

REMUNERATION OF PERSONS EMPLOYED IN PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS ON THE BASIS OF ADMINISTRATIVE AND LABOR CONTRACTS







The study was prepared within the grant for Good Governance for Georgia (3G) project from the global philanthropic organization, Luminate. The Institute for Development of Freedom of Information (IDFI) is responsible for the content of this analysis. Views expressed in therein do not reflect the position of Luminate.

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Key Findings

- 1. In 2019, GEL 242.2 million was spent on the remuneration of contractors, which is approximately GEL 25 million more than in 2018, and GEL 100 million more than in 2015.
- In the first quarter of 2020, up to GEL 57 million was spent on the remuneration of contractors, which is 10 million (21%) more than in the first quarter of the previous year.
- Most of the persons employed in ministries on the basis of administrative contracts are advisers to the Minister and their salary ranges from GEL 2,800 to GEL 6,000.
- In some cases, an employment contract is awarded for positions that warrant an administrative contract under the legislation of Georgia.
- In 2019, the number of labor contracts has increased by 18% in the 31 LEPLs studied. From 4,629 contracts signed in 2018, this number has already reached 5,452 in 2019;
- The subjects of the contracts and the names of the positions in the contract registries, kept by public institutions, are often vague and do not provide detailed information on the job description of the employees.
- Salaries of employees contracted for vaguely defined positions may vary significantly. For example, the salary of a consultant or an expert in different agencies ranges from GEL 1,000 to GEL 4,000.
- The National Center for Assessment and Examinations provides significantly higher salaries for contract employees compared to other agencies. For standard positions such as a worker/cleaner /gardener, the National Center provides GEL 1,200, while in other agencies the average salary for these positions is GEL 400.
- As a result of the analysis of the work experience (CVs) of advisors, it can be argued that in certain cases this position is likely to be used to appoint Security Liaison Officers.
- ▶ 56 agencies out of 104 did not comply or only partially complied with the FOI request.

Introduction

Employment in the public service in Georgia is regulated by the "Law of Georgia on Civil Service" ¹, which entered into force in July 2017. According to the law, the categories of public servants are: a professional public servant / public servant, a person employed on the basis of an agreement under public law (administrative contract), a person employed on the basis of an employment agreement (labor contract).

A professional public servant is appointed in a public institution for an indefinite term, while a person employed under a labor contract performs temporary or non-permanent tasks, and the position of a person employed under an administrative contract consists of assisting a public political official in performing official duties, their term is directly linked to the official's term.

According to the Law on Remuneration in public institutions, the maximum salary for a person employed under a labor contract is GEL 4,000 and the maximum salary for a person employed under an administrative contract is GEL 6,000, however, the law also provides for exceptions.

Unlike public servants, contract employment has a simpler screening process, and in many cases, their functions and responsibilities are vaguely described. Persons under an administrative contract are appointed on a non-competitive basis, while a simplified public job-posting is announced and the final hiring decision is made by an authorized person only on the basis of an interview. Therefore, the risks of nepotism and irrational management of budget funds are higher in this area. Indicators of similar risks are the ever-increasing rates of pay for contract employees. For example, according to the state budget execution reports, in 2019, GEL 242.2 million was spent on the remuneration of contract employees, which is about 100 million GEL more than in 2015. The report for the first quarter of 2020 is already available, according to which up to GEL 57 million has already been spent on salaries for contract employees in three months, which is 10 million (21%) more than the expenditure of the first quarter of last year.

Expenditures on the remuneration of contract employees in the public sector are increasing by an average of 12% annually, which is about 3 times the rate of economic growth of the country.

¹ <u>https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/3031098?publication=31</u>



The purpose of this paper is to study the practice of employment through labor and administrative contracts in the public sector. To this end, IDFI requested relevant public information from more than 100 public institutions (ministries, their subordinate legal entities of public law, and various independent public agencies). The following information was requested from the agencies within the scope of the study:

- Registry of persons employed under labor and administrative contracts in 2018-2019 (indicating the salary and the subject of the contract),
- Biographical data of the persons employed in the position of advisor to the director and copies of their contract.

A complete registry of contracts has been received from only 6 ministries, 31 LEPLs, and 11 different independent agencies. As for the data on advisors, only 14 public institutions provided us with a complete response, 14 refused to disclose information, and 42 informed us that they do not have any persons employed as an advisor.

Therefore, this study is based on the data from 6 ministries, 31 LEPLs, and 11 independent public agencies.

The Practice of Contract Employment in Ministries

IDFI's FOI request for the registry of remuneration and contract subjects of contract employees was not complied with by five Ministries. More specifically, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Labor, Health and Social Affairs explained to the Institute that they do not maintain such a registry. The Ministry of Finance provided us with only the

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number of employees, the Ministry of Defense provided information only on administrative contracts for 2019, and the Ministry of Justice did not respond to the request.

According to the information received from the rest of the ministries, most of the people employed through administrative contracts are advisers to the Ministers, and their salaries range from GEL 2,800 to GEL 6,000. There is a sharp difference between the ministries in terms of remuneration. For example, the salaries of all four advisers to the Minister of Environment and Agriculture amount to GEL 2,800, while the salaries of advisers to the Ministers of the Ministries of Economy and Sustainable Development and Regional Development and Infrastructure amount to GEL 6,000. The second category of employees under administrative contracts consists of assistants to ministers and their deputies, and their salaries range from GEL 1,000 to GEL 1,800.



The Ministry of Regional Development and the Ministry of Sustainable Economic Development have reduced the number of administrative contracts, while the other ministries have not had any drastic changes.



Note: Based on the data format provided by the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports and the Ministry of Defense, it was not possible to determine the number of persons employed by them through administrative contracts in 2018.

As for labor contracts, out of the five examined ministries, the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports has the largest quantity. As of August 2019, the Ministry's staff had 149 active labor contracts, and 127 active labor contracts in the scope of other programs. In the subjects of the contracts indicated in the registry, provided by the Ministry of Education and Science, the nature of services provided by the employed persons is often vague. For example, the central office of the Ministry employed 46 specialists / support specialists, 10 experts, 10 coordinators, 7 consultants. For most of them, there was no specification regarding the field of the expert or nature of support work. The staff of the Ministry also includes 27 drivers, 8 hotline and permit desk operators, 4 handymen, 3 IT managers, social network managers and other such positions whose job titles give more insight into their activities.

Identifying the functions / responsibilities of labor contract employees was also complicated in the case of other ministries. For example, in the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development, as of June 2019, active employment contracts were signed for 39 persons. 21 of them were drivers. For most other cases, however, only the name of the department and / or division was indicated, with the subject of their contract unspecified.

We also encountered cases when a labor contract is signed for a position for which the legislation of Georgia warrants employment through an administrative contract. For example, in the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports, one of the advisers to the Minister is employed under a labor contract. In 2018, the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development was employing an assistant to the Deputy Minister under a labor contract.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is also distinguished by the number of labor contracts. As of July 2019, there were 85 active contracts in the Ministry. Among them - 22 drivers, 13 cleaning personnel, 6 consular department telephone consultants. Most of the employees employed under other labor contracts belong to the Information Technology Department (16 persons) and the Press and Information Department (6 persons), and perform various functions and duties.

In 2018-2019, in most cases, there were no significant changes in the number of labor contract employees in the central offices of the ministries.



Note: The index of the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports, in addition to the central office, also includes the number of labor contract personnel employed through various programs.

The monthly remuneration practice for persons employed under labor contracts in ministries is inconsistent. Remuneration of personnel employed in identical or similar positions may vary depending on the ministry. Particularly noteworthy are the cases of vaguely named positions, such as an expert, a consultant, a specialist, for which a wide range of remuneration is found, while the difference in functions/responsibilities is not indicated. For example, the salaries of experts in the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports range from GEL 1,280 to GEL 4,000, consultants from GEL 1,450 to GEL 3,750, and specialists from GEL 1,000 to GEL 4,000.

The salary of drivers ranges from GEL 1,000 to 1,800 GEL, and the salary for telephone operators from GEL 800 to GEL 1,200 depending on the Ministry.

In some ministries, there are cases of sudden and drastic increases in salary. For example, the salary of a labor contract employee of the Department of Spatial Planning and Construction Policy of the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development was increased from GEL 1,500 to GEL 4,000 in March 2018. Whereas another employee of the same department was paid GEL 3,125 in June 2019, while his/her salary was GEL 1,000 in previous months. The salary of one of the contracted employees of the Strategic Department increased from GEL 2,500 to GEL 2,800 in May 2018, and to GEL 3,500 in July.

In 2019, the average salary of labor contract employees was approximately GEL 1,800 in the Ministry of Economy, GEL 1,600 in the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Regional Development, and ranged from GEL 1,200 to GEL 1,400 in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Environment and Agriculture, and Reconciliation and Civil Affairs. In the Office of the State Minister, it is the lowest and amounts to 945 GEL.



Labor Contracts in LEPLs

According to the Law of Georgia on Public Service, the head of a legal entity under public law is not a state political official. Therefore, this type of agency cannot make use of administrative contracts in order to employee individuals under their management. The analysis below is based solely on labor contract practices. According to the analysis of the registries provided by legal entities of public law, overall, in 31 examined LEPLs, the number of labor contracts increased by 18%. From 4,629 contracts signed in 2018, this number had reached 5,452 in 2019. Throughout 2019, most labor contract workers were mainly drivers, handymen, cleaners, security guards and other support staff. However, there is also a multitude of high-paying positions, mainly in information technology, but also ambiguously defined positions, such as consultants, experts, specialists, etc.

In 2019, the Office of Resource Officers was distinguished by the largest number of contract employees. 1,491 resource officers were employed through labor contracts (salary – GEL 750). The large amount of contract personnel in the National Food Agency (1,356 persons) is mostly due to the staff employed under the "Animal Health Protection and Identification-Registration" sub-program. 336 veterinarians (salary – GEL 900) and 285 veterinary technicians (salary – GEL 830). Also, 223 drivers were employed under the state sub-program "Measures to be taken against the Asian Halyomorpha" (salary – GEL 900).

In some agencies, there is a sharp increase in the number of contracts signed in 2019, compared to the previous year. For example, the number of labor contracts in the Municipal Development Fund and the National Forestry Agency has almost tripled, while the number of labor contractors in the National Food Agency and the National Agency of State Property has increased by 15 to 30 percent.

The contract registry of the National Forestry Agency contained 1,359 entries in 2019 (610 in 2018), of which 688 (425, in 2018) were unit-priced contracts for a short term work. Out of the remaining 671 contracts, there are several cases, where different contracts are signed for by the same person. Unfortunately, the provided registry does not contain detailed information on the date of conclusion of the contracts, therefore we were not able to ascertain if this practice is related to changing the name of the position, renewing the contract or simultaneously employing the same person in different positions. For example, there are cases, when a contract is signed for by the same person for two positions, inspector and assistant specialist. The increase in staff and other changes in the agency may be related to the appointment of a new head of the agency in early 2019 and the signing of a grant agreement with the Slovenian Center for International Cooperation and Development (CMSR). The grant amount is EUR 563,540.

A similar situation is found in the Municipal Development Fund, where a new head was appointed in June 2018, and the number of labor contract employees under international grant-funded projects increased in 2019. Furthermore, a government decree was issued on March 7, 2019, which increased the maximum number of persons employed through labor contracts for non-permanent tasks in the Municipal Development Fund up to 55, and the number of supporting contractors up to 15.

At the National Center for Disease Control, 42 people were employed at the end of 2019 (56 in 2018), however, 126 contracts were signed in 2019 (109 in 2018) under various additional state or international projects.

Lastly, in the Scientific Research Center of Agriculture, in addition to the number displayed on the chart below, there were 87 short-term contracts (119 in 2018), which envisage a daily remuneration.



Chart 6: Quantity of Labor Contracts in 2018-2019

Remuneration of Labor Contract Employees in LEPLs

Along with the increase in the number of contract employees, there is also a trendency of growth of the average salary in LEPLs. The chart depicts the 10 public institutions with the highest-paid contracts (only agencies, having signed more than 50 contracts throughout the year, were taken into account).

In the Municipal Development Fund, 80 contracts were signed in 2019, and the average salary of contract employees reached GEL 2,575, which may be explained by a large number of high competence positions (engineers, project managers, quality control specialists).

The National Center for Assessment and Examinations provides significantly higher salaries than other agencies. For standard positions such as a handyman / cleaner / gardener, the National Center provides GEL 1,200, while in other agencies the average salary for these positions is GEL 400. In addition, the list of contracts provided by the agency includes 21 contracts for positions of "specialists" and "consultants".

The functional difference between them is not obvious, although the provided salary ranges from GEL 1,000 to GEL 4,000.

The Agency of Protected Areas employs 4 accountants, whose salaries range from GEL 1,100 to GEL 3,100, and according to 20 contracts for the position of "specialist", their monthly salary ranges from GEL 350 to GEL 3,800.

In 2019, 232 employment contracts were signed in the target LEPLs with a salary above GEL 3,000. The Education Management Information System stands out from the LEPLs, where in 2019, a total of 32 such employment contracts were signed. The provided registry does not reflect the subject of the contract or the job position of the mentioned persons.

Most of the highly paid contract employees in the Municipal Development Fund are employed under international grant-funded programs, mainly at the positions of project managers and engineers. Highly paid positions are mainly held by IT specialists at the Revenue Service, and by international authorization experts at the Education Quality Development Center.



The highest-paid employees of the agencies subordinated to the ministries are found in the Revenue Service. Specifically, at the positions of Data Archivist and ETL Developer and their monthly salary is GEL 7,500, additionally, GEL 6,250 is provided for the advisor to the head of the agency.

The registry provided by the Education Management Information System includes one GEL 5,200 contract and six GEL 5,000 contracts, although the subject and duration of the contracts are unknown. 4 project managers at the Roads Department of Georgia and an advisor at the Civil Aviation Agency were given contracts that envisage a monthly salary of GEL 5,000.



Labor Contracts in Other Independent Public Agencies

Providing registries of contracted employees has also proved problematic for a number of independent agencies. For example, the Communications Commission stated to IDFI that the registry of contract employees and monthly salaries contained personal data. The National Bank and the Legal Aid Service submitted a registry of contracts, but did not indicate the provided salaries. As a result, the analysis below is based on information from only 11 agencies that fully complied with the FOI request.

The Electoral System Development Reform and Training Center, which regularly hires lecturers and trainers, stands out among independent public agencies, by a large number of labor contracts. Their remuneration is calculated based on the actual workload of the trainings / lectures conducted. In 2019, 340 such short-term contracts were signed, offered remuneration ranged from GEL 68 to GEL 3,500, and in 2018, 513 such contracts were signed in the same range of remuneration.

Levan Samkharauli National Forensics Bureau employed 135 contracted staff in 2019 (2018 data is not known), including 46 experts, 17 specialists, 16 chief specialists, 7 drivers, 6 laboratory technicians and others.

In the National Statistics Office, in 2019, 113 people were employed under labor contracts. Among them were 11 regional field coordinators, 5 project coordinators, 15 cleaners (in different regional offices), 8 drivers and more. In addition to the number listed on the chart, the National Statistics Office of Georgia (GEOSTAT) has concluded 192 employment contracts for various short-term activities. This list mainly includes translators, trainers, operators, monitoring specialists and others.

The National Agency for Veterans Affairs has approximately 70 employees under labor contracts. In the registry provided by the agency, most of their positions are recorded as subordinated to various divisions, no additional information is indicated about the functions of the person in the column of the subject of contract.

In 2018, the Public Defender's Office signed additional 85 contracts, within the scope of grant-funded programs, with monthly salaries ranging from EUR 625 to EUR 2800, and in 2019, 64 contracts with the same salary range.



The highest-paid position among independent public agencies is that of the advisor to the President of the National Bank, for whom a salary of GEL 6,971 is provided. There are 2 such positions in the agency, their functions include providing macroeconomic assessment, supervising macroeconomic research, advising on the development of the securities market, and developing regulatory rules, regulations, instructions and ordinances for the President of the National Bank. It should be noted that, as an

exception, the National Bank is not subject to the limitation of the maximum amount of salary established by the Law on Remuneration of Labor in Public Institutions.

The exception allowed by law also applies to the State Audit Office, where a monthly salary of GEL 5,000 is provided for a person employed through a labor contract as an expert.

In the State Procurement Agency there are two persons employed in the position of experts, their salary is GEL 5,000, which exceeds the limit set by the law by GEL 1,000.

The Public Defender's Office employs 3 individuals, whose contracts envisage a salary of GEL 4,000: a parliamentary secretary, an expert (Function: Preparation of Special Survey on public assemblies), and an expert (Function: Preparation of special research on segregation).



Advisers at Public Institutions

In the analysis of contract employment in the public sector, the position of adviser is distinct in terms of the vagueness of the functions/responsibilities defined in contracts, as well as the amount of remuneration often awarded.

The main function/responsibility of the adviser is to support the activities of the head of the agency or his deputies in various sectoral issues. However, there are frequent cases when individuals with similar functions are employed in the agencies, who are referred to as consultants, experts and others. This practice shows that there is no uniform standard in public institutions for the function of advisors in terms of defining responsibilities.

Out of the examined agencies, a person employed in the position of the advisor to the head of agency can be found in 23 LEPLs and 4 Ministries, and their monthly salary varies from GEL 1,750 to almost GEL 7,000. The chart shows only the highest-paid advisors, in some cases, there are several such people in a single agency. For example, the President of the National Bank, in 2019, had 2 advisers, each with a monthly salary of GEL 6,971, and the Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure employed four advisers.



Analysis of information from the work experience (CVs) of advisors shows that this position is sometimes used for appointing Security Liaison Officers (OДP – офицер действующего резерва). This implies the appointment of a representative of the State Security Service to monitor the activities of the certain institutions that are deemed crucial in terms of state security.

On November 18, 2015, the Government of Georgia determined the list of crucial public entities in terms of state security (25 agencies, in total). This list identifies the government agencies, where security liaison officers may be assigned. The government's definition of a list of government agencies where security officers can be present has been a welcomed decision, as it has made the system more transparent.

The probable security liaison officers identified by IDFI in the scope of the research are mostly employed in the LEPLs subordinated to Ministries, which belong to the list of crucial entities drafted by the decree of the Government of Georgia. For example, IDFI identified potential officers in two agencies under the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia - LEPL Land Transport Agency and LEPL Civil Aviation Agency.

There are 3 persons employed at the position of Advisor to the Director of the Civil Aviation Agency, two of them have a long history of working in the Ministry of Interior Affairs, and their work and academic experience do not contain any relevant points related to the aviation sector. The subject of their contract is the support of the director in security and safety issues, and the remuneration is set at GEL 3,200 per month.

The Advisor to the Director of the Land Transport Agency also has long-standing experience of working in various law enforcement agencies (from 1992 to 2018), and from 2018 he has been acting Advisor to the Director on Security issues and his salary is GEL 4,000.

The Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure is also among the crucial entities defined by the Government of Georgia. In the registry of persons employed through labor contracts provided to IDFI by the LEPL Municipal Development Fund, we find the position of Security Advisor, for which a salary of GEL 3,500 is provided. However, the Municipal Development Fund did not provide IDFI with biographical data of the advisor in question, while providing the CVs of the other advisers.

In practice, there might be cases where liaison officers may be operating in agencies that are not included in the list of crucial public entities defined by the <u>decree</u> of the Government of Georgia. For example, when monitoring the practice of proactive disclosure of public information by Georgian public institutions, IDFI drew attention to an incomplete data on officials of the State Agency for Religious Affairs. Specifically, the biographical data of the Deputy Chairman of the Agency, Giorgi Ukleba was absent from the agency's website.



<u>Giorgi Ukleba</u> has been the Deputy Chairman of the State Agency for Religion Issues since 2019, but as we have mentioned, his biography is not posted on the website of the agency. Information about Giorgi Ukleba's alleged work as a liaison officer is reflected in a study published by IDFI in 2015 <u>Advisers at Public</u> <u>Institutions</u>, which found that he had been appointed Adviser to the Minister of Agriculture in July 2013. In addition, as of March 2013-2014, he held a position at the State Security Agency as Deputy Head of the Security Division (Main Division). At points in time he was also an Advisor to the Head of the Revenue Service of the Ministry of Finance of Georgia, Advisor to the Minister of Agriculture of Georgia, Assistant Director of the Tbilisi Transport Company Ltd. and Head of the First Main Division of the Constitutional Security Department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

საქართველოში ან სხვა ქვეყანაში, თქვენი, თქვენი ოჯახის წევრის მიერ შესრულებული ნებისმიერი ანაზღაურებადი სამუშაო, სამეწარმეო საქმიანობაში მონაწილეობის გარდა				
სამუშაოს შემსრულებელი პირის ვინაობა (სახელი, გვარი)	სამსახური, რომელშიც პირს უკავია თანამდებობა ან ასრულებს სამუშაოს, ასევე რომელშიც ნინა ნლის პირველი იანვრიდან 31 დეკემბრის ჩათვლით ეკავა თანამდებობა ან ასრულებდა სამუშაოს	თანამდებობის დასახელება ან სამუშაოს შინაარსი	სამუშაოს შესრულებით ნინა ნლის პირველი იანვრიდან 31 დეკემბრის ჩათვლით შიღებული შემოსავალი	
გიორგი უკლება	საქართველოს შინაგან საქმეთა სამინისტრო	სახელმწიფო უსაფრთხოების სააგენტოს (დეპარტამუნტი) ოფიცრები უშიშროების საკითხებში (მთავარი სამმართველო) სამმართველოს უფროსის მოადგილე	12600.04 GEL	
გიორგი უკლება	საქართველოს ფინანსთა სამინისტრო	სსიპ შემოსავლების სამსახურის უფროსის მრჩეველი	6560.00 GEL	
გიორგი უკლება	საქართველოს სოფლის მეურნეობის სამინისტრო	მინისტრის მრჩეველი	17416.67 GEL	
გიორგი უკლება	შპს თბილისის სატრანსპორტო კომპანია	დირექტორის თანაშემწე	15342.67 GEL	

Excerpt from Giorgi Ukleba's 2014 declaration

In 2016-2018, Giorgi Ukleba was the head of the Supervision Service of Tbilisi City Hall. According to the declaration filed in 2016, Ukleba also served as Chief Advisor to the United Reclamation Systems Company of Georgia, Deputy Head of the Fourth Main Division of the State Security Department of the State Security Service of Georgia, and adviser to the Director of the State Fund for Victims of Human Trafficking.

Giorgi Ukleba is not obliged to fill in the declaration while employed at the position of Deputy Chairman of the State Agency for Religious Issues, since according to the Law of Georgia on Conflict of Interest and Corruption, the head and deputy of a LEPL carrying out scientific, educational and research activities are not considered to be public officials.

In Addition, a new legislative regulation came into force in 2017, on the basis of which the declarations of officials whose position has been declared confidential in accordance with the Law of Georgia on State Secrets are no longer publicly available. "As a result of this change, declarations filled out before 2016 by various officials, including Giorgi Ukleba, have been deleted from the system. However, IDFI archives have preserved his declarations for 2013-2014, which confirm that he was a deputy head of the security liaison officers' department at the State Security Agency and at the same time allegedly performed liaison officer's duties in various agencies. These circumstances give grounds for the assumption that Giorgi Ukleba may still be acting as a liaison officer, in an agency that is not included in the list of crucial public entities by the current legislation.

The appointment of liaison officers is also not prescribed for the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports of Georgia and any of its subordinate agencies. Nevertheless, the position of the Advisor to the Director of the National Center for Assessment and Examinations raises suspicion, since their function is to advise the Director of the Center on security issues, which is a term often associated with liaison officers. Unfortunately, the National Center for Assessment and Examinations did not disclose the identity and biographical details of the person employed as the advisor to the director, and the job description provided did not include detailed information about his or her actual functions and responsibilities.

სამუშაოს აღწერილობის ფორმა

უშუალო დაქვემდებარებაშია (თანამდებობის დასაბელება)	დირექტორი
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ფუნქციები (მოვალეობები)	£
 სსიპ - შეფასებისა და გამოცდების ერი საკითხებთან დაკავშირებით; 	ოვნული ცენტრის დირექტორისთვის რჩევების მიცემა უსაფრთბოების
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Conclusion

The findings of the research show, that despite the reforms carried out in the public sector in recent years, the existing practice of contract employment at public institutions remains a significant bureaucratic challenge. In particular, the ambiguity of the functions and duties of contract employees selected through a simplified screening process and the practice of providing significantly different pay for similar positions increases the risks of nepotism and mismanagement of public funds.

These risks are also significantly increased by the lack of transparency of the employers. The fact that a significant part of the research targets refused to disclose data raises suspicions that this may be an attempt to cover up the shortcomings of the existing employment policy.

The increasing public expenditures on remunerations for labor contract employees may be considered one of the side effects of deficient regulations existing in this field. This constitutes a significant bureaucratic burden for the state, which gains special significance in the post-pandemic period.

Based on the circumstances discussed in the study, IDFI calls on the Georgian authorities to:

• Review the existing contract employment practices to minimize the risks of nepotism, bias and corruption.

- Provide detailed duty descriptions for various vaguely defined positions (Advisors, Consultants, Experts);
- Develop a unified standard that ensures fair regulation of the remuneration of labor contract employees.

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