

EVALUATION OF SCHOOL EDUCATION INEFFICIENCY AND INEFFECTIVENESS

POLICY PAPER SUMMARY



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Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum Georgian National Platform is an association of local and international non-commercial legal entities registered in Georgia, aiming to promote and implement the goals set by the Joint Declarations of the Prague, Warsaw and Vilnius Eastern Partnership Summits and the EU-Georgia Association Agreement of European Neighborhood Policy and other joint events.

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Summary

The aim of the paper is to evaluate the reasons for the inefficiency and ineffectiveness of Georgia's school education system and to issue recommendations for future policy formulation. It analyzes the reasons for unemployment caused by the education system's errors -its causes and solutions. It moreover analyzes the reasons and results of these core problems in the school education system and proposes recommendations for future policy formulation.

The main questions the policy document answers are: 1. What is the reason for the inefficiency of the school education system, which result in a group of jobseekers unfit for the market; 2. What is the main problem of the school education sector in Georgia.

The research was conducted using a mixed methodology. For its field research, the experimentation interview method was employed, in conjunction with observation and focus groups; while for the desk-review, various researches were reviewed, including literature and electronic resources. For material and data analysis three methods were applied: content, contemporary and cause and effect analysis. The research is based on empirical data and the basis of all analysis is the didactical approach, a combination of the teaching processes: its essence, logic and principles.

At the initial phase of the research, problems were discovered based on working with existing focus groups, while expert interviews allowed to analyze these problems and establish the chain of causes and effected.

The issue has numerous angles and it is impossible to completely cover it within one policy document. Therefore, the accent is placed on only the most acute issue discovered in the cause and effect analysis.

The following core problems were identified in Georgia's current education system:

- School education standards have significant deficiencies.
- The education level of pupils and their academic achievement decreases as their age increases i.e. these two parameters are reversed disproportional to each other.
- The level of civic education of pupils is extremely low.
- School management does not correspond to the principles of democratic management and therefore, the schools are still managed in a Soviet management style.

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- School textbooks are not prepared at adequate levels.
 - Georgian public schools are composed of non-qualified teachers.
 - Teachers lead classes only for those pupils who have high academic achievement levels and do not care for other pupils.
 - General knowledge, skills and abilities of Georgian pupils significantly trails behind the analogous indicators of their peers in other countries.

To counter these issues, the following alternative measures are proposed:

- Increase the quality of public school decentralization
- Decentralize continuous teacher professional education process. This should not be the exclusive of the Teachers' House, as its programs does not transcend BA programs standards of various higher educational institutions of Georgia. Furthermore, these programs are extremely similar to each other - both structurally, and content wise - however they do carry different names. They do not provide tangible results despite the fact that significant amount of state funding is spent on their implementation
- Launch a career scheme for teacher career; professional development and advancement must be altered. It must become oriented towards students. In the evaluation scheme, a teacher is not evaluated based on student achievements and/or for projects or programmatic activities carried out in the school. Clearly, the student skills in such an environment cannot be compatible with the modern employment market requirements.
- Implement results-oriented educational programs by school, which will include MA level Business Administration educational materials and disciplines – e.g. managerial economics and managerial accounting. Existing school directors must be trained in these skills as well.
- Establish a civic monitoring system to adequately improve the classroom process. Currently, CSOs are unable to conduct the monitoring, since the Education Ministry does not support the inclusion of NGOs, claiming that this exclusion helps maintain a safe environment in the schools. To activate this system, mutual effort is required – both from the NGOs and from the Education and Science Ministry.

Expected results:

- The current administrative-management style in schools will be substantially altered with a democratic management style; more time will be dedicated to developing skills of the students to secure employment.
- The established external monitoring system of classroom processes and the director - who has necessary business qualification - ensures teachers are more invested in the classroom process, hold classes with not only the pupils of high academic achievement in mind, but the entire group, which will reduce youth unemployment in the medium and long-term perspectives. Additionally, they will hold higher democratic and civic values.

The proposed recommendations could save the government financial resources, which could in turn be reinvested in improving and enforcing educational policies. Moreover, a civic monitoring system will allow for NGOs and parents to manage the classroom process with their own funds (i.e. with zero funding from the State). Inclusion of local NGOs in the education boards would be a welcome step as well.

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