

Youth Partnership

Partnership between the European Commission
and the Council of Europe in the field of Youth



CONTRIBUTION OF NON-PROGRAMME COUNTRIES TO EU YOUTH WIKI

GEORGIA CHAPTER II: VOLUNTARY ACTIVITIES

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Published: September 2018

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2.1. General context

Historical and cultural development

The culture and practice of volunteering in Georgia, including youth volunteering, has experienced significant shifts over the last three decades, mostly in line with the general changes in social and political reforms. In the last 30 years, Georgia experienced at least five different stages of development, including:

- close control of all non-state activities under Soviet rule (until 1991);
- chaos and breakdown of norms and institutions in the aftermath of Soviet collapse and years of civil war (1991-1995); followed by
- relative liberalisation during the Shevardnadze era (1995-2003); superseded by
- closer state control of social groups and organisations following the Rose Revolution led by Mikheil Saakashvili (2003-2012); until
- another wave of liberalisation after the electoral defeat of post-Rose Revolution forces (2012-2013).

The development of volunteering in Georgia followed the changes in civil society and socio-economic development in general – the country seems to have developed in a non-linear fashion escaping Fukuyama's "end of history" prediction so easily applied to other post-communist societies.¹ The current state of volunteer policy development is heavily influenced by at least three historical factors: Soviet legacy, socio-economic decline and importance of community ties and rapid opening to the West and influence of foreign organisations and groups.²

In Soviet Georgia, volunteering was part of communist ideology but it was voluntary only in name as various social and professional groups (e.g. pupils, students, factory workers, farmers) were coerced by the state to give up their time and resources for the sake of state-run projects and programmes including clean-ups, farming programmes and industrial development of the Union.³ Those practices limited citizen liberties and often violated human rights, thus having nothing to do with volunteering as it is understood today within the Council of Europe and EU member states.

One of the common forms of Soviet "forced volunteering" was the so-called *subbotnik* in Russian (or *shabatoba* in Georgian) – organised cleaning of large public spaces, usually carried out on Saturdays. A number of recent studies argue that currently observed negative attitudes towards volunteering in some of the post-socialist societies are a consequence of *shabatoba* and similar experiences. According to recent studies young Georgians find it difficult to understand how such forced work could have been enjoyable.⁴ The results of a 2014 survey show that representatives of different generations report quite similar attitudes towards potential forced "volunteering" in Georgia. The majority of Georgians of all age groups (62%) agree with the statement that "Georgia would be better off today, if the government forced us to volunteer" although a slightly smaller share of young people (18-35 years old) agree with it compared with those aged 36 and older.⁵ Another recent study has shown that although Georgian citizens recognise the benefits that volunteering can bring and they are open to state-supported volunteering programmes, they prefer to be involved in organised volunteering, rather than initiate volunteering activities themselves.⁶

1. Lutsevych O., *Civil Society in post-Soviet Space – Fighting for End of History*, <https://www.opendemocracy.net/openglobalrights/orysia-lutsevych/civil-society-in-post-soviet-space-fighting-for-end-of-history>, accessed 25 May 2018.

2. Ritvo R and Janezashvili N (2012), "Transforming NGOs in post-Soviet Georgia", *Journal of Enterprise Transformation*, Volume 2, Issue 4, pp. 272-82.

3. Subbotnik – Soviet Days of Service, <https://russianlife.com/stories/online-archive/subbotniks-soviet-days-of-service/>, accessed 28 May 2018.

4. 2014 Follow-up Report on Civic Engagement, Caucasus Research Resource Centres (CRRRC), available at: http://crrc.ge/uploads/tinymce/documents/Completed-projects/FINAL_GPAC_2014_Civic_Engagement_Report_04.08.2014_ENG.pdf, accessed 30 May 2018.

5. *Georgian society's attitudes towards forced "volunteering"* (2016), Caucasus Research Resource Centres (CRRRC) blogs, available at: <http://crrc-caucasus.blogspot.com/2016/01/georgian-societys-attitudes-towards.html>, accessed 6 June 2018.

6. *Volunteerism in Georgia: Survey Summary and Recommendations* (2012), Eurasia Partnership Foundation and Caucasus Research Resource Centres (CRRRC), available at:

Another factor conditioning the popularity of volunteering in Georgia is the general socio-economic situation in the country since the severe crisis of the 1990s affected by mass poverty, high unemployment and scarcity of well-paid work. According to research conducted by international organisations, Georgians largely prioritise paid work in the absence of basic resources and subsistence, and only consider volunteering once they have resources to spare.⁷

Last but not least, volunteering trends in Georgia are affected by the dominant conservative social structure and local traditions – family and kinship networks prevail over state structures and religious groups are well established as important identity and community denominators. The relevance of kinship is enabled by the fact that there is a strong internal group solidarity among family members, friends, neighbours and relatives often helping each other at the expense of their time, labour and finances. While Georgian citizens are ready to spend their time on friends, relatives, neighbours and family regularly on a volunteer basis, they are very cautious when it comes to people who are not members of their close networks and communities. On the other hand, church-based volunteering activities are well developed and organised – this is mainly the case with the Georgian Orthodox Church, Georgia's main religious organisation. Georgian citizens are contributing funds, collecting clothing and food for the church and assisting in its everyday activities (for example, cleaning churches or participating in construction work). This shows that volunteering in Georgia is closely linked to trust and belief.⁸

Main concepts

According to Georgian legislation, volunteering is defined as “a socially useful activity voluntarily and gratuitously performed by natural persons, using their knowledge and skills, under organised conditions”.⁹ A socially useful activity is an activity that involves the provision of assistance to a legal person in a non-profit activity. The 2015 Law on Volunteering regulates volunteer relations between the physical persons and institutions with different legal and organisational form.¹⁰ General volunteering is separated from labour relations (regulated by the Labour Code), charity activities (regulated by the Tax Code) and internships (regulated by the Statement of the Government of Georgia on Approval of State Programme on the Rules and Conditions of Internship in Public Bodies). According to the National Youth Policy (NYP) Document of Georgia, youth volunteering is defined as a socially useful activity which is carried out on the basis of the freely expressed will of a person to assist others and is not motivated by any financial or material benefit. Georgian government policy considers youth volunteering as one of the effective means of non-formal education which aims to raise civic awareness among the youth and develop skills and values of free-of-charge labour that is beneficial to the public. The policy of the Government of Georgia aims to promote volunteering among the youth, engage unemployed young people, spread volunteering at the international level and involve volunteers in areas such as sports, social welfare, culture, human rights and environmental protection, humanitarian aid, health care, poverty reduction and agriculture, among others.¹¹

http://crrc.ge/uploads/tinymce/documents/Completed-projects/Volunteerism_Report_ENG.pdf, accessed 9 June 2018.

7. *State Policy in the Field of Volunteering: Georgian Legislation and World Practice* (2011), Young Republicans Institute, available at: [http://www.osgf.ge/files/publications/2011/volunteerism_\(1\)a4_montaji.pdf](http://www.osgf.ge/files/publications/2011/volunteerism_(1)a4_montaji.pdf), accessed 1 June 2018.

8. *Volunteerism in Georgia: Survey Summary and Recommendations* (2012), Eurasia Partnership Foundation and Caucasus Research Resource Centres (CRRC), available at http://crrc.ge/uploads/tinymce/documents/Completed-projects/Volunteerism_Report_ENG.pdf, accessed 7 June 2018.

9. Law on Volunteering (2015), available at <https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/3132612>, accessed June 10, 2018.

10. Ibid.

11. National Youth Policy Document of Georgia (2014), Ministry of Sport and Youth of Georgia, available at http://msy.gov.ge/index.php?sec_id=210&lang_id=GEO, accessed 8 August 2017.

2.2. Administration and governance of youth volunteering

Structure of governance and main actors involved

According to the NYP, all state institutions and government agencies are responsible for the implementation of the state youth policy according to their competence and all Georgian state programmes and strategies concerning youth have to be in line with strategic directions and the principles of national youth policy.

The Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs (MYS) of Georgia was principally responsible for the co-ordination of the National Youth Policy in addition to meeting the commitments undertaken within the National Youth Policy and the Action Plan.

Since the abolition of the MYS in October 2017, the youth policy portfolio was taken over by the Ministry of Education and Science, which now includes a Youth Policy Management Department.¹²

The NYP determines the following decision-making and co-ordination mechanisms within the process of youth policy implementation.

- The Interagency Co-ordinating Council (ICC) is the main body for the development of the Youth Policy. It shall meet at least once every six months and its activities will be co-ordinated by the MSY.
- The Government of Georgia shall hold a dialogue with local authorities in order to develop a national/local permanent mechanism which ensures the involvement of local authorities in the development of the Youth Policy.
- The Government of Georgia recognises that young people have a right to be involved in the decision-making process that affects them. The Government of Georgia shall implement structured dialogue as a mechanism for ensuring youth participation in the Youth Policy.
- The Government of Georgia shall work out mechanisms to involve all the stakeholders in decision-making, co-ordination and implementation processes of the Youth Policy.
- The Government of Georgia shall commission research on youth issues in order to perform an annual performance evaluation of the priorities and directions defined in the Youth Policy.
- The Interagency Co-ordination Council (ICC) is responsible for the development, monitoring and evaluation of youth policy across different policy sectors with the MSY co-ordinating its activities. The ICC meets every six months. It is considered competent when 50% of the members are present and votes by simple majority.

Interagency Co-ordination Council – Members	
Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs of Georgia (now abolished)	Ministry of Correction of Georgia
Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia	Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia
Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Protection of Georgia	Ministry of Environment of Georgia
Ministry of Culture and Heritage Protection of Georgia (now the Ministry of Culture and Sports)	State Minister of the Diaspora Affairs of Georgia

12. Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia, <http://mes.gov.ge/content.php?id=9&lang=eng>, accessed 3 June 2018.

Ministry of Justice of Georgia	State Minister for Integration in European and Euroatlantic Structures of Georgia
Ministry for Regional Development and Infrastructure of Georgia	State Minister for Reintegration of Georgia
Minister of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia	
	Parliamentary Committee of Sports and Youth
Ministry of Finance of Georgia	Ombudsman Office of Georgia
Ministry of Internally Displaced People from Occupied Territories, Resettlement and Refugees of Georgia	UNICEF
	UNFPA
Ministry of Energetics of Georgia	
Ministry of Defence of Georgia	
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia	
Ministry of Agriculture of Georgia	

In addition, the council can invite observers (without voting rights) to its working meetings from among the following groups: experts, MPs, representatives of governmental entities of Georgia and other organisations, such as representatives of the European structures in Georgia.

The Interagency Co-ordination Council's objectives are to provide support for the implementation of the youth policy's strategic aims and objectives including monitoring and co-ordination of governmental bodies' actions; revise and improve the National Youth Policy documents including creation of recommendations for an improved legal framework; maintain close co-operation with the key stakeholders in the process of creation of long-term programmes; and identify needs at municipal (local) level in support of civil integration of young people with fewer opportunities.¹³

13. National Youth Policy Document of Georgia (2014), Ministry of Sport and Youth of Georgia, available at http://msy.gov.ge/index.php?sec_id=210&lang_id=GEO, accessed 8 August 2017.

Cross-sectoral co-operation

Georgia's National Youth Policy implementation is based on both cross-sectoral (co-operation between governmental, non-governmental and private sectors) and inter-agency (co-operation between central and local authorities) dialogue. Members of the Co-ordination Council are all members of the government (ministries), and according to the statute of the council the following agencies can participate in the meetings of the council: Committee of Sport and Youth Affairs of the Parliament of Georgia; Public Defender's Office of Georgia; UNICEF in Georgia; UNFPA in Georgia. The council meets at least quarterly. The council is co-ordinated by the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs of Georgia.

The main aims of the ICC are:

- promotion of implementation of main directions of youth policy;
- co-ordination of effective implementation of functions of different line ministries;
- monitoring of implementation of youth policy;
- periodic revision of the action plan;
- drafting recommendations for improvement of legislation in the field of youth;
- planning of relevant interventions;
- invitation to council meetings, and drafting the meeting agenda.

ICC's activities to date include:

- reviewing and adopting the National Youth Policy;
- reviewing and adopting the National Youth Policy Development Action Plan 2015-2020.¹⁴

2.3. National strategy on youth volunteering

Volunteering as a policy area

Volunteering is a very recent policy area in Georgia. Over the first two decades since independence, there were no legal steps towards promoting and developing volunteer activities in Georgia. Volunteering was considered a low-priority issue and remained largely unpopular among the wider public (see "Historical and cultural development" under 2.1.). In certain government circles, it wasn't considered necessary to encourage volunteering through laws and formal regulation.¹⁵ Civil society organisations were actively trying to introduce volunteer practice, but they were dealing with certain legal issues such as signing a labour agreement or paying for food or other expenses. Labour and tax codes were the main documents regulating issues relating to employment, salaries and taxes. The legislation did not in any way reflect the notion of "volunteer" or voluntary work.

One of the key impulses for policy development in the field of volunteering in Georgia emerged following the deadly Tbilisi flood of 13 June 2015. The flood destroyed part of Tbilisi and caused severe damage: 19 people were killed with hundreds more suffering from injuries. Tbilisi Zoo was flooded, killing and letting loose over 300 animals. Thousands of volunteers, mostly young people, across the country mobilised within hours of the flood to help the affected families, distribute supplies to flood victims and clean the streets and public spaces. The country's prime minister was thankful to the volunteers and expressed "Deepest gratitude to the people of Georgia for their unity and help in this difficult time". Volunteers worked constantly for seven days until the government announced that it was no longer safe to work for fear of spreading disease. Soon after the flood (on 23 June 2015) the Parliament of Georgia began discussing a draft law on volunteering which was introduced by the Civil Society Institute (CSI) in March 2014. The law was adopted in December

14. Ibid.

15. *State Policy in the Field of Volunteering: Georgian Legislation and World Practice* (2011), Young Republicans Institute, available at [http://www.osgf.ge/files/publications/2011/volunteerism_\(1\)a4_montaji.pdf](http://www.osgf.ge/files/publications/2011/volunteerism_(1)a4_montaji.pdf).

2015. The law provided a basic definition of volunteering activity and volunteers (see 2.1.) and regulated volunteer status outside the labour code.

Volunteering strategy

Georgia does not have a separate national strategy for youth volunteering. Youth volunteering is part of the National Youth Policy document (NYP).

Since the adoption of the NYP (first in 2012 and later in 2014), youth volunteering was part of it and was one of its thematic areas. The NYP includes the following thematic directions: participation, education, employment and mobility, health and special support and protection. Volunteering is one of eight thematic sections under the participation theme.

The NYP document defines volunteering as a socially useful activity which is carried out on the basis of the freely expressed will of a person to assist others and is not motivated by any financial or material benefit. According to the NYP, the Government of Georgia aims to develop the institution of volunteering and for this purpose has the following objectives:

1. Draw out a National Strategy for the Development of Volunteering and regional and local programmes integrated with it.
2. Prepare legislative amendments, if necessary, in order to provide for incentives and popularisation of volunteer work.
3. Facilitate the development of international volunteering.¹⁶

The Georgian Youth Policy Action Plan for 2015-2020 (adopted in 2015)¹⁷ serves as a main instrument for implementing the policy and encompasses specific actions in line with policy domains and directions. The Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs (now abolished, with policy briefs between the Ministry of Culture and Sport and the Ministry of Education and Science) and the Ministry of Justice (as well as its affiliated entity the Centre for Crime Prevention) are responsible for implementing the actions related to youth volunteering. These actions include:

- drafting a National Strategy on Volunteering;
- involvement of young people in volunteer activities;
- popularisation of volunteering among youth;
- establishment of volunteering centres;
- preparing draft legislation for regulating volunteering;
- creating a unified electronic database on national and international volunteering programmes and organisations working in this field;
- involvement of international volunteers in the programmes carried out by the Crime Prevention Centre;
- involvement of volunteers (both national and international) in the European Youth Summer Olympic Festival 2015.

As of May 2018, very few action plan commitments relevant to volunteering have been implemented. Most of those are the actions that had already been implemented or planned by the ministries as part of other programmes or activities. They include: involvement of young people in volunteer activities, popularisation of volunteering among youth, involvement of volunteers (both national and international) in the European Youth Summer Olympic Festival 2015 and involvement of international volunteers in the programmes carried out by the Crime Prevention Centre. All of the above activities have been implemented under the programmes implemented by the central state bodies like the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs (now the Ministry of Education and Science) and the Centre for Crime Prevention. No progress has been made so far on key issues including preparation of a National Strategy on Youth Volunteering, creation of a unified electronic database on national and international volunteering programmes and organisations working in this field, and establishment of volunteering centres.

16. Government of Georgia Decree No 553 (2014), available at The Legislative Herald of Georgia, <https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/2314717>, accessed 15 June 2018.

17. Government of Georgia Decree No 349 (2015), available at The Legislative Herald of Georgia, <https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/2766763>, accessed 15 June 2018.

2.4. Youth volunteering at national level

Since 2015 the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs (and from 2018 its successor, the Ministry of Education and Science) has implemented a national volunteering programme, “Volunteer of Georgia”, to support the implementation of the National Youth Policy and its action plan.¹⁸

The aim of the programme is to strengthen volunteering, to develop a unified network of volunteers across the regions of Georgia, to raise civil awareness among youth through volunteering, and to promote and popularise volunteering among youth across the country.

The programme’s main activity is a one-year volunteering programme for young people from across the country – since 2015, two young people have been selected annually from all non-capital regions of the country and since 2017 from the capital city as well. Volunteers are selected through an open competition with direct involvement of NGOs, which are partners in the programme’s implementation. Selected volunteers attend a five-day preparatory training and after successful completion they receive the status of “Volunteer of Georgia”. The volunteers implement their activities based on the specific needs of each municipality. These activities include establishment of volunteer clubs, environmental activities, helping other people, organising foreign language courses, promotion of a healthy lifestyle, sport activities, etc. Volunteers receive a small bursary from the ministry to implement their activities. After the programme is finished, a single “volunteer of the year” is selected. Between 2017 and 2018, 1 435 activities have been implemented, with 170 volunteer clubs created in the municipalities, and around 13 000 young people have participated in the different activities. The total number of primary beneficiaries of the programme (volunteers) is 404, and secondary beneficiaries around 4 000 local volunteers (through membership of volunteer clubs). A database of volunteers was created in 2016 to support the programme but it is currently down due to the reorganisation of the ministries.¹⁹ When the database was accessible (2016-2017) any young person interested in volunteering was able to register in the database and later to participate in different volunteering activities. Through the database volunteers have participated in the following activities:

- “Check-in Georgia” project in 2016;
- Tbilisi Silk Road Forum 2017;
- Junior Eurovision Song Contest 2017;
- UEFA European Under-19 Championship 2017, among others (the ministry does not hold consolidated records of all activities).

Furthermore, volunteering activities have been implemented by the Centre for Crime Prevention (CCP) under the Ministry of Justice of Georgia. The CCP was established in September 2012. The mission of the centre is to promote the prevention of re-offending in Georgia, working with risk groups and implementing projects relating to primary crime prevention. The policy relating to primary crime prevention envisages promoting volunteering among youth. Volunteering is one of the major priorities and instruments in primary crime prevention (along with legal and civil education, personal development and healthy lifestyle). Subsequently one of the goals of the centre is to popularise a culture of volunteering among young people aged 14-21, their involvement in volunteer activities and developing a positive attitude and values of volunteering.

The CCP is implementing four youth volunteering programmes.

1) The “Leaders’ House” Programme aims to promote a healthy lifestyle, volunteering and raising civil and legal awareness among youth. The programme has four directions: sport, art and culture; education and science; non-formal education; and volunteering. Various activities are implemented within the programme: sport competitions, cinema clubs, literature clubs, career guidance, trainings, seminars, conferences, etc. Young people 14-18 years of age are able to develop physically and intellectually, increase their knowledge in different fields, actively engage in volunteer activities, and plan and implement different projects by themselves. Since 2013, 2 104 young people have participated in volunteering activities of “Leaders’ House”.

2) The “Volunteer” Programme is oriented to develop a culture of volunteering among young people. Since 2014 around 3 000 young people have participated in the programme in 18 cities and towns across Georgia. Young people aged 14-21 participate via online applications in the social networks. Participants attend trainings on the culture of volunteering. Training themes involve the activities of Public Service Hall and standards of providing services to citizens. After the trainings, participants

18. Information obtained from Ana Khabareli, Senior Specialist, Youth Programmes Division, Youth Policy Management Department, Ministry of Education and Science in May 2018.

19. National Volunteer Database <http://volunteers.youth.gov.ge/>, accessed 15 September 2017.

help employees of Public Service Hall on a volunteer basis according to the specific schedules agreed locally.

3) The “Two Generations” Programme, implemented since 2015, involves secondary school students in visiting care homes for the elderly, helping them in their daily life and organising activities. Since 2016, a total of 585 young people have participated in this programme (there are no consolidated data for 2015). Activities include cleaning care homes, reading newspapers, movie screenings, musical and art performances, sport and intellectual games and other non-formal activities.

4) The “Trainers Working with Young People” programme aims to promote volunteering and peer-to-peer education in order to increase a number of young people involved in primary crime prevention programmes, number, quality and geographical scope of activities through volunteering and peer-to-peer education. Young people attend the trainings on training issues, conflict management and youth work. After that, volunteers organise activities with other young people on themes and topics of their choice, including bullying, human rights, civic activism, legal issues, volunteering, time management and career guidance. Since 2017, a total of 221 young people have participated in the activities organised by volunteer trainers.²⁰

The Ministry of Education and Science does not hold consolidated data on volunteer profiles or funding. Partial data are available for the “Volunteer for Georgia” programme, which has received 100 000 Georgian lari (GEL) in 2015, 135 000 GEL in 2016, 85 000 GEL in 2017 and 100 000 in 2018 (approximately €35 000).²¹ No quality assurance mechanisms have been foreseen.

2.5. Cross-border mobility programmes

Georgia is involved in the EU European Voluntary Service (EVS), part of the Erasmus+ Programme. Since the beginning of Erasmus+ in 2014, Georgian-based organisations received over €2.1 million in funding for a total of 403 Georgian young people volunteering in Erasmus+ Programme countries. Georgian youth’s participation in the programme is monitored by SALTO Youth Eastern Europe and the Caucasus Resource Centre.²² The Georgian Government does not monitor or engage with the EVS programme, but a local NGO (Youth Association Droni) runs an Erasmus+ Youth Information Centre, co-funded by SALTO Youth Eastern Europe and South Caucasus Resource Centre (SALTO EECA). The information centre promotes European volunteering opportunities among Georgian youth using online tools, individual support meetings and presentations on EVS at universities and other youth organisations.²³

2.6. Raising awareness about youth volunteering opportunities

There are no dedicated awareness-raising campaigns about youth volunteering opportunities and no dedicated budgets exist. Limited awareness-raising activities on youth volunteering are implemented within volunteering programmes of state institutions mentioned in section 2.4.

2.7. Skills recognition

There is no policy framework for skills recognition for youth volunteering and no government instruments to provide validation and/or recognition of youth volunteering exist.

20. Information obtained from Maia Nasrashvili, Head of Primary Crime Prevention Division, Centre for Crime Prevention, Ministry of Justice in May 2018.

21. Information obtained from Ana Khabareli, Senior Specialist, Youth Programmes Division, Youth Policy Management Department, Ministry of Education and Science in May 2018.

22. EVS Statistics <https://www.salto-youth.net/rc/eeca/cooperation/statistics/evs/>, accessed 12 June 2018.

23. Erasmus+ Youth Information Centre Georgia, <https://sites.google.com/view/erasmuspluse/>, accessed 18 June 2018.

2.8. Current debates and reforms

The main focus of the current debate on youth volunteering policy is the ongoing central government reform and the consequences of the abolition of the Ministry of Sports and Youth Affairs in 2017 for youth policy in general. While no details are available on the decision behind abolishing the ministry, it is clear that youth policy was not at the centre of the reform – this is confirmed by the absence of the term in new ministry branding.

Sports policy became part of the new Ministry of Culture and Sport, whilst youth policy was absorbed by the Ministry of Education and Science (without any change in the ministry's name).²⁴ What is more, the most recent change of government in June 2018 resulted in further changes and abolition of the Ministry of Culture and Sports. This means that both youth and sports briefs of the now-defunct MYS will be united under the new Ministry of Education and Science.²⁵

The Ministry of Education and Science continues to implement the previous programmes including "Volunteer of Georgia". There are ongoing debates among Georgia's civil society groups and organisations on the future of youth policy in the country. There are a number of organisations that contend that the current 2014 National Youth Policy Document and its Action Plan should be revised, involving all stakeholders and taking into account new trends and needs of young people, but no timelines or drafts have been made available.

Independently of governmental changes a Georgian NGO (the Civil Society Institute) prepared a draft law on reimbursement of volunteer expenses. The parliamentary committee for sport and youth affairs started deliberating on the draft on 20 June 2018. The draft proposes tax deductions for expenses paid by host organisations to volunteer for costs incurred in the performance of volunteering activities. The proposal has not been officially registered for a parliamentary vote and discussions are ongoing in the format of a working group.²⁶

24. Georgia announces government reshuffle, merges several ministries <http://agenda.ge/news/90557/eng>, last accessed 5 June 2018.

25. PM Bakhtadze names ministries to be merged, abolished, <https://civil.ge/archives/245060>, last accessed 27 June 2018.

26. Parliament of Georgia – Sports and Youth Committee – <http://parliament.ge/ge/saparlamento-saqmianoba/komitetebi/sportisa-da-axalgazrdul-saqmeta-komiteti-1155/axali-ambebi-sport/sportisa-da-axalgazrdul-saqmeta-komitetshi-moxaliseobrivi-saqmianobis-ganvitarebis-xelshewyobaze-imsdjeles.page>, last accessed 1 July 2018.