



NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL UNIVERSITY

Institutional Benchmarking



Benchmarking is a word of English origin, Bench means level/height, and Benchmarking is a methodology aimed at collecting and analyzing information. The National Council determines that the Benchmarking methodology in education allows only indicative short assessments that are used at different times during the academic year to monitor progress.

The “NEU National Educational University” has implemented the Benchmarking methodology to identify several best practices oriented on understanding and subsequently sharing important experiences. The reality revealed by Benchmarking is a kind of guide to taking a leading position in the higher education space. The “NEU National University of Education has implemented institutional Benchmarking this year, which has covered relevant educational institutions, both within the country and abroad. The purpose of benchmarking is to study, evaluate and measure the successful experience of competitors to identify competitive environment factors. The university assessed its place in the competitive environment and conducted a realistic analysis to optimize processes. Benchmarking is a continuously implemented process that identifies the existence of different and desirable values with competitive institutions. Benchmarking can be a one-time activity, but it is important to activate it permanently to take into account the dynamics of the positions of leading institutions to share best practices and implement restructuring.

As mentioned above, Benchmarking was an in-depth analysis of regional and international institutions with the aim of sharing their experience. Preliminary data collection was carried out using a commercial online database, which allowed us to identify problems and determine new potential by comparing undergraduate educational programs of competing universities, teaching universities and colleges.

To assess academic sustainability, an assessment of the professional development opportunities of academic, scientific and visiting staff was carried out, as well as an assessment of the opportunities for developing the quality of teaching. In the process of benchmarking, the resources, current and planned activities, achieved results, educational programs of competing HEIs taken as a target segment were compared with those educational programs that coincide with the educational programs of the “NEU National Educational University”. In order to achieve the goals set for students, the locations of institutions were also measured in the Benchmarking value network in order to prioritize the relevant segment. The total number of students was measured, which was also determined as an important element in the comparison process. One of the main goals of Benchmarking was to identify the resources of the universities determined for the purpose of Benchmarking, to analyze the sustainability achieved by these institutions and the implementation of stability with existing capabilities. With Benchmarking, it became possible not only to analyze colleges, but also to discuss universities and training universities.

With Benchmarking, the strategies of higher education institutions, the diversity of educational programs according to the types and profiles of institutions, as well as curricula were analyzed. The institution has taken on the challenge of operating in a highly competitive environment, both regionally, in Europe and around the world, where a less stringent regulatory framework is a key aspect, as competition is fierce and fiercer worldwide.

Benchmarking has confirmed that the following specialties, such as the educational directions of business administration, law and psychology, are already recognized as bestsellers, which are one of the most sought-after specialties in the labor market, since the employment rate in these specialties is increasing and at the same time, a person/persons with the appropriate academic degree can be employed in both the state and private sectors. Accordingly, in the modern labor market, there is almost no field where a graduate of these fields cannot be employed. Also, the existence of a privileged position of these educational bachelor's programs is oriented toward the needs of employers both within and outside the country. The existence of demand for these specialties is confirmed by those higher educational institutions reviewed by us, where these faculties/schools are successfully functioning in an accredited regime, and the relevant part of the higher educational institution has even passed cluster accreditation, which indicates the existence of real demand for these specialties.

For benchmarking, state and private higher educational institutions were selected, both within the country and abroad, according to the “Webometrics” rating, which is one of the most famous international organizations that studies the scientific success of universities and the influence of their online resources (<https://www.webometrics.info/en/europe/georgia%20>):

Top three state higher educational institutions:

I. Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University;

II. Georgian Technical University;

III. Ilia State University.

Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University (TSU) - It is noteworthy that Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University (TSU) was recognized as the first higher educational institution in the educational space with competitive advantages and ratings and was assessed as the only university from Georgia that is among the 1.5% of the best universities in the world. It is also noteworthy that the first national university in the Caucasus was opened on January 26, 1918 (February 8 in the new style), on the day of commemoration of David the Builder. At the suggestion of Ivane Javakhishvili, the Council of Professors elected Petre Melikishvili as the first rector of the university, and Ivane Javakhishvili himself headed the Faculty of Speech of Wisdom. In 1989, Tbilisi State University was named after its founder - Ivane Javakhishvili.

In addition to the leading competitive advantage, the validity established by Benchmarking is of paramount importance, that out of the seven faculties of Tbilisi State University, the first in the rankings, which determine the priorities themselves, the educational directions of Economics and Business, Law and Psychology are recognized as dominant faculties. Also, the Faculty of Medicine, which is not the goal of our analysis at this stage. That is, out of the seven faculties of TSU, in which more than 22 thousand students study, three are dominant faculties, which were implemented at the university as a result of labor market analysis and empirical research of competitors, and

all these directions are accredited. The purpose of benchmarking at the university was determined by comparing existing accredited educational programs with analogues in order to develop and enable the compatibility of the modernized European dimension with analogue programs.

Tbilisi State University, along with bachelor's, master's and doctoral educational programs, also implements higher professional educational, as well as short and long-term certificate programs. Based on close cooperation with universities in foreign countries, all students have the opportunity to participate in exchange and joint international educational programs and obtain a double academic degree.

The impressive number of academic staff of Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University by faculties is presented in the following statistics:

- Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences - 42 academic and invited personnel;
- Faculty of Economics and Business - 106 academic and visiting staff;
- Faculty of Law - 70 academic and visiting staff;
- Faculty of Exact and Natural Sciences - 149 academic and visiting staff;
- Faculty of Humanities - 179 academic and visiting staff;
- Faculty of Social and Political Sciences - 67 academic and visiting staff;
- Faculty of Medicine - 54 academic and visiting staff.

Note: The statistical data provided by Benchmarking is constantly changing.

The vision of Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University is that by 2024, together with the Bloomberg Research Center (the Bloomberg Center is exclusively owned by TSU), it will ensure:

- Harmonization of educational programs with the needs of society and the labor market, including through constantly developing information and communication technologies;
- Increased number of fundamental and applied research;
- Internationalization of educational, research and administrative processes.

Georgian Technical University - Taking into account the specifics of the European Higher Education Area, the second higher education institution in the ranking was searched and compared to identify the best experience for single-cycle qualifications - Georgian Technical University. It is noteworthy that in 1928, the Polytechnic Faculty was separated from Tbilisi State University and the Georgian Polytechnic Institute was founded on its basis. GTU

was evaluated on the basis of its core values and visions. The relevant undergraduate educational programs were discussed. The actions and processes by which the Georgian Technical University reached second place among higher education institutions measured by ratings according to Webometrics - the international university ranking system, were analyzed in the shortest possible time. As a result of the analysis, it was determined that the University implemented and brought into line some components of the standard, strengthened its weaknesses, and shared international experiences, which led to the best results in the short term. Its key weakness remains the promotion of scientific and research activities of academic staff to increase the commercialization of research productivity, which is indicated by the lack of publication rates in high-rated journals.

Ilia State University - Unlike GTU - it was important to understand the experience of Ilia State University from the perspective that if GTU managed to become the second highest educational institution in the ranking in a minimal time, what was the reason that a higher education institution with such great achievements and successful experience gave up the leading position to GTU. For understanding, it was important to evaluate Ilia State University, whose results according to the 2014 Unified National Examinations, following the vacancy rate, Ilia State University occupied the second place among state higher education institutions of its profile. Ilia State University was also in the leading positions according to the choice of entrants - according to the registration rates of entrants, the most popular first choices are Ilia State University's bachelor's programs in business, law, philosophy, Georgian philology and biology. Iliauni's Bachelor of Law program ranks first among similar programs among state universities, according to the first choice of applicants.

Also, benchmarking of private higher education institutions from the top ten of the ratings was carried out:

- Georgian Institute of Public Affairs - "GIPA";
- International Black Sea University - "IBSU";
- Alte University;
- New Higher Education Institution - "NewUni" (College).

Georgian Institute of Public Affairs "GIPA" - Georgian Institute of Public Affairs "GIPA" was founded in 1994 and includes 10 bachelor's degree programs, which are united in the following schools:

1. School of Governance;
2. Caucasian School of Journalism and Media Management;
3. School of Law and Politics;
4. School of Social Sciences.

Today, GIPA has about 3,000 graduates, 90% of whom are successfully working in the public and business sectors, private, non-governmental and international organizations. In parallel with educational programs and training courses, GIPA successfully implements various types of projects, manages the first English-language student radio in Georgia, broadcasting on FM 94.3 (RADIO GIPA), and periodically hosts meetings and debates on current issues at the club “Frontline Georgia”.

The main strategies of GIPA were analyzed, their educational programs, program needs were assessed, and European dimensions were identified to analyze the levels of achievement of the goals set by the curriculum and the expected learning outcomes. GIPA's strengths are its high public awareness and prestige, strong international ties, and a variety of projects. The total number of academic and visiting professors across all faculties is as follows:

- Total academic staff - 92;
- Total visiting staff - 200.

Black Sea University - "IBSU" (Foundation year: 1995) - Black Sea University implements bachelor's and master's programs, among which the dominant position is occupied by the Business Administration program in Georgian and foreign languages, the Law program in Georgian and foreign languages. The university is focused on engaging successful and high-achieving students in exchange projects. It has a media center - Ibsu Blog.

The total number of academic and visiting professors across all faculties is as follows:

School of Computer Science and Architecture:

Academic staff - 9;

Visiting staff - 22.

School of Business

Academic staff - 24;

Visiting staff - 61.

School of Education, Humanities and Social Sciences

Academic staff - 38;

Visiting staff - 78.

School of Law and Public Administration

Academic staff - 20;

Visiting staff - 21.

Alte University (formerly the Open University) - founded in 2000 - Alte University offers 12 academic programs at both undergraduate and graduate levels: Psychology, Business Administration, Law, etc. The university has: Exchange programs with partner universities in Europe, Asia, and the Caucasus region. The priorities of Alte University are: full funding of studies by the University Fund in case of high academic performance and employment promotion with the active involvement of the Student Success Service. One of the most important segments of the university is the offer of free Chinese language courses for students at the Confucius Institute, as well as exchange programs at leading universities in Europe and Asia. As for the number of academic staff, it looks like this:

School of Information Technology (IT):

Academic staff - 8.

International School of Medicine:

Academic staff - 7.

School of Humanities and Social Sciences:

Academic staff - 14.

School of Law:

Academic staff - 18.

School of Business

Academic staff - 10.

Note: The number of academic and visiting professors is given according to the data for 2021 - 2022.

The new higher education institution - "NewUni" was established in 2013 - the most priority need was to implement the Benchmarking of the new higher education institution. It is a college and is positioned in the educational market only in the areas of business administration, tourism and international relations.

Benchmarking identified institutions with the best experience and social responsibility in Europe, taking into account the relevant ranking criteria:

I. QS Ranking of the Best Universities;

II. Times Higher Education World University Rankings;

III. Educational program accreditation.

International higher education institutions:

Oxford University - University of Oxford, Great Britain <https://www.ox.ac.uk/> Year of foundation: There is no exact date of foundation, although some form of education has existed in Oxford since 1096.

The University of Oxford is one of the largest and most consistently ranked universities in the world in terms of both its size and the number of its programs. One of the key dimensions of the conceptual approach of the University of Oxford is the cornerstone of quality development, which is an important condition for relevance, mobility and attractiveness. The strength of the University of Oxford is its law school/faculty, which a priori determines its leadership on a global scale. The University of Oxford is a federation of thirty law schools. Law scholars are members of the faculty in colleges and universities, and they coordinate and support the teaching process of 143 academics. Through their standard structure, this faculty is able to support, teach and research a diverse and distinguished group of students from all over the world. Due to their excellent programmes, the student-to-academic staff ratio is approximately 7:1, which is truly an excellent indicator. In addition to the strongest law school and the corresponding attractiveness, the University of Oxford implements psychology and experimental psychology programs. The Department of Experimental Psychology at Oxford is considered one of the leading psychology departments in the UK. Currently, there are particularly strong groups in the areas of human cognitive processes, neuroscience, language, development, social psychology and psychological disorders. It is interesting to note that the University of Oxford does not implement a business administration program at the undergraduate level, although business administration is taught only at the graduate level. However, it is worth noting that it implements a bachelor's program in economics and management.

Cambridge University - University of Cambridge, United Kingdom Year of foundation: The first college in Cambridge was founded by the Bishop of Ely in 1284.

The priority of educational programs at the University of Cambridge is determined by the presence of such directions as undergraduate programs in psychological and behavioral sciences. The undergraduate law program has been conducted at Cambridge since the thirteenth century. The main subjects of legal study at all universities in Europe were civil law (ancient Roman law) and canon law of the Church. The University Law Society is open to all members of the university and especially to all law students and those who wish to pursue a successful legal career. The society has principal officers who are law students and they offer members a variety of opportunities, both academic and social. It is worth noting that the University of Cambridge does not offer a business administration program at the undergraduate level, but it does offer a bachelor's degree in management studies, which covers 6 (six) main areas:

- Economics of Firms and Markets;

- Finance and Accounting;
- Marketing;
- Operations Management; □ Organizational Behavior;
- Quantitative Methods.

The University of Cambridge is constantly focused on research, as research is the driving force of higher education in the modern era.

Michigan State University - Michigan State University (MSU). Michigan State University is a member of the Association of American Universities and one of the top 100 universities in the world. Its founding year is 1855. It is known for its traditionally strong academic disciplines and professional programs. The University of Michigan's mission is to advance the knowledge of students and transform their lives for career advancement.

MSU is committed to creating a safe and inclusive community characterized by caring and respect for others.

The University of Michigan offers 17 colleges and 400 undergraduate, graduate, and certificate programs. Students can choose their major based on their career interests.

University College London, UCL - The UK has been particularly closely studied due to its status. University College London's strength is its rich heritage of philosophical research, which it continues to successfully pursue. This component is a priority worldwide as a driving force in education. Located in the heart of London, the global legal capital, UCL consistently attracts a unique and diverse international student and staff. Because of their hard work, their research has a global impact, shaping legal and judicial policy in the UK and around the world. UCL is consistently ranked, as they have received the highest marks in research and also enjoy high ratings in student surveys.

London Kings College - King's College London is the fourth oldest university in England. The college is represented by over 31,000 students from over 150 countries and over 8,500 staff. King's College constantly offers students professional study in banking, taxation, entrepreneurial companies, and other profiles, which speaks to their innovative and competitive nature. They provide students not only with quality teaching but also with research carried out and training programs offered.

The University of Edinburgh - Edinburgh University <https://www.ed.ac.uk/>). A world-leading institution, founded many centuries ago (the University of Edinburgh was officially opened in 1583) with values and beliefs, a commitment to excellence, and the success and other achievements of its staff, students, and alumni. The University of Edinburgh is home to a law school that influences civic change, both locally and globally. According to the World University Rankings, the University of Edinburgh's reputation with employers is impressive and

reaches 97.2%. The University of Edinburgh runs an undergraduate psychology program, which has an excellent reputation for research, teaching, and student support. The University of Edinburgh has a strong business school, which runs a variety of business programs and is taught by world-leading industry professionals and researchers. The University of Edinburgh Business School trains the next generation of strategic leaders.

Queen Mary University of London - Queen Mary University of London <https://www.qmul.ac.uk/>. Queen Mary University of London was founded in 1785 and has a distinguished history. Queen Mary University of London is one of the leading research-intensive higher education institutions in the United Kingdom. Queen Mary University of London offers students a high-quality learning experience and accessibility. Queen Mary University of London has a separate independent School of Business and Management, which aims to create responsible future leaders with the skills of interpreting, analyzing problems and making innovative decisions. Queen Mary University of London also has a separate independent School of Psychology, where psychology is taught within the School of Biological and Behavioural Sciences. Queen Mary University of London turned out to be the best case for the “NEU National Educational University”, as it also coincides with the reality of the university in terms of its student contingent. Founded in 1965, the law school has grown from 30 students and four academic staff to over 2,000 students and 130 academic staff in 2020. Their consistent growth has led them to be ranked among the best law schools in Europe. The main actors of the law school are the Department of Law and the Center for Commercial Law Research (CCLS).

Catholic University of Louvain - Catholic University, Belgium Founded in 1425. The Catholic University of Louvain is one of the oldest universities in the world, which also meets the greatest modern scientific demands. With a research expenditure of 365 million euros in 2012, the Catholic University of Louvain is a leading research university in Europe. Many of its graduates hold vital positions in the central and regional public administration of Belgium and in the European and international community in Brussels and elsewhere.

Leiden University - Leiden University, Netherlands <https://www.universiteitleiden.nl/en> Leiden University has seven faculties. Leiden University was founded in 1575 and is one of the leading international research universities in Europe. It has been a top-ranked university for many years. It is ranked first in the Dutch University Rankings and is among the top 100 universities in the world. Research and education are closely linked at Leiden University. This means that teaching is often carried out by top researchers, and this means that their students are exposed to research from the very beginning of their first year. Leiden University offers a Bachelor of Science in Psychology, which offers a variety of teaching formats, modern ICT tools and blended learning to support teaching in the Bachelor's degree programme. Leiden University does not offer a Bachelor of Business Administration. However, it implements a joint undergraduate educational program in economics, public administration, and management.

University of Paris 1 Pantheon - Sorbonne - The first Pantheon - Sorbonne University of Paris is distinguished by the fact that they teach all legal courses in English. Pantheon - Sorbonne University is known for its legal practitioners and visiting scholars who lecture to students and share practical experience. University students have

the opportunity to take a practical course in the most important legal institutions of France, such as the Senate, the National Assembly, the Constitutional Council and others.

Benchmarking revealed:

A significant challenge for the "NEU National Educational University" has become the conceptual approach of the University of Oxford in the direction of the cornerstone of quality development, which is an important condition for relevance, mobility and attractiveness. The university, within the framework of its activities and full autonomy, is based on this standard and is gradually following this realistic indicator to the ultimate goal and transferring knowledge and practical skills of students to the academic environment at the sixth level. Here, it is worth emphasizing the undeniable proof of the real environmental factor, which the "NEU National Educational University" has been able to implement at this stage. Out of only one academic educational bachelor's program in 2018, in 2023 seven educational programs were granted direct accreditation with the involvement of an international expert. And if we analyze the scale of mobility support, not only in relation to competing colleges, but also within the scope of relevant educational universities, the mobility process of the "NEU National Educational University" is one of the most successful in the region and the dynamics of indicators is growing. Finally, the rebranding that the institution has implemented in this short period is truly not only the cornerstone of the development of a quality culture, but also represents the best example of gaining competitive advantage.

In addition to identifying institutional standards, benchmarking was used to assess the comparability of all undergraduate educational programs of the "NEU National Educational University" in accordance with the goals set by the curriculum and expected learning outcomes.

As a result of benchmarking, the strengths of the university were identified - educational programs in demand in the labor market, the presence of a strong "intellectual" resource, the best indicator of the ratio of students and academic staff, a strong low rate of "brain drain"; Life long learning; the best infrastructure, a campus in the city center and the best location; modern material and technical base.

As a result of benchmarking, areas for improvement of the university were identified - scientific research, strengthening of internationalization policy, the attraction of local and foreign practicing personnel, improvement of quality and relevance of the third mission.

Based on the conclusions obtained through benchmarking, best practices were shared and systematic international perspectives were set: sharing of interdisciplinary views, addition of joint undergraduate educational programs, implementation of systematic international perspectives, etc.

"NEU National Educational University" is an autonomous administrative body with a fundamental historical heritage, special values and long-term social opportunities. The results obtained through benchmarking are worth considering and in some cases can be set as fundamental principles, since the "NEU National Educational

University” has been an alma mater in the educational area since 1996, and the educational programs implemented at the university have been presented as priority directions for years.

Benchmarking parameters were selected for comparison. These could be a number of criteria, such as in the case of our study; the collected information was carefully analyzed and a draft of changes was developed, which is included in its function; changes were implemented at the institutional and program levels, and also, planned changes are being prepared; changes are being implemented in the academic and practical activities of the university.

Conclusion:

By identifying the educational dimensions of local and foreign universities, important priorities were determined:

First - the core value of the "NEU National University of Education" is the constant pursuit of change, a vision beyond existing boundaries and, while striving for new challenges, to be the best in what we do.

Second - as an analog of the Catholic University of Leuven and others, the "NEU National University of Education" has a long tradition of employment in the public and private sectors.

Third - the majority of foreign institutions are universities with great traditions, which span several centuries of establishment (e.g.: First College in Cambridge, Leiden University, King's College London, etc.), while the "NEU National Educational University" is one of the first private institutions in the region, which has the best experience in the educational field compared to other private higher education institutions. "NEU National Educational University" currently has more than 2,800 graduates, 90% of whom are successfully working in the public and business sectors, in particular, in non-governmental and international organizations, and 68% of graduates are employed in their field.