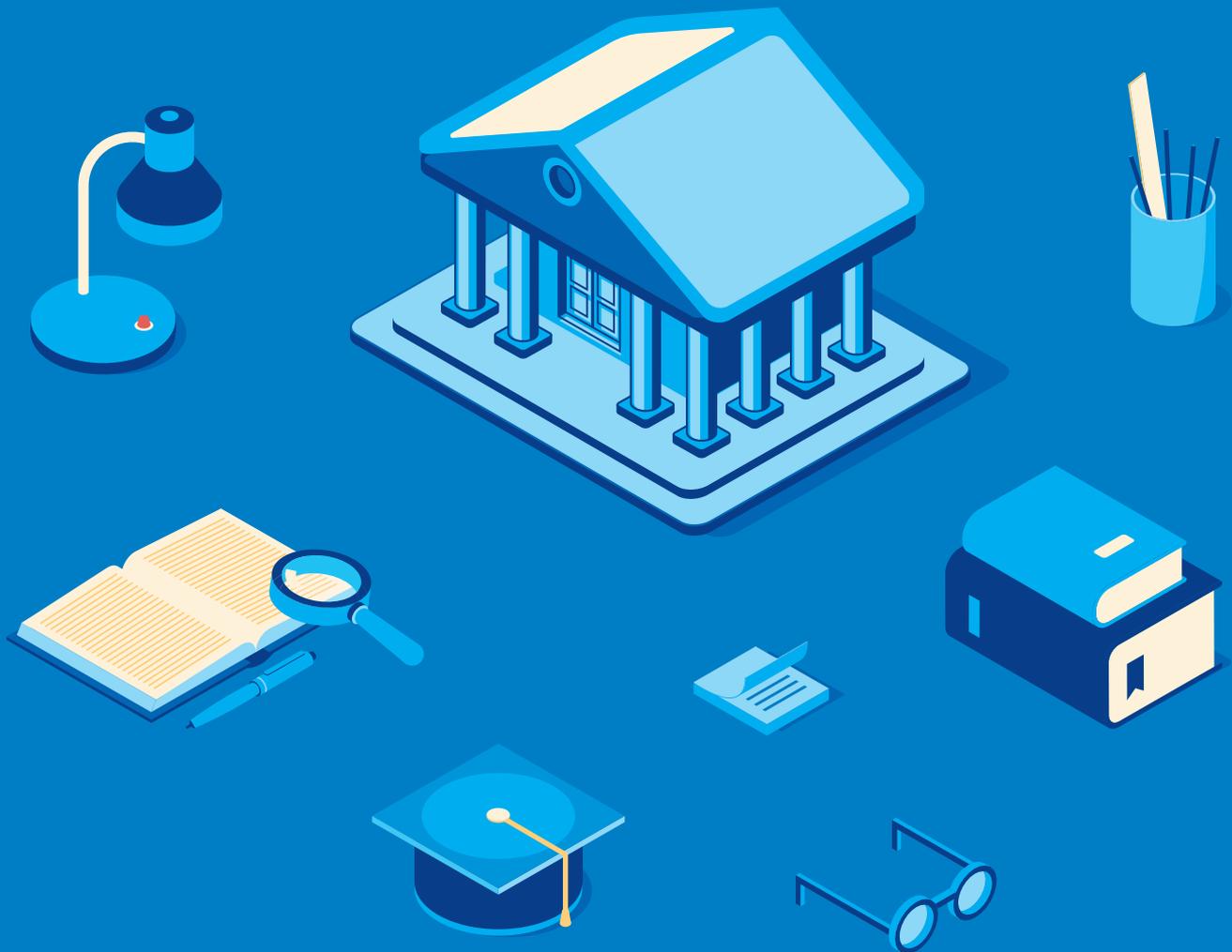


ROLE OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE TRAINING CENTERS

in the Professional Development System
of Civil Servants in Georgia



October, 2018



British Embassy
Tbilisi



*Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.*

Prepared and published by the Institute for Development of Freedom of Information (IDFI) with assistance from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and UK aid from the UK Government. Its contents are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of UNDP and UK aid from the UK Government.

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Introduction

According to the 2017 report of the Civil Service Bureau, Georgian public sector employs 28,557 individuals, which together with the executive, legislative and judicial branches, unites various public institutions. Effective functioning of the public sector greatly depends on high qualification of people employed in public institutions and it is the primary responsibility of the state to guarantee that civil servants have adequate skills.

In order to ensure a career-based and professional civil service, important changes have started to take place in 2014, which resulted in development and formal adoption of the Civil Service Reform Concept. For this purpose, the Concept identified 10 priorities that are aimed at establishing a modern, effective and meritocratic civil service in Georgia.

Between adoption of the older version of the Law on Civil Service in 1997 and its abolishment in 2017, the law was amended more than 80 times; however, the initial older version of the law did not include provisions that would compel the state to safeguard professional development needs of civil servants. This has resulted in establishment of a mixed environment, where career and professional development are not connected. One of the key elements of the reform was establishment of a professional development system of civil servants, which would be closely linked to performance evaluation and career development.

According to the older version of the Law on Civil Service, the only professional development instrument for civil servants was an optional three-month study vacation for every five years of employment in the public institution. The above-mentioned legislation did not include an obligation of the state to ensure training of civil servants. According to the new Law on Civil Service, professional development was determined as

a right of civil servants and an obligation of the employing public institution.

In absence of a unified vision of professional development of civil servants, public training centers have started to develop. As a rule, these types of public training centers are integrated in the system of a specific public institution and, along with training its employees on various issues, provide commercial training services to a wide pool of beneficiaries. Despite the fact that these training centers have their own aim and objectives, their role in professional development of civil servants is not outlined in any policy and legal document.

After adoption of the new law on Civil Service on October 27, 2015, the issue of professional development of civil servants became more acute because the law created a two-way obligation between the civil servants and the state and outlined an obligation to adopt supportive legislation on professional development. On May 22, 2018, the Government of Georgia Adopted Decree № 242 on the Rules of Determining Professional Development Needs of Civil Servants and Rules on Professional Development Standards. The Decree lays down the process on professional development and defines basic subjects and competences that are mandatory for civil servants.

Public training centers are important entities in providing professional development services to civil servants. Nevertheless, there is no unified assessment that would examine their capacity, existing practices, implemented trainings, etc. The above-mentioned information is necessary to determine the role of training centers in the professional development system that is currently being established.

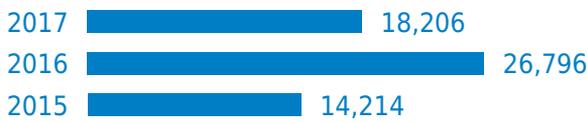


Currently, there are 12 public training centers that are operating within the system of executive, legislative and other public institutions. The underlying research examines training programs, planning and implementation activities, quality assurance procedures, teaching methods and beneficiaries of these institutions.

Between 2015-2017, a total of 59,216 beneficiaries participated in training programs administered by professional development institutions examined in the research. Moreover, GEL 1,100,475 was allocated from the state budget for professional development of civil servants of seven ministries.

The underlying study aims to examine the role, capacity and experiences of public and private training centers in the professional development system of civil servants. The study analyzes the legal framework related to professional development of civil servants and the practices that exist in primary government institutions with regard to professional development of civil servants.

Beneficiaries of Public Training Centers Between 2015-2017



In order to assess the professional development system of civil servants, it is necessary to analyze and evaluate the services provided by training centers, quality assurance mechanisms and other substantive procedures and aspects. Since in the process of establishment of the professional development system of civil servants there is a possibility of active involvement of private training providers, it is important to analyze the experience and capacity of private training centers. It must be also taken into account that above-mentioned training centers are well-established actors in the area of professional training and Government Decree №242 allows for their equal participation in the process of providing training services.



Executive Summary

The study analyzes the role of training centers in the professional development system of civil servants and the practices that exist in ministries with regard to their training. The research also examines data received from ministries and training centers and analyzes information gathered through focus group meetings and comprehensive interviews.

The process of analyzing the legal framework also included assessment of legislation related to professional development. As a result, the study identified the necessity of amending Government Decree № 242 on the Rules of Determining Professional Development Needs of Civil Servants and Rules on Professional Development Standards. In particular, the discrepancy between the subjects and competences of the basic professional development program makes it difficult to understand specifically what should be taught in the basic professional development program of civil servants. The analysis of attitudes of interview respondents also determined that the list of subjects and competences provided in the suggested program is not exhaustive and requires further expansion.

One of the most important gaps of the legal framework on professional development is the lack of financial guarantees for conducting professional development activities, which in the future might hinder implementation of professional development programs.

In the 2015-2017 period, professional development institutions examined in the study have conducted trainings for more than 55,000 beneficiaries, the majority of which were civil servants. The large amount of beneficiaries demonstrates the wide experience that these training centers have accumulated and underlines the important role of these institutions in the professional development system of civil servants.

It is important to point out that currently, the professional development system of civil servants is in the early stages of formation, since professional development needs are assessed in a limited amount of ministries and subsequent trainings are organized scarcely

by relevant institutions. According to information received from seven ministries, only four of them have conducted an assessment of professional development needs and the quality of the assessment varies in each ministry. The practice of organizing training activities and their subsequent quality assurance is also fragmented, which causes significant differences among identical training programs. In this regard, the study revealed lack of a uniform quality assurance standard; however, it is critical for training centers to participate in the accreditation process approximate quality assurance processes to the standard laid down in the Statute of Accreditation, which is currently being elaborated.

The role of private training institutions is also important in providing professional development services. In the 2015-2017, private training providers have carried out training services for various state institutions with a total value of GEL 3,449,401, which reiterates the fact that private training centers are actively involved in professional development of civil servants. Training programs administered by private entities are mostly aimed at developing various skills and less centered on transferring substantive knowledge, which is an important factor that private institutions must take into account in the future. Quality assurance practices examined in private training providers are sustainable, which underlines their competitiveness in the process.

The study also revealed an important finding – certain public training centers only provide services with regard to a limited thematic area, which constitutes a problem from the perspective of efficient use of public resources and hinders establishment of a centralized system where professional development programs are administered through a single standard.



Methodology

The study was conducted between June 25, 2018 and September 21, 2018. In order to assess the role, capacity and experience of public and private training centers in the professional development system of civil servants, IDFI has identified those training institutions that carry out professional development activities of civil servants. Following institutions were selected:

- LEPL Zurab Zhvania School of Public Administration
- LEPL Levan Mikeladze Diplomatic Training Center of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- LEPL Ministry of Finance Academy
- Public Procurement Agency Training Center
- LEPL Training Center of Justice
- LEPL Vano Khukhunaishvili Center for Effective Governance Systems and Territorial Reform
- LEPL Training Center of Corrections and Probation
- LEPL Ministry of Internal Affairs Academy
- Electoral Systems Development, Reforms and Training Center
- Training Center of the Parliament
- LEPL Defense Institution Building School
- LEPL Environmental Information and Education Center

For research purposes, IDFI has conducted more than 15 comprehensive interviews and 4 focus group discussions with participation of various interested parties. Moreover, a survey was conducted with participation of private companies. Focus group discussions were an important instrument for receiving factual information, as well as for analyzing opinions of various participating stakeholders. A total of 4 focus group discussions were conducted - 2 with civil servants, and 2 discussions with public service field experts and representatives of human resources divisions of ministries.

An important part of the preparation process was the elaboration of interview and focus group questionnaires. IDFI has developed 5 types of questionnaires with open and specific questions, which aimed to extract information related to training programs, planning processes, teaching methods, quality assurance, trainers and beneficiaries of training centers.

A comprehensive interview was also conducted with a representative of LEPL National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement, which according to Government Decree №242 is an important stakeholder in the process of accreditation of professional development programs. According to Article 7 of the Government Decree №242, the National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement is responsible for controlling quality assurance processes of professional development programs and is also responsible for developing and adopting the Statute of Accreditation of Professional Development Programs and conducting the accreditation.

Analysis of Freedom of Information (FOI) Request was one of the important components of the study. For this purpose, IDFI has elaborated 27 FOI requests, which were sent to training centers and ministries. The above-mentioned requests allowed collection of quantitative data related to finances, quality assurance and beneficiaries of professional development activities. A separate chapter is devoted to analysis of financial information, which analyses budgets of public training centers, as well as the financial dimension of professional development programs administered by training centers. IDFI has sent out FOI requests on September 14, 2018 and has received information from seven ministries and eight training centers.



Public Institutions that have responded to FOI Requests

	Educational Institution	Ministry
1.	MIA Academy	Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports
2.	Zurab Zhvania School of Public Administration	Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure
3.	Training Center of Corrections and Probation	Ministry of Internal Affairs
4.	Levan Mikeladze Diplomatic Training Center of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
5.	Vano Khukhunaishvili Center for Effective Governance Systems and Territorial Reform	Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture
6.	Ministry of Finance Academy	Ministry of Finance
7.	Public Procurement Agency Training Center	Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Labour, Health and Social Affairs
8.	Cadets Military Lyceum	

Apart from public training institutions, private training providers also participated in the study. The experience, role and evaluation of provided service is another important component of the study, since public institutions utilize the services of private training providers and their role might increase in the process of establishment of the new professional development system.

Another important aspect of the study was the review of the existing legal framework, which included the Civil Service Reform concept, articles of the Law on Civil Service addressing professional development and Government Decree №242 on the Rules of Determining Professional Development Needs of Civil Servants and Rules on Professional Development Standards.



Evaluation of the Existing Legislative Framework

A provision on professional development of civil servants first appeared in the Concept of Civil Service Reform in 2014, outlining that for the development of a professional public service the state should appropriate adequate resources to the development of civil servant capabilities. The concept also states that currently “the development of professional knowledge and skills are mainly conducted by vertically integrated structures, existing separately from individual ministries and having their own study centers or academies.”

In regards to the professional development of civil servants, the concept includes several important recommendations, a part of which is reflected in the relevant laws and subordinate acts. The part of the document about professional development includes two main principles:

- Every civil servant should have an opportunity for professional development within the institution or in another form;
- Civil Service Bureau should define accreditation standards for facilities that provide a determination of educational and training requirements.

The concept distinguishes between the measures for professional development of high-ranking public officials and the rest of the civil servants. Specifically, for enhancement of professional skills of high-ranking officials, the document discusses a possibility of establishment of a special course, based on the “experience of the world’s leading countries”. In regards to the other civil servants, utilization of the study centers of the ministries and private service providers is discussed. The proposals also include allocating a fixed budget share to the professional development of employees and establishment of a common standard for educa-

tion quality monitoring by the Public Service Bureau.

The Concept of Public Service Reform leaves open the issue of professional development of civil servants in various branches of the government. The document refers to training and standard development by LEPL Vano Khukhunaishvili Center for Effective Governance System and Territorial Arrangement Reform for the civil servants of local governments, raising the question of compatibility of this approach with the principle of cohesion of civil service system. The concept doesn’t refer to the professional development of civil servants of the legislative and judicial branches, and of independent public bodies¹.

A provision regarding professional development of employees of municipal public entities already exists in the Code on Local Self-Governance, according to Article 101 “a municipality will allocate no less than 1 percent of all budgetary assignments filed under remuneration to the professional development of its employees”. This provision exists in the Code since 2015, however despite the existence of appropriate budgetary resources, planning and implementation of professional skill development activities are conducted in a chaotic manner, most probably due to prior lack of regulating legal basis and insufficient experience in defining relevant needs of professional development.

The concept also doesn’t discuss what role professional development should play in the career development system of employees and how learning should relate to the evaluation of employee performance, which is an important issue for a systemic approach. The lack of interrelation between professional and career developments in the current system was also mentioned as one of the drawbacks in a focus group of public service experts. The participants of the focus group also

¹ Institutions that do not belong to the Executive, Legislative or Judicial branches of the government, but are mandated by the Constitution of Georgia.



pointed out that the weak link between professional development and career advancement was negatively reflected on the motivation of employees to participate in educational activities.

The first legal provision regarding professional development of civil servants appeared in the new Law on Public Service, approved by the Parliament on October 27, 2015, and entered into force on July 1, 2017. According to Paragraph 1 of Article 54, “a civil servant is required, based on the goals of the public service, to develop their professional skills through participation in professional development programs offered by the public service”. Paragraph 3 of the same article defines an obligation of a public institution to ensure participation of a civil servant in a mandatory professional development program and support their participation in the existing professional development programs outside the public service system.

While the new edition of the law defines rights and obligations of civil servants and public institutions in regards to professional development, appropriate main procedures are regulated by subordinate acts. Along the above-mentioned provisions, Article 54 of the Law defines a reporting requirement for professional development needs of a public institution in an electronic system and defines an opportunity for a study leave based on a request of a civil servant. Similar to the other articles of the Law on Public Service, the provisions about professional development are also to be regulated by governmental decrees, which could interfere with the establishment of sustainable legal basis, as governmental decrees are more amenable to change than laws.

Main issues regarding professional development of civil servants are regulated by the Government Decree N242. Firstly, the scope of the governmental decree on professional development should be discussed. According to Article 1 of the Decree, the only target group of the legal act is professional civil servants and the law is targeted specifically towards their pro-

fessional development. The target group of the Law and the Concept of Public Service is also professional civil servants. However, according to Article 2 of the same Decree, its goal is to establish high professional standards in the public service and ensure its proper functioning, yet contractors are also currently actively contributing to the proper functioning of the system. The Decree doesn't mention contractors, total remuneration of whom in 2016 amounted to 170.35 million GEL and who, according to the current practice, actively perform regular activities in public institutions.

Article 4 of the Decree describes the criteria based on which professional development requirements of civil servants in a public institution are defined:

- Requirements relevant to each hierarchical rank;
- A job description of each employee;
- Performance evaluation results of each employee;
- Strategic goals and needs of a public institution.

Based on these criteria, by the end of the year, a structural unit responsible for human resources management must prepare an annual plan for employee professional development, based on a form pre-approved by the Public Service Bureau. Currently, an appropriate form to be approved by the head of the Public Service Bureau, as well as, annual plan forms for professional development are being developed. According to the public information received from public institutions, none of the ministries have conducted an evaluation of professional development needs of their employees yet.

The main new notions introduced by the Government Decree N242 are concepts of basic and additional professional development programs. A basic program is a combination of topics and competencies described in the annex of the Decree, and all civil servants, hired based on an open or closed competition, are required to complete it.



An additional professional development program is a voluntary instrument for the development of civil servant competencies and skills, requirement of its completion is defined by an individual public institution. An additional program may include any skill and/or content topic based on the above-mentioned criteria. Unlike a basic program, the Decree delegates a requirement for accreditation of additional programs to public institutions, while according to Paragraph 1 of Article 7 of the Decree, accreditation of basic professional programs is mandatory.

Ensuring high-quality educational programs is an important aspect of developing a sustainable and effective professional development system. According to the Government Degree N242, the accreditation process is managed by the LEPL National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement, it has to define an accreditation resolution, create an accreditation expert group and provide organizational and financial support to the accreditation council of professional development programs. Decisions regarding accreditation of a program are made by the accreditation council, members of which are selected and dismissed by the head of the Public Service Bureau.

Accreditation of educational programs is important to ensure that education and skills given to civil servants are identical across various institutions. In this regard, additional professional development programs should also be considered. As the experts and representatives of structural units responsible for human resources management at the ministries have mentioned in the focus group discussions, additional professional development programs are much more relevant to the current civil servants, as their knowledge and competencies are much more in alignment with such programs. Therefore, the requirement to ensure the quality of such programs should not be at the discretion of individual public institutions. It must also be noted that accreditation of highly-specialized programs can become problematic for the educational facilities as well, as they have to allocation extra financial resources and effort for a product of low market

demand. Therefore, the issue of establishing appropriate mandatory mechanisms for ensuring the quality of additional professional development programs must be raised when the Decree is amended – educational programs should be compatible with the needs of the beneficiaries, qualifications of trainers, education and skill transfer effectiveness, and general totality of all criteria based on which basic professional programs are to be evaluated, must also be established for additional programs.

According to Article 7 of the Government Decree N242, an accreditation term of a professional development program is determined to be 5 years. Expert focus group discussions have revealed that a 5-year term is excessively long. Unlike academic educational programs, professional development programs can be dynamic, narrowly focused, and fast-evolving, based on various needs of a public institution at various times. Furthermore, accreditation term of five years for academic programs is logical based on the number of criteria that the program has to comply with and such a term can be long to ensure existing flaws are remedied in that period. Similar to academic programs, professional education programs will be subject to mid-term quality assurance evaluation, conducted two or three years after the accreditation has been issued, making the five-year term even more adequate. These arguments notwithstanding, general term, as well as mid-term evaluation intervals can be reduced, making the quality monitoring process more dynamic.

Based on the Decree, LEPL National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement plays an important role in quality assurance of professional development programs. Since 2010, the center has accumulated significant experience in academic program quality assurance sphere, however, as the processes associated with the professional development programs are novel, there are several issues that could cause complications for the Center in the future. Specifically, the main competence of the National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement up to now has been quality assurance of academic (university) programs



and the work associated with accreditation of the professional development programs is dissimilar. Opinions expressed during the study showed that it not known how the professional development program accreditation standard defined by the Center will function. The accreditation standard will consist of two components - programmatic part and resources of the educational facility. The programmatic part will include criteria like structure, goals, educational plan, materials, criteria for knowledge evaluation, etc. An opinion has been expressed that after the implementation of the accreditation process, the accreditation standard might have to be reviewed. Among the complexities, the issue of the selection of the accreditation expert group has been named, arising from the lack of experience in this sphere. In the analysis of the future needs, the Center has issued an assessment that it is materially sustainable and in the process of the professional development program accreditation it might just need to increase human resources dedicated to the accreditation process.

A relationship between an educational facility and the Center in the process of the accreditation is of significance. According to the participating experts, as the concept of accreditation by an external evaluator might be foreign to some educational facilities and all programs are executed based on best practices defined by the facilities themselves, most of the facilities might not have any experience working with external evaluators. It's essential that educational facilities understand that their products will be evaluated for quality by a third party.

In the evaluation of the Government Decree N242, the expert focus group discussed the fact that the regulation doesn't address the issue of continuous education of current civil servants and establishment of a common standard of qualitative knowledge, required on various levels of a career of civil servants. Even though the Decree defines the procedures for the definition of professional needs, it doesn't include a long-term vision as to what qualitative components should be included in the continuous educational programs of

civil servants. According to this position, a longitudinal analysis is essential for determination of knowledge and skills required for holding various positions.

An important part of the Government Decree N242 is an annex, which includes main qualitative characteristics of two types of basic educational programs. These modules are management skills and development of personal and professional skills, and they are divided according to the ranks of employees. Management skills module includes employees of I and II rank (high and middle management level), while personal and professional skill development module is for employees of III and IV rank (senior and junior specialists). The content of basic professional development programs looks like this:



I and II Rank

Module	Subjects	Competencies	Minimum and maximum number of academic hours
Management Skills	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strategic planning-management (strategic management, planning of long- and mid-term goals and aims, development of an action plan); 2. Service and quality management, risk management, change management; 3. Decision-making, leadership and team management, team enhancement and motivation, gender equality and prevention of sexual harassment at work; 4. Professional communication, effective communication and effective negotiations, media communication and public speaking; 5. Ethics in public service, conflict resolution, organizational culture, anticorruption politics and legal methods of fighting against corruption. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective communication and negotiation management skill; • Public institution representation skill; • Strategic and complex thinking skill; • Defining personal and structural unit goals; • Change/innovation initiation and management skill; • Meeting management skill; • Skill for professional development, evaluation, and motivation of a civil servant; • Team development skill; • Problem solution and conflict resolution skill. 	24-40



III and IV rank

Module	Subjects	Competencies	Minimum and maximum number of academic hours
Development of personal and professional skills	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Administrative Processing. 2. Ethics in public service. 3. Professional communication, cooperation, and team work. 4. Effective service and time management. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective communication; • Working independently; • Working in a team; • Complex thinking; • Effective time management; • Information collection and analysis; • Task planning and organization; • Detail-oriented information collection and analysis. 	16-24

An analysis of the modules in the annex of the Decree reveals a discrepancy between the listed subjects and the competencies, meaning that there are competencies listed for which there is no appropriate subject defined in the Decree and vice versa, there are subjects mentioned for which there are no appropriate competencies in the module. For example, the management module includes a subject Ethics in Public Service, Conflict Management, Organizational Culture, Anti-Corruption Policy and Legal Methods of Fighting Corruption, however, there is no mention of competencies that an employee should acquire in this subject. A similar issue can be found in the basic program for III and IV rank employees - the list includes Administrative Processing and Ethics in Public Service subjects, but doesn't define the competencies that need to be enhanced through these subjects. Such ambiguity can be negatively reflected on the process of program accreditation, as it creates a discrepancy between the subjects and competencies and makes it impossible to

determine what type of knowledge needs to be transferred through the program. Additionally, the disparity between the subject and competence definitions creates complication in the knowledge quality evaluation, as the knowledge acquired after the completion of the program cannot be measured if there are no clearly defined competencies that need to be acquired in the subject.

The National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement wasn't involved in the process of the Decree Annex development, and therefore, it is unknown whether the totality of subjects and competencies will be sufficient for accreditation requirements. In the future, it is recommended that the technical parts of the annexes to the educational programs be inspected with active participation from the National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement and the Public Service Bureau, which will be able to technically evaluate whether a relationship between a program subject and a competence is appropriately defined.



The focus group participants expressed an opinion that activities targeted towards required skill development for newly-appointed civil servants don't need to be planned in the basic program and the focus should be on acquisition of qualitative knowledge, while skill-oriented educational activities can be included in the additional professional development programs.

Regarding the content, the expert focus group participants have recommended reassessment and expansion of the subjects included in the basic program based on a longitudinal analysis. The majority of civil servants participating in the focus groups pointed out that employees without higher legal education have difficulty working on legal texts and a lack of general legal knowledge is an issue. Thus, a need for a program dedicated to general legal knowledge was emphasized by the participants. Additionally, a favorable position for the inclusion of budgetary topics, microeconomics, external relations (in regards to the EU Association Agreement) and informational technologies in the basic program was expressed.

One of the most significant issues in the civil servant professional development system is financial appropriation. According to the public information received from the ministries and the positions expressed in the focus groups, a lack of financial resources significantly undermines the sustainability of the civil servant professional development system. As participation of civil servants in the professional development programs is associated with significant financial resources, the representatives of the structural units responsible for human resources management at the ministries are unable to comply with unanticipated requests for funds that may arise during a year as such provisions were not made in advance in the budget. Despite the

fact, that the current legislative framework defines a requirement for determination of professional development needs, it doesn't address the financial side of the issue. Even though the Concept of Public Service Reform discusses allocation of fixed share of a budget to professional development, the Law and the Government Decree N242 do not reflect this recommendation. An absence of such a provision creates a risk that despite defining professional development needs a public institution won't be able to plan and implement educational activities. Therefore, it is essential that the issue of financial resources for professional development be reflected in the legislation.

Article 9 of the Decree also determines that the services associated with the professional development must be procured based on the existing legislation, which could also be a further complication for a procuring public institution. Most participants of the focus group find utilization of the standard procuring practice in regards to professional development services problematic, as, frequently, these procedures are divergent from the individual needs of an institution. This issue is particularly acute in case of additional professional development programs, as such specific services might be needed by a public body infrequently or only in the exceptional cases.

Additionally, the representatives of the ministries believe that the Law on Public Procurement may prevent them from acquiring specific services they might need for individual employees. This issue requires additional consultations between the procuring institutions and the State Procurement Agency to define a need for a separate regulation of this issue.



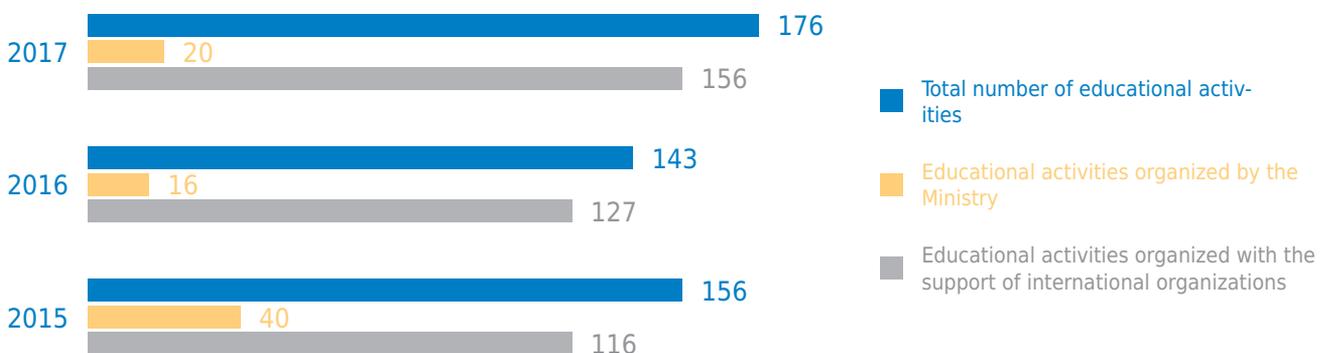
General Situation at Educational Facilities and Ministries

Ministries

For the analysis of the civil servant professional development system, it is important to examine the activities conducted by the ministries for determination of the professional development needs, as well as, how they plan and execute educational process. According to the public information, in 2015-2017 period seven

ministries administered a total of 475 educational activities, which included domestic and foreign trainings funded by the ministries and international organizations.

Number of Educational Activities at the Ministries in 2015-2017



According to the data displayed in the graph above, 74% of the educational activities conducted by the seven ministries were funded by international organizations, clearly demonstrating a lack of resources dedicated to the professional development of employees at the ministries. Additionally, the lack of funds directed at professional development activities is further

attested by the amount of resources spent – in the ministries surveyed for this study in 2015-2017 GEL 1,100,475 was spent (excluding Ministry of Internal Affairs)².

² The information provided by the Ministry of Internal Affairs does not show what share of the budget was spent on the professional development of its public servants, however main part of the shown amount is directed towards development of employees with special rank (including policemen).



Total expenditure of ministries on the professional development of public servants in 2015-2017 (GEL)

Ministry		2017	2016	2015
1.	Ministry of Finance	–	–	–
2.	Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from Occupied Territories, Labor, Health and Social Affairs of Georgia	–	–	–
3.	Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport	–	–	300
4.	Ministry of Internal Affairs	6,741,500	6,735,000	6,170,000
5.	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	345,000	352,000	385,000
6.	Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure	2,420	4,250	2,450
7.	Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture	850	7,755	450

Evaluation process of professional development skills among employees varies across the ministries studied in this survey. As the legal requirement for the definition of professional development was established by the governmental decree in 2018, most institutions haven't yet conducted such an evaluation based on

a common standard. Despite the absence of formal requirements and a common standard, there are ministries where the structural units responsible for human resources management conduct the evaluation of professional development needs.

Determination of civil servant professional development needs at the ministries in 2015-2017

Ministry		Evaluation of employee professional needs was conducted	Evaluation of employee professional needs was not conducted
1.	Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure	✓	
2.	Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture	✓	
3.	Ministry of Finance	✓	
4.	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	✓	
5.	Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport		✗
6.	Ministry of Internal Affairs		✗
7.	Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from Occupied Territories, Labor, Health and Social Affairs of Georgia		✗

According to the public information, a part of the ministries determines professional development needs of its civil servants. However, the existing practice shows that the current approaches are fragmented and inconsistent. For example, the Administration of the Ministry of Finance defines professional development needs of its employees annually. The Department of Human Resources sends a questionnaire to all structural units of the Ministry, where heads of the structural units and employees define needs for two types of trainings - necessary and desirable. Based on consolidation of the results of the survey, an analysis document of necessary trainings is compiled, the Department of Human Resources of the Ministry in cooperation with LEPL Academy of the Ministry of Finance and other educational facilities then organizes trainings, if possible. Similarly, a practice of identification of employee professional development needs exists at the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture.

The process of determining professional development needs is more clearly outlined at the Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure - a dedicated form for identification of such needs exists, and the heads of structural units are responsible for filling them out. The form includes information about a position of an employee, their job description and required knowledge and skills. Additionally, a separate field is included for a desired training topic, number of employees who wish to participate and length of the training. After the form has been filled out, a professional development plan is created, which includes information on qualification advancement, ranks of the employees and their number, activity/method of the professional development, approximate length of the activity, and priority evaluation of the educational activity. As currently there is no common standard for determining professional development needs, the process at the Ministry of the Regional Development and Infrastructure can be considered as a best practice. However, it is unclear to what extent the educational plans are successfully implemented, as in 2015-2017 period the budget allocated to professional development was GEL 9120, which is not sufficient for large-scale educational programs.

Despite positive examples, the majority of public servants participating in the focus groups believe that public institutions do not support the professional development of their employees sufficiently, as the institutions rarely offer educational programs tailored to the individual needs of the employees. A part of respondents also believes, there is no connection between the offered educational programs and, usually, they are on dissimilar topics. Some of the participants stated that a part of the trainings is usually offered by a third party (mainly international organization) and has very little relevance to the actual jobs performed by the employees. Additionally, an absolute majority of the participants maintained that a department for human resources is usually involved in the determination of professional development needs and the role of the actual supervisor is minimal. Some civil servants expressed an opinion that the professional need evaluation process resembled a survey as to what type of training would be most useful to employees. It was a position of these employees that three parties should be involved in the professional development need determination process, including a direct supervisor of the employee and a representative of the structural unit responsible for human resources management. Additionally, some participants expressed a belief that it would be more beneficial to focus on long-term perspective when defining professional development goals, and rather than identifying a specific training program, to determine a long-term individual training program tailored to an individual employee.

One of the flaws mentioned by the civil servants was the fact that the training courses aren't unified in a program and often related content is dispersed in different courses, obstructing consolidation of knowledge and its application. According to the participants, one of the main reasons for this is the short length of the training courses which often do not exceed two days, due to this fact important content is often broadly compiled and there is no opportunity to learn or discuss them more fundamentally. According to some members of the focus group, civil servants often are selected for the training courses not based on their needs but based on who has free time during the pe-



riod of the course. A part of participants also stated that the courses are often focused on the transfer of specific knowledge and less attention is paid to the development of skills.

The ministries and their educational facilities often cooperate in planning and execution of various educational activities. Despite the fact, that all these educational facilities exist as independent subjects and some of them have own income sources, all facilities define professional development of the human resources of the respective ministry as their mission and a goal.

According to the majority of the respondents, international organizations play a leading role in the pro-

fessional development activities of civil servants. International organizations provide financial support for professional development activities requested by various ministries, as well as invite civil servants to training courses organized through their own initiative. In 2015-2017 306 educational activities on various topics were organized by international/donor organizations in the seven ministries participating in this study. Additionally, in the same period, the civil servants of the seven ministries participated in 282 educational events taking place outside of the country, a significant part of these educational trips were supported by international organizations.

Educational activities conducted with the support of international organizations in 2015-2017		
Ministry		Number of educational activities
1.	Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport	23
2.	Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure	44
3.	Ministry of Internal Affairs	90
4.	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	42
5.	Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture	86
6.	Ministry of Finance	16
7.	Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from Occupied Territories, Labor, Health and Social Affairs of Georgia	86
		Total 306

A comparative analysis of professional development programs conducted by international/donor organizations and the ministries reveals the leading role international organizations have in this regard. Additionally, the size of the financial support by the donor or-

ganizations shows that the resources allocated by the state for professional development of its civil servants are not sufficient.



Analysis of Individual Educational Facilities

Surveyed educational facilities can be divided into two groups – specialized educational centers, beneficiaries of which are mostly servicemen of special, military or another type of rank and facilities that conduct educational programs for civil servants and private individuals. Specialized individual facilities are:

- The Academy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs;
- The Center for Development of the Penitentiary and Probation System Employees;
- General Giorgi Kvinitadze Cadet Military Academy;
- Electoral Systems Development, Reform and Training Center.

The bylaws of the above-mentioned educational facilities also include professional development of civil servants, however, their main function is training of special groups of beneficiaries. For example, Center for Penitentiary and Probation System Employees has conducted 26 various educational programs in 2016, 3900 individuals participated in these programs, of which only 119 were civil servants of the Ministry, while 3768 were employees of the Department of Penitentiary, penitentiary institutions and Probation Agency. None of the training courses from the 26 conducted by the Center in 2016 corresponds with the subjects and competencies defined by the Government Decree N242, which further confirms that such educational centers are focused on specialized knowledge and competencies.

Among specialized educational facilities is LEPL General Giorgi Kvinitadze Cadet Military Academy, which is a legal entity of the Ministry of Defense. Despite its educational profile, the main goal of the military academy is general education and military preparation of cadets. Due to the military academy's mandate and its goal, it has no clear goal in the professional development of civil servants.

Similar to the Military Academy and the Center for Development of the Penitentiary and Probation System

Employees, the Academy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs is also a specialized educational facility and a vast majority of its beneficiaries are service people of a special rank of the ministry and its system. Educational programs and training courses offered by the Academy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs in 2015-2017 were targeted towards detective-investigators, patrol-inspectors, expert-criminologists, border policemen and employees of the academy. In the reporting period, 5767 employees participated in the professional development programs, the majority of whom were individuals with a special rank.

Among the subjects with a special mandate is LEPL Electoral Systems Development, Reform and Training Center, which is an educational facility under the Central Election Commission. Main beneficiaries of the center are parties involved in the election process – employees of the election administration, members of the district electoral commissions, members of the polling station electoral commissions, representatives of observer missions, political parties, representatives of media and voters. According to the mandate given to the facility by the Election Code, the mission of the Center is to conduct educational activities necessary in the electoral process and raise awareness about elections in the general population. Despite the specialized thematic direction of the center, civil servants are well represented among its beneficiaries, specifically employees of election administration, central and local public institutions. For example, in 2015 4563 individuals participated in the educational and informational events of the Center, among the participants, along with the above-mentioned beneficiaries, were university and high school students.³

The activities conducted by the specialized educational facilities and a large number of their beneficiaries attest to the fact that these facilities have significant experience and technical resources, as every year they organize and conduct training courses. However, analysis of the beneficiaries and educational programs



demonstrates that professional civil servants are not a target group of these institutions and educational programs offered by them don't have much in common with the subjects and competencies defined under the Governmental Decree N242.

Structural units, that do not exist independently and are parts of public institutions also might have a mandate for civil servant education. Following structural units of public institutions have such a mandate:

- Training Center of the State Procurement Agency
- is one of the departments of the LEPL State Procurement Agency
- Educational Center of the Parliament of Georgia
- is a structural unit of the Department for the

Human Resources Management of the Parliament Administration

- Center for Professional Development and Career Management of the Human Resources Management and Development Department of the Prosecutor's Office of Georgia.

In surveyed educational facilities, particular attention was paid to the organizations that do not have a specialized group of beneficiaries and serve all types of individuals working in the private or public sector. Nonetheless, financial indicators of these facilities and a total number of beneficiaries that went through their programs were analyzed.

Analysis of Current Processes and Practices at the Educational Facilities

According to the Law on Public Service and its subordinate acts, state educational facilities should have a leading role in providing professional education services to civil servants. Therefore, it is imperative to analyze current practices of educational process planning, execution, quality assurance, accountability, trainer and beneficiary selection, teaching methods and subject selection at these facilities.

The mandatory character of the professional educational programs as directed by the new law will most likely affect the demand on services at the educational facilities, as a broad participation of civil servants in the educational programs is expected. Therefore, it is important to evaluate the resources of the educational facilities.

An analysis of the interviews demonstrated that the practice of educational process planning, execution, and quality assurance varies across the facilities. Additionally, content offered through the educational

programs of these facilities differs due to their thematic focus, however, despite divergent goals, these programs include similar content topics and competencies.

Based on the content of the educational programs, the facilities can be divided into two groups - narrow and broad content profile educational facilities. Educational facilities with a narrow, specialized profile, generally, provide courses regarding specific topic or direction, while multi-profile facilities offer beneficiaries broader selection of courses and competencies.

Educational facilities with a narrow profile are:

- LEPL Training Center of the State Procurement Agency - is one of the departments of the State Procurement Agency and offers educational programs regarding state procurement;
- LEPL Environmental Protection Information and Education Center - conducts educational and in-

³ A Report of LEPL Electoral Systems Development, Reform and Training Center 2015



formational activities around environmental protection topics;

- LEPL Electoral Systems Development, Reform and Training Center – is responsible for the education of parties responsible for elections and raising general awareness on election topics;
- LEPL Defense Institution Building School – mainly administers educational programs about defense and national security topics;
- LEPL Levan Mikeladze Diplomatic Training and Research Institute – mainly offers beneficiaries educational programs on foreign relations and diplomatic service.

Multi-profile educational facilities administer educational programs on various topics and are not focused

Beneficiaries of the Facilities

Beneficiaries of the facilities surveyed in this study include a wide spectrum of interested parties, however, they can be grouped based on their type. Among the educational facilities are training centers beneficiaries of which include not only employees of the parent institution but also employees of other public institutions, employees of private companies and interested private individuals. Analysis has shown several facilities that have a broad spectrum of beneficiaries:

- LEPL Training Center of Justice
- LEPL Academy of the Ministry of Finance
- LEPL Environmental Protection Information and Education Center
- LEPL Training Center of the State Procurement Agency

The Training Center of Justice and the Academy of the Ministry of Finance are particularly noteworthy, as along with working with civil servants, they actively cooperate with the private sector and receive independent income from various educational activities. However, above-mentioned educational facilities do not keep a record of their beneficiaries based on their type.

on any particular topic. Generally, such facilities offer beneficiaries a selection of various content topics and skill development:

- LEPL Training Center of Justice
- LEPL Academy of the Ministry of Finance
- LEPL Zurab Zhvania School of Public Administration
- Educational Center of the Parliament of Georgia

There are also specialized training centers that administer professional development programs targeted towards employees, that do not fall under the category of civil servants. Such facilities are discussed in a separate chapter.

The second category of educational facilities administer sectoral or topical educational activities and have homogenous beneficiaries. For example, beneficiaries of Zurab Zhvania School of Public Administration are individuals and civil servants in regions (including regions with ethnic minorities and mountainous regions). Beneficiaries of Defense Institution Building School are mostly representatives of the defense and security sector, while Levan Mikeladze Diplomatic Training and Research Institute serves mostly employees of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs system. Beneficiaries of the Educational Center of the Parliament of Georgia are mostly members of Staff of the Parliament, however, in some cases, Members of the Parliament also participate in the educational programs organized by the Center.



Number of beneficiaries of educational facilities in 2015-2017					
Facility		2017	2016	2015	Total
1.	Training Center of Justice	6,736	13,029	4,968	24,733
2.	Academy of the Ministry of Finance	5,771	3,892	4,964	14,627
3.	Training Center of the State Procurement Agency	1,002	851	549	2,402
4.	Environmental Protection Information and Education Center	–	–	3,150	3,150
5.	Zurab Zhvania School of Public Administration	3,333	3,914	1,699	8,946
6.	Levan Mikeladze Diplomatic Training and Research Institute	340	521	322	1,183
7.	Vano Khukhunaishvili Center for Effective Governance System and Territorial Arrangement Reform	117	607	1,689	2,413
8.	Educational Center of the Parliament of Georgia	–	–	288	288
Total		17,299	22,814	17,629	55,329

Information received during the study demonstrated that the majority of educational facilities do not categorize their beneficiaries, making it hard to find out what share of the beneficiaries were civil servants. However, the in-depth interviews revealed that most of the beneficiaries of such educational facilities are civil servants of the parent ministry – the centers actively collaborate with the structural units responsible for human resources management on professional development of these employees. For example, in case of the Training Center of Justice, 70% of the beneficiaries are employees of the parent ministry and its system, while remaining 30% includes civil servants of other public institutions, private companies, and private individuals. Unlike the Training Center of Justice, a much smaller share of beneficiaries of the Academy of the Ministry of Finance are civil servants of the parent ministry. According to 2017 data, only 1263 beneficiaries out of total 5771 were employees of the Ministry of Finance or its system, while 4508 were civil servants of other institutions, private companies, and private individuals.

In the absolute majority of educational facilities, communication with the beneficiaries is done proactively, meaning that these centers disseminate information about their educational programs. As the existing practice shows, to attract beneficiaries, these facilities actively work with the structural units responsible for human resources management at the ministries and other public institutions. Initially, an educational facility consults with a representative of the human resources department, providing information about planned educational programs. Next, the human resources department, in consultation with heads of structural units, selects individuals that will participate in the program. In cases where a public institution contacts an educational facility to request a training course, the educational program is tailored to the needs of the beneficiary.

In some facilities, beneficiaries are recruited based on an open call, during which the educational facility announces a selection process for an offered program and disseminates information about the training program across various channels. For example, the Train-



ing Center of Justice has a special form on its website, that offers interested organizations and private individuals an opportunity to express their expectations about the content of the training program, the training process is then tailored individually to the organization or the potential beneficiary.

In regards to the number of beneficiaries an educational facility can train throughout a year, a majority of the facilities surveyed in this study stated that they have not had any challenges to meet the demand and have material-technical and other resources to conduct as many training courses as would be required. The only limitation that the educational facilities have in terms of resources is the number of concurrent trainings and number of beneficiaries participating in them. Most of the facilities stated that they limit the number of beneficiaries that can participate in individual courses as a large number of participants makes it difficult to effectively transfer knowledge.

An exception in terms of limitations is the Training Center of the State Procurement Agency, which finances the educational programs on state procurement from its own budget and offers free participation in these courses. According to the representative of the institution, they serve on average 900-1000 beneficiaries a year, however, the demand for their courses exceeds their supply by 200-300%. These limitations are due to the number of classrooms, trainers leading the courses and insufficient financial resources.

Teaching Methods

In the analysis of the educational facilities, it is valuable to evaluate the teaching methods used by these facilities, as the methods are closely related to the Government Decree N242 regarding professional development of civil servants, and a wide variety of teaching methods demonstrates a high quality of the service offered by these facilities.

Article 5 of the Government Decree N242 states that civil servant professional development programs may be taught through the following methods/forms:

- Electronic course – distance learning;
 - Classroom course – studying through a lecture, seminar, or other formats with a trainer present;
 - Masterclass – sharing of experience through a seminar or other format by a professional of the relevant sphere;
 - Learning by doing – practice-oriented learning.
- All educational facilities surveyed in this study use these methods in multifarious forms. In-depth interviews revealed that a method used least frequently is a masterclass, however, 70% of the facilities have some experience conducting a masterclass. Furthermore, the representatives of the educational facilities emphasized electronic courses and distant learning. As the participants noted, in recent years the facilities are actively working on the development of electronic learning resources and they aim to make more educational programs accessible electronically, as distant learning methods are convenient for beneficiaries and require less financial resources.

Most facilities favor a joint method, in which lectures and seminars are coupled with practice-oriented activities and group works. The Training Center for Justice and Defense Institution Building School, along with practice-oriented learning, use so-called learning by playing method, which, according to the respondents is a particularly effective instrument for skill development.

The Government Decree N242 lists the teaching methods that can be used in the administration of the basic and additional programs for civil servant professional development. However, the Decree doesn't define characteristics that should accompany each teaching method. The inclusion of a precise provision on teaching method in the Decree is crucial, as this element is an essential component of the program accreditation and it is recommended to clearly determine which criteria should be used in the evaluation of teaching methods/forms in the accreditation process. The ambiguity of the provision in the Government Decree was



also underlined by the participants of the expert focus group, noting that the methods are vaguely defined and more detailed clarifications are needed.

Most civil servant participants of the expert groups noted that, the training courses in which they have taken part, have mostly used lecture and/or seminar format, with an additional component of group work. Additionally, 7 respondents stated that they have participated in a masterclass, while only two civil servants out of 16 respondents said they have used a distant learning method. The two electronic courses taken by both participants were offered by the Academy of Ministry of Finance and concerned public finance management and legal writing. A majority of the participating civil servants noted that they prefer educational programs in which a shorter period is allocated to a lecture component and more attention is paid to practical learning and discussion of case studies.

Planning of the Educational Process

Planning of the training process is an important step for the educational facilities participating in professional development of civil servants, as it is on this stage that all main activities for the year are planned. An annual educational plan is an action plan, in which the priorities of the organization for the year are reflected. In some cases, an educational plan is based on the long-term strategic document of the facility itself or the parent ministry. For example, educational plan of the Electoral Systems Development, Reform and Training Center is based on the 5-year strategic plan of the Central Election Commission – implementing educational activities for the beneficiaries of the Center is one of the main priorities in the plan⁴.

Generally, the practice of planning educational process is non-homogenous in the training centers, as the facilities develop documents of different content and goals. There are cases where the facilities do not have an annual educational plan at all. For example,

Levan Mikeladze Diplomatic Training and Research Institute and the Educational Center of the Parliament of Georgia are currently working on an annual educational plan and other strategic documents, due to the institutional changes and reforms taking place at these facilities.

There are no guiding documents for the development of educational plans in the educational facilities surveyed here, however, in most institutions, the process and responsible parties are clearly defined. Along with the employees of the educational facility, representatives of the parent institutions are also actively engaged in the development process of educational plans, as employees of the parent institution are usually the largest group of beneficiaries and it is crucial to reflect their needs in the annual plan of the educational facility. In some cases, the strategic document of the educational facility is directly approved by the head of the parent structure – for example, the mid-term action plan of Zurab Zhvania School of Public Administration is approved by the Decree N620 of the Minister of Education, Science, Culture and Sport of Georgia on July 3, 2018, further underlining the active role the parent institutions play in the process of educational plan development.

In some cases, general activities to be implemented by a facility are outlined in its strategy document, which also includes educational plans. For example, the Academy of the Ministry of Finance has a Strategic Plan for 2015-2020, which includes the goals of the facility and appropriate activities, as well as educational plan with information on planned educational activities, their duration, number of beneficiaries and expected revenue.

It is unclear in regards to the educational plans how these facilities plan ad hoc activities that could arise during a year based on requests of private companies, private individuals, or other public bodies. Making predictions and estimations about such requests in annual educational plans would be important, as to prevent

⁴ The Strategic Plan of Election Administration of Georgia for 2015-2019, p. 11



future challenges with facility resources and its capacity. Additionally, it is essential for the implementation of a common standard in the facility that educational plan development is based on identical information type, making the activities that the facility is conducting for professional development of civil servants more distinct.

Development of Training Programs

One of the most important factors in evaluation of a training facility performance is the process of educational plan development, as to a large extent, it determines the quality of the service provided by the educational facility and its relevance to the needs of the beneficiaries. When analyzing the process of educational plan development, it is important to evaluate the parties involved in the process, whether internal regulations or guidelines exist for the development of such a program, what role do trainers play in the program development, etc.

The representatives of the educational facilities stated in the interviews that in the absolute majority of the institutions there is a clearly defined process for development of educational programs, however in none of the facilities surveyed here exists a pre-approved procedure or guideline document that would define minimum requirements that need to be met during the program development. Such a document would first of all be useful in the accreditation process of the facility, as it would include the aspects the facility should pay particular attention to in the program development process. Furthermore, such a document would contribute to the establishment of a common standard among facilities, which in turn would have an impact on the quality of the educational programs offered at these facilities.

Currently, the process of program development is different in all educational facilities surveyed in this study, however, there are some significant common-

alities. In all educational facilities, there is a structural unit or individuals responsible for development of a program, leading the whole process from the first stage to the pilot. In most educational facilities, there is a structural unit with the main goal of developing an educational program. For example, Defense Institution Building School, Zurab Zhvania School of Public Administration, the Academy of the Ministry of Finance, Diplomatic Training and Research Institute and Electoral Systems Development, Reform and Training Center all have structural units responsible for educational program development.

The facilities that are not independent bodies have a different approach. For example, at the Educational Center of the Parliament of Georgia and Training Center of the Public Procurement Bureau the heads of the facilities supervise educational program development.

The Training Center of Justice has a distinct approach to program development – based on four possible content directions (social, legal, financial, IT) of an educational program, an appropriate structural unit leads the program development process. In terms of process, the practice at the Training Center of Justice is the most detailed and is based on need-based individual approach. After a request for an educational course has been registered, representatives of the center start analyzing what led to the need for a training for the beneficiary and what are the goals of the educational activity. Next, the center representatives conduct an interview with the client organization, research future job scope of a beneficiary and if needed, conduct a focus group meeting. Based on identified needs, the Training Center of Justice selects potential trainers that are experienced in the requested topic. After the selection of possible candidates, one or several trainers present their vision of the training course. The center also organizes a meeting between the trainer and client, where the proposed approach is discussed. After the development of a syllabus, a pilot



training program is launched for one group, based on the results of the pilot the training program is modified and then provided for the main group.

Similar to the Training Center of Justice, a trainer has a leading role in educational program development at the Academy of the Ministry of Finance. Thus, selection of a trainer is one of the first steps in program design. The selected trainer develops a program syllabus based on the needs determined by the Academy, which then is discussed with a manager responsible for the program, a representative of the financial department and head of the facility. After an approval is granted, the program is added to the training calendar.

Another important aspect of program development is a process of reviewing and updating the program. Every surveyed educational facility reviews its programs annually. Parties that are responsible for the development of these programs actively participate in the process. The programs are usually updated based on experience acquired in the monitoring process of these programs. In the revising process, consideration is given to the feedback of the beneficiaries, as well as, flaws and needs identified by the trainers and the educational facilities. As the majority of the interviewees stated, the revision process mainly concerns the content of the program, especially in case of programs focused on legal issues and legislation.

Trainers of Educational Programs

As the analysis has revealed, in cases of some programs, a trainer takes a leading role in program development, which further points to the importance of selecting a qualified trainer. During the execution of a program content competence of a trainer and their skills and experience in leading a training are essential. Currently all educational facilities have a database of trainers, where information about their competences is included. The database includes the trainers with whom the facility has already worked before. A direct contract is signed with the trainers in the database when they are hired for a course and no open call is

announced. A part of facilities updates the database when such a need arises, while another updates them constantly independent of an actual need.

In the educational facilities, it is frequently the case that staff members also act as trainers. Such a practice exists in all facilities surveyed in this study, however, it is particularly common at facilities with a specialized focus. For example, most trainers of the Training Center of the State Procurement Agency are also employees of the center. In such cases, these individuals receive additional remuneration, as they conduct the training outside of their work hours.

There are no established special procedures for the selection of trainers, and usually, they are selected based on an open call or individual negotiation. In some facilities, potential trainers are regularly invited and those interested in conducting a training are encouraged to submit their resumes and training course proposal to the educational facility. According to some of the educational facilities, they try to attract trainers that are employed in public service or have a similar experience.

There are no minimum requirements for selection of a trainer, however, most educational facilities require experience in conducting a training and a proof of subject expertise. Despite this, the facilities conduct training of trainers (ToT), ensuring the trainer skills match needs of the educational facility. Despite the experience requirement, there were cases when educational facilities have hired candidates with no experience. In such cases, the facility conducts training of the candidate. Such practice is common in cases where the facility is in a need of a very specialized knowledge and candidates might not have any experience in conducting such a training.



Programs Conducted by Educational Facilities

Discussing programs already administered by the educational facilities is one of the main components of their performance evaluation. First of all, an analysis of the training programs is important to reveal whether these programs are in compliance with the subjects and competencies of the basic professional development programs defined by the Government Decree N242. Additionally, analysis of the programs offered by the educational facilities is crucial to evaluate their general capabilities for providing professional development services to civil servants.

An analysis of public information and in-depth interviews demonstrated that a majority of the educational facilities do have experience in providing study courses for subjects defined in the Government Decree N242. Exceptions are the Training Center of the State Procurement Agency, Environmental Protection Information and Education Center, Electoral Systems Development, Reform and Training Center, and the Training Center of the Parliament of Georgia. These four facilities do not teach the subjects listed in the Govern-

ment Decree, as they work in specialized fields and their mandate doesn't include teaching subjects and competencies that fall under general professional development. As to the Training Center of the Parliament of Georgia, it is currently undergoing a reformation process and the direction of its educational programs are yet undefined.

In total, nine subjects for four ranks of civil servants are listed in the Decree, the educational facilities have various degrees of experience teaching these subjects. In total, 45% of subjects listed in the Decree are taught by 10 educational facilities, which could be considered a significant experience, taking into account that the Decree was approved only several months ago.

Information regarding individual subjects of the basic professional development program of civil servants provided by the educational facilities is presented in the table below.



I and II rank (Management Skills Module)

Facility	Subject				
	Strategic planning-management (strategic management, planning of long- and mid-term goals and aims, development of an action plan)	Service and quality management, risk management, change management	Decision-making, leadership and team management, team enhancement and motivation, gender equality and prevention of sexual harassment at work	Professional communication, effective communication and effective negotiations, media communication and public speaking	Ethics in public service, conflict resolution, organizational culture, anticorruption politics and legal methods of fighting against corruption
Training Center of Justice	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Academy of the Ministry of Finance	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗
Training Center of the State Procurement Agency	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
Environmental Protection Information and Education Center	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
Zurab Zhvania School of Public Administration	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Levan Mikeladze Diplomatic Training and Research Institute	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓
Vano Khukhunaishvili Center for Effective Governance System and Territorial Arrangement Reform	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓
Educational Center of the Parliament of Georgia	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
Defence Institution Building School	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓

Training Programs offered by the State Educational Facilities according to the Government Decree N242



III and IV rank (personal and professional skills)

Facility	Subject			
	Administrative Processing	Ethics in public service	Professional communication, cooperation, and team work.	Effective service and time management.
Training Center of Justice	✓	✓	✓	✓
Academy of the Ministry of Finance	✓	✗	✓	✓
Training Center of the State Procurement Agency	✗	✗	✗	✗
Environmental Protection Information and Education Center	✗	✗	✗	✗
Zurab Zhvania School of Public Administration	✓	✓	✓	✓
Levan Mikeladze Diplomatic Training and Research Institute	✗	✓	✓	✓
Vano Khukhunaishvili Center for Effective Governance System and Territorial Arrangement Reform	✓	✓	✗	✗
Educational Center of the Parliament of Georgia	✗	✗	✗	✗
Defence Institution Building School	✓	✗	✓	✓

It is also essential to analyze the competencies defined under the basic professional development program of civil servants, however, due to the incomplete information this is a difficult undertaking. Although, an analysis of several examples allows us to draw preliminary conclusions as to what extent the educational facilities develop competencies defined in the above-mentioned decree.

An analysis of the legislation has revealed cases where there is a discrepancy between the subjects and competencies listed in the Government Decree N242, creating ambiguity as to what should be a relationship between the subjects and competencies of the basic programs. Moreover, there are frequent cases where the listed competencies are taught in a program with a different name and/or with a different goal. Therefore, a competence may be a more accurate criterion for evaluating the programs of the educational facilities.

A total of 17 competencies are listed for two basic professional development programs – 9 competences in the management skills module and 8 in the professional and personal skills module. According to the in-depth interview with the representative of the Training

Center of Justice, the programs offered by the Center aim at developing all competencies listed in the Decree. These competencies are distributed across a wide variety of programs offered by the center, including subjects that are not listed in the Decree. Similar to the Training Center of Justice, the Academy of the Ministry of the Finance and Zurab Zhvania School of Public Administration also cover all competencies of the Decree. The educational programs of the Defense Institution Building School address 15 out of the 17 competencies. The educational programs of Levan Mikeladze Diplomatic Training and Research Institute develop/enhance 11 of these competencies – 5 from the management module and 6 from the professional and personal skills module.

The information provided by the educational facilities regarding the competencies demonstrates that the majority of these facilities have a capability for conducting basic professional development courses, while also giving a basis for an assumption that the competencies listed in the Government Decree can also be acquired outside of the listed subjects. A comparison of the educational programs and competencies also



revealed cases where the educational facility was not teaching a specific subject, but the competences of the module were integrated into another educational program.

Analysis of Financial Information of Training Centers

Various training centers participating in the study are integrated in the system of different ministries; however, they function as independent Legal Entities of Public Law, which in addition to budgetary funds also receive their own income.

In the 2015-2017 period, nine training centers received a total of GEL 69,764,291 from the state budget, which indicates that the state allocates significant financial resources for professional development of civil servants.

Institution		2017		2016		2015	
		State Budget	Grants and Alternative Income	State Budget	Grants and Alternative Income	State Budget	Grants and Alternative Income
1.	Training Center of Justice	1,835,000	1,782,800	2,485,000	1,939,500	2,200,800	2,155,400
2.	Ministry of Finance Academy	895,000	415,400	1,100,000	438,200	869,000	863,800
3.	Defense Institutional Building School	579,900	0	94,300	0	–	–
4.	Electoral Systems Development, Reforms and Training Center	7,088,092	0	6,379,200	0	4,985,000	0
5.	Levan Mikeladze Diplomatic Training Center of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs	316,600	3,200	326,300	5,700	288,600	95,300
6.	Zurab Zhvania School of Public Administration	316, 623	1,200	326,342	7,600	288,637	20,300
7.	Vano Khukhunaishvili Center for Effective Governance Systems and Territorial Reform	260,000	0	270,222.9	0	275,000	0

8.	MIA Academy	6,291,396	833,500	6,244,991	590,900	6,006,678	503,500
9.	Environmental Information and Education Center	1,920,800	413,100	4,727,600	292,500	824,400	160,700
10.	Training Center of Corrections and Probation	921,600	0	1,405,410	0	991,000	0
11.	Cadet Military Lyceum	3,165,100	577,200	2,811,800	210,800	3,561,500	199,900
Total 2015 - 2017		23,590,111	4,026,400	26,171,165	3,485,200	20,002,015	3,998,900

Since training centers exist in the form of Legal Entities of Public Law and have the right to receive alternative income, it is interesting to examine the funds that training centers received in addition to state funding. In the 2015-2017 period, 11 training centers received GEL 11,510,500 as grants and other income, which is six times less than what they have received from the state budget. Significant difference between state and alternative funding underlines the challenge of financial sustainability that the majority of training centers are facing. Among the listed training centers there are institutions that are less likely to receive alternative income - for example, the Electoral Systems Development, Reforms and Training Center and the Corrections and Probation Training Center. Nevertheless, it is interesting to analyze income of other training centers that they have received between 2015-2017.

The Justice Training Center is the leading institution with regard to receiving alternative funding. In the past three years, the Justice Training Center has received GEL 5,877,700 for training of various beneficiaries. Additional income of the Ministry of Finance Academy is also remarkable - it has received GEL 1,717,400 between 2015 and 2017. The MIA Academy, Environmental Information and Education Center, and the Cadet Military Lyceum are also standing out with regard to receiving extra-budgetary income. As for other institutions, it is apparent that without support from the state budget, they will not be able to perform their duties, which is a challenge that needs to be addressed strategically.



Overview of Private Training Centers

In the 2015-2017 period, public institutions and state-owned enterprises have purchased training services of a total value of GEL 3,449,401 through Electronic Tenders, which further underlines the significant demand of the public sector for professional development services. The purchased services ranging from specific thematic trainings to general skills and competences. As for the beneficiaries, they included various types of professionals employed in the public sector.

Government Decree №242 envisages equal participation of public and private training centers in the provision of professional development services, which makes it more important to analyze the experience and attitudes of these private institutions.

The study examines experience of three private training centers with regard to elaboration of training programs, implementation of trainings and quality assurance mechanisms. The study also looked into the expectations of private training providers with regard to the new system of professional development and their potential role. These institutions were selected based on their leading role in the provision of training services to public institutions.

Private training providers pointed out that they actively participate in public procurement related to provision of training services and various types of civil servants represent a large number of their beneficiaries. Nevertheless, their services are mostly purchased by international and donor organizations, which support provision of training services to public institutions. This practice is also reiterated by the fact that public institutions allocate a limited amount of funds in addition to direct budgetary support that their subordinate training centers receive annually (see the above graph on Professional Development Costs Incurred by Ministries).

Private training centers mostly cooperate with central public institutions; however, their target audience also covers civil servants employed in local public institutions. Over the last two years, beneficiaries of

private training centers included, Office of the Chief Prosecutor, Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development, Administration of the President of Georgia, Public Service Development Agency, Crime Prevention Center, Public Procurement Agency, Central Elections Commission, State Property Agency, Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure, Civil Service Bureau etc.

Notwithstanding active cooperation with public institutions, representatives of three private training centers pointed out that provision of training services to public institutions is a small part of their work – in case of two training centers, conducting trainings for civil servants did not exceed 20% of their workload and one private training provider pointed out that training of civil servants represents more than 70% of their work.

Training programs offered by private institutions can be divided into two categories – trainings elaborated in advance, which are permanently offered to interested parties and on-demand trainings, which are elaborated upon the request of the client. On-demand trainings can vary in their substance and private providers are not limited in this regard. Nevertheless, these institutions offer programs, which they consider as their “strong side”. Training programs of private institutions examined in the study mostly focus on developing specific skills and are rarely focused on transferring specific substantive knowledge.

One of the factors that distinguishes private and public training centers is the methodology used for training. While public training centers mostly use traditional training methods, private training providers mostly use a combined method, which mostly focuses on practical components of training. Moreover, one of the private training institutions participating in the study administers a training program, which utilize their own innovative teaching methodology. As the representatives of training centers pointed out during the interview, their advantage mostly lies within the methods and processes that they utilize during training.



Trainers are significantly involved in elaborating professional development programs in private training providers. These programs are individually created and amended upon request of beneficiaries. One of the private training centers participating in the study possesses an ISO-9101 certificate, which requires a clearly outlined training elaboration procedure as one of the preconditions for receiving the certificate. The Justice Training Center and the Ministry of Finance Academy also possesses the above-mentioned certificate. Private training providers also have specifically designated staff that are responsible for coordinating the process of developing, conducting and renewing training programs, as well as for assuring their quality. Nevertheless, the syllabus of the training program is created by the trainer who determines duration, literature and additional details regarding the training.

From the perspective of quality assurance, trainers are using training plans, which determines the procedures that one has to follow from the beginning until the end of the program. All private training providers are using standard instruments to measure results of the intervention – *pre and post testing*, which measures how the skills and knowledge of the participant has

improved. Moreover, private institutions also use satisfaction surveys, where they assess the trainer and his/her capacity. One of the training centers pointed out that the trainer himself/herself analyzes results of the satisfaction survey. One of the important experiences that was shared by a representative of a training center is the long-term assessment of training results, when the private institution asks beneficiaries to reflect on the results of the training after several months after the completion of the program.

In general, private training providers participating in the study have pointed out that they are motivated to participate in provision of professional development services to public institutions; however, they have underlined that participation in public procurement procedures is often difficult and time-consuming. Another problematic factor raised by private institutions was the price. The bargaining process of public procurement significantly affects the price of the service, since they have to compete with public training centers that also receive budgetary support. The above-mentioned issue puts private training centers in a position when they are more disadvantaged.

Analysis of Focus Group Findings

Throughout the research process, focus group discussions have taken place with participation of three interested parties – civil servants, representatives of human resources divisions of ministries and experts of civil service issues. Input of each of the stakeholder groups is important not only for the analysis of current situation but also for identification of future steps. Below are some of the key findings identified during the focus group discussions.

Civil Servants

The majority participants of the civil servant focus group have noted that currently, public institutions

play a limited role in the process of professional development of civil servants. Most of the major effort in this regard are made by international and donor organizations, which only cover specific thematic areas. According to the participants of the focus group, challenges of the professional development system are linked to two key factors – lack of financial resources and absence of professional development programs that are tailored to the needs of civil servants. Civil Servants have underlined instances, where representatives of the human resources departments of the public institution have gathered data about professional development needs of civil servants; however, these efforts were not followed by implementation of training programs.



Civil Servants have also pointed out that training activities where they have participated were mostly focused on transferring specific substantive knowledge and did not aim to develop skills of civil servants. Nevertheless, the majority of the focus group participants have pointed out that trainings in which they have participated were useful and enabled them to increase substantive knowledge regarding a specific thematic area. Civil servants have also mentioned several types of trainings that could be useful for the performance of their duties – project management, team management, introduction to law and legal writing, legal drafting, budgetary issues and public finances, public procurement, disclosure of public information and personal data management, policy drafting etc.

During the analysis of training centers, civil servants have pointed out that they mostly utilize services of public training institutions; however, they have also referred to instances when an individual trainer is conducting the training event. The absolute majority of focus group participants have noted that throughout

the execution of their professional duties they have not used services of a private training institution. The causes of scarce utilization of private training services can be several – public institutions do not have financial resources to purchase private services and/or representatives of public institutions prefer training programs provided by public training centers.

While evaluating the quality of professional development programs administered by training centers, civil servants have stated that the qualification of the trainer is a decisive factor in determining the quality of the program. In this regard, feedback provided by civil servants was mixed. Part of the civil servants have pointed out that often the training becomes not interesting, because the trainer is not able to maintain their interest and attention. Some participants of the focus group have stated in certain cases the qualification of the trainer was not satisfactory with regard to a specific substantive issue. Another part of the focus group participants has stated that trainers were mostly qualified, well-prepared and are able to effectively transfer knowledge.

Representatives of HR Departments of Ministries

When discussing challenges of the professional development system, representatives of human resources departments of the ministries have mainly pointed out lack of financial resources as the core problem. Participants of the discussion have stated that in order to plan and administer professional development activities, they mostly depend on international organizations, since the budget mostly does not cover professional development costs. Despite lack of resources, ministries actively cooperate with public training centers and positively assess the quality of their services. Majority of the focus group participants found it difficult to make any projections with regard to practical implementation of Government Decree №242, since the proposed system is completely new and gaps and further needs will surface in the process of implementation.

Civil Service Field Professionals

Experts working on issues of civil service have pointed out that the system is fragmented and have additionally stated that current practices cannot guarantee formation of a systemic environment with regard to professional development of civil servants. Experts have underlined that currently, civil servants are not motivated to participate in training activities because participation in these trainings is not connected to their career development.

While analyzing Government Decree №242, participants of the focus group discussion have stated subjects and competencies listed in the managerial and personal and professional skills module are not clearly defined and their content is ambiguous. Moreover, it was also pointed out that it is difficult to identify which component is a subject and which part is a competency.



Respondents also stressed that classic accreditation of professional development programs is not relevant because quality assurance of such programs should be more flexible and simple. For example, one of the respondents has mentioned that the five-year accreditation period is too long and it is recommended to simplify the period. Moreover, respondents have pointed out that if the aim of accreditation is to ensure high quality of professional development programs, it is advisable to create quality assurance standards of additional professional development programs.

Participants of the focus group have also discussed the list of subjects and competences of the basic professional development program and have outlined that subjects and competences of both modules are incomplete and it is recommended to modify their content based on a longitudinal analysis of skills and competences in the public sector.

Participants of the focus group have also stated that generally, public training centers operate well and offer high-quality products to their beneficiaries. Nevertheless, respondents have raised the issue of an unequal setting between public and private training centers. According to the respondents, it is much easier for public training centers to attract beneficiaries because they also represent the public sector and decisions are often made in their favor. One of the participants has underlined the in light of competition between public and private training centers, it is important to conduct the accreditation process in an impartial manner.

Conclusion

Recent legislative changes in civil service regulations have had a significant impact on defining the concept of civil service, as well as on determining rights and duties of civil servants. One of the bilateral obligations enshrined in new legislation is the establishment of a professional development system of civil servants. Without this system, it will be impossible to establish a modern, effective and meritocratic civil service. As the

analysis of ministries and training centers indicated, the professional development system of civil servants is still in the early stages of development. The nearest future will be important with regard to formation of several features of a career-based civil service – performance evaluation of civil servants, remuneration of civil servants and professional and career development of civil servants. The above-mentioned four components of the Civil Service Reform are closely linked to each other, since the establishment of a career-based civil service requires for these mechanisms to work in conjunction.

Recent legislative changes related to professional development of civil servants are critically important for public institutions to start determining professional development needs and carry out relevant activities. Despite the fact that Government Decree №242 contains several practical aspects that require further improvement, it is important to address obligations determined by the regulation in a timely manner. In particular, professional needs assessment of civil servants must be conducted in all public institutions and the Statute of Accreditation of Professional Development Programs must be adopted as soon as possible. One of the issues that still needs to be resolved by legislation is establishment of financial guarantees for the professional development process, which in the future might negatively affect timely and effective implementation of relevant training activities. Challenges of the Government Decree are also related to the contents of the basic professional development program, which according to various interested parties interviewed in the research process, requires additional improvement. In particular, interviewed stakeholders pointed out that subjects and competences listed in the Decree are not sufficient to ensure adequate professional development of civil servants.

With regard to the role of training centers in the system of professional development of civil servants, the existing practices indicate that these institutions play an important part in providing professional development services to civil servants; however, the practices are mixed and not sustainable. Training centers actively provide services to public institutions; however,



the link that exists between them is not systemic and often these entities are not able to fully meet the requirements that they have towards each other.

Despite abundance of training centers, there are only a handful of institutions that can provide a broad range of services required by beneficiaries. Training centers participating in the study provide professional development services only for a specific thematic area, which indicates that such institutions do not have a sufficient mandate and resources to provide the full service. Existence of various thematic training centers can be considered as a challenge from the perspective of financial efficiency because existence of these institutions as separate entities does not have a sufficient rationale. The majority of training centers utilizes additional financial and human resources for the provision of specific services, which makes it possible to assume that such entities can exist in a centralized form.

The analysis of the substantive side of administered professional development programs indicates that training centers carry out 45% of subjects listed in Government Decree №242. In this regard, there are training centers that offer 100% of programs indicated in the Decree; however, there are also instances where a training institution does not cover any of the subjects and competencies required by the regulation.

Training centers are an integral part for the development of a professional development system of civil servants. Despite the absence of systemic approaches, these entities provide services to a large amount of beneficiaries, which is also reiterated by the fact that between 2015-2017, public training centers administered more than 500 professional development programs for over 55,000 beneficiaries. Despite significant experience, it is important to review the work, quality assurance practices and objectives of these training centers, in order to ensure their formation as a part of a unified system.

Recommendations

Based on the issues identified in the study, it is recommended to carry out the following activities in the future:

- ✓ Amending Government Decree № 242 on the Rules of Determining Professional Development Needs of Civil Servants and Rules on Professional Development Standards and incorporate financial support guarantees for the implementation of professional development programs;
- ✓ In order to improve the logical link between subjects and competences, review Government Decree № 242 based on a longitudinal analysis;
- ✓ While developing the professional needs assessment form of civil servants, take into account possibility of determining long-term individual professional development needs, which includes a unified analysis of needs necessary for career development of civil servants;
- ✓ Define in legislation a single standard of quality assurance for additional professional development programs
- ✓ Unified registering and reporting on professional development programs and beneficiary types by the Civil Service Bureau;
- ✓ Elaboration of a manual for quality assurance of professional development programs;
- ✓ Implementation of practical training methods in professional development programs administered by public training centers;
- ✓ Elaborate an unified vision (through a policy document) with regard to public training centers that provide professional development services;
- ✓ Inform private training providers about the recent reform, in order to ensure active participation of private training centers in provision of professional development services.



