/Program	Year of Graduation					Total
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	
LEPL - Akaki Tsereteli State University			1	2	2	5
Construction				1		1
Law				1		1
Social Sciences					1	1
Georgian language and literature			1		1	2
LEPL - Batumi Shota Rustaveli State University					1	1
Business Administration					1	1
LEPL - David Agmashenebeli Georgian National Defense Academy			2	2	2	6
Informatics			1	1	2	4
management			1	1		2
LEPL - Tbilisi Apollon Kutateladze State Art Academy				1	1	2
Architecture					1	1
interior design				1		1
LEPL - Tbilisi State Medical University			7	19	33	59
Graduated physician				11	26	37
Graduated dentist			6	4	5	15
Pharmacy			1	2	2	5
Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation				2		2
LEPL - Iakob Gogebashvili Telavi State University		1	2	2		5
English Language and Literature			1			1
Mathematics		1				1
Georgian language and literature			1	2		3
LEPL - Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University	12	64	90	110	125	401
American Studies			3	1	1	5
Arabistics			1		2	3
Armenology			2	2	1	5
Business Administration	7	14	16	22	23	82
Geography		4	4	2	1	11
primary education		1		1	1	3
economic		4	5	4	5	18
Electrical and electronic engineering			1			1
Spanish Philology			1			1
Turkology		3				3
English philology		1	5	6	12	24
Iranianism			1			1
History			1	1	1	3
Caucasology (Russian)				2	3	5
Caucasology (Georgian)			2	6	1	9

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Computer Science		1	1		3	5
Mathematics		1	5	4	3	13
Medicine (Georgian)				13	17	30
Multilingual education (primary education level)					12	12
Political Science				1	1	2
Journalism and Mass Communication			1	1	2	4
Journalism and Mass Communication (with Georgian-Russian Components)		1				1
Russian Philology (Russian)		1		1	1	3
Russian Philology (Georgian)			1	1	2	4
International law		1	1	1		3
International Relations		2	10	6	6	24
law	5	16	8	16	9	54
Dentistry			4	6	8	18
Tourism		4	5	6	2	17
physics					1	1
Philosophy		1				1
psychology			1			1
Georgian Philology		9	10	7	7	33
chemistry			1			1
LEPL - Ilia State University		1	16	57	64	138
Business Administration (Management, Banking and Finance, Tourism) (Major Specialties)			5	10	17	32
Elementary School Pedagogy (Major Specialty), Preschool Education (Additional Specialty)				2	2	4
Earth Sciences (Geography and GIS Technologies, Geology, Geophysics) (Major Specialties)				2	1	3
Informatics (major and additional specialty)			2	6		8
Mathematics (major and additional specialty)			1	2	4	7
Natural Sciences: Physics, Biology, Ecology (major and additional specialties)				3	2	5
International Relations: Europe and the Middle East (major)					2	2
law				5	10	15
Fine and Applied Arts (major and additional specialty)				1		1
Social Sciences: Political Science, Sociology, Psychology, European Studies (Major and Additional Specialties)			2	8	5	15

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Humanities (major and minor specializations: Anglicanism, German Studies, Spanish Studies, French Studies, Italian Studies, Slavic Studies, Oriental Studies, History, Archeology, Art History, Film Studies, Literary Studies,						
		1	6	18	21	46
LEPL - Samtskhe-Javakheti State University	15	23	22	30	33	123
Business Administration	11	11	12	21	4	59
primary education	1	2		1	2	6
economic					8	8
English philology	3	1	1	1	4	10
Information technology		1	1		2	4
History			1		1	2
law		2	1	3	6	12
public administration					6	6
Georgian Philology		6	6	4		16
LEPL - Georgian Technical University	1	8	13	66	11	99
Architecture				1	4	5
Business Administration		1	3	9	2	15
Business organization and management				1		1
Business Law		1	1			2
economic				18	2	20
Energy and electrical engineering				1		1
Informatics		4	5	3	1	13
Mass Communication / Journalism				4		4
construction		1	2	3		6
Banking and Financial Technologies				1		1
International Relations	1			4	1	6
International Relations (Russian)				1		1
law			1	11	1	13
Mining and Geoengineering				1		1
Transport				3		3
Pharmacy		1	1	5		7
LEPL - Sokhumi State University	1	1	7	6	3	18
Business Administration			1	1		2
economic			2			2
History			1			1
Computer technology			1			1
Mathematics				1		1
International Relations			1			1
law		1		2	3	6
Georgian Philology	1			2		3
chemistry			1			1
Total:	29	98	160	295	275	857

Low Graduation Rates

Statistical analysis of the student data showed that despite the increased number of university entrants and enrollments attributable to the quota system, university graduation rates still remain quite low. This indicates that minority students enrolled in BA programs experience various problems related to financial capacity, as well as language and academic preparedness. To explore these issues, we conducted BA student focus groups. These groups discussed those problems that hinder the students from successful studies and graduation, and the groups' results will be reported in later chapters. In this section, we analyze the graduation rate indicators.

Students were enrolled through the quota system first in 2010. Therefore, the first cohort of these students graduated in 2015. As part of this study, we compared statistics of the students enrolled by universities in 2010-2014 to the number of BA program graduates in 2015-2019. Analysis of these statistics showed that approximately 30% of the students enrolled in the 1+4 program graduated their BA programs. SJSU had the highest graduation rate, 58%, while the rate at other universities ranged from 25 to 30%. The relatively higher graduation rate at SJSU can be explained by several factors: (1) Less financial burden, as the university is located near where students live; (2) familiar cultural environment and more opportunities for integrated academic and student environment; (3) faculty's greater sensitivity toward student needs, and (3) relatively accurate assessment system. All of these factors will be discussed in more depth in the chapter on the focus group discussions. The table below provides detailed statistical information on the number of students enrolled and the graduates.

Table 14. Graduation Rates of Students Enrolled in 2010-2014

HEI/Program	# of Graduates in 2015-2019	# of Enrolled students in 2010-2014	%
Tbilisi State University	401	1499	26.70%
Ilia State University	138	398	34.70%
Georgian Technical University	99	385	25.70%
Tbilisi State Medical University	59	229	25.70%
Samtskhe-Javakheti State University	123	212	58%
Sukhumi State University	18	59	30.50%
Other universities	19	95	20%
Total	857	2877	29.80%

Grant allocation patterns and Related Inequities

Beginning in 2010, Armenian and Azerbaijani university entrants receive 5% each of all HEI slots. In addition, the decree by the Prime minister determines grant financing for each group of

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students up to 100 individuals. Thus, Armenian and Azerbaijani students are allocated the same number of slots through the quota system and receive the same number of grants as well as a result of the general skills exams.

It should be noted that because of the different proportions of these two ethnic groups, both the quota and financing systems are unfair in the following ways: (1) The number of K-12 students; (2) the number of 12th graders who graduate from high school; (3) the number of HEI applicants; (4) the number of students enrolled in Georgian HEI, and (5) the weighted scores in the general skills tests needed to obtain a study grant. Each of these factors is discussed in detail below.

There is an excess of 25,443 students in Azerbaijani schools, while Armenian schools enrol only 13,374 students (Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia, 2019). The number of 12th graders is higher in Azerbaijani schools as well compared to Armenian schools, 1,250 and 950 students, respectively. There is also a difference in the number of students who are willing to enrol in HEI. During 2010-2019, there was a total of 11,755 Azerbaijani HEI applicants versus 4,362 Armenian applicants. The same pattern is found in enrollments. During 2010-2019, 5,510 Azerbaijani and 2,653 Armenian students were enrolled in HEI. Given a large number of Azerbaijani students, they need higher weighted scores in the General Skills exam to get funding. Table 15 contains detailed information about the weighted scores of Armenian and Azerbaijani students in the General Skills exam by years.

Table 15. Weighted Scores in General Skills Exam, 2010-2019

Year	Mean Score in General Skills Exam (Armenian)	Mean Score in General Skills Exam (Azerbaijani)	Mean qualifying score for grant award (Armenian)	Mean qualifying score for grant award (Azerbaijani)
2010	140.3 Weighted	139.7 Weighted	141.1 Weighted	144.1 Weighted
2011	140.3 Weighted	154.3 Weighted	145.4 Weighted	157.4 Weighted
2012	141.9 Weighted	142 Weighted	148.1 Weighted	153.8 Weighted
2013	144.9 Weighted	141.6 Weighted	152.1 Weighted	156.9 Weighted
2014	144.1 Weighted	142.7 Weighted	152.2 Weighted	154.9 Weighted
2015	143.9 Weighted	142.6 Weighted	150.5 Weighted	155.6 Weighted
2016	147 Weighted	144.7 Weighted	157.6 Weighted	159.8 Weighted
2017	145.8 Weighted	143.7 Weighted	157.8 Weighted	158.3 Weighted
2018	146.1 Weighted	146.3 Weighted	160.7 Weighted	163.3 Weighted
2019	147.7 Weighted	149.5 Weighted	161.4 Weighted	165.1 Weighted

Analysis of the Results of the General Skills Exam

Analysis of the results of the university entrance exams showed that quite a large number of the students eligible for the quota system failed the General Skills exam. During 2010-2019, a total of 31.3% of Azerbaijani students and 22.4 % of Armenian students were unable to pass the exam. Compared to the Georgian students, this is a high proportion—only up to 10% of Georgian

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students did not pass the General Skills exam during the same years (Tabatadze & Gorgodze, 2013; Tabatadze & Gorgodze, 2017).

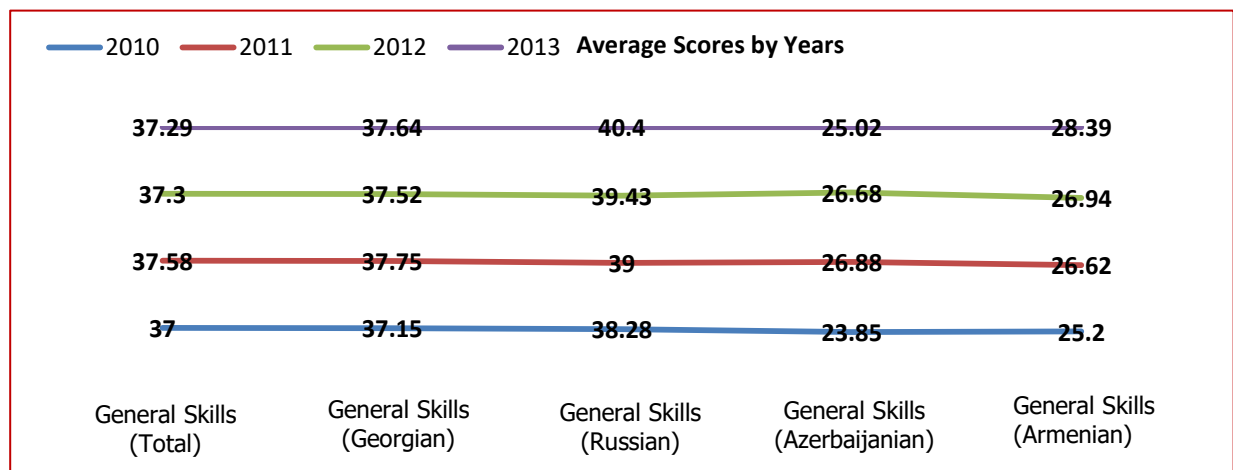
Analysis of these results in the exam, as well as their comparison to their Georgian and Russian fellows, allows us to draw several conclusions. Despite the fact that university applicants' General Skills exams are in their native language, Armenian and Azerbaijani applicants still score far lower compared to their Georgian and Russian counterparts. These differences indicate the problems in the educational quality at the school level. Table 16 provides more illustration of these problems.

Table 16. Mean Scores in General Skills Exam, 2010-2013

Exam	Mean Scores by Years			
	2010	2011	2012	2013
General Skills (Total)	37.00	37.58	37.30	37.29
General Skills (Georgian)	37.15	37.75	37.52	37.64
General Skills (Russian)	38.28	39.00	39.43	40.40
General Skills (Azerbaijani)	23.85	26.88	26.68	25.02
General Skills (Armenian)	25.20	26.62	26.94	28.39

Tabatadze and Gorgadze, 2013

Figure 1-Average Scores by Year in General Skills Exam



Tabatadze & Gorgodze, 2013

A similar pattern was observed in the results of the General Skills exam during 2015-2018 years: Georgian and Russian university entrants have higher scores in the General Skills exam (38-41 points) compared to Azerbaijani and Armenian students (27-32 points) (seen in Tabatadze, 2018; Assessment of the Strategy and Action Plan on Tolerance and Civil Integration 2015-2018). These differences deserve attention for two reasons: (1) They shed light on the existing differences in the quality of education across schools with different languages of instruction, and (2) in the event the quota system is eliminated, Azerbaijani and Armenian students will remain

non-competitive because of their lack of proficiency in the Georgian language, as well as overall academic knowledge and skills (Tabatadze, 2018; Assessment of the Strategy and Action Plan on Tolerance and Civil Integration 2015-2018). Table 17 below reflects the differences in the General Skills exam scores during the period 2015-2018.

Table 17. Mean Scores in General Skills Exam by Year and Types of Tests in 2015-2018

Year	Georgian	Russian	Armenian	Azerbaijani
2015	39.59	41.07	28.64	27.53
2016	38.56	38.40	31.59	27.92
2017	39.91	41.78	31.97	28.01
2018	41.08	40.83	32.73	30.53

Tabatadze, 2018; Assessment of the Strategy and Action Plan on Tolerance and Civil Integration 2015-2018

Conclusion

Analysis of the student data from 2010-2019 leads us to the following major conclusions: (1) The number of Azerbaijani university entrants is increasing over the years, as is the number of those who could not take or pass the exam during the period 2010-2019; (2) the number of Armenian university entrants began to increase since 2014; (3) students show varied preferences for different universities; (4) regional and private universities' potential has not been realized properly in the context of the quota system; (5) there are high drop-out and incompleteness rates in BA programs; (6) Armenian and Azerbaijani students are financed equally despite the differences in their numbers and in their weighted scores in the General Skills exams overall, and (7) Armenian and Azerbaijani students fall behind their Georgian and Russian counterparts in their scores on the General Skills exams.

Chapter 5. Survey of 12th Graders: Findings and Conclusions

The goal of the survey that was conducted among the 12th graders was to answer questions that would help assess the quota system's effectiveness, as well as develop future policies. The survey study addressed the following research questions:

1. To what extent do non-Georgian schools achieve general education goals?
2. According to students' self-assessment, what Georgian language skills do students of non-Georgian schools possess?
3. According to students' self-assessment, what social skills do students of non-Georgian schools possess?
4. What are the major factors that motivate ethnic minority students to select Georgia for their higher education?
5. What are the major factors that influence their selection of HEI and programs?
6. How do Armenian and Azerbaijani students vary in their post-graduation plans and choices?

As described in the methods section, we developed a questionnaire to answer the research questions above. In total, we interviewed 579 12th graders both from Armenian and Azerbaijani schools, and provide a detailed description of the findings of the research questions below.

5.1. Students' Preparedness in Language and Subject Competencies and Social Skills

It should be noted that the 12th graders we surveyed as part of this study had very high self-assessments in all aspects—schools that achieve general education goals and prepare them properly, and the students having high language and content skills, as well as social skills. This self-assessment was so high that it was completely inconsistent with the results in the national examinations of the students of the same schools, as well as in the international assessment and school exit exams. Therefore, we can assume that when they answered the questions, 12th graders tried to represent themselves and their schools positively. Further, it should be noted that the positive attitude toward their own and schools' performance overall changed when we analyzed the survey results of the One Year Program or BA program students. Based on these observations, we can conclude that HEI students' ability to demonstrate critical thinking are much greater compared to that of high school graduates. Accordingly, this has strong implications for schools, in that, in addition to developing language and subject competencies, they should work to develop critical thinkers and active citizens.

5.2. Post-graduation Plans

One of the goals of this survey study was to explore the plans 12th graders had after they graduated from school. Specifically, we were interested to see whether they planned to continue their studies in Georgian or foreign HEI after they graduated and what motivating factors determined each of these preferences. Therefore, most of the questions were designed to answer these questions.

As the table below depicts, a high proportion of students, 77%, plan to receive higher education in Georgia (63%) or in another country (14%). 6% of the students interviewed mentioned that they plan to pursue vocational education, while quite a large number had no specific post-graduation plans (more than 14%). Less than 5% of the students mentioned that they plan to join the labour force abroad.

Table 18. Post-graduation Plans of non-Georgian schools 12th graders

Post-graduation Plans			
	Total	Armenian	Azerbaijani
HEI in Georgia	63%	46%	65.40%
Vocational Education in Georgia	6.30%	6%	5.10%
HEI abroad	14%	19.60%	4.80%
Vocational informal	1.80%	1.40%	1.70%
Work in own farm	6.50%	4.50%	6.80%
Will get some job	1.20%	0.70%	1.40%
Move abroad	4.20%	3%	4.10%
Other	2.20%	3.50%	0.40%
No plans	14.40%	15%	10.30%

In addition to the general analysis of their post-graduation plans, we also desegregated the data and looked separately at Azerbaijani and Armenian students' plans. 65% of the Armenian students and 70.2% of Azerbaijani students plan to pursue higher education. These two groups differed with respect to their plans to pursue higher education abroad (19.6% of Armenian students vs 4.8% Azerbaijani students).

The data indicated that 82% of those who plan to pursue a higher education plan to apply to Georgian HEI, while the remaining 18% would like to continue their studies abroad. Desegregation of these numbers by language showed that 93% of the Azerbaijani students plan to attend HEI in Georgia and only 7% of them plan to go abroad. The distribution differed among Armenian students, 69% of whom plan to continue their studies in Georgia, while 31% plan to pursue higher education abroad.

These data show that: (1) There is a significant increase in the number of students who plan to pursue higher education in Georgia; (2) the number of graduates who wish to attend HEI in Georgia is particularly high among the Azerbaijani students, and nearly all of them have future plans to study in local universities, and (3) Armenian university entrants' interest in continuing their studies in Georgia is increasing; however, quite a high proportion, one-third of them, still favour universities abroad.

As part of the survey, we asked students why they decided to pursue higher education. 21% of them stated that their academic achievement qualifies them for higher education and therefore, they should choose this path. 42.1% of students indicated that they decided to pursue higher education because it is necessary for their future career. Further, 21.5% believe that a higher education degree will help them earn higher salaries.

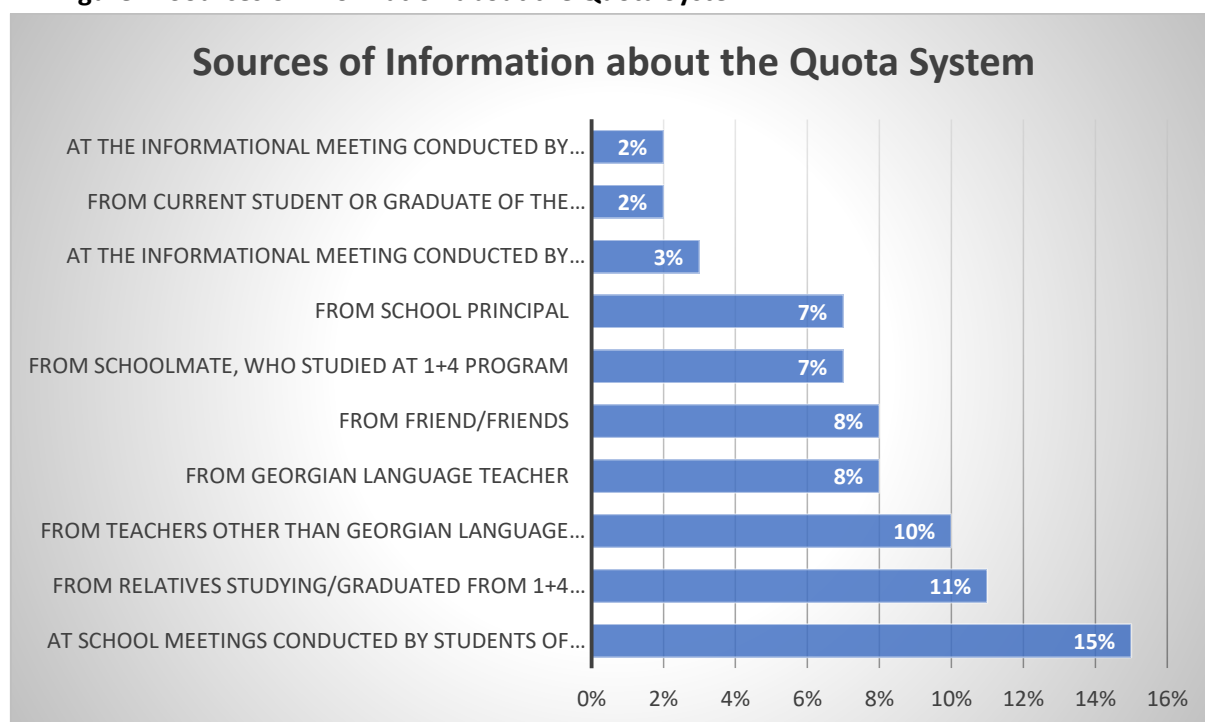
The students' responses suggested that the majority of the 12th graders associate higher education with the prospects of a career and higher salary. This offers lessons on what may determine the effectiveness of affirmative action policy in admissions of higher education: Employment, income, and career advancement. Accordingly, these motivational factors will not be important unless students obtain employment after they graduate. Such developments may affect the number of students interested in pursuing higher education in Georgia negatively, as well as hinder the achievement of policy initiative's major goal—Integration and development of the society through Georgian university graduates' engagement in civic, political, and socio-economic life. It should be emphasized that the lack of employment and economic engagement opportunities often cause educational reforms to fail, regardless of their quality and the financial resources invested.

The survey participants also explained the reasons for their decision to continue studies at the BA level in Georgia. 75% of the students related their decision to the Georgia-issued higher education diploma that is an important precondition for employment. This also revealed that a high proportion of the participants hope to find employment in Georgia. According to the participants, another motivational factor is related to the quota system. 15% of the Armenian and 10% of Azerbaijani 12th graders explained their choice according to the opportunities the quota system offers. They mentioned other factors as well; however, their frequencies were relatively low. It should be mentioned that none of the 12th graders mentioned financial factors or financial incentives as one of the reasons they plan to attend Georgian HEI. This is another piece of evidence of the quota system's importance for minority students.

One of the survey's goals was to explore where the 12th graders had obtained information about the quota system. It should be noted that initially, the non-Georgian population was not informed sufficiently about the quota system. Therefore, with the initiative of NGOs, the Ministry of Reconciliation and Civil Integration also joined in efforts to solve this problem. As part of an

awareness-raising campaign, graduates of the 1+4 program conducted information sessions in the communities and villages, as well as with their relatives. This survey showed that these actions were very successful. 43% of the participants reported that they had heard about the program from their schoolmates, friends, relatives, or in the official meetings graduates of the 1+4 program led. Schools have played an important role too. 25% of the participants indicated that they received information about the quota system from their Georgian language teacher, other teachers, or their school principal. This implies that schools can become even more proactive in this process and inform their students about this promising opportunity. According to the survey results, relatively fewer students had received information from the official meetings the resource centres or the Ministries organized. Finally, 15% of the respondents could not recall their source of information. Details on the sources of information about the quota system are provided in Figure 2.

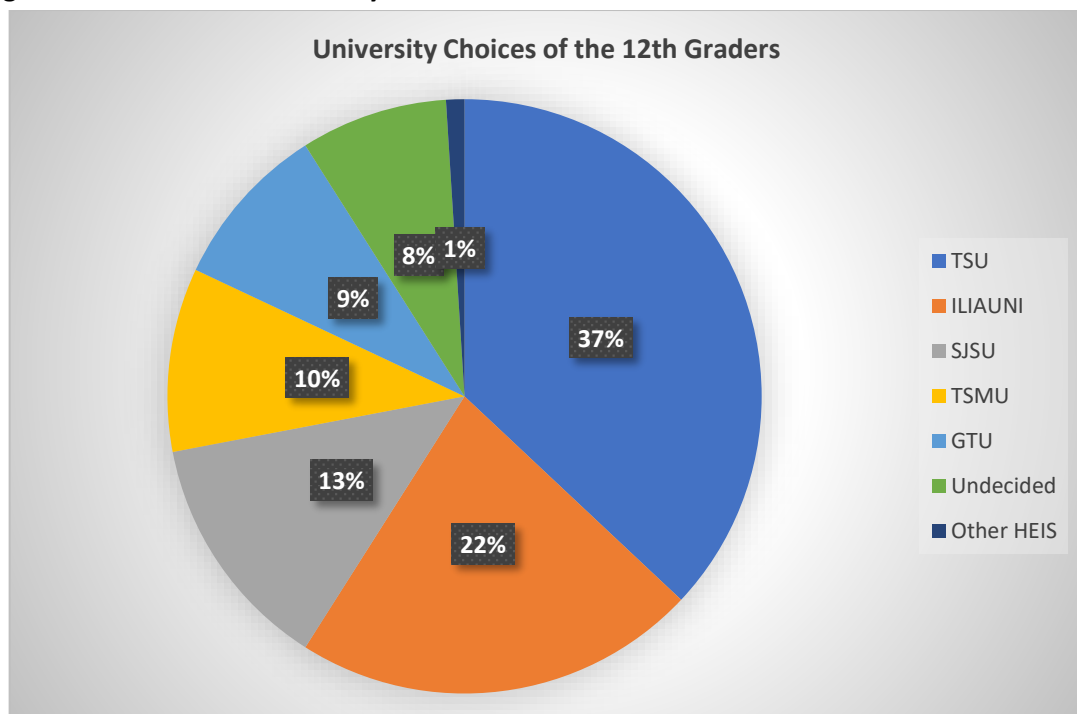
Figure 2. Sources of Information about the Quota System



12th graders made similar choices of universities as minority students in 2010-2019, in that their preferences were distributed primarily across five universities: (1) TSU; (2) ISU; (3) SJSU; (4) TSMU, and (5) GTU. A minimal number of students selected other universities. The distribution in the frequency of responses by language suggests the following differences: (1) In most cases, Armenian students selected SJSU (because of the geographic location) or TSU. The demand for ISU, TSMU, and GTU was insignificant in Armenian students. Azerbaijanian students selected TSU and ISU largely as their preferred choices.

Statistical data on university-related preferences allow HEI to conduct effective recruiting campaigns. For example, ISU, as well as other universities that experience low student demand, may conduct more intensive campaigns for Armenian university entrants. The following two problems should be emphasized: (1) Private universities engage in the quota system to a very limited extent, and therefore, it would be effective if the scope and number of participating universities is expanded, and (2) regional universities are less appealing to minority university entrants; however, it should be mentioned that this situation has been improving in recent years. Kutaisi Akaki Tsereteli University and Batumi Shota Rustaveli University have already accepted students through the quota system. However, it should be mentioned that both of these universities have the capacity to accept more students. The figure below presents detailed information about the 12th graders' university preferences.

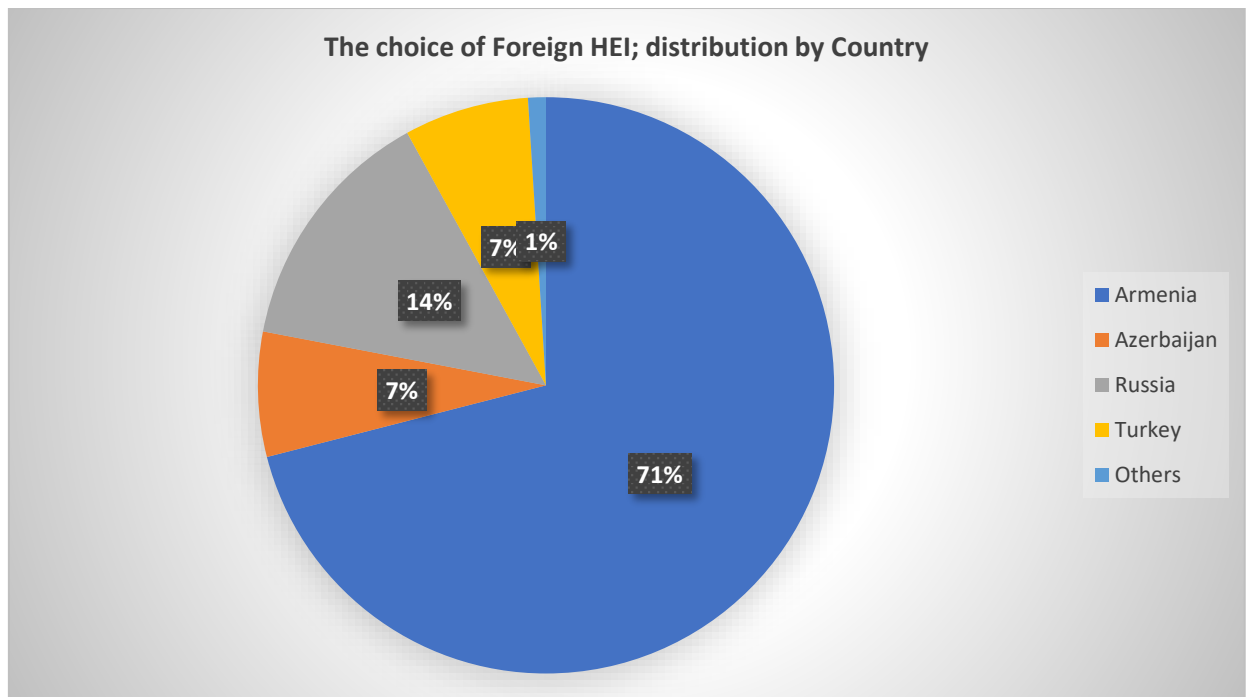
Figure 3. 12th Graders' University Choices



The choices of study programs the current 12th graders made are very similar to those the current BA program students made. The majority of the 12th graders (37%) reported that they prefer business administration, and 27% of them chose the humanities. Unlike those, the demand for the faculties of math and natural sciences was very low. It should be noted that Education science is gaining increasing popularity among school graduates. As an illustration, 21% of the university entrants selected this field as their future academic path. This is a very promising development and creates opportunities to prepare future teachers for non-Georgian schools and expand the quota system's positive effect on the general educational level as well.

As part of the survey, we also explored the reasons students chose to continue their studies abroad. This information can be very helpful both in assessing the quota system's effectiveness as well as planning the policy's future directions. As mentioned above, the wish to pursue higher education abroad was observed largely among the Armenian students, in which the survey results showed that the majority of these students plan to attend universities in Armenia. Relatively fewer, primarily Azerbaijani students, plan to continue their studies in Turkey or Azerbaijan. A limited number of students also selected HEI in Russia. It should be noted that the preference frequencies for Russian HEI might have increased if the survey was extended to 12th graders in Russian schools as well. As the exploration of these preferences of 12th graders of Russian language schools is of significant practical importance, we suggest that this specific target group should also be studied with an appropriate survey instrument.

Figure 4. 12th Graders Who Wish to Pursue a Higher Education Abroad: Distribution by Country



One of this survey's goals was to determine the reasons for the choice to pursue higher education abroad. 50% of the students believe that universities in the countries they selected provide a better-quality higher education. 15% of the students reported that it is easier for them to enrol in HEI institutions in other countries. Further, 15% of the 12th graders interviewed explained that their selection was attributable to having fewer financial expenses because they have relatives there. This information can be used effectively to plan the quota system in the following ways: (1) Popularizing Georgian HEI in the language of targeted ethnic minority groups, and (2) offering additional financial packages, as well as scholarships and housing to students who participate in the quota programs. The latter can be funded through municipal programs.

It should be noted that 7.2% of the 12th graders indicated they were interested in pursuing vocational education. Vocational education, particularly in some professions, is very popular, as well as competitive for applicants. This is particularly true for state vocational institutions that the government funds fully. Minority students' enrollment in vocational education, as well as language, social, and academic/professional problems related to their studies in these programs, needs additional research, and the findings of this study can be helpful when making decisions whether to include vocational education in the quota system.

According to the survey results, the reasons for choosing vocational education varied. 30% of the students mentioned low academic achievement as their primary reason for selecting a vocational education. 15% related their choice to high expected compensation. For 12%, the major motivating factor was obtaining an official diploma for a vocation they had mastered already. These statistics may also be meaningful in efforts to popularize vocational education, and also to extend the quota system to vocational education.

Conclusion

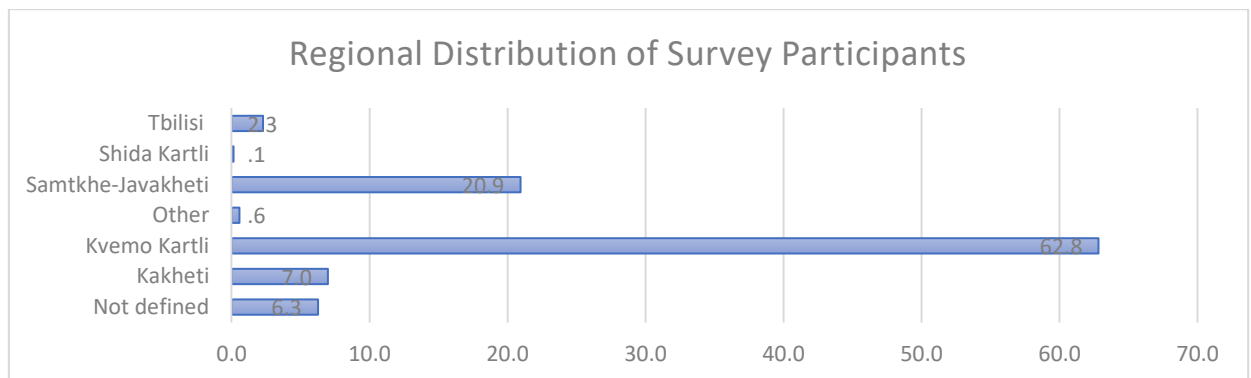
This was the first effort to collect information about 12th graders' opinions and perceptions with such an instrument. The survey yielded important information about the actions that need to be taken in various directions. The number of ethnic minority students who plan to continue their studies at Georgian HEI is increasing, as is the number of those who are informed about the quota system. However, quite a large segment of students remains that needs to be reached. During the communication process, particular emphasis should be placed on compensation and career advancement prospects, as these seem to be the main determinants of the decisions school graduates make. The survey revealed effective methods to communicate among schools that should be taken advantage of and used more extensively in the future. Another conclusion relates to the limited number of universities and programs that engage in the quota system. Therefore, it is suggested that efforts should be made to diversify and increase the number of participating HEI. Further, students have expressed increasing interest in educational programs. This positive change may be used strategically to prepare future teachers for non-Georgian schools. In addition, financial and quality-related factors that encourage students to pursue higher education abroad should be considered in future planning of the quota system. These future efforts will need to be directed toward more research, and eventually, the inclusion of vocational education in the quota system. Finally, additional research with different and more appropriate instruments should be conducted to explore the needs of Russian school graduates, as well as the quota system's effects on this sub-group. The results of such an additional study can be used to improve the quota system's effectiveness for this group of non-Georgian students.

Chapter 6. Evaluation of the One-Year Georgian Language Program's Effectiveness: Results and Challenges

6.1. Survey Participants' Demographics

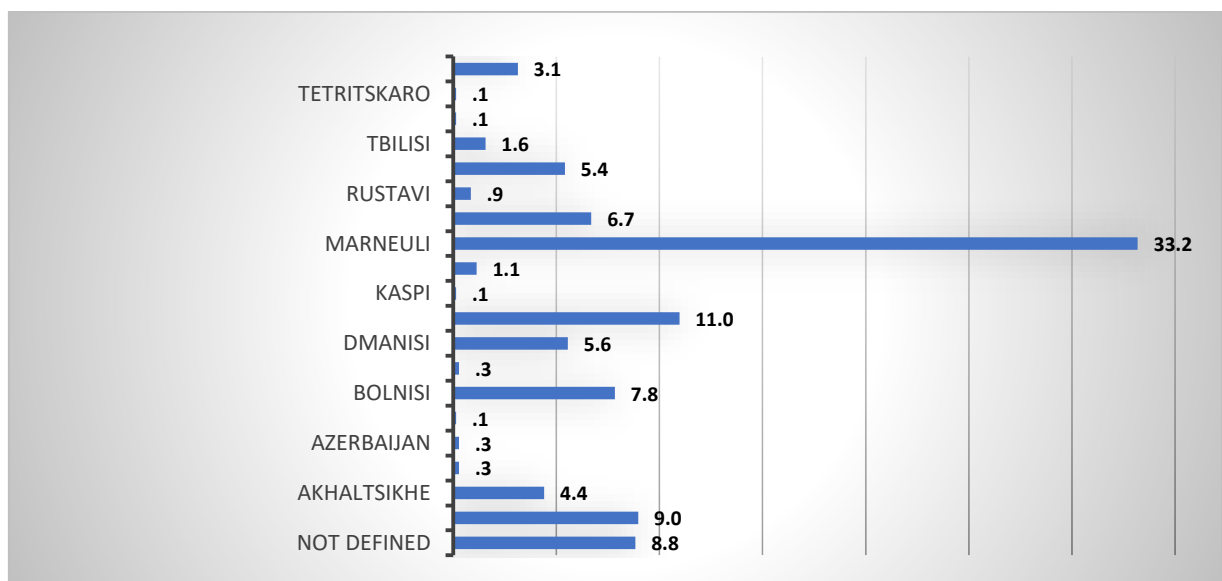
702 students from 6 Georgian HEI were surveyed. 296 (42.2%) participants were female, while 284 (40.5%) were male, and 122 (17%) did not indicate their gender. The participants' age distribution was as follows: (1) 304 (43.3%) were 17-18 years old; 271 (38.6%) were 19-20 years, and 54 (7.7%) were 21-24 years old. The participants' regional distribution was as follows: 441 participants came from Kvemo Kartli, 147 from Samtskhe-Javakheti, 49 from Kakheti, and 21 from different regions in Georgia, including Tbilisi. The figure below presents the regional distribution.

Figure 5. Regional Distribution of Survey Participants



The majority of the participants came from the Marneuli district (233 persons); 77 were from Gardabani, 63 from Akhalakalaki, 55 from Bolnisi, 47 from Ninotsminda, and 38 from Sagarejo. 62 students did not indicate their district, and 3 were foreigners enrolled in the program. The figure below presents the participants' distribution by the district in detail.

Figure 6. District Distribution of Survey Participants



The distribution by HEI is also important. The sample was designed to make it possible to generalize the results for each specific HEI. The figure below shows the number of participants from each HEI and their percentage in the sample.

Table 19. Distribution of Survey Participants by HEIs

HEI	Number of Survey Participants	%
No Response	57	8.1
Georgian Technical University	157	22.4
Ilia State University	149	21.2
Samtskhe-Javakheti State University	57	8.1
Sokhumi State University	57	8.1
Tbilisi Medical State University	63	9.0
Tbilisi Ivane Javakhishvili State University	162	23.1

The table above shows that most of the participants were from Tbilisi State University and Georgian Technical University. Ilia State University had a large share of participants as well.

The study's goal was to explore students' attitudes toward different topics, specifically: (1) The One-Year Georgian Language Program's effectiveness; (2) The teaching methods the teachers used; (3) Teachers attitudes toward minority students; (4) The quality of teaching materials and resources; (5) The environment that promoted the students' academic and social integration, and (6) The program's infrastructure. The students were asked to rate the program's effectiveness overall, as well as the specific aspects of the program on a 5-point scale. We discuss the way the students assessed the program and its different directions below.

6.2. The Students' Assessment of the Program's Effectiveness Overall

The assessment of the One-Year Georgian Language Program overall was positive. Students mostly rated the program from 4 to 5 points on a 5-point scale. They indicated that the program has a diverse course catalogue that is oriented to the students' needs, and the courses are interesting and help them learn the Georgian language so they are prepared for their BA studies (See the table below).

Table 20. The overall assessment of program effectiveness

Statement	Mean	Mode	SD
The program has diverse courses that are oriented to students' needs	3.96	5	.999
The program's courses are interesting	4.09	5	.935
The program supports studying the Georgian Language	4.15	5	.973
The program courses develop general knowledge and competencies that students need for their BA program	3.93	4	1.025

It is worth mentioning that the fewest points were given to the statement that the program develops students' general knowledge and the competencies needed for BA undergraduate studies. This is important, as the One-Year Georgian Language Program is intended not only to develop Georgian language competences. Instead, the objective overall is to prepare students for their undergraduate studies. Accordingly, HEI must focus on both students' language and academic skills and competences.

Table 20. Continued

The workload in the program is sufficient to learn the language	3.99	4	.92
The daily workload of the program prevents learning the language effectively	4.15	5	.97
The program is focused on teaching grammar and on memorization	3.90	5	1.14

The questions about the workload included two different dimensions. The first focused on the students' workload overall and its effectiveness in learning the Georgian language. The second addressed the daily workload and the distribution of teaching hours. The participants have positive attitudes toward the program workload overall and believe that it is sufficient to learn the language; however, the survey participants did not assess the daily workload positively; this finding is important for future program planning. It is crucially important to plan daily schedules with supportive activities and academically engaging methods, as well as diversify the daily teaching hours.

The second important issue in the assessment section of the questionnaire overall was the question about the program's main focus with respect to teaching. 3.90 points of 5 was given to the statement, *the program is focused on teaching grammar and on memorization*. Although the program uses diverse teaching resources, it still focuses on teaching grammar and uses memorization strategies. This is also an important finding that shows that focusing on teaching grammar, as well as using memorization strategies and approaches to teaching, are not the best

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practices in language acquisition. Table 21 below provides detailed information on the assessment of the One-Year Georgian Language Program overall.

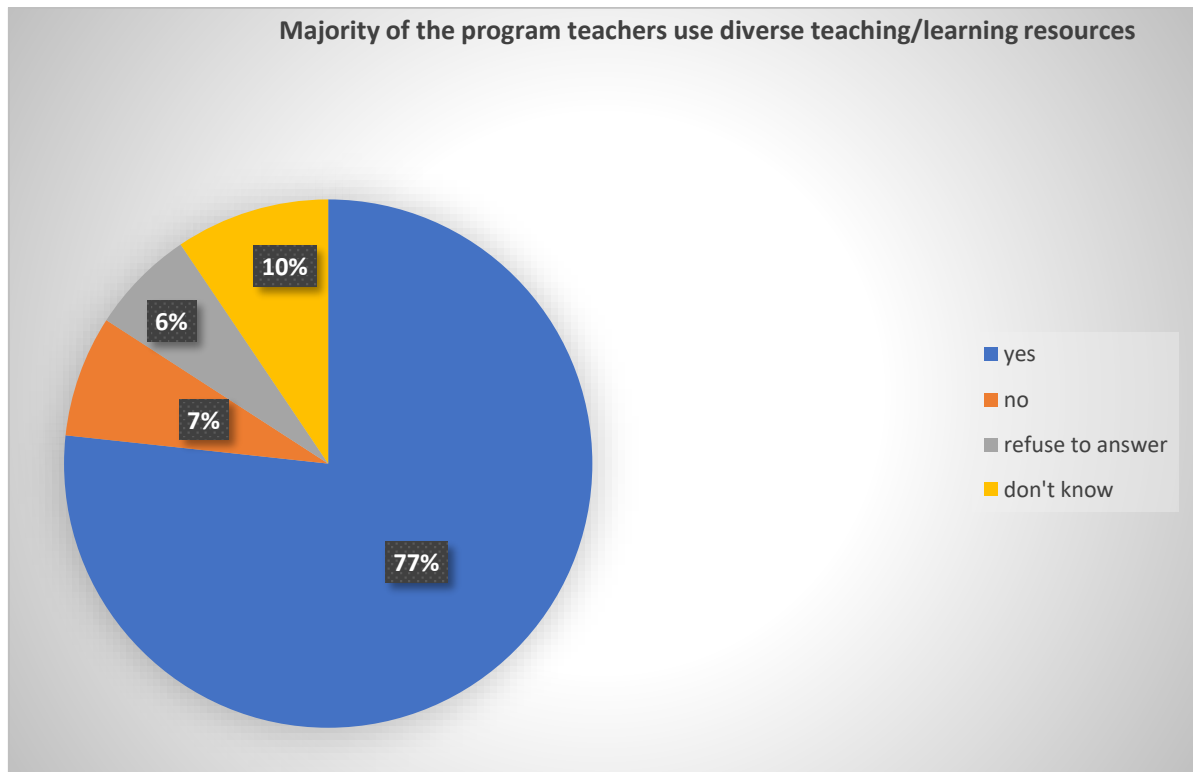
Table 21: The assessment of courses and workload and hour net of the program

Frequency for the statements for all universities	Not relevant	Absolutely disagree	disagree	Don't agree and don't disagree	Agree	Absolutely agree
The program has diverse courses that are oriented to students' needs	1.40%	2.60%	4.00%	24.50%	30.90%	36.60%
The program courses are interesting	1.10%	1.30%	6.00%	16.70%	35.50%	39.50%
The program supports the study of the Georgian Language	1.90%	1.60%	4.80%	17.70%	29.10%	45.00%
The program courses develop general knowledge and competences that students need for their BA program	1.10%	3.10%	6.30%	20.50%	34.80%	34.20%
The workload in the program is sufficient for language acquisition	0.90%	0.70%	5.60%	23.80%	34.60%	34.50%
The program's daily workload prevents effective language acquisition	0.70%	1.70%	4.60%	17.80%	30.10%	45.20%
The program is focused on teaching grammar and on memorization	1.00%	5.40%	7.00%	20.40%	28.50%	37.70%

6.3. Teaching Methods

A special section of the questionnaire was devoted to the teaching methods the teachers use. The first question asked about the diversity of the teaching materials the teachers use, and the majority of the survey participants (76.4%) believe that the teachers in the program use diverse teaching resources.

Figure 7. The assessment of teaching resources used by teachers



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The general question on teaching resources was followed by a list of specific resources to identify those used most widely in the teaching process.

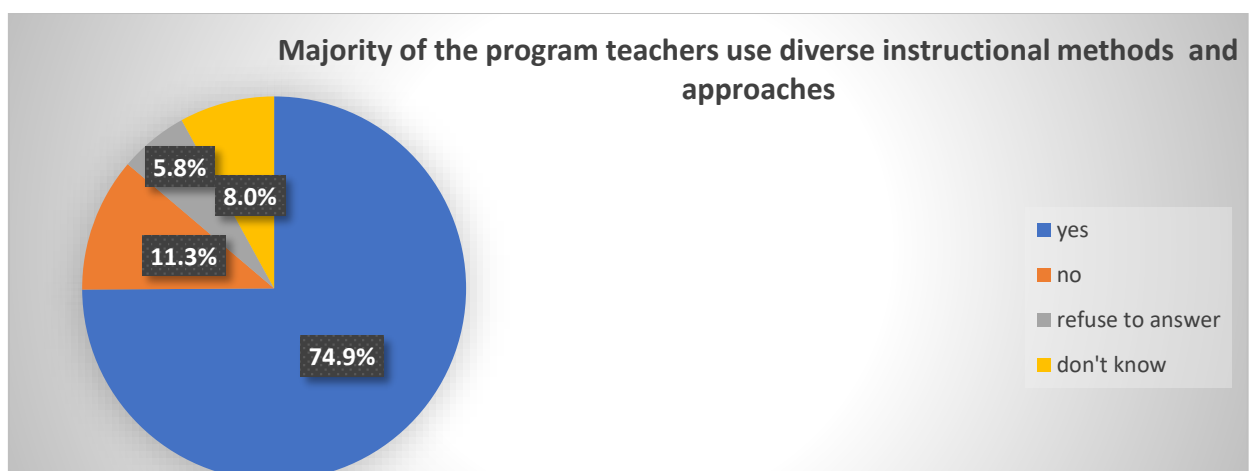
Table 22: Frequency of teaching resources used by teachers

Teacher Uses the Following Teaching Resources	No response	Never	Once a Month	Several Times a Month	Almost at all lectures	In all lectures
Textbook	1.6	3.6	10.4	22.4	27.9	34.2
Additional literature	1.6	15.4	23.6	30.1	19.8	9.5
Writing exercises	2.1	3.3	10.8	22.6	26.2	34.9
Audio materials	1.4	23.2	17.7	25.9	16.0	15.8
Movies and other video materials	1.0	28.5	21.9	30.3	12.5	5.7
Electronic and internet resources	1.1	23.4	20.9	29.8	13.7	11.1

As the table shows clearly, the resources used most often are textbooks and exercise books, while the materials used least are video resources (28.5% of survey participants indicated that they had never been used in lectures) and electronic and online resources (23.4% of survey participants indicated that they had never been used in lectures).

Nearly 75% of the participants believe that teachers use diverse teaching methods and strategies, and only 11.3% of the participants believe that teachers do not do so. 5.7% of participants did not answer this question and 8% were unable to respond.

Figure 8. Overall assessment of teaching methods used by teachers



The research also assessed the frequency with which the teachers use the various teaching methods. The teachers use the following strategies most frequently: (1) Teaching grammar rules

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(46.6%); (2) lecturing (40.7%), and (3) debates (41.2%). The teaching methods used least are: (1) Role play—40% of participants indicated that this method had never been used; (2) movies and analysis; (3) presentations, and (4) discussions. The results highlight clearly that: (1) Teachers use diverse teaching methods in the teaching process; (2) Teachers prefer to use traditional teaching methods, such as lecturing and memorization of grammar rules more frequently compared to interactive teaching methods, such as role-play, discussions, and presentations.

Table 23. Frequency of different teaching methods used by teachers

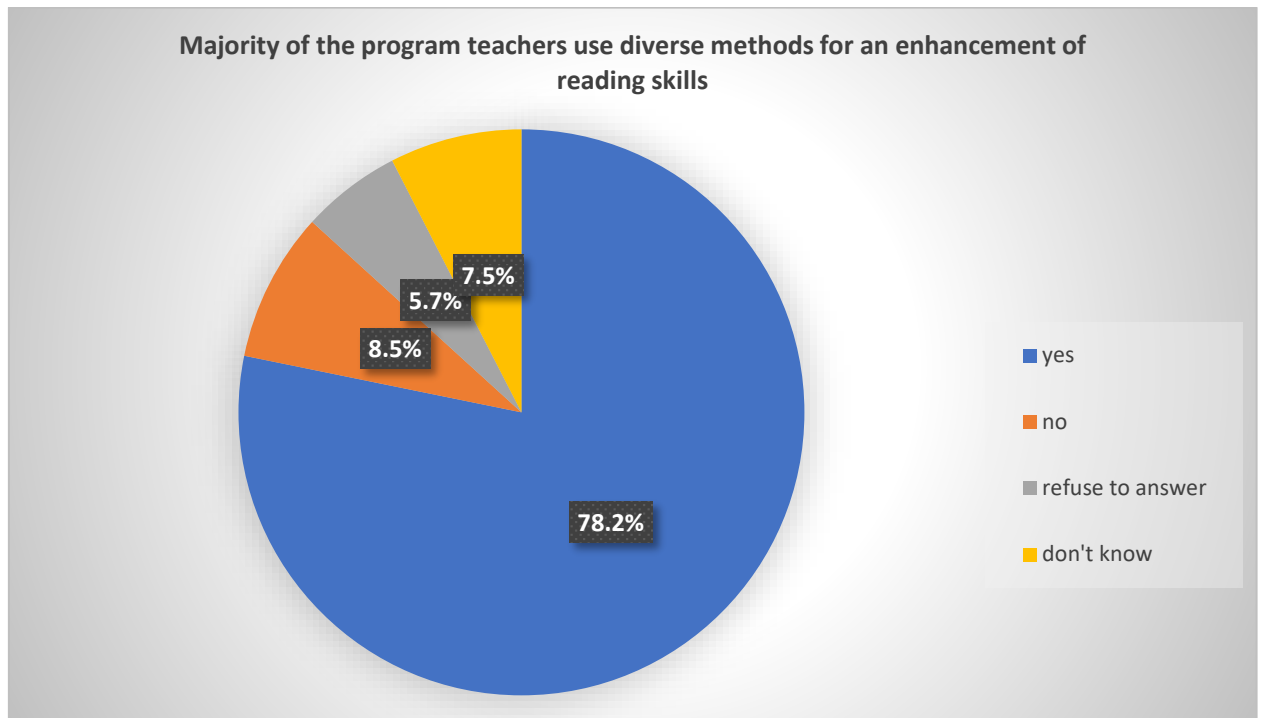
	No response	Never	Once a Month	Several Times a Month	Almost at all lectures	In all lectures
Majority of teachers use diverse teaching methods in the teaching process	1.1	74.9	11.3	8.0	4.7	0
Lecturing	1.0	5.3	12.3	18.8	21.9	40.7
Presentation	.4	20.5	22.2	35.8	12.7	8.4
Role Play	.4	40.0	24.5	23.1	7.5	4.4
Group work	.7	16.4	19.5	32.6	17.9	12.8
Working in pairs	1.4	14.0	22.8	33.9	16.7	11.3
Movies and analysis	.6	31.1	22.9	32.2	8.7	4.6
Discussions	.9	17.9	26.8	30.9	14.0	9.5
Debates	.7	1.7	9.1	16.2	31.1	41.2
Activities to memorize grammar rules	1.0	4.6	7.0	15.1	25.8	46.6

It is interesting to note that the study showed quite different frequencies in teachers' use of discussion and debate strategies. Both of these are important ways for students to convey their views and opinions and support the process of exchanging ideas and arguments and their own ideas with sufficient arguments and evidence. Why debates are used more widely than discussion requires further enquiry.

The survey was designed to assess the teaching methods teachers use to develop different language skills, such as reading, writing, speaking, and listening. The survey showed that teachers use diverse teaching methods to develop reading skills. 78.2% of survey participants agreed with

this statement and only 8.5% of survey participants disagreed. Approximately 13% of the survey participants did not respond or were unable to respond to this question. The figure below provides detailed information on the distribution of answers to this question.

Figure 9. Overall Assessment of teaching methods used by teachers to develop reading skills



The approach teachers use most widely during the reading phase is that in which one student is reading while the other students are listening. One-by-one reading methods during the reading phase are also used often (1/3 of survey participants reported that this approach is used daily), as is the approach in which the exercises are performed after reading (30% of participants reported that this approach is used daily). Again, the approach in which the lecturer reads the text while the students listen is used frequently (29.8% survey participants reported the approach is used daily). Questioning after the reading and individual reading, as well as restating the text are strategies used frequently. The strategies least widespread are "...ending the story approach" and "...development of info graphs and graphic organizers." 40% of survey participants reported that the teachers never use these approaches or use them once a month. In summary, teachers' reading strategies focus primarily on working on texts and less attention is paid to checking the degree to which the students comprehend them. The greatest emphasis is placed on knowing and understand aspects of Bloom's taxonomy and less attention is given to higher-level thinking: The figure below presents the distribution of the participants' responses in detail.

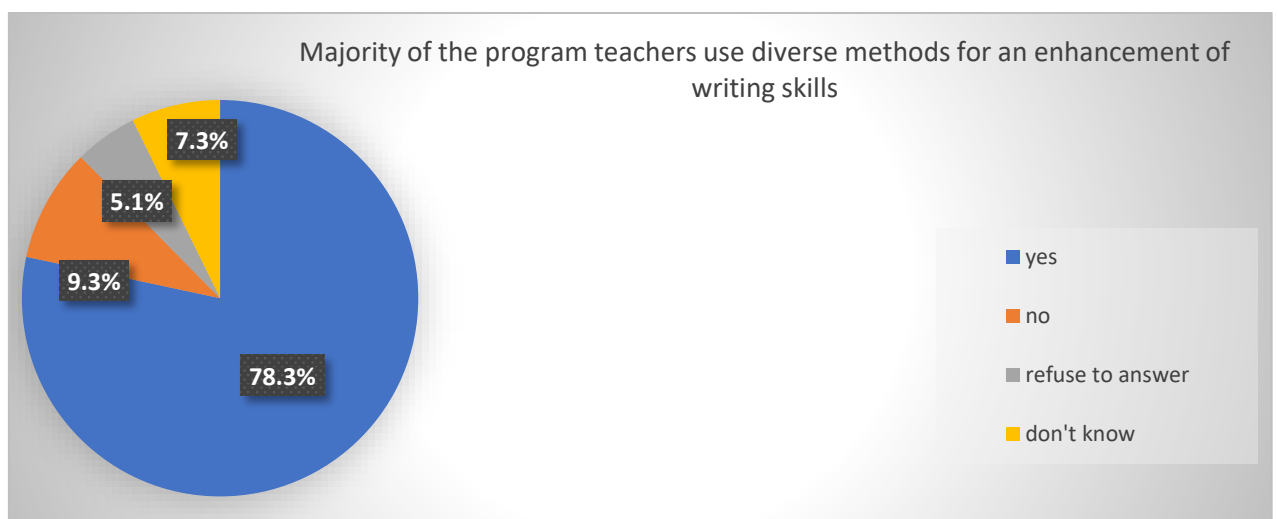
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Table 24. Frequency of different teaching methods used by teachers to develop reading skills

	No response	Never	Once a Month	Several Times a	Almost at all lectures	In all lectures
One-by-one reading	.7	6.0	9.4	24.2	26.8	32.9
One student reading, others listening	.4	8.0	12.4	22.1	23.8	33.3
Teacher/lecturer reading, students listening	.4	10.3	18.1	24.9	16.5	29.8
Individual reading	.7	9.0	15.2	34.9	21.4	18.8
Group reading and presenting to other groups. (Jigsaw)	.4	13.5	18.5	30.8	22.8	14.0
Reading and restating the text	.6	6.8	18.5	30.3	24.1	19.7
Performing exercises after reading the text	1.0	2.6	9.3	24.1	32.5	30.6
Answering questions after reading the text	1.0	4.3	10.0	27.4	31.9	25.5
Developing own version of text after reading the first passages of the text	.7	14.4	23.2	35.3	16.2	10.1
Using infographics and graphic organizers in different stages of reading	2.8	20.2	21.8	34.6	12.8	7.7

As mentioned above, the survey was designed to assess the methods teachers use to develop writing skills and showed that teachers use diverse teaching methods to develop writing skills. 78.3% of survey participants agreed with this statement and only 9.3% of participants disagreed.

Figure 10. Overall Assessment of teaching methods used by teachers to develop writing skills



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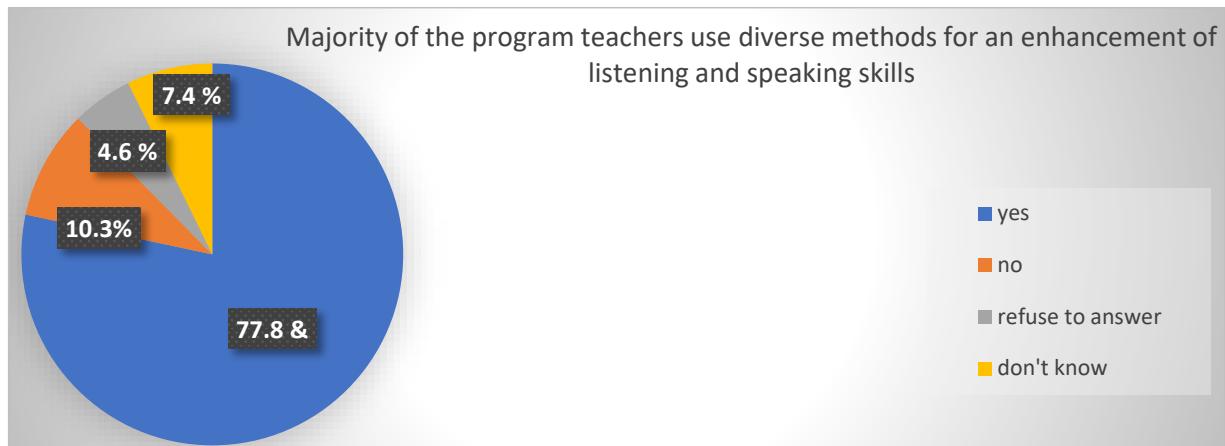
The approaches used most frequently to develop writing skills are writing missing words in the text and correcting words with spelling or grammar mistakes. The approaches used least are writing essays or papers (21-30% reported that their teachers never use these approaches). Teachers also use rewriting, as well as dictation rarely. This finding is important and makes it obvious that teachers do not use strategies oriented to spelling and memorizing the way to spell words, and at the other extreme, are not using methods to develop writing skills that focus on synthesis and analysis. Teachers' primary objective is still to develop lexical and grammar skills and not writing skills. The figure below presents the distribution of answers in detail.

Table 25. Frequency of different teaching methods used by teachers to develop writing skills

	No response	Never	Once a Month	Several Times a Month	Almost at all lectures	In all lectures
Rewriting the text	.9	22.4	20.2	26.1	18.5	12.0
Dictation	.9	21.5	21.1	31.6	14.7	10.3
Spelling	.7	16.7	21.9	30.2	18.2	12.3
Writing plot of texts to which they have listened	.6	15.4	17.4	38.6	17.1	11.0
Writing essays on the texts students read	.4	21.8	21.4	30.5	16.4	9.5
Writing the missing words in the text	.7	6.4	14.8	33.0	25.8	19.2
Correcting the misspelled words in the text	.4	7.1	16.2	33.0	22.5	20.7
Correcting grammar mistakes in the text	.6	6.6	17.2	29.8	21.2	24.6
Writing papers based on materials learned	.9	30.1	22.8	22.6	13.2	10.4
Connecting words in the text logically	1.3	12.3	19.5	32.3	23.6	11.0

As mentioned above, the survey's goal was to assess the teaching methods teachers use to develop speaking, listening, and writing skills. The survey showed that teachers use diverse teaching methods to develop listening and speaking skills. 77.8% of survey participants agreed with this statement and only 10.3% of participants disagreed.

Figure 11. Overall Assessment of teaching methods used by teachers to develop speaking and listening skills



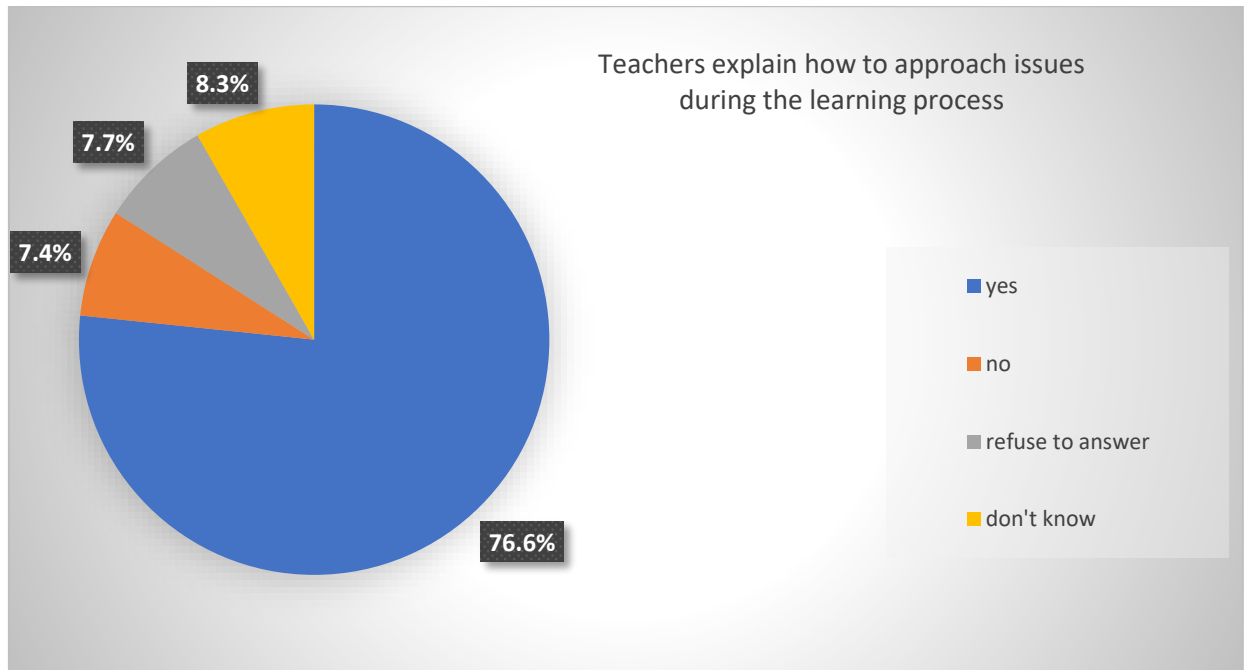
Although students indicated that teachers use diverse methods, the frequency with which they are used differs greatly. Teachers use the following teaching methods nearly every day: Learning new words in texts they have listened to; learning grammar constructions from the texts; discussing among themselves, and listening to, and analyzing the texts. 42% of the participants reported that conducting interviews, an important strategy to develop listening and speaking skills, was a strategy never used by teachers. Student presentations were also listed as a strategy teachers use infrequently. In summary, teachers' use of listening and speaking strategies are oriented largely to knowledge, understanding, and application, and less attention is paid to higher-level thinking: The table below presents the distribution of answers in detail.

Table 26. Frequency of different teaching methods used by teachers to develop speaking and listening skills

	No response	Never	Once a Month	Several Times a Month	Almost at all lectures	In all lectures
Conducting interviews	.6	42.0	18.9	24.8	10.1	3.6
Engaging in dialogue	.7	11.5	19.1	36.6	20.1	12.0
Creating and telling stories based on personal experience	.6	7.1	23.9	38.2	20.4	9.8
Listening and analyzing the text	.4	11.0	16.0	28.2	23.9	20.5
Speaking about personal experiences	1.0	14.2	22.9	35.8	16.8	9.3
Debates	.9	19.2	23.8	31.6	15.8	8.7
Student presentations	.3	21.2	24.8	30.9	13.2	9.5
Listening to the text and working on new words	.3	8.3	9.8	23.1	29.6	28.9
Listening to the text and working on grammar exercises	.7	11.4	12.4	27.4	23.4	24.8

The questionnaire consisted of questions about the approaches teachers use to develop students' metacognition and showed that teachers use diverse teaching methods to do so. 76.6% of participants agreed with this statement, and only 7.4% disagreed. 16% of the participants did not respond to this question or were unable to do so.

Figure 12. Teachers approaches to develop metacognitive skills



Students indicated that teachers use specific methods to develop metacognitive awareness from “several times a month” to “in all lectures.” 37% of the participants indicated that teachers use “Note making” several times a month.” 30% of the participants indicated that the method of “Group or individual work after explaining new materials” is used several times a month, 26% of participants indicated that this method is used in almost all lectures, and 21% indicated that teachers use this method in all lectures. 33% of participants indicated that the method of “Summarizing” is used several times a month, 23% indicated that this method is used in almost all lectures and 18% indicated that teachers use the method in all lectures. Participants indicated that such approaches as “Teachers explaining how to work on homework” or “Teachers ask us what was most important in the lesson” is used in all or almost all lectures. In summary, teachers are dedicated to developing students’ metacognitive skills. This is important for students in the long-term and facilitates their studies at the undergraduate level. The figure below presents the distribution of answers in detail.

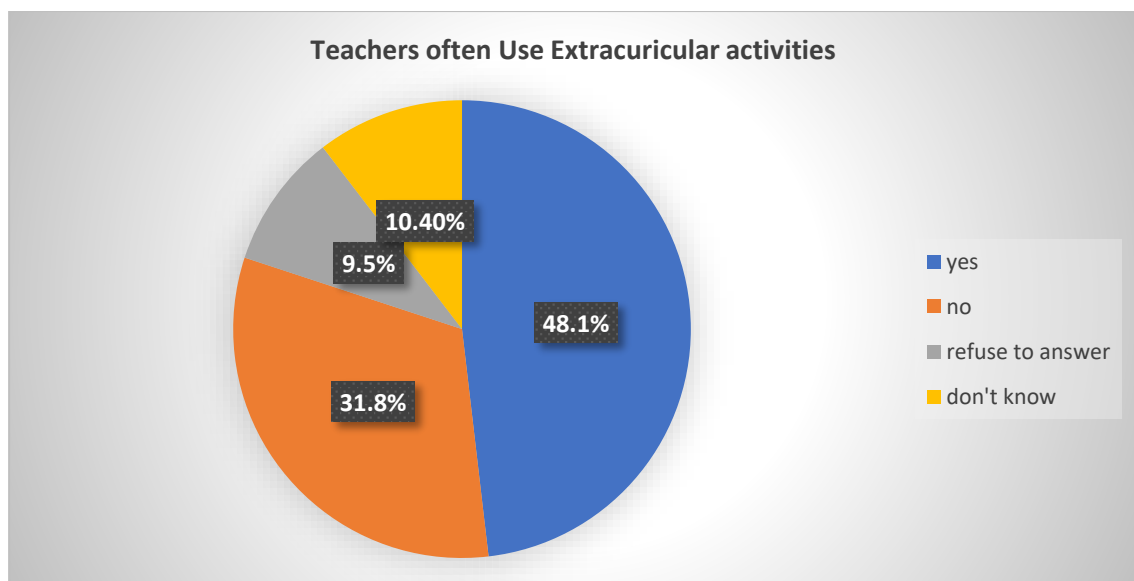
Table 27. Frequency of teachers' approaches to developing metacognitive skills

	No response	Never	Once a Month	Several Times a	Almost at all lectures	In all lectures
Note making	1.9	10.4	18.9	37.0	18.8	13.0
Summarizing	1.3	7.1	16.7	33.9	23.1	17.9
Explaining and guiding homework	1.1	6.6	17.1	29.9	22.1	23.2
Asking the students what was most important for them in the lesson	.9	5.0	13.8	28.3	28.3	23.6
Group or individual work after explaining new materials	1.0	5.4	15.5	30.3	26.4	21.4
Activating prior knowledge	1.4	9.0	17.2	35.9	18.1	18.4
Understanding why learning new material is important	1.3	6.3	12.7	30.5	23.8	25.5
Devoting different amounts of time and effort to different learning materials based on interest in the topic	1.0	6.3	15.2	29.5	24.2	23.8

6.4. Extracurricular activities

The study was also designed to explore the issue of the integration of extracurricular activities in the teaching process. 48.1% of the study participants indicated that extracurricular activities are used in the program, while 31.9% reported the converse. Approximately 10% of study participants did not respond to or were unable to respond to this particular question.

Figure 13. Frequency of using extracurricular activities by teachers



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The study identified the extracurricular activities used most widely in the program and found that these are not diverse and teachers use largely the same type of activities. Showing movies is one of the strategies used most widely for extracurricular activities, while intensive courses or summer and winter schools are used in the program rarely. Hence, diversification of extracurricular activities is an important direction for the improvement of the One-Year Georgian Language Program. The necessity to diversify these activities is mentioned in the qualitative part of the study. Students in the One-Year Georgian Language Program, as well as those in undergraduate programs and university graduates, highlighted such activities' importance.

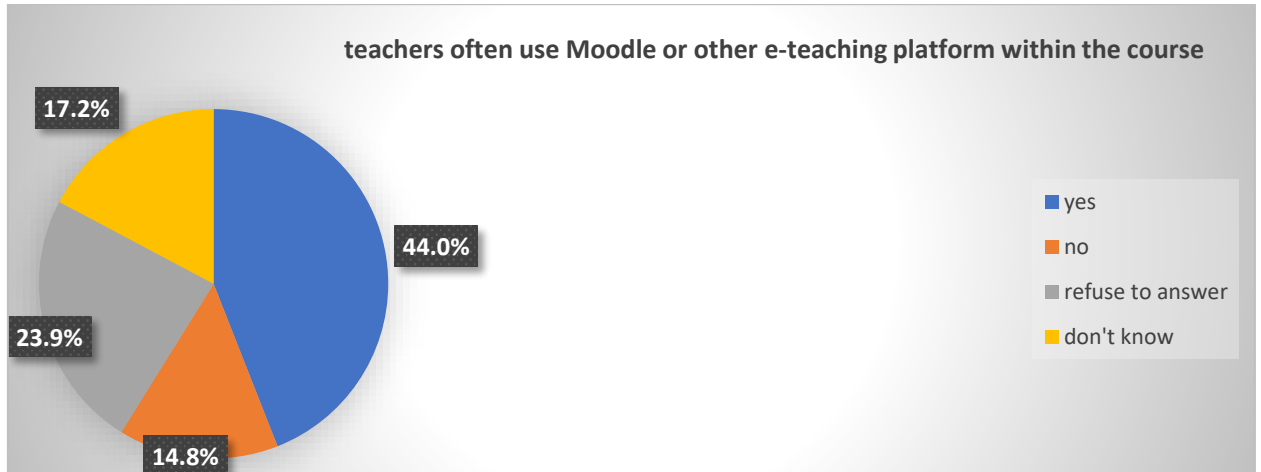
Table 28 Frequency of usage of specific extracurricular activities

	No response	Never	Once a Month	Several Times a Month	Almost at all lectures	In all lectures
Movie show and analysis	1.1	33.6	24.5	23.8	13.5	3.4
Guest Speaker	2.4	41.7	24.8	20.5	8.1	2.4
Attending Public Lecture	2.0	50.3	18.9	16.7	9.0	3.1
Organizing Competition	2.0	47.6	22.9	18.7	6.4	2.4
Visiting Museums and cultural centers	1.1	47.4	19.2	18.8	10.5	2.8
Excursions of awareness-raising and intellectual development	5.4	53.4	18.4	16.1	4.8	1.9
Intensive course, winter and summer schools	1.7	68.5	12.7	11.0	4.7	1.4
Trainings and workshops	2.3	53.6	19.5	15.5	6.6	2.6
Chat time	1.3	34.5	20.8	22.1	15.1	6.3
Visit the theatre or watching other performance	2.0	60.0	15.4	14.1	5.4	3.1

6.5. Use of technology and internet platforms

The study explored the use of technology in the teaching process as well. 44% of the participants indicated that online platforms are used, while 15% reported that online platforms and technology are not used in the program.

Figure 14. Teachers use of moodle platform in the teaching process



The frequency with which technology is used for different purposes differed. The following activities in which technology and the internet are used were reported to occur at the following frequencies: (1) Teaching resources are selected from internet sources—25% reported “sometimes,” 18% “often,” and 8.7% “intensively”; (2) homework/assignments—the survey participants reported the following frequency for completing assignments using technological and internet tools—22% “often and 27.8% “sometimes; (3) teachers use technology and internet platforms to communicate with students—this statement had the lowest frequency in survey participants’ responses. The table below provides detailed information on teachers’ use of technology and internet platforms in teaching:

Table 29. Frequency of teachers’ use of technology and internet platforms in teaching

	No Response	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Intensively
6. A8.1 Teachers use technology and the internet to select teaching resources and materials	1.4	25.5	21.7	24.8	17.9	8.7
A8.2 Teachers use internet platforms and technology for classroom assignments	1.7	23.5	21.9	23.1	22.6	7.1
A8.3 Teachers use internet platforms and technology for homework assignments	2.1	18.7	20.8	27.8	23.4	7.3
A8.4 Teachers use computers, internet platforms, e-mail, or other means of communication in interactions with students	1.3	27.4	23.2	20.1	19.9	8.1
A8.5 Teachers use the internet and informational technology in students’ consultancy	1.7	28.6	22.8	24.1	16.8	6.0

6.6. Infrastructure for program implementation

50 to 60% of the survey participants rated the infrastructure for program implementation as good or excellent. Approximately 25% reported that the infrastructure is relevant in achieving the One-Year Georgian Language Program's objectives. Students' assessments of the program's infrastructure overall were positive.

Table 30. Students' assessments of the program's infrastructure

	No Response	1	2	3	4	5
The program's infrastructure (buildings, heating and air conditioning systems, equipment, furniture, etc.) is sufficient to teach the language effectively	1.3	9.5	11.7	25.5	24.2	27.8
Computers and the internet are always available for students	1.3	12.5	12.5	26.1	21.2	26.4
Equipment such as computers, printers, projectors, audio-video equipment) is sufficient to teach and learn the language	1.4	12.7	14.4	22.2	25.8	23.5
The program has a rich library for students	1.3	10	12.1	21.8	26.4	28.5
The computer lab and ICTs are available for students to learn the language and increase academic knowledge	1.3	10.7	14.2	24.4	24.1	25.4
The program's textbooks are of high quality	1.6	6.0	10.0	24.6	31.1	26.8
The program's textbooks are not so highly-priced that it becomes a financial burden for students to purchase mandatory reading materials	1.9	11.0	11.8	24.5	27.4	23.5
E-versions of mandatory reading materials are available for students	2.0	15.1	13.8	21.9	21.2	25.9
The program has visual aid materials (e.g., posters, pictures, cards, maps, papers)	1.3	18.7	17.4	28.1	21.5	13.1
All teachers use visual aid materials actively in all classes	1.4	12.4	15.2	27.4	24.5	19.1
Students and teachers have sufficient stationery to achieve academic goals	1.0	13.1	14.5	23.6	27.6	20.1
The administration uses websites, online learning systems, moodle platforms, and institutional e-mails widely to communicate with students	1.3	16.4	14.5	22.2	20.9	24.6

6.7. Students' Assessment of the Program by HEI

The study was designed and participants were sampled in a way that made it possible to analyze and generalize the study results for the specific HEI. The results showed that universities differ

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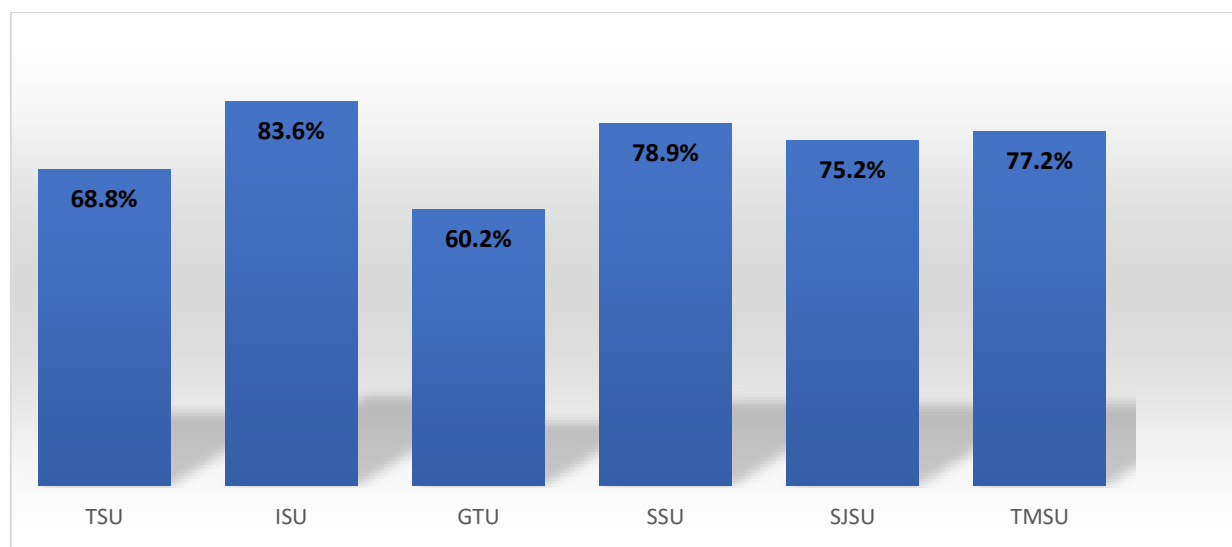
importantly in different components. The assessment of the One-Year Georgian Language Program was positive overall, but it differed significantly by the university (See table below).

Table 31: The assessment of the One-Year Georgian Language Program

	TSU	Ilia	GTU	SSU	SJSU	TSMU
The Program Has diverse courses, which are oriented to students' needs	64.6%	83.1%	50.0%	73.6%	75.4%	75.8%
The courses of the program are interesting	74.1%	85.8%	62.2%	85.2%	80.7%	88.7%
The program supports to study the Georgian Language	72.7%	84.9%	65.4%	86.3%	89.5%	73.0%
The program courses develop general knowledge and competences of student needed for BA Program	62.5%	85.0%	58.3%	76.4%	78.9%	75.8%
The workload in the program is sufficient for language acquisitions	65.2%	81.8%	61.1%	77.8%	71.9%	73.0%
The daily workload of the program prevents effective language acquisition	77.0%	78.4%	68.2%	76.4%	80.7%	87.3%
The program is focused on teaching grammar and on memorization	65.4%	86.4%	56.1%	76.8%	49.1%	66.7%

The assessment of the program overall showed that Ilia State University, Sokhumi State, SJSU, and the Medical University were evaluated more positively than were TSU and GTU. 83.6% of students at Ilia State University evaluated its program as good or excellent, while 68.8% of TSU students rated the program positively and only 60.2% of GTU students did so.

Figure 15. Rate of Positive Evaluation of Programs by HEI



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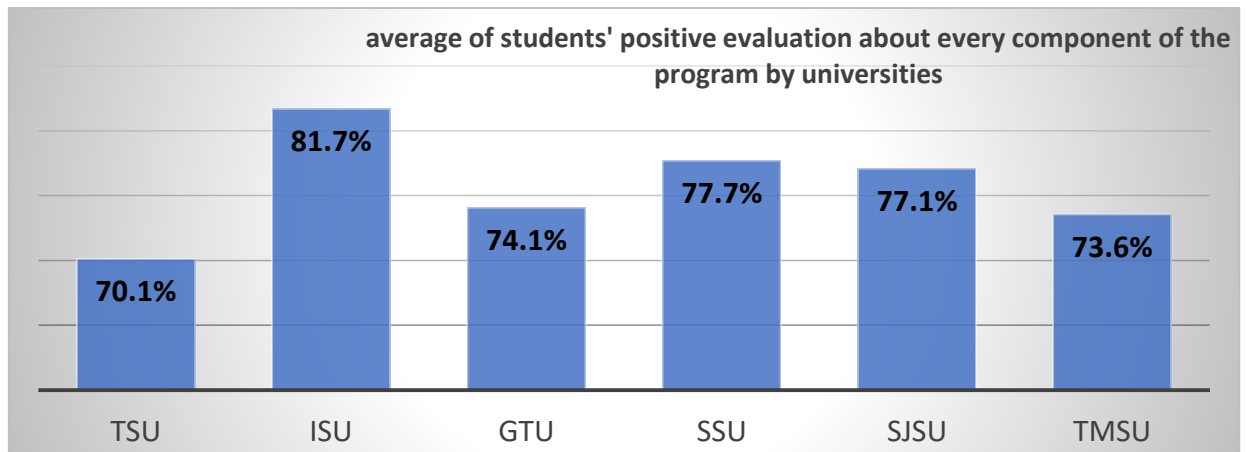
Similar to the program's evaluation overall, the evaluation of specific program components differed greatly by the university. The table below shows clearly that, despite the very high ratings overall at the university level, in the case of GTU, TSU, as well as TSMU, the ratings varied by component. 93% of SJSU students agreed with the statement that "Most teachers use a variety of methods and strategies in teaching", almost 88% of SSU students agreed with the statement "Teachers used a variety of methods to develop reading skills." 89.9% of Ilia State University students agreed with the same statement. The TSU students gave the most balanced ratings of the components. It is noteworthy that different universities' students rated the effectiveness of methods designed to develop different components of language skills (reading, writing, speaking, and listening) differently. This pattern makes it clear that different HEI focus more on one or another language skill (reading, writing, speaking, and listening).

Table 32. Evaluation of different components of the program by HEI

Evaluation of Different Components of the Program	TSU	Ilia	GTU	SSU	SJSU	TSMU
Majority of teachers used diverse resources in teaching Process	74.1%	82.6%	75.2%	80.7%	84.2%	84.1%
Majority of teachers use diverse teaching methods and strategies in the teaching process	71.6%	86.6%	77.1%	86.0%	93.0%	76.2%
Majority of teachers use diverse teaching methods and strategies in the teaching process to develop reading skills of students	77.8%	89.9%	65.6%	87.7%	84.2%	74.6%
Majority of teachers use diverse teaching methods and strategies in the teaching process to develop writing skills of students	71.0%	86.6%	74.5%	77.2%	86.0%	76.2%
Majority of teachers use diverse teaching methods and strategies in the teaching process to develop listening and speaking skills of students	77.1%	86.6%	93.0%	86.0%	76.2%	71.6%
Teachers explain how to learn and approach different topics	74.1%	82.6%	75.2%	80.7%	84.2%	84.1%
Teachers often use extracurricular activities in the teaching process	45.2%	57.0%	57.9%	45.6%	31.7%	48.1%

The figure below shows the cumulative evaluation of students of each component of the One Year Georgian Language Program per university. The figure shows that Ilia State University has the highest rate cumulatively in the evaluation of each component of the program.

Figure 16. Student evaluation of different components of the program by HEI



As mentioned already, the study explored students' assessment of the following topics: Teaching resources; teachers' teaching strategies and extracurricular activities, and strategies to develop metacognitive skills, etc. The data were analyzed on the university level as well, where it was interesting to compare students' evaluations. We compared the frequency of positive responses (4 and 5 points) by HEI. Table 26 below shows the differences among universities. For example, the strategy of using video materials in the classroom differs greatly depending upon the university. The frequency of this activity at ISU is more than 40%, while it has only a 7% frequency at Sokhumi State University, 5% at GTU, and only 3.2% at TMSU.

Table 33 The Frequency with which Teachers Use Different Resources by HEI

Teacher Uses the Following Teaching Resources	GTU	ISU	SJSU	SSU	TSMU	TSU
Textbook	39.5%	70.5%	64.9%	56.1%	82.5%	70.4%
Additional literature	24.8%	25.5%	31.6%	29.8%	65.1%	24.1%
Writing exercises	52.9%	67.8%	80.7%	71.9%	71.4%	50.6%
Audio materials	9.6%	69.8%	24.6%	22.8%	4.8%	32.1%
Movies and other video materials	5.1%	41.6%	7.0%	8.8%	3.2%	24.1%
Electronic and internet resources	10.8%	57.7%	31.6%	10.5%	12.7%	16.7%

The research also assessed the frequency with which the teachers use these various teaching methods and found that they use the following strategies most frequently: (1) Teaching grammar rules. This strategy is used widely in all universities; however, SJSU and TSMU have the highest rates—86-87%, respectively—and the frequency is high at ISU as well. Lectures and debates are

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a technique teachers in all HEI also use widely. Interactive teaching methods, such as role-play, movies, and analysis, presentations, and discussions are used often at ISU. Strategies such as group work or working in pairs are used widely at SJSU as well, while teachers at TSU and TSMU use discussions frequently.

Table 34: Students' Assessment of Teaching Methods Used by HEI

Teaching methods and strategies teachers use	TSU	ISU	GTU	SSU	SJSU	TSMU	ALL HEI
Lectures	59.9%	70.5%	62.4%	47.4%	75.4%	58.7%	63.1%
Presentations	10.5%	47.7%	15.9%	1.8%	35.1%	7.9%	21.6%
Role Play	11.1%	21.5%	5.1%	1.8%	17.5%	9.5%	11.6%
Group work	17.3%	77.9%	14.6%	10.5%	35.1%	15.9%	31.5%
Working in pairs	13.0%	77.2%	8.9%	12.3%	28.1%	23.8%	29.1%
Movies and analysis	14.2%	29.5%	6.4%	3.5%	12.3%	3.2%	13.6%
Discussions	27.2%	34.2%	10.8%	12.3%	29.8%	22.2%	23.3%
Debates	75.9%	76.5%	60.5%	66.7%	77.2%	85.7%	72.6%
Activities to memorize grammar rules	65.4%	79.9%	63.7%	68.4%	86.0%	87.3%	72.6%

The frequency with which teachers use reading strategies is similar in all HEI. The approach teachers use most widely during the reading phase is that in which one student reads while the other students listen; one-by-one reading methods during the reading phase are also used often, as well as the approach in which the lecturer reads the text while the students listen, questioning after the reading and individual reading, as well as restating the text and completing exercises. Developing one's own version of a text after reading its first passages is used most frequently at ISU, while reading teaching methods that entail creating infographics or text organizers are used most widely at ISU and SSU. The latter method is used less frequently at TSU. Retelling the text read is used more widely at TSU and TSMU, while group reading and retelling the texts to others are used most often at ISU, TSMU, and SSU. Table 35 below presents the distribution of the participants' responses in detail.

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Table 35: Reading Teaching Methods Teachers Use by HEI

Statement	TSU	ISU	GTU	SSU	SJSU	STM U	ALL HEI
One student reads others listen	71.6%	55.7%	45.2%	78.9%	49.1%	65.1%	59.5%
One student reads others listen	54.3%	53.0%	56.7%	70.2%	49.1%	69.8%	57.1%
Teacher/lecturer reads, students listen	39.5%	44.3%	54.8%	56.1%	42.1%	34.9%	45.6%
Individual reading	28.4%	56.4%	28.7%	49.1%	29.8%	54.0%	39.4%
Group reading and presenting to other groups (Jigsaw)	24.1%	54.4%	28.0%	49.1%	38.6%	41.3%	37.2%
Reading and restating the text	31.5%	34.2%	58.0%	49.1%	29.8%	69.8%	43.7%
Performing exercises after reading	66.0%	67.1%	54.8%	66.7%	66.7%	66.7%	63.7%
Answering questions after reading the text	59.3%	71.1%	42.0%	50.9%	63.2%	61.9%	57.7%
Developing own version of text after reading its first passages	19.1%	42.3%	17.2%	31.6%	14.0%	30.2%	25.7%
Using infographics and graphic organizers in different stages of reading	11.1%	35.6%	13.4%	33.3%	19.3%	12.7%	20.2%

The comparison by universities revealed: (1) Some HEI try to balance teaching methods that focus on high-level thinking skills as well, while (2) some universities use more traditional teaching methods, place the greatest emphasis on knowing and understanding aspects of Bloom's taxonomy, and give less attention to higher-level thinking.

The university-level analysis of teaching methods used to develop writing skills showed that Georgia HEI use diverse strategies to do so. All methods listed had high frequencies, but they differed for different methods in different universities. For instance, dictation methods are used frequently at GTU (approximately 60% of students reported that this method is used frequently

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and nearly every day). At ISU, TSU, and SSU, writing essays is used frequently (54%, 57%, and 60%, respectively), and writing papers is used widely at ISU (55%). Table 36 provides detailed information on methods HEI use to develop students' writing skills.

Table 36: Methods Used to Develop Writing Skills by HEI

Statement	TSU	ISU	GTU	SSU	SJSU	TSMU	ALL HEI
Rewriting the text	27.5%	49.7%	49.1%	29.8%	42.9%	38.6%	38.6%
Dictation	38.9%	21.5%	61.1%	57.9%	33.3%	46.0%	42.2%
Spelling	35.8%	43.0%	50.3%	45.6%	15.8%	54.0%	41.9%
Writing plot of texts to which they have listened	57.4%	54.4%	42.7%	57.9%	40.4%	36.5%	49.6%
Writing essays on the texts students read	35.8%	51.0%	30.6%	42.1%	49.1%	36.5%	39.8%
Writing the missing words in the text	55.6%	51.0%	49.7%	64.9%	45.6%	57.1%	53.2%
Correcting the misspelled words in the text	47.5%	54.4%	61.8%	52.6%	50.9%	47.6%	53.3%
Correcting grammar mistakes in the text	47.5%	59.7%	56.1%	61.4%	50.9%	60.3%	55.2%
Writing papers based on materials learned	35.8%	55.6%	26.5%	39.6%	37.6%	35.1%	22.8%
Connecting words in the text logically	37.0%	49.0%	43.3%	47.4%	36.8%	55.6%	44.0%

The study compared the methods teachers in HEI use to develop speaking and listening skills and no important differences were observed. In all HEI, learning new words in texts to which students listened; learning grammar constructions from the texts; discussing among themselves, and listening to, and analyzing the texts are the techniques used most widely while conducting interviews and student presentations are methods used rarely. The exception is ISU, where students reported that teachers use the student presentations strategy widely (See Table 37 for details).

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Table 37: Teaching Methods Used to Develop Speaking and Listening Skills by HEI

Statement	TSU	ISU	GTU	SSU	SJSU	TSMU	ALL HEI
Conducting interviews	12.3%	29.5%	8.3%	5.3%	5.3%	9.5%	13.8%
Engaging in dialogue	34.6%	43.0%	21.7%	33.3%	28.1%	25.4%	31.8%
Creating and telling stories based on personal experience	33.3%	29.5%	22.3%	19.3%	40.4%	46.0%	30.4%
Listening and analyzing the text	54.3%	59.1%	27.4%	45.6%	35.1%	34.9%	44.5%
Speaking about personal experiences	24.1%	33.6%	19.7%	31.6%	14.0%	31.7%	25.7%
Debates	18.5%	36.2%	15.3%	31.6%	26.3%	22.2%	24.0%
Student presentations	10.5%	54.4%	12.7%	15.8%	31.6%	11.1%	23.6%
Listening to the text and working on new words	54.9%	77.9%	44.6%	70.2%	61.4%	50.8%	59.2%
Listening to the text and working on grammar exercises	52.5%	61.7%	36.3%	50.9%	38.6%	47.6%	48.8%

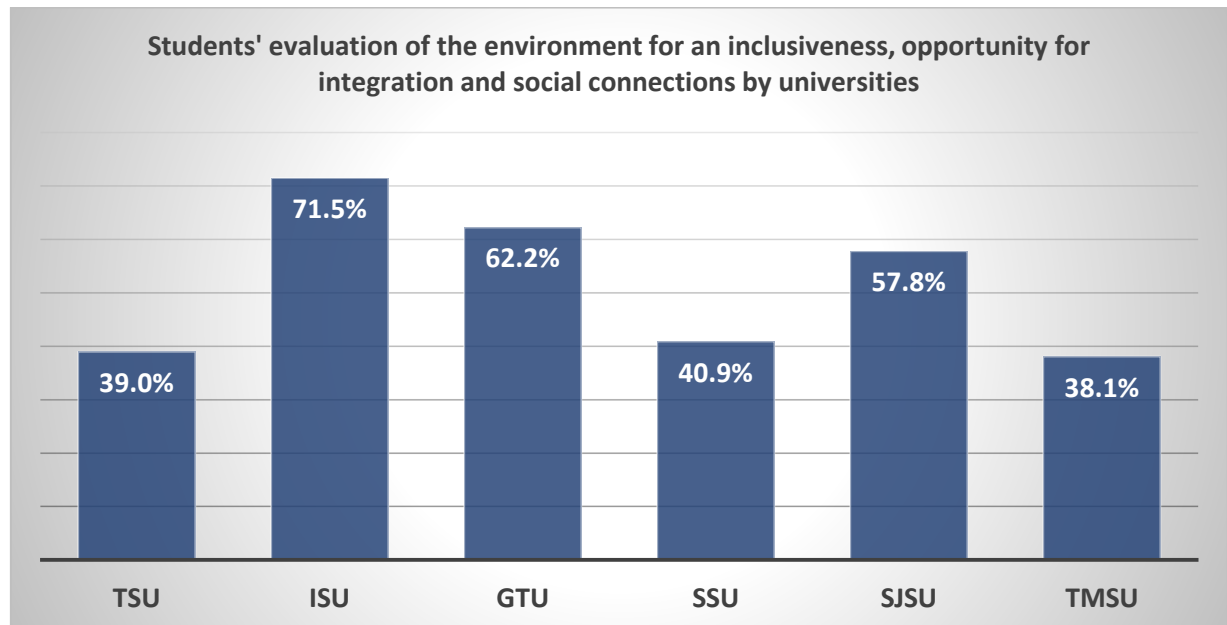
As noted previously, students assessed the environment at HEI overall with respect to campus diversity, inclusion, and opportunities for civil integration, and the table below shows the differences among HEI. The table is designed based on high assessment points given to these components of students' lives. The highest rates of diversity, inclusion, and integration opportunities were given to ISU. SJSU had the highest rate with respect to the organization of diverse activities for inclusion and integration, and TSMU had high rates with respect to teachers' attitudes and positive behavior. The greatest difference was observed with respect to orientation meetings at the beginning of the first semester. ISU students assessed these meetings' effectiveness most highly, while high points were given to these activities by only 26% of students at SSU, 25% at GTU, and 19% at TSU.

Table 38: Students' Assessment of the Campus Environment by HEI

Assessment of Campus Environment	GTU	ISU	SJSU	SSU	TSMU	TSU
University has an inclusive campus environment	31.2%	78.4%	52.6%	33.9%	42.9%	37.7%
Teachers in programs have positive attitudes and treat all students equally	52.6%	85.8%	84.2%	70.2%	82.5%	58.0%
Students have the opportunity to interact with Georgian students in the program	39.5%	65.5%	35.1%	49.1%	46.0%	33.3%
Many activities are conducted in the program to facilitate the students' social activities and civil integration (excursions, public lectures and meetings; Tolerance Day, etc.)	41.2%	33.1%	70.3%	21.1%	50.9%	31.7%
The orientation meetings at the beginning of the semester integrate students in social life effectively	25.3%	100.0%	61.5%	26.7%	69.5%	19.2%
If needed, students always have an opportunity to consult with lecturer further	44.0%	66.0%	69.6%	44.2%	54.8%	48.4%

The figures below present students' average assessment of the campus environment with respect to inclusiveness, social integration, and possibilities to interact with students with diverse ethnic backgrounds. The assessment overall reflects well the patterns highlighted in each provision discussed above in each HEI.

Figure 17: Assessment of University Environment Overall



6.8. Students' attitudes/Gender differences

The research showed gender differences in the assessment of various aspects of the One Year Georgian Language Program. Females are more likely to assess the diversity of the courses of the One Year Georgian Language Program, as well as its orientation toward students' needs positively. Females also assessed the program's efforts to develop Georgian language and metacognitive skills more positively. On the other hand, males assessed teachers' equal treatment of all students, as well as the Tutor Program's effectiveness more positively.

6.9. Comparative Analysis of Students' Perceptions: Comparison of Current and Previous Survey Results

The CCIIR conducted research on the quota system and the One Year Georgian Language Program's effectiveness in 2013 and 2016. This made it possible to compare the results and analyze the tendencies from a longitudinal perspective. The students of TSU, Akhaltsikhe State Teaching University and Higher Educational Institution—Akhalkalaki College—participated in the survey in 2013 and the results for these two HEI can be compared. Five HEI participated in the study in 2016, and because both surveys were representative, the results could be generalized.

6.10 Comparison of Results of 2013 and 2020 Studies

The 2013 study focused on the program's effectiveness with respect to the development of language skills. The results showed that the majority of participants believe that their language skills are sufficient to read and analyze academic books. The students also agreed with the statement that they developed sufficient language skills to listen to lectures and participate in classroom discussions. The majority of students also acknowledged that the One Year Georgian Language Program met their expectations. According to their assessments, they developed better listening skills, have less difficulty with reading comprehension, and improved writing skills. Students indicated that the program develops communicative language skills effectively, and the development of communicative rather than academic language skills actually was their expectation from the program. The table below presents the results in detail.

Table 39. Students' Assessment of Their Development of Language Skills in the One Year Georgian Language Program in 2013

2013	Mean	SD
I developed speaking and writing skills equally well	3.73	.88
I can communicate freely in the Georgian language after completing the One Year Georgian Language Program	3.98	6.66
I have difficulty reading and understanding academic literature after completing the One Year Georgian Language Program	4.50	11.45
I am able to write academic essays	3.08	1.11
I am able to listen to lectures in the Georgian language and participate freely and actively in class discussions	4.12	6.65
The program was as effective as I expected	4.71	9.33

The students assessed the effectiveness of One Year Georgian Language Program in 2020 overall, and the table below provides detailed information on their assessment. They assessed their development of language skills through the program highly. It is worth mentioning that the fewest points were given to the statement that the program develops students' general knowledge and the competencies needed for undergraduate BA studies. All answers to the different statements had low standard deviations, which indicates that survey participants evaluated the program's effectiveness quite similarly.

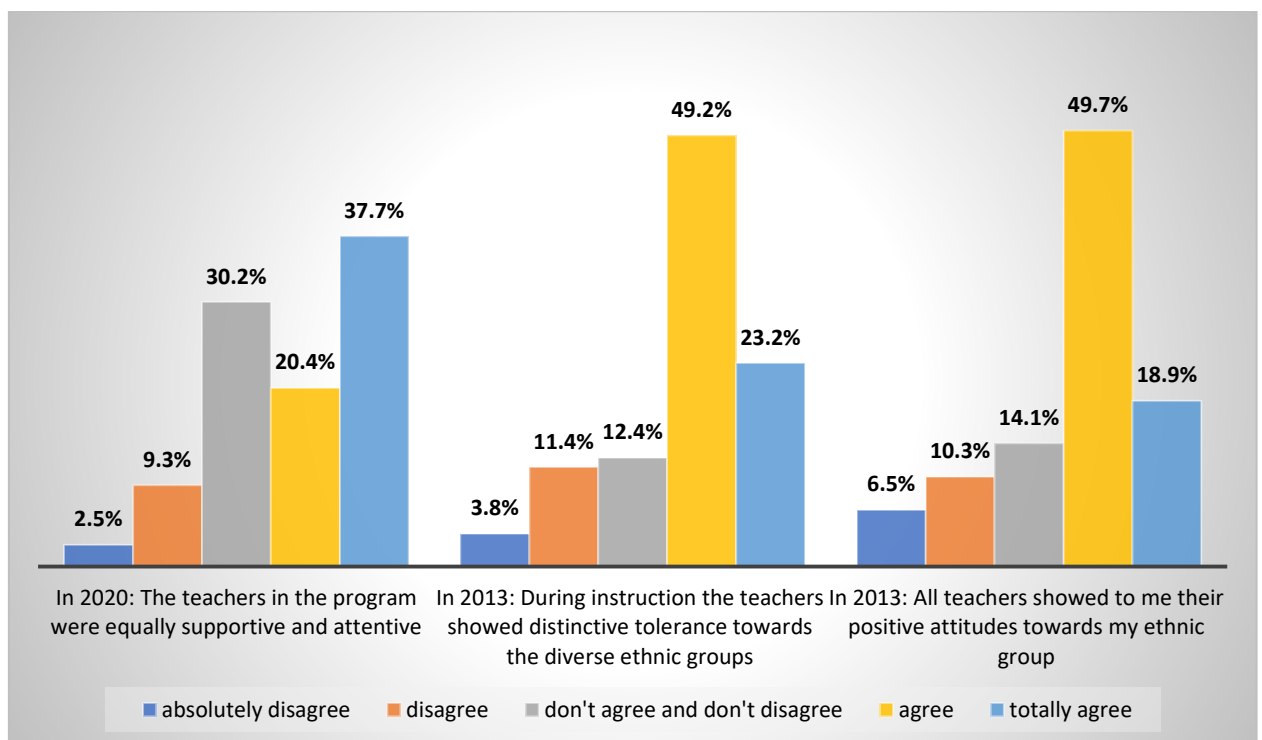
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Table 40: Students' Assessment of the Development of Language Skills During the 2013 One Year Georgian Language Program

2020	Mean	SD
The program has diverse courses that are oriented to students' needs	3.93	.94
The program courses are interesting	4.06	.911
The program supports the study of the Georgian Language	4.20	.94
The program courses develop general knowledge and competencies that students need for their BA program	3.91	.93

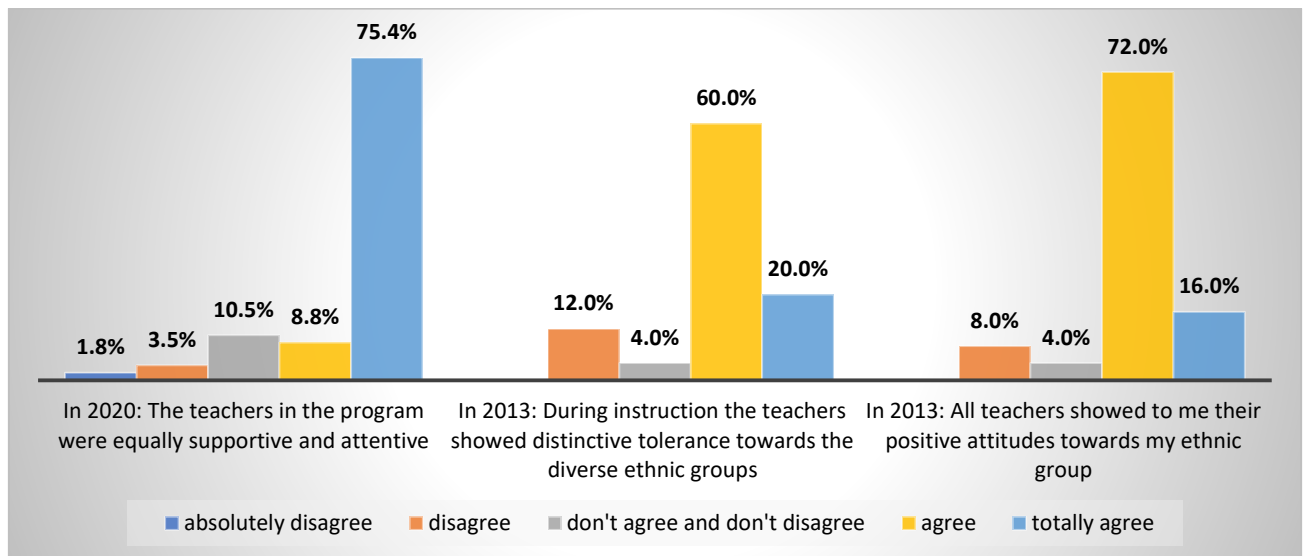
Both studies evaluated the attitudes of teachers in the program at TSU. The figures below present the results of both studies. The students assessed the teachers' attitudes, as well as their tolerance of different ethnic groups more positively in 2013 than in 2020. This discouraging outcome needs further consideration and research as well as corrective actions on the part of HEI.

Figure 18: Assessment of TSU Teachers' Tolerance and Attitudes toward Students with Diverse Ethnic Backgrounds in 2013 and 2020



The converse trend was observed at SJSU, where students assessed teachers' attitudes and their tolerance more positively in 2020 than in 2013.

Figure 19: Assessment of SJSU Teachers' Tolerance and Attitudes toward Students with Diverse Ethnic Backgrounds in 2013 and 2020

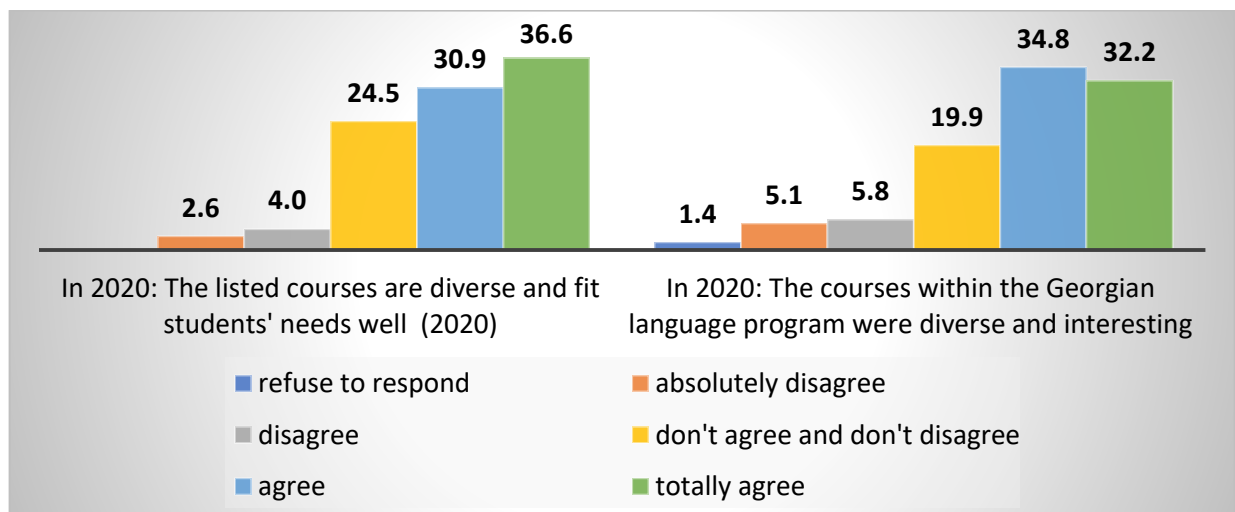


The distribution of answers to different statements showed clearly that the outcomes of the One Year Georgian Language Program differ across HEI, and these differences are reflected in students' attitudes and perceptions.

6.11. Comparison of the Results from 2016 – 2020

As mentioned previously, all students in major universities took part in the 2016 research, so the results can be generalized to the entire population of students in the Georgian language program. The figure below compares statements that rate the program courses' diversity. The frequency of highly positive assessments of courses' diversity was nearly identical in 2016 and 2020, although negative assessments decreased in 2020.

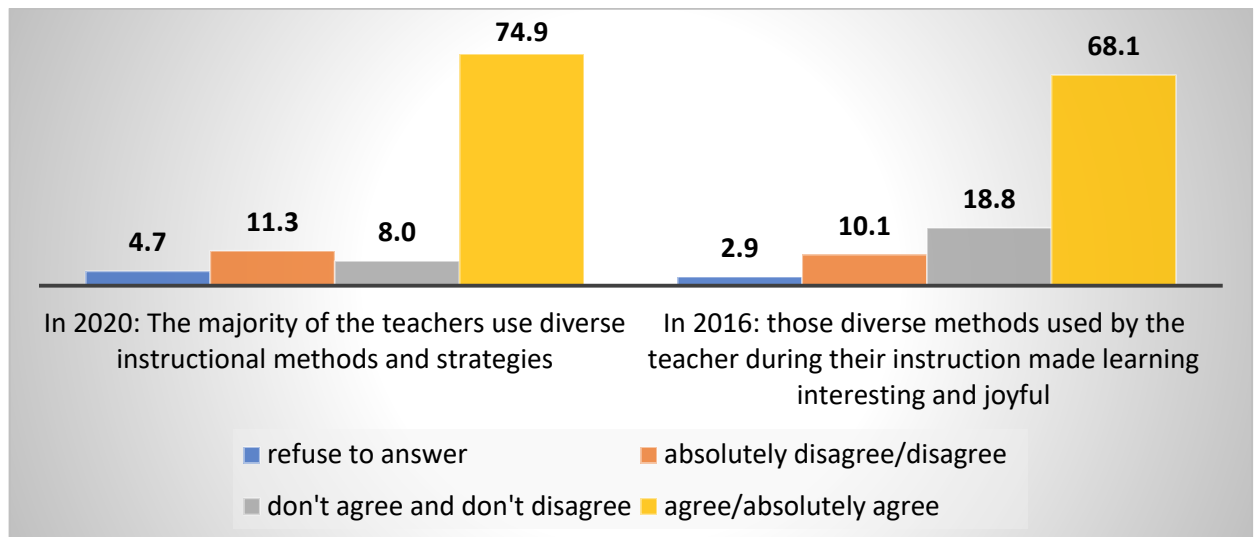
Figure 20: Assessment of the Courses' Diversity in 2016 and 2020



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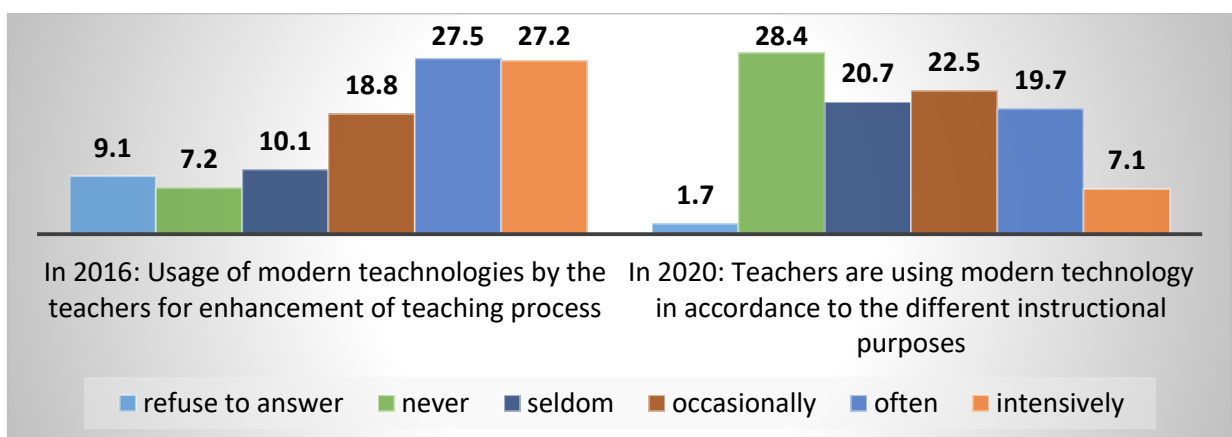
The most positive changes and developments were observed with respect to the teachers' use of diverse teaching methods. In 2016, 68% of the study participants agreed or agreed strongly with the statement that teachers use diverse teaching methods to make the learning process more interesting and engaging. 74% of the participants agreed and agreed strongly with the statement in 2020. Only 11.3% of students believed that teachers did not use diverse teaching methods in 2020. This positive change is important and should be strengthened further through professional development programs for the teachers.

Figure 21: Assessment of Teaching Methods in 2016 and 2020



The use of technology in teaching decreased in 2020 compared to 2016. More than 50% of students reported that their teachers used technology in their courses in 2016, while only 27% of the participants indicated the same in 2020. It is important to note that 29% of those in 2020 indicated that their teachers *never* use technology in their teaching. In the same study, 20% of students reported that their teachers use technology seldom. This pattern also requires further attention from HEI.

Figure 22. Teachers' Use of Technology in Teaching in 2016 and 2020

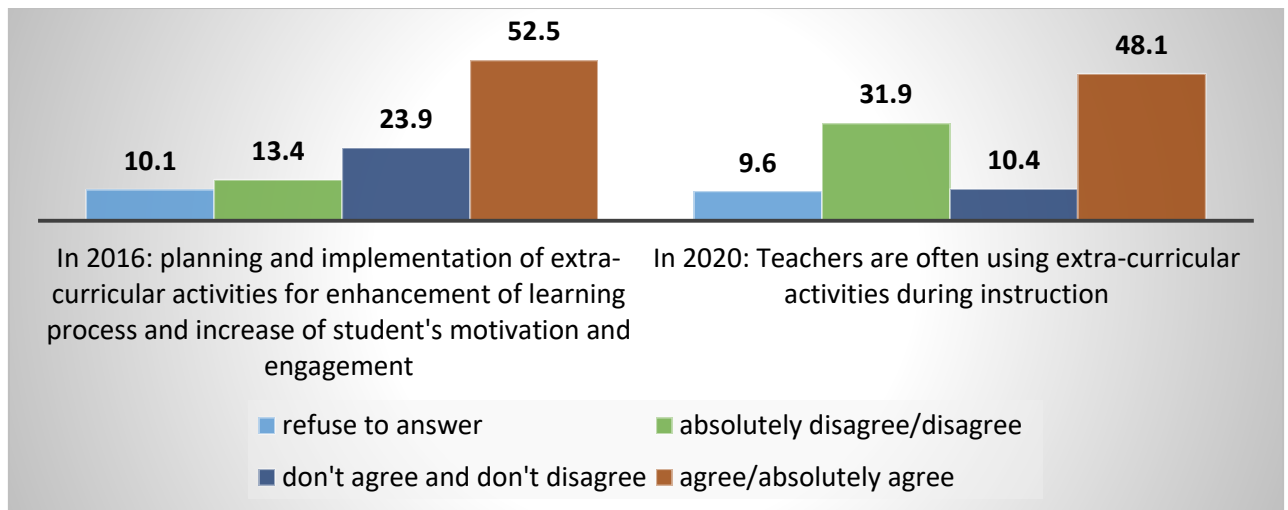


Both studies examined the students' extracurricular activities, which play an important role in teaching language as well as in integrating the students academically and socially. The figure below presents a comparison of the dynamics over the years. The surveys' questions were stated

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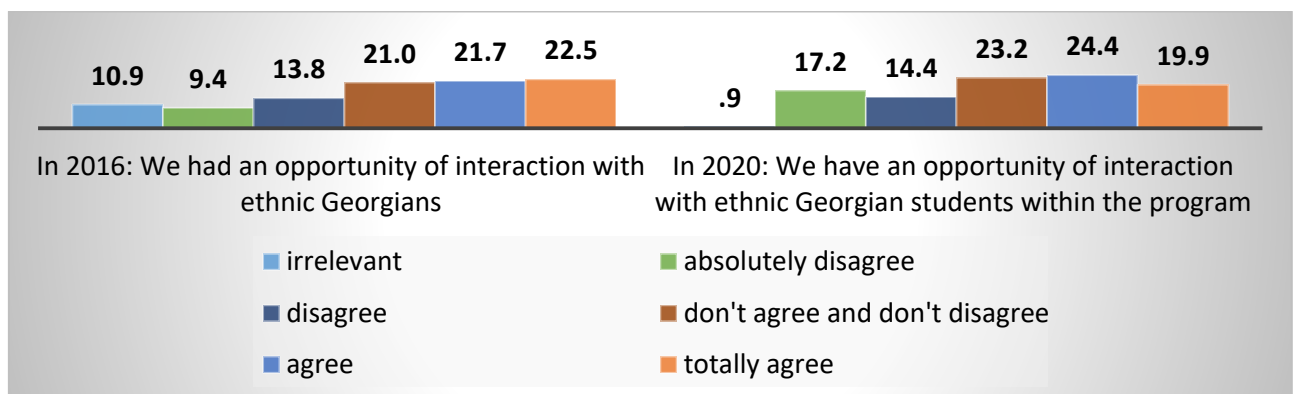
differently and thus, it is difficult to compare the results with respect to the extracurricular activities' extent. However, only 13% of survey participants in 2020 indicated that extracurricular activities were not included in the One Year Georgian Language Program.

Figure 23: Extracurricular Activities in 2016 and 2020



One more issue studied in 2016 as well as in 2020 was minority students' interactions with ethnic Georgian students, and the results demonstrated an improvement overall in this important facet of the quota system's success. Only a very few students did not interact with Georgian students during their studies in the One Year Georgian Language Program in 2020.

Figure 24: Minority Students' Interactions with Georgian Students in 2016 and 2020



Concluding Remarks

The study revealed progress overall in different elements of the policy's implementation; however, some of the improvements are not obvious or large and it is clear that the system requires further improvements:

- Positive patterns were found in the assessment of the One Year Georgian Language Program's effectiveness overall, as well as its effectiveness in teaching the Georgian language and preparing students for undergraduate studies
- The survey participants' assessments of specific components of the program differed

- The assessment of different aspects of the program differed by HEI
- Gender differences were also observed in the students' assessments of the program. Females tended to assess the program more positively, while at the same time, they evaluated teachers' attitudes and tolerance toward students with different ethnic backgrounds more negatively
- The comparison of the assessments conducted in 2020, 2016, and 2013 revealed the program's progress overall; however, some elements require further improvements

Chapter 7. Students' Problems and Challenges in Undergraduate Studies

This study was designed to explore the problems and challenges students enrolled in Georgia's HEI through the quota system encounter, and studied the following specific issues: (1) The problems ethnic minority Bachelor's students in Georgia's HEI face; (2) the academic, social, and civil integration challenges of students enrolled through the quota system, and (3) the specific reasons for the high dropout rates of students enrolled through the quota system.

The study used the following research methods: (1) Desk research and statistical data analysis; (2) focus group discussions with undergraduate students, and (3) interviews with HEI administrators, heads of programs, and professors.

Ethnic minorities' most important financial and funding problems identified in 2013 still persist. Following the decree N 79/N issued on June 24, 2013, the State provides funding to the 17 priority state higher education programs, and this program is still implemented. However, students enrolled through the quota system are ineligible for this program. The current and latest decree the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture, and Sport of Georgia issued on August 21, 2019 (175N) in article 6, point 5, states directly: *"It is prohibited to fund graduates of the One-year Georgian Language Program under the program..."* Accordingly, students enrolled through the quota system are ineligible for the program funding. As of today, universities are granted the authority to enroll these students in state-funded programs; however, these programs are not free of charge unless the students are awarded a grant, and they have to pay to study in programs that are free of charge for Georgian students. This violates the students' rights, discriminates against them, and does not meet the state policy to attract students and popularize the programs. This approach prevents students in such important programs as teacher education from enrolling.

7.1. Specific Reasons for High Dropout Rates of Students Enrolled Through the Quota System

The statistical data on ethnic minority students' high dropout and low graduation rates were analyzed in Chapter four. In this chapter, the factors that influence the high dropout rates will be presented and analyzed. The focus group discussions with students and interviews with lecturers identified several reasons for the high dropout rates: (1) Marriage; (2) lack of Georgian language competences; (3) lack of preparation to study in particular programs, which causes students to drop out or change their field of specialization through internal or external mobility; (4) financial constraints and the consequent necessity to work, and (5) changing their country of residence. Each of these issues will be described briefly.

Marriage

It is worth mentioning that the undergraduates' age cannot be classified as an early marriage age; however, the participants indicated that marriage still is a major cause to drop out for several reasons: (1) Husbands and their families do not allow girls to continue their studies. As one of the study participants emphasized: *"The family takes the girl and asks [her] to stay home. This is the end of the studies"*; (2) after marrying, students do not have time to continue their undergraduate studies. Their main obligation is childrearing, there is no time for studies, and HEI have no alternative programs for these students, and (3) there are cases of international marriage. Students marry abroad and leave Georgia and thus, are unable to continue their studies. One of the study participants remarked: *"They will stop learning if married not in Georgia but in Armenia."*

Level of Georgian language competences

All students attend the One-year Georgian Language Program and receive a certificate of knowledge of the Georgian language before they begin their undergraduate studies. However, this does not guarantee that all graduates of the program possess academic adequate language skills. BA program professor identified clearly the existing problem and the challenges students encounter because of their language deficiencies in their Bachelor's program: *"This is quit[e] challeng[ing] to do assignments at BA programs. The problem is acknowledged by lecturers and administrators of HEI. The transition is very fast. They start to study very difficult academic courses. They need academic language skills to master the subject and they do not have these academic language skills. They have language competences; however, it is different from the language required at undergraduate."* Having communicative language skills does not mean students can use the language effectively in an academic setting. Thus, it is obvious that developing academic language competences should be the benchmark for the One-year Georgian Language Program.

The language barrier is demonstrated differently in different study programs and is the reason for dropping out or changing programs through mobility in such programs as Medicine, Law, and International Relations. As the participants reported: *"The materials at medical faculty are so difficult, it is hard to understand" "I encountered the problem dealing with legal texts, I decided to change my program"*... The converse situation was found in the faculty of humanities and the business administration program. An undergraduate study lecturer at Samtskhe-Javakheti State University explained: *"We do not have such (language) problems at the faculty of humanities."* Another observed: *"The business administration is different; we have international terminology here and it makes it easy for students."* It is obvious that different BA programs have different language competence requirements. Accordingly, it is important to take this finding into consideration and identify the language competencies required for specific undergraduate programs. This will allow the One-year Georgian Language Program to be planned better so that it meets all programs' and students' requirements.

Level of academic and cognitive development

Low levels of academic and cognitive development were mentioned as an important impediment for ethnic minority students. The participants emphasized that they are unable to receive a quality education in public schools, which influences their studies in higher education adversely. One stated, *“Study at Medical University is difficult. We are not prepared academically.”* This finding indicates that access to a quality general education is an important challenge for the educational system and all efforts should be directed to reform non-Georgian schools, not simply to improve the process of teaching the Georgian language.

Financial constraints and low paid employment

Students' financial constraints contribute importantly to the dropout rates in Georgia, and more than 11,000 students have suspended or dropped out of their studies in Georgian HEI. The same pattern is observed in minority students. Financial problems are an important reason that ethnic minority students enrolled through the quota system drop out. This problem was mentioned in focus group discussions with students as well as in interviews with lecturers. As one of the study participants noted, *“If financial grants not received, they (students) suspend or dropout their studies because of financial problems.”* The second issue related to financial constraints is low paid employment. Students in need of financial aid attempt to find employment in various low paid sectors, but the low pay in such jobs prevent them from continuing their studies.

Leaving the country

There are many cases in which students leave the country to seek jobs or career opportunities. Largely, the destination country is not ethnic minorities' historical motherland. Two countries were their most frequent destinations: Russia for ethnic Armenians and Turkey for ethnic Azerbaijanis. One of the participants indicated, *“Students leave Georgia, in some cases, families move to Russia or students himself. This is an important reason for dropouts.”* This tendency requires further consideration. Foreign countries are attractive destinations for Georgian students, and primarily, Russian language schools in Georgia prepare immigrant students to migrate to Russia.

7.2. Undergraduate Students' Academic, Social, and Civic Integration

Research on this topic has revealed some very interesting patterns, in that it demonstrated that discrimination is very common in the academic process. However, the instructors also described certain positive examples.

Positive cases and challenges in students' social integration

With respect to the students' social life, the focus group participants spoke about the gaps and issues in the undergraduate program's preparation. At the undergraduate level, Armenian and Azerbaijani students continue the learning process with Georgian students, which is a new challenge for them. Unlike the year-long Georgian language program, during which these students are largely isolated by themselves, as undergraduates, they must learn in a normal environment and face different problems that they have to solve, and about which they talk painfully. From this perspective, the problem is clear, and can manifest differently in different cases: (1) Academic or social integration with other students; (2) integration with instructors and the administration in the academic or social context; (3) different possibilities for civic and student integration, and (4) challenges that make it difficult for students to participate in students' life.

Students and instructors have different thoughts and opinions about students' relationships. Lecturers and administration members believe that there are no problems in the relationships of Georgian and non-Georgian students. *"The students have a very good relationship, whether they're Georgian or not. It's absolutely normal, and there's no problem."* However, the students in the focus groups had different opinions. Of course, they acknowledged the positive influences, but the situation also has problems:

In the beginning, when I didn't know Georgian, they (Georgian students) used to laugh at me. Then I did better than them at classes, they didn't like and felt some way about it"... "Then there were the stereotypes that I was a cheater because I'm Armenian. There were constant arguments between us.

With respect to the interactions between instructors and undergraduate students, there were some positive tendencies that both students and instructors mentioned. Many instructors have been trying to change the way they teach to meet the students' needs. They also indicated that it is their unwritten rule that everyone receives the same opportunities:

I remember this one time, we entered the university, and there was a Megrel student that arrived from Abkhazia. The student was scared because of the stereotypes about the people of Abkhazia. It was believed that Abkhazians knew Russian better than Georgian. The student was scared, so when we got to the class the instructor warned us to not discriminate and told us that we were all equal there, even if we're from different countries and regions. The instructor said that we'd get our grades based on our work, and no other outside factors. Once the instructor told the student about this, the student calmed down.

The students also mentioned other examples in which the instructors changed their way of teaching to help students with different needs:

For example, when my classmate had a language problem, there were forty of us in the class and there were mostly Georgians, there were only 5 of us minority students. We did not feel comfortable presenting in front of the whole class, so the instructor let us present after everyone left, alone, just with them. The instructor let us do this for a whole semester.

Unfortunately, in addition to all of the positive stories, there were some negative incidents in which the effect on the student can be traumatic, and both instructors and students discussed these problems in the focus groups and interviews. There was an interesting case at Samtskhe-Javakheti University. In the interviews, the students stated that there is no problem with respect to the Armenian students' academic and social integration attributable to the relationships Georgians have had with them. Lecturers, students, and the administration had this same positive attitude, but the research showed problems with different groups. There were descendants of groups deported from Samtskhe-Javakheti in 1944. The repatriation process of this group began in Georgia and they study at SJSU today. However, they encounter social and academic integration problems. The University and its administration are trying hard and doing their best to resolve this situation, but the research identified certain challenges in the integration between lecturers and students. One of the participants reported:

There has been something like this with Meskhs before. Here's what happened: There were Muslim and Christian Meskhs who were from the same soil but had different beliefs, and they had a hard time accepting each other.

In the case of universities in Tbilisi, instructors and students reported that there are many positive interactions, but the students still mentioned some difficult episodes. One graduate student spoke about one of these:

The instructor was giving a lecture about the Middle East and didn't know that there was an Azerbaijani at the lecture. The lecturer said that there were a lot of Muslims, and there were Azerbaijanis having a lot of babies and Muslims soon become the majority in Georgia. I was just sitting there surprised, in the end, Professor saw my surname and didn't know what to say. It really hurt me.

One important problem that the research revealed was the incorrect name of the Azerbaijani population, which Azerbaijani students perceive as offensive. Not only the Georgian students, but the professors as well use the incorrect name. Azerbaijani students try to tell their professors that they are not using the name that this specific ethnic group believes is correct. One student spoke of an incident s/he recalled:

For example, there is a widely used naming of the Azerbaijani population. They are very often called Tatars, which is not correct. I had a professor, who asked if we had a Tatar in the group. I am Azerbaijani and didn't say anything. Once she/he read the list and saw my surname, the professor asked me why I didn't say anything when the question was asked. I said that I was an Azerbaijani and not a Tatar. Then I explained why the naming of Azerbaijani as "Tatars" was wrong and offensive.

Different opportunities of different universities use for academic and civic integration

It must be mentioned that Tbilisi State University (TSU) and Ilia University have centers and programs that play an enormous part in the integration of minority students, both academic and social. Both students and lecturers discussed the positive effects of these programs and indicated

that not only these universities have such programs. Students at the Tbilisi State Medical University and Georgian Technical University do not have the opportunity to participate in these types of programs, and they spoke about the positive influences they have in different universities, and what they are failing to receive:

If we had a tutor, then it would be a junior or senior student, and we would have more information on learning. Also, when we come to the city, we knew nothing about it, we could've used help then. We know about the tutor programs in different universities"... "We didn't have extracurricular activities as there is no amount for that.

Problems with minority students' active participation in student activities

Minority students participate actively in special integrative programs. One of the students stated, *"I am actively involved in PITA, it's very interesting,"*; however, minority students still hesitate actively to involve in student's councils' activities, as they say, they are afraid that they will not be accepted because of their nationality. One participant reported, *"The students' council functions at our university. I went there once, but I was struggling to communicate, and then I couldn't leave because it was very interesting, but I was afraid to involve because of my knowledge of Georgian language. I have never gone there since"* Because unpleasant experiences such as these occur, it is crucially important to work with dominant cultural group students to increase their cultural sensitivity and acceptance of minority groups.

7.3. Research on the Problems that Ethnic Minorities in Georgian HEI Face

Largely, the problems and challenges at the BA level have been covered in this chapter and were discussed in previous chapters as well, but the study revealed certain important aspects that require more detailed analysis and are presented in this section. The problems undergraduate students face can be classified further as follows: 1) The learning format at the undergraduate level, the stress it causes, and the adaptation process that the students have to undergo; 2) the problems accompanied with specific BA programs that are associated with academic and language issues, and 3) the problems related to the choice of a specific BA program and the particular issues that affect ethnic minorities.

The learning format at the undergraduate level, the stress it causes, and the adaptation process that the students have to undergo

This problem includes: 1) Change in the interaction format, which is the transition from the individual learning format to the lecture format, in which many students study at the same time and pace. This eliminates the opportunity for the students to discuss with the lecturer the problems they are having. On a positive note, the lecture is set up so that ethnic minorities can get the help they need alone with the lecturer. Further, many university practices were revealed, in which after-class programs were created to help the One-year Georgian Language Program

graduates with language barriers overcome their challenges and understand the topics better. However, students still mentioned the need to work hard at home to achieve success. Professors also mentioned that while teaching, they focus not only on the specific subject they are teaching, but also the important life skills in the framework of the bachelor's programs: *"If the students [are]n't able to pass or finish the course, they can take it again during the summer as an extra semester, so that they don't lose an entire year"*; 2) the amount of work, which differs depending on the work that precedes it, and therefore, is difficult for the Georgian Language Program graduates to become familiar with, and later analyze and work on it. *"Before, we were used to doing work one page a time, here it's like 15 pages a day and suddenly you're shocked. The amount of work increased."* It should be mentioned that universities offer students different resources to still do their work successfully, even when they have language problems. Sometimes students decide not to use these, simply cope with them on their own, and overcome their challenges with hard work, although these types of problems are found primarily in the first stages of the undergraduate program. There are cases in which ethnic minority students overcome all of their problems with their hard work and dedication, and often do even better than their Georgian counterparts. Because of this, many students on scholarships talk about the ethnic minority students who receive grants and have improved their learning by pure hard work.

The lack of academic preparation, which often impedes the learning process and makes the challenge of analyzing the lecture properly even more difficult

Not knowing the language well enough makes it difficult for the students to ask questions when they need help with an unfamiliar concept. Further, the students' language problems are related not only to Georgian, but can be associated with not knowing a different language fluently. On the other hand, the heads of the bachelor's programs talked about the preparation for, and transition from, the One-year Georgian Language Program to the bachelor's program.

When they move on to the undergraduate level, they are a lot more prepared. They are used to the environment and understand the requirements, the challenges, and the teaching methods. They understand the university life a lot better than their Georgian classmates, so adaption to the bachelor's program is a lot easier for them.

The academic environment can also differ depending on where the university is located. In areas with compact settlements of ethnic minorities, ethnic minority students seem to be more comfortable at the university, as they are accepted better and do not have to cope as much with discrimination. Bachelor's students at these universities talk about positive examples in which their Georgian classmates helped them understand the concepts with which they had difficulty.

I think our department is very well developed, information and technology is available for everyone, and we don't have any problem of understanding what we need to do, but if we did, we always have classmates willing to help us.

The undergraduate students also mentioned that it is important to have groups with mixed ethnicities (e.g., Azerbaijanis and Armenian students studying together) to develop their

intercultural communication skills and overcome the academic and ethnic issues at the bachelor's level.

University representatives believe that ethnic minority students challenges' derive not only from their lack of language competences and social skills, but also from their less developed metacognitive skills, i.e., the skills needed to work independently, and their ability to learn to learn.

Ethnic minority students' inadequate knowledge of English was also mentioned as an important impediment to their learning in BA programs, as these students do not master English as well as their Georgian counterparts. Accordingly, they have less opportunity to use and access English language reading materials, which are used widely at Georgia's HEI.

This issue becomes even more difficult when students choose English Language Arts as their undergraduate program and at the same time, do not have basic skills. English Language Arts program is one of the top choices for One Year Georgian Language Program graduates for undergraduate studies. In this situation, universities recommend that students take the majority of the courses except for English learning courses. If this happens, students must study for an additional number of semesters, and instructional leaders say that graduates of the One-year Georgian Language Program find it impossible to reduce the language barrier. Nonetheless, supporting courses are arranged to make the learning process easier and more flexible for those students.

In the framework of research, many positive practices to help students with their problems and challenges were emphasized. In most cases, if the material was difficult to understand, professors were willing to help students understand it.

The professor could just come and say two words in Armenian as a gesture of solidarity and empathy. This is also some type of way to integrate. This shows how much respect he/she had for our culture. There are a lot of strategies used by professors at our universities for our integration and we really appreciate it.

Students also spoke about professors who use the Russian language to address the problem of students' inadequate knowledge of the Georgian language. Professors use all possible instruments to engage minority students in the process, and they do not emphasize ethnic minorities' background or linguistic or academic problems. As one of the graduates in the focus group discussions recalled: *"They(professors) do not emphasize student's different ethnicity, professors do not make it obvious that we are on lower level academically and linguistically."*

In this sense, it is very important for the One-year Georgian Language Program graduates to make realistic self-assessments. They spoke frankly about their academic weaknesses compared to their Georgian counterparts and acknowledged that some professors give them the same requirements and are trying to integrate them with mainstream students. They added that they try not to make minority students feel like outsiders: *"They do not pay attention, saying, that it does not matter and we have to learn the same way as Georgians do."* This approach was seen clearly in interviews with the HEI administrative staff and heads of the BA programs. They

noted that they have general rules and attitudes that are the same for every student and they do not distinguish them from others. First-year students in BA programs receive aid from the administration to meet program regulations. *"If you need anything, come to me, they tell us. However, when he/she explains, how we should go to an exam, where it was located and etc., everything was easily understandable and I did not have to go to professor separately."*

Students talked about Bachelor programs and changes made during the learning process that are based on research results:

During my studies, for example, things were different, many practices were changed and improved, several research studies were conducted and their results are used for improvement. I can recall when I was at the second year of my BA studies, the lady arrived and did research, and she had similar questions. Finally, recommendations for improvement were drafted and the administration always takes into consideration these recommendations and research results.

One of the problems mentioned in the focus group discussions was the completion of the BA program, as HEI require a BA thesis that is difficult for minority students to write. However, some universities manage this problem by having students begin working on their BA thesis at the beginning of their undergraduate studies. At the same time, some HEI have introduced the practice of a group thesis defence, in which students work in groups, and prepare and defend their thesis as a group. The increased opportunities to consult with advisors or academic staff is another important approach to solve the problem of writing and defending their BA thesis.

Some universities introduced the format of meeting with the Rector/President of University. This meeting is important, as it allows him/her to receive feedback from students constantly to identify existing problems and challenges and respond to them. There is another positive practice in which teachers with a minority ethnic background are involved in the teaching process in the One-year Georgian Language, as well as the BA programs. One more positive practice is related to the gradual introduction of scientific courses to these programs, in which the foundation of specific scientific fields is taught during the first semester of undergraduate studies. This introductory course allows students to use the first semester to develop their academic language competences, as an introductory course is not difficult to take and focuses on preparing students for further immersion in scientific fields.

Challenges Attributable to the Selection of a BA Program

One of the important challenges that students face is making an uninformed choice of undergraduate programs. Students choose a program according to what their parents would like them to study without giving them credible arguments, so the programs that students select are often not those they are actually motivated to study. HEI career growth and development centers have to organize orientation meetings with students to help them select BA programs based on well-informed decisions.

The second important challenge is gender biases in selecting BA programs. Professors indicated that there is a strict gender division in professions, such that women and men perceive that their

potential jobs are divided strictly by gender. Thus, women choose the faculty of humanities and are interested in the teaching profession, while male students tend to choose business schools, agriculture, and industrial programs more often. The study also found a pattern in which gender-neutral professions, such as law and economics, are less attractive for ethnic minority students. Teachers noted that professions' gender appropriateness is based on cultural beliefs and perceptions that are developed deeply in students. *"They (students) see themselves in the business sector, especially in the food businesses. They have family businesses and they see to widen it, which makes me very happy."*

It should be noted that students' choice of BA programs differs by universities; for example, TSUs students tend to choose a BA program in Law more often, while this pattern is not observed at SJSU. This result requires sufficient attention while planning the One-year Georgian Learning programs and preparing students for undergraduate studies.

In many cases, minority students' choice of undergraduate programs is based strongly on the consideration of employment opportunities. One of the professors reported:

They (Armenian students) conduct small research before choosing the program, they are asking questions, they are analyzing the opportunities of employment, they are asking if Georgians allow them to take those positions related to the program of study.

This quote indicates that minorities still consider themselves unequal to Georgians, and it is important to know why they make this assumption. It may be based on ethnic background, as well as a critical self-assessment of skills and knowledge that minorities possess compared to their Georgian counterparts' skills and competences. For example, Armenian and Azerbaijani students' themselves acknowledged their lower competences, knowledge, and skills.

The students change their choice of BA program only if they are unable to study in the program they selected because of language or academic difficulties, and they may do so even at the beginning of the One-year Georgian Language Program. As one of the professors noted: *"Students know their BA program at the beginning of the One-year Georgian Language Program...They have an orientation meeting with heads of BA programs and they are able to make their choice."*

Chapter 8. The Effectiveness of the Quota System in the Context of Graduates' Empowerment and Integration

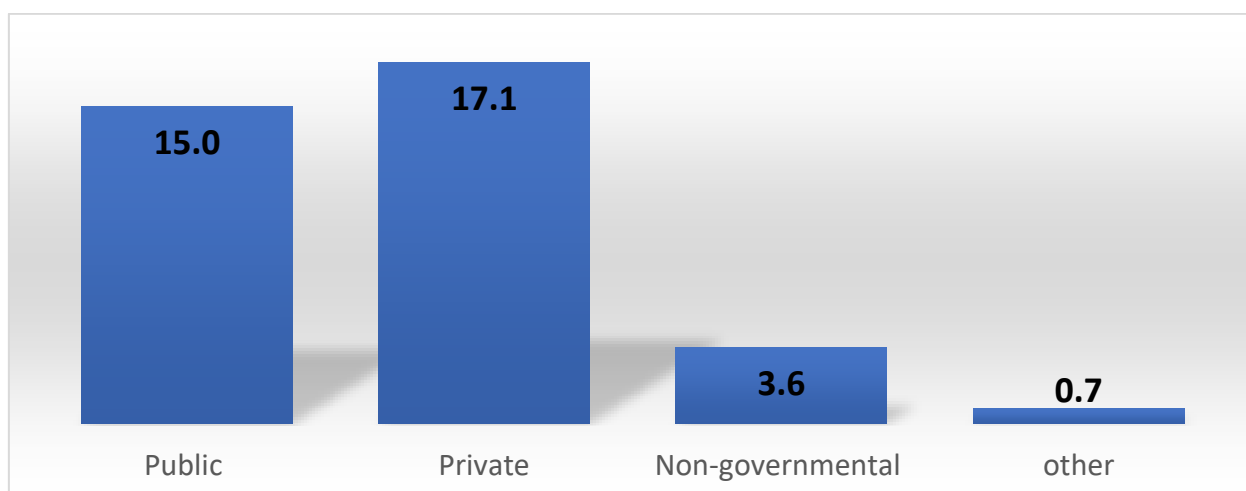
The Centre for Civil Integration and Inter-Ethnic Relations conducted a quantitative survey of ethnic minority HEI graduates in 2019 on the employment opportunities and requirements of the labour market. The research revealed certain important patterns that were crucially important to study further and thus, a qualitative portion of the study was conducted in 2020.

One of the goals of the study was to identify the frequency with which students enrolled through the quota system continued their studies at the Master's level. Of 140 participants, 36 (25.7%) responded positively to the question, while of 36 participants, 8 reported that they changed their field of study, and 28 noted that they chose the same field of study at the Master's level that they had as undergraduates. Those who changed their field of specialization indicated two main reasons for doing so: (1) The new program was associated more with the requirements of the labour market, and (2) their professional and educational life motivated their new interests.

The study's primary purpose was to identify the employment rate of graduates of the 1+4 program. Of 140 participants, 96 (68.6%) reported that they were employed currently. Further, 31 of those noted that they were employed when they were undergraduate students. The job experiences of the students employed ranged from 1 month to 5 years. The study found that 53.1% of the graduates employed worked in their field, while nearly half were unable to find jobs in their field.

The study analyzed the distribution of employed graduates by sector. 24 (17.1%) employed in their field of specialization worked in the private sector and 21 (15%) in the public sector; 5 were employed in the non-governmental sector and 1 was self-employed.

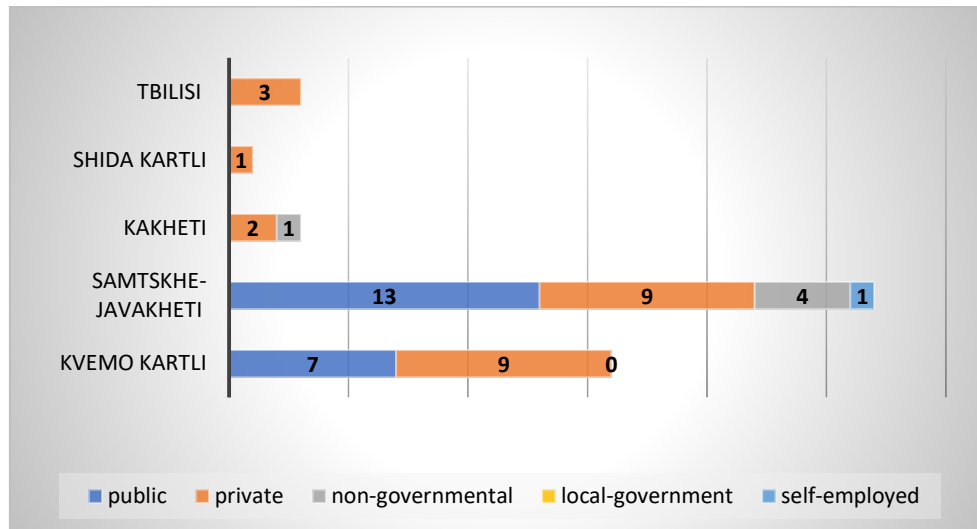
Figure 25. The distribution of employed graduates by sector



The regional distribution of those employed was also interesting. Of 50 employed in their field of specialization, 27 were employed in Samtskhe-Javakheti, 16 in Kvemo Kartli, 3 each in Kakheti

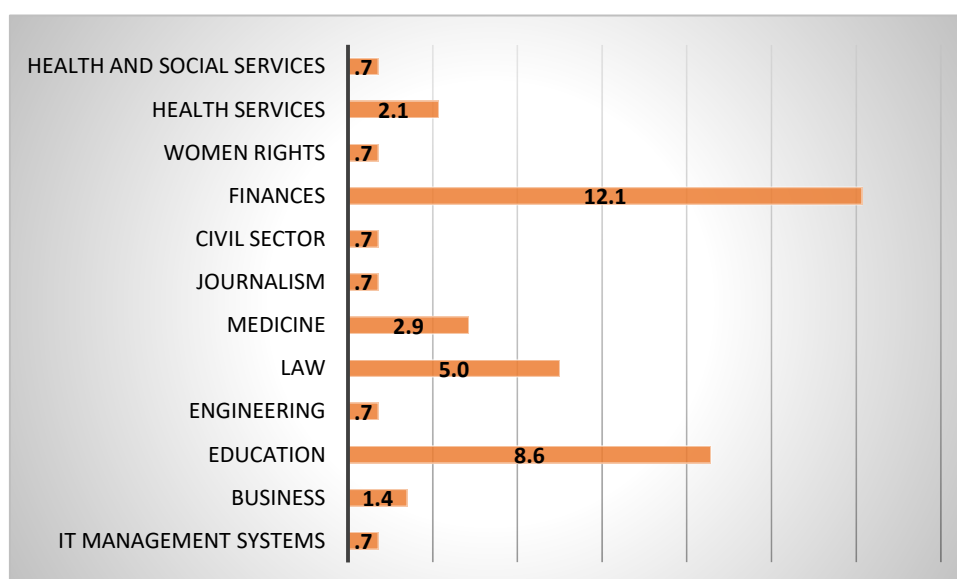
and Tbilisi, and 1 in the Shida Kartli region. 13 were employed in the public sector in Samtske-Javakheti, while 9 were employed in the private sector. Only 7 in Kvemo Kartli were employed in the public sector and 9 in the private. The detailed sectoral distribution by regions is presented in the figure below.

Figure 26. The distribution of graduates in public and private sectors by regions of Georgia



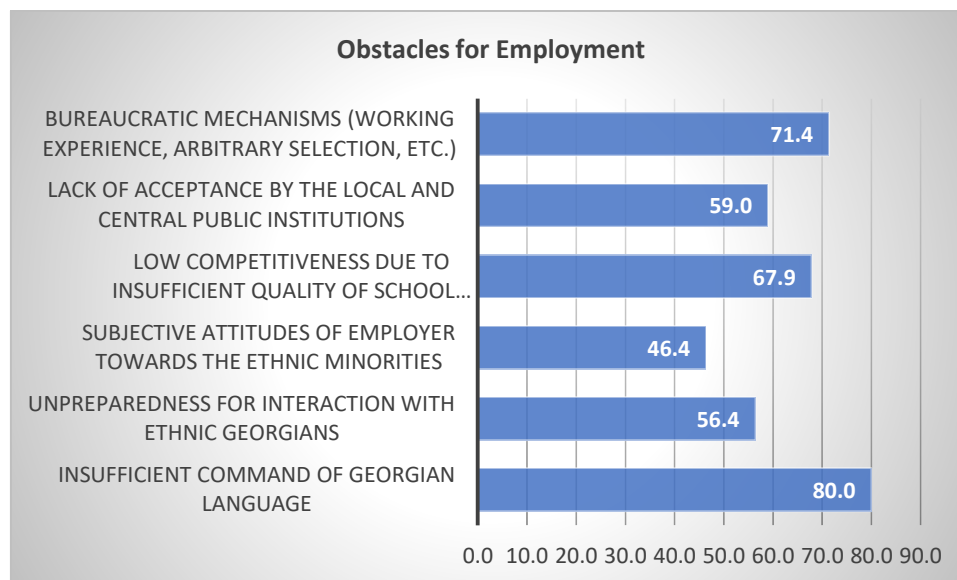
It was interesting to analyze the graduates' employment by field. 12% were employed in their field and worked in the financial sector. The second field was educational, which comprised 8% of the graduates employed. The high number of those employed in education is interesting. Only one survey participant studied teacher education in the educational sciences undergraduate program. This indicates that most of the graduates employed in the educational sector did not have the equivalent education and degree. The MoES Teacher Professional Development Centre has a special program through which graduates are employed. This fact underscores the importance of specially state-designed programs for ethnic minority students' employment. The figure below presents the ethnic minority graduates' employment in the economic sector by field.

Figure 27. The employment of ethnic minority graduates by field of the economic sector



The survey participants were asked to indicate the principal obstacles in obtaining a job in the Georgian labour market and were asked to list and mark those obstacles to employment that are specific to ethnic minorities.

Figure 28. Obstacles for Employment



The figure above shows those obstacles clearly. Their lack of knowledge of the State language was perceived as one of the most obvious impediments to employment even after they completed their undergraduate studies. 71.4% of the survey participants agreed that the complex bureaucratic mechanisms and the work experience requirement were impediments to employment. Ethnic minority graduates also perceived that their low level of general education, as well as employers' discrimination based on ethnic background, were important barriers. A considerable percentage (more than 60%) agreed that the local authorities' refusal to accept graduates was a major barrier.

It was important to have greater insight into the barriers mentioned above. Accordingly, focus group discussions were conducted with HEI graduates, one in Akhaltsikhe, and the second online using the zoom platform. The employment opportunities and the following barriers were discussed in the focus groups: (1) Lack of competences in the State language; (2) level of integration in Georgian society; (3) ethnic discrimination on the part of employers during the selection process; (4) low level of general education; (5) local authorities' refusal to accept graduates and nepotism in local governmental structures; (6) the complex bureaucratic mechanisms and work experience requirements, and (7) the potential to launch independent economic activity and the factors that hinder minorities' engagement in economic life.

The participants in the focus group discussions were less concerned about the problem of sufficient knowledge of the Georgian language as a barrier to employment. As they explained, their target for employment is the districts in which minorities have compact settlements.

Accordingly, in these specific districts, their language competencies are quite high compared to those of their competitors. Because they do not compete with Georgians, in this specific case, their lack of language competences in Georgian does not play an important impeding role. However, graduates spoke about the persistent problem of their inadequate knowledge of the Georgian language, but in the context of implementing their duties and responsibilities when employed. As one of the participants noted:

You know the language, you can understand it, but there are occasions at work, you get a document with the terminology, with an explanatory note, and you see that you are not able to comprehend it. You have to learn this professional language and you have to start learning this language.

This quote indicates clearly that students do not acquire sufficient academic and professional language at the university level. This appears to be a serious challenge for Georgian HEI. Communicative language skills are not sufficient for professional careers, and hence, a greater focus should be given to academic and professional language development.

The focus group participants also placed less emphasis on their low level of integration in Georgian society; however, this derives from the low level of integration of minorities itself. As noted already, the target for 1+4 program graduates' employment is the districts where minorities have compact settlements. They do not consider themselves competitive in Georgian in the public or private sectors in the capital or in other regions of Georgia. Accordingly, they perceive that their low level of integration is not a barrier to their employment there, as the possibility of such employment is not considered at all. The same applies to employers' discrimination against employees based on their ethnic identities, as in both regions of compact settlements, the employers have the same ethnic identity. One reported that ethnic background has a positive effect on their employment because they are able to speak their native language and communicate with local communities in minority languages. This pattern was observed in the Kvemo Kartli region, where the representation of ethnic minorities in local governmental and municipal structures is lower. However, the situation differs in the Samtskhe-Javakheti region, where the majority of public servants are ethnic minorities in their compact settlements; nonetheless, a different problem is obvious in this region. The study participants indicated that knowledge of the State language is poor in municipal structures and they are not ready to attract the younger generation with knowledge of the State as well as minority languages in public services.

The participants in the focus groups discussed often the fact that the complex bureaucratic mechanisms and work experience requirements are challenges to their employment. The requirement of work experience is a barrier to employment that is difficult to overcome. One of the participants stated, *"One year of work experience is asked by everyone, mostly even more*

experience is required." The internship they acquire at their university is simply a formality in most cases and does not count as work experience. Accordingly, graduates of HEI in Georgia typically have no work experience when they graduate, and it is nearly impossible to find employment in their field without it. It is worth mentioning that special, state-funded programs have positive effects in this respect. Focus group discussion participants made positive comments about such programs. *"I was an intern in the framework of the Internship Program of the Ministry of Reconciliation and Civil Equality. I had an internship at ombudsman's office and I got the job after the internship."* The participants also emphasized HEI' role in connecting graduates with potential employers. *"University connected me to the employer"... "University informed be about the vacancy and recommended my candidacy."* These are positive examples of university practices that can be used for future planning. HEI can take the following important steps in the future to institutionalize those practices: (1) Enrich and expand the Internship Programs, particularly in public service; (2) enhance partnerships between HEI and potential employers to support graduates in the process of employment, and (3) institute an initiative that is used widely in European and American HEI, employment on campus. Graduates suggested developing such programs so they can acquire formal work experience as well as important job skills while undergraduates.

The issue of local authorities' refusal to accept graduates and nepotism in local governmental structures was also discussed in the focus groups. Participants declined to discuss the topic in depth because of personal considerations. One of the participants explained, *"We do not like to speak about this issue for specific reasons;"* however, participants talked about public schools as a good illustration of the reality in public service at the local level. One indicated:

You can [use the] example of public schools, you know what's going on there...who are employed? School principals employ their relatives, who cares about diplomas or knowledge and skills, you need just to be a relative of the school principal.

The participants also avoided giving specific examples of nepotism in local municipal structures, but gave the example of schools to illustrate the existing local reality. It is clear that acceptance of new, well-prepared graduates is not high in a society managed through nepotism.

The issue of the potential to launch independent economic activity and the factors that hinder minorities' engagement in economic life was the last topic discussed in the focus groups. The participants identified two obstacles in this respect: (1) Initial funding of business and entrepreneurial projects, and (2) the knowledge and experience required to manage business projects. The participants noted specific ideas and initiatives that are important for economic and community development. *"Agrarian tourism will work in my district. I have a business plan how to develop it. This sector is interesting not only for foreigners but also for citizens of Georgia living in urban areas."* Graduates' employment in the public and private sectors is important; however,

it is even more crucial to create the potential for graduates to engage in their own entrepreneurial endeavors and facilitate the process of community development and minority communities' economic integration. Special programs can also be designed to achieve these goals.

Chapter 9. Recommendations for Methods to Improve Policy

To address the issues identified in the research, it is very important to make certain changes in planning an affirmative action policy as well as in providing legislation, as these changes will also increase undergraduate programs' effectiveness. We propose the following recommendations that we believe will help continue the 2010 reform more effectively with the greatest achievements.

9.1. Recommendations for MoES

Funding

- Include ethnic minority students in the higher education state funding program and provide its benefits to all students enrolled in Georgia's HEI through the quota system; distribute state funding to students enrolled on the basis of the quota system in proportion to the quotas established by legislation (5% of funded spots overall for Armenian students, 5% for Azeri, 1% for Abkhazians, and 1% for Ossetians).
- Elaborate the funding system and increase the funding of Azerbaijani students enrolled through the quota system in Georgia's HEI proportionally
- Establish a stipends fund for students enrolled through the quota system to cover living costs as needed. Such a fund can be established in partnership with local governments of compact settlements of ethnic minorities

Reform the admissions system

- Consider the interests of those ethnic groups within an affirmative action program who have not been part of that action until now and correspondingly, face discrimination at this stage; identify a certain quota for Russian schools or Russian sector students. In addition, to ensure justice and avoid migration between schools with the motivation to obtain benefits, additional control mechanisms should be introduced to ensure the right to use privileges under affirmative action. Only those students who study at a Russian school or in the Russian sector for at least the past five years should be authorized to use affirmative action privileges. Russian-speaking entrants' quota could be 1% or less of the number of spots allocated overall. This change will have a positive effect in several ways: (1) It will help attract Armenian and Azeri entrants with a Russian education to the Georgian higher education system and will place them on an equal footing as their Armenian and Azerbaijani peers; (2) it will support the civic integration of ethnic groups residing in dispersed settlements and will place them in an equivalent position with entrants from compact settlements; (3) it could also have the positive effect of attracting Abkhazian and Ossetian entrants into Georgian Universities

- Revise the quota system admission regulations now that the higher education admissions system was changed in 2019, and a general skills exam is not mandatory for admission. This research showed that students who do not speak Georgian at the beginning of the program cannot overcome the language issues within the one-year program; moreover, they face language issues as undergraduates because they do not have sufficient communication skills at the end of the program, and also have significant issues in academic language competences. Accordingly, it is reasonable to set a second exam in the Georgian language. Funding, as well as placement, will be undertaken based on the general skills exam; however, the Georgian language exam will be mandatory and thus, school graduates will have greater language competences. This will increase their motivation to learn the language as well as enable universities to plan the program based on students' language levels and needs
- If a state language exam is introduced, amendments will be made in the National Curriculum of Georgia and the subject of the Georgian Language Abitur will be introduced in the 12th grade.

Develop an instrument to assess language competence for higher education

- The MoES must set a policy to develop an instrument to assess Georgian language competences. The MoES itself or its structural unit, as well as an institute the university or an independent party, can undertake such an assessment. Developing a language competence assessment system and the instrument will be important not only with respect to affirmative action policy implementation, but will also help overcome issues in the labor market, in the process of granting citizenship, and in public service
- The Georgian language knowledge certification system must be legally functional, and the certificate's validity must be evaluated
- In addition to developing the assessment system and instrument to measure language competences, there should be legal mechanisms for those students who meet the language knowledge criteria defined; these students should receive permission to continue their undergraduate studies any time after they pass an exam, so that they will not waste a year in the program and money will also not be spent to train such students within the one-year program

9.2. Recommendations for Georgia's HEI

- HEI must become involved actively in the recruitment process, as well as in pre-meetings with 10th and 11th-grade pupils, their parents, school administrators, and teachers to inform them about the One-year Georgian Language Program, as well as undergraduate programs that the entrants will have to select after they graduate from the program

- HEI should replicate the best practices to recruit university entrants and involve current students and graduates in the process of recruitment
- School principals and teachers must encourage students to study in Georgia's HEI. Awareness-raising campaigns and providing school teachers and principals with proper information will be good strategies to raise their awareness of the quota system
- Specific HEI should work with specific groups. For example, Ilia State University can work with the Armenian population. Further, regional HEI also have a large number of places allocated and there is an opportunity to attract entrants at these allocated places
- Awareness-raising campaigns must be conducted with minority populations to inform them of Georgian higher education's quality
- A special orientation program before the One-year Georgian Language Program commences should be prepared that will help ethnic minority groups obtain a better understanding of the university structure, the function of these structural units, and their scope of work. Georgian student groups should organize such orientation meetings by developing promotional mechanisms and conditions for them. This will also help establish and develop relationships between students of different ethnicities. This practice has been introduced already in some of Georgia's HEI and can be replicated easily
- Plan and develop good working relationships with the city municipality structures, which will enable ethnic minority students who come from rural settlements or regions to obtain useful information about existing services in a new city, including transportation and its schedules and social and cultural life. Such cooperation would not only help orient the students, but also increase their integration and active involvement in public life
- Help students cope with logistic issues in the beginning of the academic year. Websites designed already for this purpose are popular and used actively, i.e., www.studentnet.ge
- Regulate database and bureaucracy issues with the university administration during the transitional period between the One-year Georgian Language Program and undergraduate studies, including regulating legal issues with respect to these students' status as well as the general bureaucracy related to it
- Establish a Students' Academic Support Center to help these students during the One-year Georgian Language Program and their undergraduate studies
- Develop certain guidelines for the administration and professors and organize workshops on intercultural communication
- Organize intercultural activities on the university level and involve Georgian students actively to improve their intercultural understanding and abilities
- Support interaction between Georgian students and those who have been enrolled based on the quota system by organizing extracurricular activities and projects and

expanding syllabi further with intercultural activities. Expand the experience of the TSU and Iliuni Youth Centres to Tbilisi State Medical University and Georgian Technical University

- Support interactions between Armenian and Azerbaijani students enrolled on the basis of the quota system and promote activities between them. Expand the experience of the TSU and Iliuni Youth Centres to Tbilisi State Medical University and the Georgian Technical University
- Organize extracurricular activities for students enrolled on the basis of the quota system targeted at their social integration
- Popularize the culture of the students enrolled on the basis of the quota system among Georgian peers, professors, and administration, and highlight their role and importance in the establishment of the Georgian state and Georgian culture; use existing best practices at TSU and Iliuni to do so. Expand the experience of the TSU and Iliuni Youth Centres to Tbilisi State Medical University and the Georgian Technical University
- Establish certain approaches that will ensure integration of undergraduate students enrolled on the basis of the quota system into university life and prevent them from facing problems in the process of developing academic and social skills and competences because of language limitations. Share and exchange experiences between universities in the process (simplify teaching materials, consider language issues in the grading system, and provide the opportunity to respond in a different language, extend the exam time because of the need for more time attributable to language limitations, etc.)
- Organize public awareness activities about the labour market requirements and the programs' responses to these requirements
- Organize information meetings for students enrolled on the basis of the quota system before they select their undergraduate program; provide them with an opportunity to attend undergraduate lectures and develop mechanisms that support planning their student and career lives (tutors, advisors, student and academic career planning support center, etc.).

Tertiary Education

- Conduct Awareness Raising Campaigns for students about Labor market requirements
- Create an institutional mechanism for academic support for students in the 1+4 program
- Conduct formal and informal activities on professional development and career planning and development
- Engage students of the 1+4 program in the activities of Tbilisi State University's "Knowledge Development and Innovation Centre"

- Establish business incubators at the university level and promote engagement on the part of students in the 1+4 program
- Improve the component of internships in undergraduate study programs
- Develop campus employment programs and create opportunities for students to develop work-related skills
- Improve collaboration with students' potential employers. Play the role of mediator and communicator between students and employers

9.3. Recommendations for Planning and implementing the One-year Georgian Language Program

- Focus on developing important academic and social skills while teaching the language. Content and language integrated learning is an important approach in this respect and most universities have incorporated the new course "Diversity and Tolerance" in their programs. This approach requires further development and it is crucially important to increase the number of elective courses
- Introduce assessment mechanisms for A and B modules to develop alternative modules for second-semester students who are unable to fill the gap in their language competences in the first semester of the program
- Plan a program that considers that students' academic language skills require further development because undergraduate students need these competences as well as the communication language skills that the majority of the existing one-year programs focus on developing.
- Develop additional language courses once students have developed communication language skills by increasing the students' contact hours or organizing summer-winter courses.
- Develop summer courses when students have an idea which undergraduate program they will select, as organizing academic language courses for the program desired will prepare them more effectively for their undergraduate program
- HEI must define the mandatory level of language knowledge to study on the undergraduate level; accordingly, an academic language knowledge level should become an essential component in the process of identifying the students' language competences, which will then become a precondition for them to continue undergraduate studies
- Organize teacher professional development programs and encourage/require teachers to participate in them
- Organize teacher professional development programs that include intercultural communication to improve their capacity to do so
- Develop mechanisms for teachers within the university and among universities to cooperate effectively

- Develop the following approaches to teachers' professional development: (1) mentorship; (2) attendance and positive feedback; (3) sample lessons and lectures, and (4) workshops
- Involve teachers who belong to the students' ethnic group in the program to create an adequate cultural environment for the students, as these professors will be a role model for the students to follow
- Conduct teacher training on strategies to develop students higher-level thinking and metacognition abilities.

9.4. Recommendations for economic development and employment

- Establish a Business Fund to finance youth business projects and facilitate the development of the private economic sector as well as 1+4 program graduates' active economic participation
- Conduct awareness-raising campaigns on the "Quota System" and Georgian Language Program, as well as on the labor market requirements and requirements of regulated professions (e.g., Teachers, Doctors, Lawyers)
- Conduct awareness-raising campaigns for potential employers from the private and public sectors on practices of discrimination during the recruitment process and ways to prevent them.

Public service

- Develop a language assessment tool to assess candidates' level of language competences based on the instrument recognized officially
- Abolish barriers for candidates created artificially, such as prior work experience in the lowest positions in public service
- Develop procedures to form selection committees in public service and eliminate the existing practice in which these commissions select pre-determined candidates
- Create paid and unpaid internship programs for 1+4 program graduates. Further, create regulations to increase internships to work experience.

Schools and the general education system

- Develop regulations for those students who have participated in state programs and teach in schools currently to obtain the status of school teachers
- Develop monitoring systems for the teacher recruitment process at schools
- Adopt officially the status of assistant teachers and introduce regulations that allow them to advance to teacher positions without complex bureaucratic procedures
- Establish a system to monitor assistant teachers and their school-based activities to allow the program to analyze the existing good practices and identify the most effective and promising assistant teachers

- Introduce consistent and reasonable procedures and system-level mechanisms in teacher professional development to smooth the transition from assistant teacher to teacher to ensure implementation and adherence to these procedures and regulations.

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