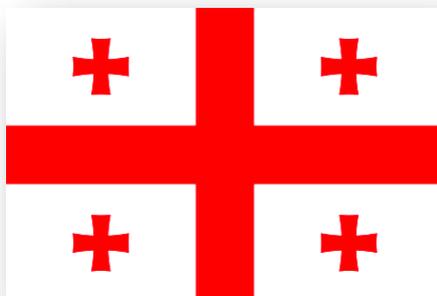


Youth Partnership

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



COUNTRY SHEET ON YOUTH POLICY IN GEORGIA



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Disclaimer: The content of this document, commissioned by the EU-CoE youth partnership, is on the entire responsibility of the author and does not necessarily reflect the opinion of either of the partner institutions (the European Union and the Council of Europe).

Contents

1. Context and principles of national youth policy	2
1.1. Context of national youth policy	2
1.2. Principles of national youth policy	4
1.3. Decision-making and co-ordination mechanisms	5
2. Statistics on young people	6
3. Actors and structures	7
3.1. Public authorities	7
3.1.1. National public authorities	7
3.1.2. Regional public authorities with competencies in the youth field	10
3.1.3. Local public authorities with competencies in the youth field	10
3.2. Youth welfare services (comprising public and/or non-public actors)	11
3.3. Non-public actors/structures and youth services with competencies in the youth field	13
3.3.1. Youth Councils	14
3.3.2. Youth NGOs	14
4. Legislation	19
5. National policy programmes on youth	20
6. Budget / Public expenditure allocated to youth	21
7. European dimension of youth policy	22
7.1. Council of Europe	22
7.2. European Union	22
7.2.1. Implementation of the Youth in Action/Erasmus + programme	22
7.2.2. Follow-up of the EU Youth Strategy (2010-2018) on the national level	23
8. Further sources of information on youth policy in Georgia	24

1. Context and principles of national youth policy

1.1. Context of national youth policy

According to the State Youth Policy Document of Georgia a “youth” is considered to be a person aged from 14 to 29 years. The policy document covers identification and support of youth groups, among them students, children, vulnerable and marginalised groups, such as young people with disabilities, internally displaced young people, young people from ethnic minorities, underprivileged young people, young people living in mountains and rural areas, juvenile inmates, young people living in the areas bordering the occupation line etc.

Georgian youth is considered by the state among the most valuable assets to ensure long-term democratic development and economic growth of the country. It is essential to have a common view of the needs, challenges and role of young people, based on which appropriate mechanisms and approaches will be established for full-fledged development of the young generation in Georgia.

It is very hard to face all the challenges (employment, education, health and healthy lifestyle, drug/alcohol abuse, violence, participation in social life, etc.) of young people if there is no cross-sectoral approach to youth and youth policy. It is important to establish a permanent co-ordination body with participation of all ministries, local governments, youth organisations and groups, the private sector, international organisations and donors.

The first governmental structure responsible for development of youth policy in Georgia, “The Youth Affairs Department of the Georgian Republic”, was created in 1994. During its existence the department had several successful initiatives about youth policy development, among them two legislative initiatives concerning youth and youth policy, which are the only legal bases until this day in terms of youth policy. It is very important to mention Decree 92 of 12 March 2001 of the President of Georgia on “State concept for supporting Georgian youth”, but unfortunately it was never implemented due to lack of budget. The fragments of the concept were reflected and implemented in action plans of other entities. Decree 132 of 6 April 2000 entitled “Public Youth Council based with Administration of President of Georgia” and passed by the president was also an important step. But the Council stopped functioning in 2004.

Unfortunately, due to socio-economic and general problems in the country, youth policy issues never became one of the priorities of state policy. Besides this, territorial problems in Abkhazia and South Ossetia appeared and as a result of armed confrontation

these territories were occupied by Russia. The solution of these and other important problems are priority issues for the government, having a negative influence on all state policies, including on youth policy in Georgia. However, the situation has changed since the new Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs was established in July 2010. As a result of two years' work with partner organisations UNICEF and UNFPA, on 17 August 2012 the Government of Georgia approved the State youth policy document (Resolution N1608).

On 17 May 2013 the “Co-ordination council on the development of state youth policy of Georgia” was created. Members of the Council are deputy ministers from the cabinet of ministers of the government, as well as representatives from the parliamentary committee of sports and youth affairs, the Public Defender of Georgia, UNICEF and UNFPA. The main aim of the co-ordination council was to revise the adopted “State youth policy document” which was done successfully in 2013 with full participation of all interested parties. The new state youth policy document was adopted by the Government of Georgia on 2 April 2014.

On 5 March 2015 on the basis of the State Youth Policy Document, a State Youth Policy Development Action Plan for 2014-2020 was adopted, covering four strategic dimensions, including participation, education, employment and mobility. The State Youth Policy Development Action Plan covers all components of youth policy, among them ongoing and planned actions in the framework of the youth policy, specific and time-bound programmes, projects and events, ensuring effective implementation of youth policy. It unites all line ministries working on youth issues, state structures, civil society and the private sector, as well as international, national and local organisations and human capacities. Regarding development of an action plan, it has to be mentioned that in co-ordination with the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs of Georgia, UNICEF and National Statistics Office of Georgia conducted a [“National research on conditions of youth and adolescents in Georgia”](#). The research is supporting the definition of main needs and problems of young people, as well as the development of knowledge and evidence-based youth policy. Field and face-to-face research among the young people aged from 14 to 29 and administration data analysis has been done in the framework of the survey according to the youth policy document priorities of Georgia. The survey was conducted in October-November 2013 and published in 2014.

1.2. Principles of national youth policy

The aim of national youth policy is to develop a suitable environment for full-fledged development of youth, where young people have the opportunity to realise their potential and to be involved in all fields of public life. To reach this goal, youth policy needs to ensure:

- opportunities for young people to participate in public, economic, cultural and political life;
- access to high quality education, employment and professional growth;
- promotion of healthy lifestyle, accessibility to medical services and improvement of quality in a youth-friendly environment;
- raising awareness in civil rights and obligations, creation of a safe atmosphere, respect for their rights and support of young people with special needs.

The work of government towards youth is based on the following principles:

- decisions made based on reliable evidence, knowledge, and experience;
- accountability and transparency;
- equality;
- respect for and recognition of rights;
- accessibility;
- youth friendliness;
- partnership and participation;
- international co-operation.

Government ensures creation, implementation and evaluation of the youth policy action plan in line with the following four thematic directions:

- participation
- education, employment and mobility
- health
- special support and protection.

The target groups of the “State youth policy document” are young people from 14 to 29 years old, as well as young people with special needs and fewer opportunities. State institutions and government agencies are responsible for the realisation of the state youth policy according to their competence. All state programmes and strategies concerning youth have to be in line with thematic directions and the spirit of national youth policy.

The Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs of Georgia is the responsible agency for development of the state youth policy. Important key actors of youth policy are:

- the Committee of Sport and Youth Affairs of the Parliament of Georgia;
- local self-governments;
- youth;
- youth organisations;
- interested persons;
- international organisations;
- media;
- scientists.

1.3. Decision-making and co-ordination mechanisms

The State Youth Policy implementation is based on sectoral (co-operation between governmental, non-governmental and private sectors) and inter-agency (co-operation of central and local authorities) dialogue. For the development of youth policy, an intergovernmental co-ordination council was established on 17 May 2013 on the basis of Governmental Decree No. 112. 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 Georgia; UNFPA 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 co-ordination council 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 of the council, drafting the agenda etc.

Up to now, the co-ordination council has:

- reviewed and adopted the State Youth Policy Document;
- reviewed and adopted the State Youth Policy Development Action Plan 2015-2020.

2. Statistics on young people¹

Number and percentage of young people in global population

Number of young people from 15 to 29: 814 300 (22.0% of total population), 51.0% male, 49.0% female.

Number and percentage of young people by gender in global population

Number of young males: 415 300 (11.1% of total population); number of young females: 399 200 (10.7% of total population);

Other relevant figures

- Population of Georgia: 3 729 500.
- Average age of Georgian population is 38 years.
- 29.5% of young people are married. 69.7% of total married youth are females (statistic not updated).
- By gender, 40.6% of total female youth and 18.1% of total male youth are married (statistic not updated).
- Majority of young people lives in cities 53.1% (statistic not updated).

1. Based on “National research on conditions of youth and adolescents in Georgia”, conducted in 2013.

3. Actors and structures

3.1. Public authorities

3.1.1. National public authorities

Ministry in charge of youth: Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs of Georgia

Minister: Mr Tariel Khechikashvili. Duration of mandate: May 2015 to date

Main tasks of the Youth Policy Management Department in the Ministry:

- development and implementation of state youth programmes on the basis of the State Youth Policy Document;
- co-operation with relevant Georgian and foreign children and youth organisations and implementation of international youth projects;
- co-operation with youth NGOs.

The following is the list of yearly state youth programmes of youth policy management department

- Popularisation of healthy lifestyle and involvement of youth in cultural life
- Youth work development programme
- Young students support programme
- Development of the Georgian legislation in the sport and youth field
- Integration programme for young people with disabilities
- Programme for supporting the integration of ethnic minorities living in Georgia
- Development of the relationship with the young people living in the occupied territories and supporting internally displaced young people
- Youth development programme in the regions of Georgia
- International co-operation programme
- Re-socialisation programme for juveniles
- Secondary school students professional orientation programme
- Programme for supporting socially disadvantaged young people
- Programme for development of youth journalism
- Youth NGOs' support programme
- Support programme for volunteering

Number of people who work the youth policy management department: 18

- Director responsible for Youth in the Ministry: Head of the youth policy management department, Mr Nugzar Kandelaki
- Person in the youth affairs department competent for European youth policy: Ms Nino Tsereteli

The department is divided into the Youth Programmes Division and the Youth Affairs Research and Analysis Division.

The above-mentioned divisions' main activities are: implementation and monitoring of youth programmes, as well as studying and analysing international experience, preparation of recommendations in the youth field and organisation of youth policy research. The International Relations and European Integration Department of the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs of Georgia is also actively working on implementation of youth policy.

Other national public bodies who are directly involved in youth policies

The Co-ordination Council on development of state youth policy of Georgia; members of the Council are deputy ministers from the Cabinet of Ministers of the government.

Children and Youth Development Fund

The Children and Youth Development Fund is a legal entity of public law under the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs of Georgia. The fund was established in 2000.

The aim of the fund is to promote youth involvement through funding and supporting implementation of various initiatives. Activities of the fund are part of the national youth policy. The fund guarantees funding of the projects submitted according to the programme priorities set by the advisory board of the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs of Georgia. Based on its priorities, the fund supports various youth non-governmental organisations through grant competitions; the main priorities are:

- promotion of employment and non-formal education;
- healthy lifestyle and mass sport;
- promotion of youth participation;
- promotion of innovations and technological inventions.

Children and Youth National Centre

Children and Youth National Centre (CYNC) is a national public body and operates under the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs of Georgia. The mission of the CYNC is to promote young people through organising trainings, conferences, creating strategic vision documents and establishing a youth club with the co-operation of private and international

organisations. The centre was founded in November 2007. The main priorities of the centre are:

- popularisation of non-formal education among children and youth;
- promotion of strengthening of groups with special needs (IDPs, socially unprotected children, PWDs, etc.);
- introduction and promotion of healthy lifestyle among children and youth.

Parliament commission in charge of youth issues

Name: Sport and Youth Affairs Committee of Parliament of Georgia

Chairman: Khabelovi Leri

Role and competence: The committee is formed by 17 members of parliament. Under the competence given by law and its own statute, the committee:

- co-ordinates state youth policy;
- ensures the development of legislation in the sport and youth field;
- controls the creation of supportive terms to involve youth with disabilities in social life;
- co-ordinates relationships between youth organisations, ensures state support and protection of their rights and interests;
- works on youth economic, social and legal arrangements.

In addition to identifying and co-ordinating the implementation of youth policy directions, and of relevant research activities, the ministry, in partnership with its subordinated units, is the main actor in charge of planning and implementing youth programmes and services. The ministry involves the following subordinated units in this process:

- Youth Programmes Division of Youth Policy Management Department;
- Children and Youth National Centre;
- Children and Youth Development Fund.

The centre's activities are focused on planning and implementation of youth programmes, while the fund financially supports youth initiatives in Georgia.

Most of the programmes of the centre and the division are related to promotion of healthy lifestyle, involvement of youth in cultural-creative activities, support for youth and students living in different regions of Georgia. Both units are mainly focused on support for vulnerable groups such as youth with disabilities, youth with special needs, ethnic minorities, socially disadvantaged young people, other relevant groups.

3.1.2. Regional public authorities with competencies in the youth field

The Georgian State Youth Policy strategy is a political view of the Government of Georgia. Regional authorities and local self-governments use the document as a “road map” for implementation of local youth policy. Georgia is divided into two autonomous republics and nine regions. According to the Constitution of Georgia autonomous republics are governed by their own cabinet of ministers, among which there is a department of sport and youth affairs. Nine regions of Georgia are governed by a regional administration headed by a State Governor who is officially appointed by the Government of Georgia. The State Governor co-ordinates implementation of the state policy on a regional level; among them is youth policy. At this moment there is no special youth unit under the regional administration of the State Governor.

3.1.3. Local public authorities with competencies in the youth field

Nine regions of Georgia are divided into municipalities. Under each municipality there are Educational, Cultural, Sport and Youth Affairs divisions. According to the national youth policy document and needs and challenges of local youth, the division defines an annual action plan of projects and activities. The Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs regularly meets representatives of the division responsible for youth issues and tries to co-ordinate general work on a municipal level based on main directions of state youth policy. In 2014, for better co-ordination and visibility, the regional web page for municipalities was launched (regions.msy.gov.ge). Through the web page they were able to publish details of local activities and planned projects. Nowadays, the web page does not function.

For 2017, under the initiative of the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs of Georgia the reconstruction and renovation of the web page youth.gov.ge is planned, which will be a united web portal and will incorporate all the stakeholders working in the field of youth policy.

Among these are regions, municipalities and self-governments; state agencies – parliament, ministries and LEPLs; non-governmental youth organisations; and student unions.

The web page will cover all information in the field of youth, including relevant research, and will promote implementation, monitoring and evaluation of evidence-based youth policy.

3.2. Youth welfare services (comprising public and/or non-public actors)

The major implementing institutions of youth welfare and social services for young people are the following ministries.

Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Affairs of Georgia

Reform of the child care service – upbringing of children in a family-like environment rather than in large institutions – is a key priority of child welfare reform. Several major steps have been taken under the framework of child care reform in Georgia in recent years. Among those the most notable are development and improvement of relevant legislation to reduce administrative barriers for children’s reintegration into their biological family, adoption and placement in foster care, strengthening the role of social workers in the field of child care, establishment of regional bodies of guardianship and care and delegation of relevant powers to them.

The Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia

Inclusive education – accessibility of education for children with disabilities has been prioritised by the Ministry of Education and Science within the framework of the current reform. For more information, visit www.inclusion.ge

- Inclusive Education Assistive Programme
- Development of Inclusive Education in nine Regional Public Schools
- Strengthening the General Education within the Penitentiary Establishments of Georgia
- Public School Management Strengthening (Decentralisation) Programme
- Civil Integration Programmes
- Pre-school Sector Support
- Civil Activity Development Programme 2010
- Supporting Gifted and Talented Youth Programme – National and International Olympiads
- Funding of students admitted at first cycle of higher academic education of higher education institutions under social assistance programme.

Ministry of Justice of Georgia

Juvenile Diversion and Mediation programme (www.ganrideba.ge)

The main goal of the Juvenile Diversion and Mediation programme is to help the juvenile become a socialised citizen of the society. That is why rehabilitation and social integration of the juvenile are very important. For this purpose, social workers will then formulate a bio-psycho-social portrait of the juvenile and bearing in mind the juvenile’s mental, physical

and social conditions, will draw up a civil contract according to which a minor will be given the necessary services and bear the responsibilities of the victim and/or society. Services are very important for juveniles' mental, physical or professional development. At the same time real interests of juveniles are taken into account.

These are the most frequently used services for this target group:

- education – foreign languages and computer courses;
- sport – basketball, football, swimming;
- psycho-social rehabilitation – individual/family psychological counselling; training in volunteer work, leadership; participating in the programme “My senior friend”; participating in the programme “Diversion for carrying a knife”;
- services for professional development – sewing, felt, wood carving, cooking courses.

Leadership House (www.lidertasakhli.ge)

Leadership House aims to promote a healthy lifestyle in young people, and help them develop creative thinking and common sense. The programme covers all regions of Georgia and aims to provide various interesting opportunities to young people aged 14-21. The “Leadership House” project has four main categories: Sport, Art and Culture, Education and Science, Informal Education and Volunteering. During the programme, young people develop physically and mentally, get involved in voluntary work, and plan and implement projects that interest them. The project is implemented with the partnership of Public Service Hall, the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia, and the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs of Georgia. Active students, who are involved in most activities throughout the year, have the opportunity to participate in a Summer School organised by Leadership House. Apart from that, the Ministry of Justice of Georgia will issue small grants for summer school participants to finance their projects in the regions.

Ministry of Corrections and Legal Assistance of Georgia

Care for Juveniles – The main goal of the MCLA is to create the penitentiary and probation system that is commensurate with European standards. One of the fundamental parts of this reform is development of the juvenile justice system. The reform aims to elaborate the special approach towards juveniles in the penitentiary system that will be different from that towards adults. The special approach should achieve juveniles' rehabilitation, re-socialisation and return as full members of the society. To reach the goal the ministry works in the following main areas:

- penitentiary system

- probation system
- diversion by means of community service.

As mentioned above these actors work together in the framework of the State's Youth Policy Development Action Plan for 2015-2020. The working mechanism for co-operation is the Youth Policy Development Co-ordination Council. They work together on monitoring and evaluation of youth policy. The monitoring and evaluation document is prepared, which encompasses indicators to measure progress in youth policy, as well as responsible ministries for providing data. There are two sources: survey and administrative information.

Relevant data and information are published on the Youth Monitor web page (youth.gov.ge) with various researches describing situation of youth people.

3.3. Non-public actors/structures and youth services with competencies in the youth field

Youth Organisations Forum of Georgia

The Youth Organisations Forum of Georgia is a non-profit, non-governmental, non-political youth organisation which unites youth NGOs working on youth issues. The forum aims to support development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of an effective youth policy in Georgia and to support development of the field of youth work in close co-operation with governmental and non-governmental institutions through lobbying the interest of young people as a starting point. The forum annually conducts a two-day Youth NGO "Forum". More than 181 youth NGOs participated in the event last year, where recommendations for the national youth policy of Georgia were drafted. The forum is a good practice of involving young people in decision-making process on the policy level.

The forum's goals are:

- To contribute to the development process of youth policy in Georgia and to its further implementation and evaluation.
- To create non-formal educational opportunities for young people, youth workers, youth trainers and youth leaders for their personal and professional development.
- To run awareness-raising activities about different activities, resources and other types of information available and useful for young people for better co-ordination among youth organisations and young people.
- To support youth organisations in their structural and organisational development.
- To promote active involvement of young people in the development of civil society and active participation.

3.3.1. Youth Councils

National Council of Youth Organisations of Georgia (NCYOG)

The National Council of Youth Organisations of Georgia (NCYOG) was created in 1995. NCYOG is an acting structure, uniting 45 non-governmental youth and children organisations of Georgia. Its activities are aimed at the development of the non-governmental youth sector. NCYOG was founded with the purpose of creating a favourable environment and conditions for development, co-operation and co-ordination of non-governmental youth organisations, leading to an increase in participation and social activity of young people. Since 2000 NCYOG has been a full member of the European Youth Forum. In 2009 NCYOG [conducted national research on Georgian youth](#). This research has been the most extensive attempt to collect detailed information on Georgian youth. The aim of the research has been to collect the most relevant and detailed data about young people directly from them (www.ncyog.ge). At this moment there are no structured regional youth councils on the regional level.

3.3.2. Youth NGOs

European Youth Parliament – Georgia

EYP Georgia started its activities by organising the first National Selection Conference in June 2007. The organisation has been granted plenipotentiary membership of the European Youth Parliament in 2008, at the 57th International Session of the EYP in Prague (www.eyp.org.ge).

Youth Voices Georgia (YVG) – World Bank Tbilisi Office

In May 2004, the World Bank selected a group of young people for the “Youth Voices” group (currently called Youth Voices Georgia – YVG). These were young active people aged from 15 to 25 who expressed their interest in discussing and analysing issues of concern to young people in Georgia. The goal of forming the Youth Voices group was to bring to the World Bank fresh ideas and recommendations for youth programmes and policies that are informed by their experiences, perspectives and priorities. The aim of the ECA Youth Voices groups in general is to establish a mutual learning initiative for youth stakeholders in individual countries and for the World Bank. The Youth Voices initiative is part of the larger effort on behalf of the World Bank to engage in a systematic dialogue with young people, either as individuals or as youth groups, so as to include their perspectives and needs in the development process. Some of the concrete objectives of the Youth Voices Georgia are to:

- fill in an informational gap among the young people in remote regions, youth representatives of ethnic and religious minorities and young people living in conflict areas;
- provide them with non-formal education;
- promote their civic integration;
- support youth initiatives;
- fight youth idleness;
- support internally displaced persons and other socially vulnerable young people.

Currently the YVG includes nine members and is diverse in terms of age difference (18-25), educational, work/volunteering backgrounds and regional representation. They have just a Facebook page (www.facebook.com/YouthVoicesGeorgia)

Youth Association DRONI

DRONI is a non-governmental organisation with the mission to promote the establishment of a modern, healthy, educated and perfect society. In order to meet this task the association has been implementing educational and youth development programmes. The organisation's aims are to support the young people's physical, spiritual and educational development and to develop educational initiatives in the field of civil society, conflict resolution, human rights and peace-building, to promote intercultural relations in Georgian society and among its youth. Youth Association Droni was established on the basis of the international organisation Academy for Educational Development in 2003 by young people with 4-5 years' working experience in the NGO sector. DRONI is working mainly in the field of education with different target groups (children, youth, students, teachers, refugees). DRONI is mostly focusing its activities on the Caucasian region and co-operates with different NGOs in Europe.

The organisation has been providing activities on:

- human rights education;
- gender issues;
- civil education;
- conflict prevention and peace-building;
- active citizenship;
- youth participation.

DRONI was actively involved in the "All Different, All Equal" European Youth Campaign for Diversity, Human Rights and Participation in Georgia (www.droni.org.ge).

Georgian School Students Unions' Alliance (GSSUA)

The Georgian School Students Unions Alliance (GSSUA) was founded in 2011. GSSUA is the only non-governmental youth organisation which brings together pupils' self-governing bodies and clubs. The goal of the organisation is to involve pupils in civil activities and encourage their initiatives at regional as well as international levels. GSSUA recognises the importance of school students' activism and aims to promote the school democratisation process through empowering school students and increasing their level of participation in the decision-making process. GSSUA aims to:

- unite the school student unions in Georgia and create a sphere where information, initiative, projects and ideas can be exchanged and new projects and programmes written;
- involve school students in various democratic processes, as well as various civil and social projects;
- support school students in acknowledging their rights and abilities;
- support school students to overcome discrimination and racism in school life;
- empower school students for creating and implementing new project initiatives;
- involve students in international projects, programmes and organisations;
- promote access to education for all school students.

The Georgian School Students Unions' Alliance works at national level; its member school student unions are coming from varied social and economic backgrounds. For instance, we have members from mountainous villages and also from the big cities; also members coming from different ethnic backgrounds (Armenian school students living in Georgia, Azerbaijani school students, etc.). The difference between member school student unions gives GSSUA the chance to promote cultural learning and sharing good practices among its members.

Helping Hand (www.helpinghand.ge)

Mission: To inspire and equip youth as volunteers to meet the needs of their communities and strengthen the civil society network.

Vision: A world where united and engaged young people discover their power to make a difference and to take responsibility for their own communities and help those in need.

Our values: Helping Hand is committed to achieving its mission and vision by placing the utmost value on being:

- effective – working to make a difference in the lives of the individual, communities and organisations we serve;

- reliable – operating in a trustworthy and responsible manner;
- empowering – creating opportunities for young people to achieve personal growth and drive change;
- caring – serving people in need through service.

Youth Space

The non-profit, non-governmental organisation Youth Space was founded in December 2009. Youth Space is a voluntary association of young citizens, which acts on the basis of the Georgian civil code. The organisation is based on democratic values, active citizenship and volunteering, as well as non-formal education principles. One of the biggest achievements of the organisation is the translation of the manual on human rights education (COMPASS) into the Georgian language (www.futuregeneration.ge). The goals of the organisation are to:

- advocate human rights, giving support to defend and realise them;
- support participation of young people in civil society;
- reveal and develop democratic values;
- support volunteering;
- promote peace and conflict transformation;
- support intercultural dialogue and increase tolerance;
- achieve gender equality;
- support non-formal education among youngsters;
- prevent smoking, alcoholism, addiction and other bad habits, promote healthy lifestyle among adults;
- research youngsters' problems, analysis, and reveal actual issues;
- support, help and involve in civil society national minorities, internally displaced people and orphanages.

International Students Union (ISU)

The International Students Union (ISU) is a non-governmental, non-political, non-commercial student organisation founded in February 2011. ISU supports student exchange programmes and helps students in cultural and social adaptation in the new environment. This organisation provides for students' professional and self-development. ISU works actively on cultural integration programmes and supports friendly relations between students of different religions and nationalities.

The Organisation is a member of the biggest student organisation in Europe, Erasmus Students Network (ESN), which helps us to work on an international level. ESN

is represented in 36 countries, consists of 391 local sections and serves 150 000 students of Europe.

3.4. National networks for knowledge on youth linking all actors in the field (policy makers, researchers, young people and their organisations, NGOs)

At this moment there is no national network for knowledge on youth. There is a lack of research component at the national level, which ensures relevant research and establishment of knowledge on youth needs and issues. This is due to the fact that there is a lack of both researchers and finances for conducting research. Currently, the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs of Georgia is working actively to attract funds for research in different fields of youth.

4. Legislation

National legislation on youth

The work on the development of a legal framework and admission of regulating acts only began in Georgia in the late 1990s. Significant steps have already been made in this direction but, as our data show, there is still a lot to do. Today there are two main laws related to youth:

- the law concerning state support to children and youth unions (22 June 1999)
- the law concerning the protection of underage children from harmful influence (28 September 2001).

Creating systematically ordered structure for youth work and youth policy implementation, it is crucial to develop corresponding legal bases which orders and regulates the implementation process of youth policy and its action plan (2015-2020) set by the Government of Georgia. 2016 was the year of drafting the law on State Support of Youth Work in Parliament of Georgia. At the moment the draft law is under discussion in parliament. After passing the law several different actions should take place, such as revision of the youth policy document and action plan, plan and start the infrastructure development interventions by MSY with the Government of Georgia.

Articles of the constitution concerning youth explicitly

The Georgian constitution and other legislation define citizens' rights and responsibilities according to their age:

- The lowest age of criminal responsibility is 14.
- Participation in referendums and elections of government and self-governing institutions is allowed at the age of 18.
- A person of 21 can be elected as a member of the Georgian Parliament.
- A person over 28 can be appointed as a judge.
- A Georgian citizen can be elected as President of Georgia at the age of 35.

Regional and local legislation on youth

On 5 February 2014, the Parliament of Georgia adopted a new “local self-government Code” whereby the initiative of the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs of Georgia, to the “article 16” has been added an amendment, according to which Local self-government body is authorised to support the development of youth policy on the local level.

5. National policy programmes on youth

The Youth Policy Development Programme was developed in 2012 and is based on the State's Youth Policy Document. Every year the Ministry's Youth Policy Management Department implements programmes under the Youth Policy Development Programme. The programme aims to promote creation of relevant environment for youth, where they will have a chance to fully realise their skills and be actively involved in social life.

To reach the objective the Youth Policy Development Programme ensures:

- promotion of involvement of youth in social, economic, cultural and political life;
- promotion of relevant and high-quality education for youth, employment and professional growth;
- promotion of the establishment of a healthy lifestyle and youth-friendly environment;
- raising awareness of youth of civil rights and obligations, creation of safe environment for youth, protection of their rights and support of youth with special needs.

The beneficiaries of the programme are Georgian youth, children and youth and student Organisations.

The Youth Policy Development Programme consists of:

- popularisation of healthy lifestyle and involvement of youth in cultural life;
- youth work development programme;
- young students support programme;
- development of the Georgian legislation in the sport and youth field;
- integration programme for young people with disabilities;
- programme for supporting the integration of ethnic minorities living in Georgia;
- development of the relationship with young people living in the occupied territories and supporting young internally displaced people;
- youth development programme in the regions of Georgia;
- international co-operation programme;
- re-socialisation programme for juveniles;
- secondary school students professional orientation programme;
- programme for supporting socially disadvantaged young people;
- programme for development youth journalism;
- youth NGOs' support programme;
- support programme for volunteering.

6. Budget / Public expenditure allocated to youth

For 2016, the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs of Georgia has allocated the following budget to youth programmes and its legal entities on national level:

- Youth affairs department of the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs of Georgia – 1 500 000 Georgian lari (GEL)
- Children and Youth Development Fund – 1 537 000 GEL
- Children and Youth National Centre – 3 500 000 GEL

Budgets for the youth sector on the regional level are allocated on the municipal level which is independent from the MSY administration and is managed by the local self-government.

7. European dimension of youth policy

7.1. Council of Europe

Fifteen years ago, on 27 April 1999, Georgia joined the Council of Europe as its 41st member state and declared its commitment to respect agreed standards in the areas of human rights, the rule of law and democracy. Since 1999, Georgia has signed and ratified 69 Council of Europe Conventions.

The Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs of Georgia (MSY) takes an active part in the meetings of the European Steering Committee for Youth (CDEJ). Since 2010, the representative of the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs of Georgia is the member of CDEJ as the representative of Georgia and since 2014, the same person became a member of CDEJ Bureau.

The Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs of Georgia has already sent the draft Action Plan for 2016-2017 to the Council of Europe. The main priorities of the document in the youth field are non-formal education and the youth campaign “No Hate Speech Movement”. In May 2015, in the framework of the Action Plan on the fight against violent extremism and radicalisation leading to terrorism, the Committee of Ministers decided to continue the No Hate Speech Movement campaign until 2017. The MSY has been conducting a number of activities with regard to the campaign on the national level since 2014 and is still maintaining the campaign in our country.

It is important to mention that the legal entity of the MSY “Children and Youth National Fund” has supported the project for translating “Compass, Manual for Human Rights Education with Young People” published by the Youth Department in 2012. The project is implemented by the organisation “Youth Space”. The manual was published in September 2014.

Although Georgia does not contribute to the European Youth Foundation, Georgian youth NGOs are welcome to apply for grants to EYF.

7.2. European Union

7.2.1. Implementation of the Youth in Action/Erasmus + programme

On 27 June 2014 Georgia signed the Association Agreement between the European Union (EU) and Georgia and on 17 July 2014 the document was ratified by the Parliament of Georgia. The Association Agreement is a comprehensive political document with the potential to lead qualitatively new and higher levels of co-operation between Georgia and the EU in many important sectors featuring specific articles on education, training and youth.

According to the agreement, Title VI, article 360:

The Parties agree to co-operate in the field of youth to:

- reinforce co-operation and exchanges in the field of youth policy and non-formal education for young people and youth workers;
- support young people and youth workers' mobility as a means to promote intercultural dialogue and the acquisition of knowledge, skills and competences outside the formal educational systems, including through volunteering;
- promote co-operation between youth organisations.

7.2.2. Follow-up of the EU Youth Strategy (2010-2018) on the national level

There is no national strategy to follow up the EU Youth Strategy (2010-2018).

8. Further sources of information on youth policy in Georgia

- www.msy.gov.ge

www.youth.gov.ge