The Discourse of Peace Education in Higher Education Programmes in Georgia: Trends and Challenges

სამშვიდობო განათლების დისკურსი საქართველოს უმაღლესი განათლების პროგრამებში: ტენდენციები და გამოწვევები

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Abstract

Introduction. Peace education represents an important area of contemporary education policy, concerned not only with acquiring knowledge about conflict and peace, but also with developing a culture of peace, respect for human rights, democratic values, social responsibility, recognition of diversity, dialogue, and competencies for the non-violent management of conflicts. Taking into account Georgia's post-conflict experience and its ongoing integration into the European educational space, this study examines how the discourse of peace education is developing within Georgian higher education and how it is reflected in educational programmes and university practices. **Methods.** The study employs qualitative documentary analysis and examines educational programmes, courses, syllabi, learning resources, institutional activities of universities, and materials from international projects. The central case is the collaboration between Sokhumi State University and Ilia State University within the framework of the PeaceEdu project, while the experiences of other universities are considered to provide a comparative perspective. **Results.** The study demonstrates that peace education has not yet developed into a unified model in Georgia; however, significant academic and institutional foundations for its development are already in place. The analysis reveals progression from the thematic and disciplinary integration of peace-related content, through the academic and institutional establishment of Peace Studies, towards the curricular integration of competence-based Peace Education. Importance is attached to the experience of PeaceEdu, which directly connects peace education with teacher professional preparation, the teaching and learning process, and the development of practical. **Conclusion.** A key challenge remains the sustainable institutionalization of the experience gained and its systematic alignment with programme objectives, learning outcomes, courses, teaching methods, assessment, and professional practice.

Keywords: Peace Education, Peace Studies, higher education, PeaceEdu, Georgia.

აბსტრაქტი

შესავალი: სამშვიდობო განათლება თანამედროვე საგანმანათლებლო პოლიტიკის მნიშვნელოვან სფეროს წარმოადგენს. იგი ითვალისწინებს არა მხოლოდ კონფლიქტისა და მშვიდობის შესახებ ცოდნის შეძენას, არამედ მშვიდობის კულტურის, ადამიანის უფლებების პატივისცემის, დემოკრატიული ღირებულებების, სოციალური პასუხისმგებლობის, მრავალფეროვნების აღიარების, დიალოგისა და კონფლიქტების არაძალადობრივი მართვის კომპეტენციების განვითარებას. საქართველოს პოსტკონფლიქტური გამოცდილებისა და ევროპულ საგანმანათლებლო სივრცეში მისი მიმდინარე ინტეგრაციის გათვალისწინებით, კვლევაში შესწავლილია, თუ როგორ ვითარდება სამშვიდობო განათლების დისკურსი ქართულ

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უმაღლეს განათლებაში და როგორ აისახება იგი საგანმანათლებლო პროგრამებსა და საუნივერსიტეტო პრაქტიკაში. **მეთოდები.** კვლევაში გამოყენებულია თვისებრივი დოკუმენტური ანალიზი. შესწავლილია საგანმანათლებლო პროგრამები, კურსები, სილაბუსები, სასწავლო რესურსები, უნივერსიტეტების ინსტიტუციური საქმიანობა და საერთაშორისო პროექტების მასალები. ცენტრალურ შემთხვევას წარმოადგენს სოხუმის სახელმწიფო უნივერსიტეტისა და ილიას სახელმწიფო უნივერსიტეტის თანამშრომლობა PeaceEdu პროექტის ფარგლებში, ხოლო სხვა უნივერსიტეტების გამოცდილება განხილულია შედარებითი პერსპექტივის უზრუნველსაყოფად. **შედეგები**. კვლევა აჩვენებს, რომ სამშვიდობო განათლება საქართველოში ჯერ კიდევ არ ჩამოყალიბებულა ერთიან მოდელად; თუმცა მისი განვითარებისთვის მნიშვნელოვანი აკადემიური და ინსტიტუციური საფუძვლები უკვე არსებობს. ანალიზი ავლენს განვითარების თანმიმდევრობას: მშვიდობასთან დაკავშირებული შინაარსის თემატური და დისციპლინური ინტეგრაციიდან, მშვიდობის კვლევების აკადემიური და ინსტიტუციური დამკვიდრების გავლით, კომპეტენციებზე დაფუძნებული სამშვიდობო განათლების კურიკულურ ინტეგრაციამდე. განსაკუთრებული მნიშვნელობა ენიჭება PeaceEdu-ს გამოცდილებას, რომელიც სამშვიდობო განათლებას უშუალოდ უკავშირებს მასწავლებლის პროფესიულ მომზადებას, სწავლა-სწავლების პროცესსა და პრაქტიკული კომპეტენციების განვითარებას. **დასკვნა.** მთავარ გამოწვევად რჩება მიღებული გამოცდილების მდგრადი ინსტიტუციონალიზაცია და მისი სისტემური შესაბამისობა პროგრამის მიზნებთან, სწავლის შედეგებთან, კურსებთან, სწავლების მეთოდებთან, შეფასებასა და პროფესიულ პრაქტიკასთან.

საკვანძო სიტყვები: სამშვიდობო განათლება, მშვიდობის კვლევები, უმაღლესი განათლება, საქართველო.

Introduction

The contemporary understanding of education increasingly extends beyond its traditional functions of knowledge transmission and the development of professional skills. The university, as a space for knowledge creation, critical thinking, social interaction, and civic responsibility, plays an important role in shaping the values and competencies that determine how individuals relate to one another and to society. From this perspective, education can be understood not only as a mechanism for professional preparation, but also as an important instrument of social change and peacebuilding.

The contemporary concept of Peace Education is grounded precisely in this broader understanding. It is no longer limited to providing information about war, armed conflict, and peace. Contemporary Peace Education is concerned with developing the knowledge, values, attitudes, and skills that enable individuals, when interacting with people who are different from themselves, to engage in dialogue and cooperation, demonstrate mutual respect, and manage conflicts through non-violent means. In this sense, Peace Education is intrinsically connected with human rights, democratic citizenship, inclusiveness, recognition of diversity, and social responsibility.

In the Georgian context, this issue is of particular significance. The country's recent history has been marked by armed conflicts, territorial divisions, forced displacement, and prolonged social and political tensions. Consequently, peace cannot be regarded within the Georgian education system merely as part of an abstract international agenda. Rather, it is closely connected with the historical experience of society, the understanding of different perspectives, addressing the legacies of conflict, and preparing a generation capable of engaging in dialogue and cooperation in conditions of diversity.

Higher education has a particularly important role to play in this process. It is at university that future professionals acquire not only disciplinary knowledge but also experience in discussion, argumentation, listening to different perspectives, and exercising social responsibility. Teacher education is especially important in this regard, as future teachers subsequently become organizers of learning environments and interpersonal relationships among students. Accordingly, integrating Peace Education into teacher preparation programmes creates an opportunity for competencies developed at university to be transferred to schools and, more broadly, to society.

The development of this field within Georgian higher education did not begin as a single, isolated process. Rather, it has emerged through several interconnected developments. One important stage can be associated with the Erasmus+ project PESTUGE — *Creation of the Graduate Curricula in Peace Studies in*

Georgia. The project involved Caucasus University, Ilia State University, Sokhumi State University, and Tbilisi State University. Within the framework of the project, learning resources were developed, while the Institute for Peace Studies was established at Caucasus University (Ilia State University, 2016; Caucasus University).

This experience created an important academic and institutional foundation. Against the background of the PESTUGE experience, it is particularly important to distinguish between Peace Studies and Peace Education. Peace Studies primarily constitutes an academic and research field concerned with peace, conflict, violence, and peacebuilding, whereas Peace Education focuses on how this knowledge and these values can be incorporated into teaching and learning processes and translated into the development of specific competencies (Galtung, 1969; UNESCO, 1999).

Conceptual Framework and Theoretical Review: Peace Studies and Peace Education

The theoretical understanding of Peace Education is grounded in an expanded conception of peace. Galtung's (1969) classical approach distinguishes between negative peace, understood as the absence of direct violence and war, and positive peace, which is associated with just social relations and the transformation of structural conditions that generate violence. From this perspective, education is not merely an instrument for preventing conflict but also a space in which a culture of justice, equality, dialogue, and cooperation can be developed.

Contemporary literature increasingly conceptualizes Peace Education as a combination of knowledge, values, attitudes, and skills that enables individuals to analyse conflict, engage in dialogue with differing positions, and act through non-violent means. A systematic review of Peace Education in higher education identified four interconnected dimensions: ***inter-university collaboration, the teaching of Peace Education, curricular integration, and the so-called hidden curriculum*** (Purwanto et al., 2023). Accordingly, Peace Education is not limited to teaching particular topics; it encompasses both curricular content and the processes of teaching and learning, interpersonal relationships, and the educational environment.

This approach is further developed by research on pedagogies of peacebuilding in higher education, which focuses not only on what students learn about peace but also on how learning takes place. Dialogical, participatory, and experiential approaches to teaching provide students with opportunities to connect ideas about peace with their own educational experiences and professional practice (Millican et al., 2021). Therefore, when assessing Peace Education, it is important to consider content and pedagogy in conjunction with one another.

At the same time, the literature on critical Peace Education cautions researchers against treating Peace Education as the mechanical transmission of a predetermined and universal model of peace. Zembylas (2018) emphasizes the need to take into account power relations, inequality, historical experience, and asymmetries in knowledge production. Kester's (2019) research likewise demonstrates that Peace Education curricula in universities should be context-sensitive and critically examine how knowledge about peace, conflict, and justice is produced and transmitted.

Recent research on curricular integration likewise indicates that the implementation of Peace Education in higher education is often uneven and fragmented, with its sustainability depending on institutional support, the capacity of academic staff, and the alignment between policy and practice (Heretape & Escarlos, 2026). Accordingly, the literature provides a basis for considering the integration of Peace Education not merely in terms of the presence of individual courses, but also from the perspective of institutional and programme-level sustainability.

At the international level, this approach is further reinforced by UNESCO's 2023 Recommendation concerning education for peace, human rights, international understanding, global citizenship, and sustainable development. The document links education for peace with knowledge, skills, values, attitudes, and behaviours, while emphasizing the interrelationship among curriculum, teaching methods, the educational environment, and assessment (UNESCO, 2023).

Against this background, the present study places its analytical focus on the curricular and institutional dimensions of higher education: how peace-related content moves from the level of individual courses into programme objectives, learning outcomes, professional competencies, and practice. This approach makes it possible to assess the Georgian experience not only in terms of whether a course addressing peace-related

issues exists, but also in terms of how systematically such content is connected to the teaching and learning process and to students' professional development.

This issue is particularly significant in the context of teacher education, as future teachers not only acquire peace-related competencies themselves but also subsequently create the learning environments in which these competencies are expected to develop among students. Experience from teacher preparation programmes indicates that transformative Peace Education integrates knowledge, skills, dispositions, and relationships, and that its effectiveness depends significantly on adaptation to the programme context and on opportunities for practical experience (Brion-Meisels et al., 2014).

Taking this distinction into account, the present study conceptualizes Peace Education as a combination of content and educational experience. Therefore, identifying its presence cannot be based solely on searching for course titles. It is important to examine whether relevant knowledge, values, skills, and opportunities for professional action are reflected in programme objectives, learning outcomes, courses, teaching methods, and student activities.

Research Methodology

The study is based on a qualitative research design and employs targeted document analysis and a comparative-analytical approach. The aim of the study is to identify the existing forms, development trends, and institutional challenges of integrating Peace Education within the context of higher education in Georgia. Particular attention is paid to the distinction between the existence of an individual topic, course, or project related to Peace Education and its broader programme-level or institutional integration.

The choice of the research design is determined by the specific nature of the research issue. The development of Peace Education in Georgia cannot be explained solely through a description of current courses or individual programmes. It is also necessary to take into account the academic and institutional processes that have created the foundations for the development of contemporary Peace Education. For this reason, the study connects two important directions: on the one hand, the experience of the academic and institutional development of Peace Studies, including the foundations established within the framework of PESTUGE; and, on the other hand, the curricular and pedagogical development of contemporary Peace Education, which became particularly evident within the framework of PeaceEdu. This approach makes it possible to view PESTUGE and PeaceEdu not as initiatives that replace one another, but rather as interconnected stages in the development of Peace Education in Georgia.

Research Questions. Based on the aim of the study and the defined analytical framework, the following research questions were formulated:

- In what forms are components of Peace Education and related thematic areas represented and integrated into higher education programmes and academic practices in Georgia?
- What trends can be identified in the development of Peace Education in Georgia, and how can thematic, disciplinary, curricular, and institutional forms of integration be distinguished from one another?
- What major challenges constrain the sustainable and systematic integration of Peace Education into higher education, and what significance does the transformation of project-based experience into programme-level and institutional practice have in this process?

The research questions determine both the direction of data selection and the subsequent analysis of the data. The first question is directed towards identifying and describing existing practices; the second towards comparing the identified practices and interpreting development trends; and the third towards understanding the challenges facing the sustainability and institutionalization of Peace Education. This structure enables the study not to be limited to a description of existing practices, but also to examine the issue from the perspective of development dynamics and institutional sustainability.

Data Sources and Principles of Selection. The empirical basis of the study consists of a set of publicly available academic, programme-related, and institutional documents. Data were selected purposively, based on their relevance to the research questions. Materials related to universities' educational programmes, individual courses, Peace Education and Peace Studies initiatives, as well as research and institutional activities, were analysed.

In selecting the sources, primary attention was given to materials that made it possible to establish not only the presence of peace-related content, but also its educational function and the degree of its integration. Accordingly, the analysis distinguished between: (a) the presence of individual peace- or conflict-related

topics at a university; (b) the existence of a relevant course; (c) the institutionalization of Peace Studies or Conflict Studies as a disciplinary field; (d) the integration of Peace Education into professional preparation programmes; and (e) the connection of Peace Education with the university's institutional and community-oriented activities.

Such an approach is particularly important for ensuring that the study avoids evaluating universities solely on the basis of their names or individual projects. Document analysis makes it possible to identify not only the peace-related content explicitly documented in a source, but also the context in which the relevant educational practice is presented.

The central case of the study is the experience of Sokhumi State University and Ilia State University, particularly the educational practices developed within the framework of PeaceEdu. This case is analysed within the broader national context and compared with practices identified at other Georgian universities related to Peace Education, Conflict Studies, mediation, human rights, democratic values, and peacebuilding. Thus, the study combines an in-depth examination of the central case with a comparative analysis of other institutions.

Units of Analysis and Analytical Categories. In the process of document analysis, the unit of analysis was considered to be not only a specific document, but also the educational practice, course, programme component, or institutional initiative presented within that document. The main task of the analysis was to determine in what form and at what level the idea of Peace Education is represented in higher education.

Several interconnected analytical categories were established for the interpretation of the data. The first category was **content integration**, which included the presence of issues related to Peace Education in the content of a course or programme. The second was **disciplinary integration**, which concerned the existence of Peace Studies, Conflict Studies, mediation, and peacebuilding as more independent academic fields. The third category was **value-based integration**, within which attention was given to human rights, democratic values, diversity, social responsibility, dialogue, and non-violent interaction. The fourth category concerned **institutional and community integration** — connecting university activities with student engagement, cooperation with the community, research, international projects, and peacebuilding practice.

The use of these categories made it possible to distinguish different forms of Peace Education integration from one another and subsequently group them into four main analytical models: direct curricular integration; disciplinary integration of Peace Studies/Conflict Studies; values-based integration; and institutional/community-oriented integration. These models are used in the study as analytical categories rather than as rigid or mutually exclusive classifications of universities.

Data Analysis Procedure. The analysis was conducted in several successive stages. At the first stage, the relevant documents and materials were reviewed and grouped according to the aim of the study and the research questions. Particular attention at this stage was given to information that directly or indirectly indicated the educational function of Peace Education, its curricular integration, or institutional support.

To strengthen the credibility of the research, source triangulation was employed: programme documents were compared with syllabi, learning resources, and official institutional or project-related information provided by universities. The interpretation is limited to publicly available materials; accordingly, claims that could not be verified through internal documents or activities conducted outside the public domain are not presented in generalized form (Levitt et al., 2018).

At the second stage, content coding was conducted. The information identified in the documents was grouped according to the analytical categories defined above. Attention was given both to explicit references to Peace Education and to components that were substantively related to it — for example, conflict management, mediation, dialogue, human rights, democratic values, diversity, and social responsibility.

At the third stage, the experiences of different universities were compared. The purpose of the comparison was not to create a ranking of universities or to divide them into "better" and "worse" models. Comparative analysis was used to determine the different ways in which Peace Education is connected to higher education and to identify common trends emerging in the Georgian context.

At the fourth stage, the identified practices were interpreted within a broader theoretical framework. In particular, the analysis was based on the distinction between Peace Studies and Peace Education: while Peace Studies represents an academic and research field concerned with peace, conflict, violence, and peacebuilding, Peace Education entails transferring this knowledge and these values into the educational process and developing the corresponding competencies. Accordingly, the study focused not only on the question —

"What does the university teach about peace?" — but also on the broader question — ***"How does the university teach for peace?"***

At the final stage of the analysis, the identified data were synthesized into a broader developmental model comprising the following sequence: **thematic integration → disciplinary integration → specialized course → programme integration → institutional integration → transfer into professional practice**. This model is used in the study not as a strictly linear developmental scheme, but as an analytical framework that makes it possible to assess the direction in which the institutionalization of Peace Education is moving and the points at which its integration remains at a fragmented level.

Ensuring Credibility and Research Limitations. To strengthen the credibility of the research, different types of sources were cross-compared. Where possible, information concerning universities was verified through the respective universities' official websites, descriptions of educational programmes or courses, and institutional materials. In the case of academic and international literature, relevant scholarly and institutional sources were used.

Such comparison of sources is particularly important when the object of research consists of ongoing or recent educational initiatives. The existence of an activity implemented within a project does not automatically indicate its sustainable curricular integration. Accordingly, the study distinguishes between project-based activity, an individual course, programme integration, and institutionalized practice.

At the same time, the study does not claim to provide an exhaustive description of all Peace Education initiatives existing across all higher education institutions in Georgia. Research based on publicly available documents entails a certain limitation: some practices existing within a university may not be fully reflected in publicly available web resources. Accordingly, conclusions concerning a particular university are considered within the scope of the materials that were accessible and verifiable at the time the research was conducted.

Thus, the methodological approach employed makes it possible to examine the development of Peace Education in Georgia not as a list of individual courses and projects, but as an interconnected process of academic, curricular, pedagogical, and institutional changes. It is from this perspective that the experiences of PESTUGE and PeaceEdu are connected and their roles in the different stages of the development of Peace Education within Georgian higher education are understood

Results

From PESTUGE to PeaceEdu: The Logic of Development. Understanding the process of the development of Peace Education in Georgian higher education is impossible through a description of individual universities alone. It becomes more important to identify the chronological and substantive connections between them. From this perspective, PESTUGE and PeaceEdu can be viewed as two interconnected stages of one broader process (Ilia State University, 2016, 2024; Ilia State University, 2025).

Within PESTUGE, the main objective was to develop Peace Studies as an academic field in Georgia. The project partners included Caucasus University, Ilia State University, Sokhumi State University, and Tbilisi State University, while the Peace Studies Institute was established at Caucasus University (Ilia State University, 2016; Caucasus University, n.d.-c). The experience of Caucasus University added an institutional dimension to this process and demonstrated that the academic development of Peace Studies should not remain limited to the level of an individual course or a one-time project (Caucasus University).

Ignoring the experience of PESTUGE when analysing PeaceEdu would disrupt historical and academic continuity; however, treating them as one and the same process would also be inaccurate. PESTUGE's main contribution lay in the academic curricular development and institutionalization of Peace Studies, whereas PeaceEdu shifted its focus more towards pedagogical and curricular transformation. This is precisely where the logic of development becomes evident: initially, issues of peace and conflict enter the university as academic knowledge; specialized courses and institutes are then established; subsequently, the question emerges of how this knowledge can be applied to transform education and professional practice.

PeaceEdu represents precisely this subsequent stage. The Erasmus+ project *Curriculum Reform to Promote Education for Peace in Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova (PeaceEdu)* can be viewed in the Georgian context as a new stage in the development of Peace Education. If one of the significant outcomes of PESTUGE was the academic and institutional establishment of Peace Studies, the focus of PeaceEdu shifts more towards curricular transformation in education, professional competencies, and practice. Therefore, it would be inaccurate to regard these two projects as initiatives that replace one another: PESTUGE created the academic

and institutional foundation, while PeaceEdu develops this experience further in the direction of education, professional competencies, and pedagogical practice (Ilia State University, 2024, 2025).

The particular significance of PeaceEdu for Georgia is also determined by the fact that the project directly connects Peace Education with the education system and, in particular, with the preparation of future teachers. The question is no longer only "What should a student know about peace and conflict?" but rather "What should a future professional be able to do in order to create a culture of peace?" (Ilia State University, 2024, 2025).

The Experience of Sokhumi State University and Ilia State University: The Central PeaceEdu Case. The experience of Sokhumi State University and Ilia State University was considered separately in the study because both universities jointly participate in the process of curricular development of Peace Education within the framework of PeaceEdu. In both cases, the project is associated with the development and piloting of courses, quality monitoring and evaluation, student engagement, and the transfer of Peace Education into practice (Ilia State University, 2024, 2025; Sokhumi State University, 2025).

This common process is complemented by an institutional and student dimension at both universities. At Sokhumi State University, the Peace Education Center was opened on May 29, 2026, serving as an institutional platform for the university's Peace Education and research activities. In the same direction, a Peace Education Student Club was established at Sokhumi State University within the framework of PeaceEdu, with planning for its activities beginning in 2025. Ilia State University also has a Peace Education Student Club, which was established in 2025 with the support of Iliauni and Erasmus+ PeaceEdu (Sokhumi State University, 2025, 2026a; Ilia State University, 2025).

Thus, the experience of Sokhumi State University and Ilia State University should not be viewed as different models, but rather as interconnected processes taking place within the framework of a single Erasmus+ initiative. At both universities, curricular change is connected with course development, piloting, monitoring, and evaluation, while student clubs and other activities extend this process into the non-formal educational space. At the same time, the opening of the Peace Education Center at Sokhumi State University provides an additional institutional dimension to this shared development process (Sokhumi State University, 2026a, 2026b; Ilia State University, 2025).

An important component of this common process is represented by two courses — *Peace and Responsibility in a Global World* and *Peace Education in General Education Schools*. Their development within the framework of PeaceEdu is connected with the educational activities of both universities and aims to link peace-related issues with education, future professional activity, and school practice.

Peace and Responsibility in a Global World provides a broad conceptual and value-based foundation for Peace Education. The course considers peace in the context of war, conflict, international relations, conflict resolution, and peacebuilding, as well as through the perspectives of responsibility, difference, stereotypes, and relationships among people. Such an approach enables students to perceive peace not merely as a state opposed to war, but as a complex social and political process.

Peace Education in General Education Schools directly connects this knowledge with the educational environment. The course focuses on developing the competencies of future teachers that will enable them to plan curricular and extracurricular peace-related activities and to apply approaches to conflict management, peaceful resolution, and peer mediation in school settings.

The relationship between the two courses is considered in the study as a logic of transition from knowledge to professional competencies and practice. At the same time, the PeaceEdu activities of both universities demonstrate that curricular change is connected with teaching methods, student activities, and opportunities to apply acquired knowledge in practice.

Peace Education as Content and as Educational Experience. The analysis of the PeaceEdu experience demonstrated that the essence of Peace Education is not determined solely by the knowledge that students acquire. Equally important is how this knowledge is taught and what type of educational experience students receive.

The use of active and interactive methods such as discussion, debate, case analysis, role-playing, group work, reflection, and problem-based learning is particularly consistent with the objectives of Peace Education. These methods enable students not only to become familiar with issues of peace and conflict, but also to experience for themselves listening to different perspectives, reasoned argumentation, cooperation, and joint decision-making (Millican et al., 2021).

From this perspective, the teaching process of Peace Education itself should correspond to the values and competencies it seeks to develop. If students are taught dialogue, the learning environment should create opportunities for dialogue; if they are taught respect for difference, the educational process should accommodate the existence of different opinions; and if they are taught non-violent conflict management, students should have opportunities to analyse relevant situations and apply these approaches in practice.

Thus, a principle emerges from the research material: Peace Education is not only what the university teaches, but also how it teaches it. It is precisely this unity that creates the transition from an understanding of Peace Education as content to an understanding of it as competence-based education.

Table 1: Comparative Analysis of the Forms of Peace Education Representation in the Georgian Higher Education Space

University / Initiative	Peace Education-Related Component	Type of Source	Form of Integration
Sokhumi State University	Two PeaceEdu courses: *Peace and Responsibility in a Global World*; *Peace Education in General Education Schools*	Course syllabi	Direct curricular / professional
Ilia State University	Two PeaceEdu courses: *Peace and Responsibility in a Global World*; *Peace Education in General Education Schools*	Course syllabi	Direct curricular / professional
Caucasus University	PESTUGE; Peace Studies Institute and relevant courses	Official institutional and project information	Peace Studies / institutional
Tbilisi State University	PESTUGE experience; Master's Programme in Conflictology	Project and programme information	Disciplinary / academic
University of Georgia	Conflict management and mediation in education	Public academic information	Disciplinary / professional
International Black Sea University	Conflict, negotiation, and mediation	Official university materials	Disciplinary / skills-oriented
Batumi Shota Rustaveli State University	Peace Studies Center — *Youth Platform for Peacebuilding*	Official university information	Institutional / youth-oriented
Akaki Tsereteli State University	Project-based and community activities on peace- and conflict-related issues	Public project information	Project-based / non-formal
Samtskhe-Javakheti State University	Diversity, civic integration, and human-rights-related topics	Public programme information	Values-based / indirect

Note: *The table represents an analytical comparison rather than a strict classification of universities. To confirm direct programme-level integration, only those cases for which publicly available documents provide an appropriate basis are included; in other cases, a broader or indirect connection is indicated.*

The PeaceEdu experience of Sokhumi State University and Ilia State University can be expressed through the following chain: **theoretical knowledge → critical reflection → professional competence →**

application in practice → student engagement → institutional development. In this process, student clubs, meetings, discussions, and other activities connect curricular and non-formal educational experiences, while the Peace Education Center at Sokhumi State University creates an opportunity for the institutional strengthening of these activities.

Other Universities in Georgia: Different Paths towards One Direction. The overall picture of Georgian higher education cannot be reduced to the experiences of Sokhumi State University and Ilia State University alone. Processes taking place at other universities demonstrate that the development of Peace Education in Georgia follows different paths.

Caucasus University occupies a particularly important place in this regard. The Peace Studies Institute established within the framework of PESTUGE provided Peace Education with an institutional foundation that goes beyond the mere existence of an individual course. In addition to teaching and research, the Institute serves as a platform for public lectures, student activities, and international cooperation (Caucasus University, n.d.-a, n.d.-c).

Tbilisi State University is important as one of the partners in PESTUGE. Within the project, inter-university cooperation aimed to develop Peace Studies modules and integrate them into master's curricula. At the same time, it is necessary to distinguish between participation in the

Discussion

The comparative analysis of the documents demonstrated that Peace Education is not represented through a unified model within the Georgian higher education space. The experiences of universities differ both in the form of integration and in its depth and institutional scope. In some cases, peace-related themes are directly connected with the curriculum and the development of professional competencies; in others, they are represented through the disciplinary fields of Peace Studies and Conflictology; in still other cases, the values of peace, human rights, dialogue, and diversity are integrated into various educational activities, while some universities create institutional and community-oriented spaces.

On the basis of these differences, four main models of integration were identified. However, their distinction is possible only for analytical purposes, as in actual practice universities often combine more than one model. This is particularly important for assessing the Georgian context: the development of Peace Education does not proceed from a single institutional centre in one direction, but rather develops through different pathways and with varying degrees of depth across different universities.

Sokhumi State University and Ilia State University: A Shared Curricular and Institutional PeaceEdu Model

The study identifies the joint PeaceEdu experience of Sokhumi State University and Ilia State University as one of the clearest examples of direct curricular integration. Here, knowledge about peace-related issues is connected with curriculum development, teacher professional preparation, student engagement, and application in practice. Thus, the experience of both universities demonstrates the same developmental logic:**integration of Peace Education content → development of professional competencies → practical application.**

The two courses developed within the framework of PeaceEdu — *Peace and Responsibility in a Global World* and *Peace Education in General Education Schools* — provide the substantive foundation for this process. The first course presents the broad social and global context of peace and responsibility, while the second transfers this knowledge into the professional context of education and the school environment. Therefore, their analytical significance lies not merely in the existence of individual courses, but in the opportunity to connect knowledge with professional action.

The professional perspective of the future teacher is particularly important. Peaceful conflict resolution, dialogue, peer mediation, cooperation, and listening to different positions are considered not only general social values, but also professional competencies. Thus, the experience implemented at both universities within PeaceEdu demonstrates one of the important transformations of Peace Education — the transformation of knowledge into pedagogical and professional competence.

The second important dimension of this example is the form of teaching. Discussion, debate, case analysis, role-playing, group work, and reflection are not merely methodological choices; they create a learning environment that practically develops cooperation, listening to different positions, and non-violent conflict management. Accordingly, in the case of both universities, the principle becomes particularly clear that Peace Education is not only what the university teaches, but also how it teaches it.

The significance of the cooperation between Sokhumi State University and Ilia State University lies precisely in the combination of these components: curricular development, course piloting and monitoring, student activities and student clubs, as well as cooperation between the universities. Accordingly, it is more appropriate to consider this case as a shared development model operating within the framework of a single Erasmus+ project rather than as a juxtaposition of two different institutional models.

Caucasus University: From Disciplinary Knowledge to Institutionalization. The case of Caucasus University demonstrates a different developmental logic. Within the framework of PESTUGE, Peace Studies courses and the Peace Studies Institute were established at the university, through which the field of Peace Studies moved beyond the boundaries of individual educational activities and acquired an institutional foundation.

The analytical significance of this example lies precisely in institutionalization. If the existence of an individual course confirms the presence of peace-related themes within the curriculum, the establishment of an institute already indicates the formation of a more sustainable structure for knowledge production, teaching, research, and cooperation. Accordingly, the experience of Caucasus University demonstrates that the existence of an educational component alone may be insufficient for the sustainability of Peace Education; it is also important whether an institutional mechanism exists to continue developing this field academically.

Therefore, in the study, Caucasus University approaches two models simultaneously: **disciplinary and institutional integration**. This once again confirms that the identified models are not strictly separated categories.

Tbilisi State University: Strengthening the Academic Field

The example of Tbilisi State University is important for understanding the historical dynamics of the development of Peace Education in Georgia. The university was a PESTUGE partner in a process through which cooperation among four Georgian universities aimed to develop Peace Studies modules and integrate them into relevant academic programmes.

At the same time, TSU's contemporary Conflictology field demonstrates that issues of peace and conflict are also developing as an independent academic field in Georgia. The significance of this case lies not in confirming the existence of a separate "Peace Education" course, but rather in the fact that the university creates an **academic foundation of specialized knowledge**, upon which more practical and professional forms of Peace Education can subsequently be developed.

Therefore, the example of TSU represents primarily the direction of disciplinary integration. Its experience demonstrates that the development of Peace Education requires not only the creation of direct pedagogical practice, but also the existence of an academic knowledge base and research environment that intellectually supports such practice.

University of Georgia: Incorporating Peace-Related Competencies into Professional Education

In the case of the University of Georgia, the study identified the courses *Conflict Management and Mediation in Education* and *Conflict Resolution in Education*. The significance of this example lies in the fact that issues of conflict management and mediation are transferred directly into the professional context of the field of education.

Such integration is particularly interesting because it does not leave Peace Education solely within a general social or political discourse. Here, conflict management is connected with the professional reality in which an education-sector professional will have to manage relationships, listen to different perspectives, and resolve conflict situations.

Accordingly, the example of the University of Georgia can be viewed as an **intersection between values-based and professional competency-oriented integration**. At the same time, the study does not provide sufficient grounds for considering this practice a full-scale institutional Peace Education model. Its significance lies more specifically in connecting peace-related competencies with a particular professional field.

International Black Sea University: The Possibility of Thematic Integration

In the materials of International Black Sea University, the themes of conflict, negotiation, and mediation emerge across various educational activities and courses. This case is important as an example of

how components relevant to Peace Education can be developed through topics such as negotiation, conflict management, and mediation.

At the same time, caution is required when interpreting this example: the available material does not provide sufficient grounds for asserting that a unified, separately institutionalized Peace Education programme has been established at the university. Therefore, the experience of IBSU is more appropriately considered an example of **thematic/disciplinary integration**, demonstrating the possibility of incorporating specific Peace Education competencies into the curriculum.

This distinction is methodologically important because the study seeks to distinguish between directly confirmed curricular integration and practices that are only thematically related to Peace Education.

Batumi Shota Rustaveli State University: An Institutional Space Beyond the Curriculum

The establishment in 2026 of the Peace Studies Center — *Youth Platform for Peacebuilding* — at Batumi Shota Rustaveli State University represents another dimension of the development of Peace Education. In this case, the focus is not limited to an educational course. An institutional space is created that is connected with youth engagement and educational activities addressing peacebuilding issues.

The analytical value of this example lies precisely in the fact that it demonstrates the expansion of the university's role beyond the boundaries of the formal curriculum. Peace Education can develop through youth platforms, research centres, discussions, public events, and other non-formal educational mechanisms.

However, here too it is important to maintain the distinction: the existence of a centre in itself does not confirm full curricular integration of Peace Education. It would be more accurate to consider it an **example of institutional and community-oriented integration**, which in the future may become more closely connected with formal educational programmes.

Akaki Tsereteli State University and Samtskhe-Javakheti State University: Manifestations of the Values-Based Dimension

In the cases of Akaki Tsereteli State University and Samtskhe-Javakheti State University, the study identified primarily values-based and community-related components associated with Peace Education. These areas are connected with issues such as diversity, civic engagement, human rights, and social integration.

In these cases, particular caution is required, as the available material does not provide sufficient grounds for directly considering the specific programmes of these universities as Peace Education programmes. Their significance for the study lies elsewhere: they demonstrate that certain principles of Peace Education may exist in an **indirect, values-based form**, even when a separate Peace Education course or programme has not been established at a university.

This, in turn, broadens the analytical perspective of the study: the presence of Peace Education should not be determined solely by the use of the specific term "Peace Education." It is also necessary to identify the content and competencies that are actually associated with the formation of a culture of peace.

Comparative Analysis of Universities

Comparison of the university cases demonstrates that the development of Peace Education in Georgia can be understood as **different but interconnected trajectories of integration**. One pathway begins with the academic development of Peace Studies and moves towards institutionalization; another proceeds from transferring knowledge about peace into the professional curriculum towards the development of practical competencies; a third involves the dissemination of the values of peace across various disciplinary and professional fields within the university; while the fourth involves expanding the university's institutional and community role.

From this perspective, differences among universities reflect not only different levels of development, but also **different logics of integration**. For example, in the experience of Caucasus University, the main achievement lies in the creation of an institutional and disciplinary foundation; in the case of TSU, in strengthening the academic field of peace and conflict studies; in the PeaceEdu experience of Sokhumi State University and Ilia State University, in connecting knowledge with professional and pedagogical practice; at the University of Georgia, in connecting conflict management and mediation with education; and at Batumi State University, in expanding peacebuilding activities into the youth and community sphere.

Based on this comparison, the following trajectory can be identified in the development of Peace Education:

Thematic integration → disciplinary integration → curricular integration → transfer into professional practice → institutional integration.

This trajectory should not be understood as a strict, unidirectional hierarchy. In practice, a university may simultaneously combine characteristics of several stages and models. Such intersections indicate that the field of Peace Education in Georgia is still in the process of formation and that its development depends on connecting different institutional experiences with one another. The initial research material also emphasizes that the four models are not strictly separated from one another and that their intersection is possible in practice.

Thus, the results do not confirm the existence of one dominant model of Peace Education in Georgia. On the contrary, the diversity identified points to a developing and differentiated educational space, in which the main task for further development is to connect individual experiences with one another and transform them into sustainable institutional practice.

Sokhumi State University: Two Courses as a Model of the Development of Peace Education from Knowledge to Practice

The experience of Sokhumi State University deserves particular attention in the research findings because the integration of Peace Education is represented here not merely in the form of an individual course, but through two interconnected educational components: *Peace and Responsibility in a Global World* and *Peace Education in General Education Schools*. Their interconnection makes it possible to view the development of Peace Education as a movement from broad conceptual knowledge towards its professional and practical application.

This distinction is particularly important when taking into account the conceptual differentiation between Peace Studies and Peace Education. The logic of the first course is associated with understanding peace, responsibility, and the role of the individual in the contemporary world at a broader social and global level, whereas the second course transfers this knowledge directly into the context of education and the school environment. Accordingly, their interrelationship can be expressed through the following formula:

global and conceptual understanding → transfer into the field of education → professional competence → school practice.

Such a sequence distinguishes the experience of Sokhumi State University from cases in which peace-related issues are represented only in an individual disciplinary or thematic course.

“Peace and Responsibility in a Global World”: Creating a Conceptual Foundation

The first course — *Peace and Responsibility in a Global World* — can be considered a broad conceptual and value-based foundation of Peace Education. Its function is not limited to defining the concept of peace. The very title of the course combines two important components — peace and responsibility — thereby placing peace-related issues within the broader context of the individual, society, and global interdependence.

At this stage, the student perceives the issue of peace as a complex social and global challenge. Here, peace can be connected with responsibility, human relationships, recognition of difference, dialogue, justice, and civic engagement. Accordingly, the course creates the conceptual framework without which the transfer of Peace Education into professional practice could be reduced merely to the development of technical skills.

In other words, the first course addresses the question:

“What does peace mean, and what responsibility do individuals and society have in shaping a culture of peace?”

This represents the level of knowledge and value-based understanding.

“Peace Education in General Education Schools”: Transforming Conceptual Knowledge into Professional Practice

The second course — *Peace Education in General Education Schools* — raises a different type of question: how can ideas of peace become part of the teaching and learning process and school life?

The significance of this course lies precisely in this transformation. The student no longer remains merely a recipient of general knowledge about peace; rather, the student begins to consider how the principles of peace, dialogue, cooperation, and non-violent conflict management can be applied within a specific educational environment.

The official PeaceEdu documentation also confirms that the course *Peace Education in General Education Schools* was specifically developed within the framework of the project and that its piloting and quality monitoring were planned. At the same time, *Peace and Responsibility in a Global World* was considered an already existing bachelor's-level course, whose development strategy was discussed within the framework of the project.

Accordingly, the relationship between the two courses can be understood as a vertical curricular sequence: the first creates the foundation for understanding peace-related issues, while the second transforms this foundation into professional application within a specific field of education.

The Interrelationship between the Two Courses: A Mechanism for the Transfer of Knowledge

The most important characteristic of the two courses lies not merely in their substantive difference, but in their functional interdependence. If the first course enables students to understand peace within a broad social and global context, the second processes this knowledge at the level of professional action.

Thus, their functions can be presented as follows:

First Course	**Second Course**
Broad conceptual understanding of peace	Transfer of peace into education
Global and social context	School and professional context
Understanding of values	Application of values in practice
Knowledge about peace	Possibilities for education for peace
Individual and social responsibility	Professional responsibility for creating a learning environment

This comparison makes the distinction between two questions particularly important:

"What do we teach about peace?"

and

"How do we teach for peace?"

The first course primarily creates the foundation for the first question, while the second moves towards the second question. It is precisely through this transition that Peace Education acquires its pedagogical significance.

The Future Teacher as a Transformer of Knowledge

The particular significance of the Sokhumi State University example is also determined by the fact that this experience is connected with teacher professional preparation. A future teacher needs not only to know what conflict, peace, or mediation are. They need to understand how to create a classroom and school environment in which different opinions can be expressed, conflict does not escalate into violence, and relationships are based on respect, dialogue, and cooperation.

Therefore, the function of the second course can be considered as the professional transformation of knowledge. The student learns not only the content itself, but also the professional actions through which this content should be transferred into school practice.

The use of active and interactive teaching methods is particularly important here — discussion, debate, case analysis, role-playing, group work, and reflection. Such methods are not merely techniques for teaching Peace Education. They create the very model of interaction that Peace Education seeks to develop.

Therefore, in the case of Sokhumi State University, one of the central theses of the study becomes particularly clear:

Peace Education is not only what the university teaches, but also how it teaches it.

If students are taught dialogue solely through lectures, their experience may remain at the level of knowledge. However, if they themselves participate in discussions, reconcile different perspectives, make group decisions, engage in role simulations, or analyse conflict situations, the value of peace is already experienced within the learning process.

The Two Courses and the Transfer from University to School

The third link — the transfer between the university and the school — is particularly important in the example of Sokhumi State University. The first course creates a broad knowledge and value-based foundation, the second transforms it within a pedagogical context, while the ultimate goal is to apply this knowledge in future professional activity.

This can be presented as a three-stage model:

I. Understanding — the student acquires knowledge about peace, responsibility, and conflict;

II. Professional transformation — the student learns how to transfer this knowledge into education and the school environment;

III. Practical application — the future teacher applies the acquired competencies with students, in the classroom, and within the school community.

Such a structure is particularly important because it transfers Peace Education from the university's internal teaching and learning process into the social space of the school. Accordingly, in this case the university is no longer merely a provider of knowledge; it acts as an institution for preparing future peaceful educational environments.

The Analytical Significance of the Experience of Sokhumi State University

The analytical significance of the experience of these two universities lies precisely in their shared developmental logic. Within the framework of PeaceEdu, curricular change is connected not only with the creation of new educational content, but also with didactic approaches, piloting, monitoring, student engagement, and transfer into practice.

In this process, the two courses can be viewed as complementary components: the first creates a broad conceptual foundation of peace and responsibility, while the second transforms this foundation within the context of education and school practice. Accordingly, the analytical formulation of the study is:

global and conceptual understanding → pedagogical understanding → professional competence → transfer into practice.

The official PeaceEdu materials emphasize in this process both the integration of courses into university curricula and the development of Peace Education didactics from "theory to practice," including piloting, monitoring, and student activities (Ilia State University, 2024, 2025). Therefore, the experience of Sokhumi State University and Ilia State University should be considered not as separate cases, but as two equally important institutional implementations of a single project-based and curricular development process.

The student engagement component is also important in this context. Student activities and the development of student clubs within the framework of PeaceEdu at both universities connect the knowledge acquired through the courses with non-formal and collaborative experiences. This strengthens the connection between the curriculum and the university's everyday educational culture.

Thus, in the case of PeaceEdu, the integration of Peace Education can be described as a multilayered process in which curriculum, pedagogical approaches, professional preparation, student engagement, and institutional cooperation are interconnected.

Sokhumi State University and Ilia State University: The Institutional Dimension of the Shared PeaceEdu Experience

In the example of Sokhumi State University and Ilia State University, Peace Education does not remain merely a combination of individual courses. Both universities participate, within the framework of a single Erasmus+ project, in curriculum development, the piloting and evaluation of courses, student activities, and the transfer of Peace Education into practice. This shared foundation is particularly important for the study because it demonstrates how an innovation created within an international project can gradually become part of university educational practice.

A common characteristic of the activities implemented at both universities is the connection between curricular and extracurricular components. Educational courses create the foundation for knowledge and professional competencies, while student clubs and activities provide students with opportunities to apply this knowledge, cooperate, and participate in community engagement.

From this perspective, the function of the student club is not limited to organizing additional events. It creates a space where students can transfer the ideas of Peace Education into discussion, teamwork, project activities, and community initiatives. As a result, knowledge acquired through the curriculum becomes connected with non-formal educational experience.

The piloting, monitoring, and evaluation planned and implemented within the framework of PeaceEdu also indicate the cyclical nature of curriculum development:

idea → course design → piloting → evaluation → improvement.

This logic is important from the perspective of sustainability because the value of resources created within the project increases when they become connected with institutional quality assurance and programme development processes.

The experience of Sokhumi State University and Ilia State University therefore demonstrates that the integration of Peace Education can simultaneously encompass substantive, pedagogical, professional, student, and institutional dimensions. Despite different institutional contexts, both universities are developing, within the framework of one project, the same fundamental objective — transforming the knowledge and values of Peace Education into educational practice. The Peace Education Center opened at Sokhumi State University and the student clubs developed at both universities add an additional institutional and non-formal dimension to this shared process.

The questions **“What do we teach about peace?”** and **“How do we teach for peace?”** are particularly important in this process. The initial courses and learning resources create the substantive foundation, while teaching methods, student activities, and practical experience ensure the transformation of this knowledge into competence and action.

The future teacher is represented in this process not only as a recipient of Peace Education, but also as a professional who transfers it into practice. Accordingly, the knowledge acquired at university should be transformed into competencies that will help future teachers promote dialogue, respect for difference, cooperation, and non-violent conflict management in the classroom.

This shared development model is complemented by cooperation between universities. The joint activities of Sokhumi State University and Ilia State University within PeaceEdu create an opportunity for the experience of courses, student activities, and pedagogical approaches to become a basis for mutual exchange and joint development.

Such cooperation is also important for institutional sustainability. Following the completion of the project, the courses, resources, student clubs, methods, and forms of cooperation created through the project will acquire long-term significance only if they continue within the programme and institutional practices of the universities. From this perspective, the existence of the Peace Education Center at Sokhumi State University represents an important institutional foundation that can be connected with the further development of the experience gained within PeaceEdu.

Therefore, the main analytical significance of the PeaceEdu experience lies not merely in the creation of new courses. It demonstrates how an innovation created within an international project can become connected with curriculum development, professional preparation, student life, and inter-university cooperation.

Accordingly, the case of Sokhumi State University and Ilia State University can be considered in the study as an example of the intersection of direct curricular and institutional integration. Within this model, content, teaching methods, student engagement, and professional practice are no longer separate components.

This experience also reinforces the central thesis of the study: **Peace Education is not only what the university teaches, but also how it teaches it and how it creates conditions for transferring acquired knowledge into practice.**

At the same time, the research data do not provide sufficient grounds for considering the outcomes achieved within PeaceEdu as an already fully institutionalized and sustainable system. It would be more accurate to assess them as a development process whose next stage is the sustainable connection of project outcomes with programme-level, quality assurance, student, and institutional practices.

It is precisely here that the issue of moving from a project-based initiative to sustainable educational practice becomes evident. If the courses, resources, teaching methods, and student activities continue beyond the framework of the project, the PeaceEdu experience will be able to generate a broader institutional impact.

In this process, the development of both the curriculum and the university's non-formal educational environment is important. The Peace Education student clubs, discussions, projects, and other activities at Sokhumi State University and Ilia State University create an opportunity for Peace Education to become part of everyday university culture. The opening of the Peace Education Center at Sokhumi State University provides an additional mechanism of institutional support for the same direction.

Accordingly, the experience of Sokhumi State University and Ilia State University demonstrates not two different pathways, but the multilayered development of one shared PeaceEdu model:

course → professional competence → practice → student engagement → institutional cooperation → sustainable educational practice.

Within this shared model, the Peace Education Center at Sokhumi State University and the student clubs at both universities connect formal and non-formal educational spaces.

This trajectory is particularly important in the Georgian context because it combines the academic, curricular, professional, and community dimensions of Peace Education while simultaneously leaving room for its further institutionalization.

On the basis of this model, the experiences of other universities can also be compared: some are more oriented towards disciplinary development, some towards professional competencies, and others towards institutional or community activities. The PeaceEdu example demonstrates how these dimensions can be integrated into a unified educational process.

Thus, the experience of Sokhumi State University and Ilia State University is considered in the study as an interconnected case of curricular and institutional development that combines course development, piloting, pedagogical approaches, student clubs and activities, and inter-university cooperation. The opening of the Peace Education Center at Sokhumi State University adds another institutional pillar to this shared process.

The significance of PeaceEdu from this perspective lies precisely in the fact that the project is not limited to describing existing practices: it creates mechanisms for curriculum development, piloting, monitoring, and student engagement that can subsequently become the foundation for institutional practice.

Therefore, the example of the two universities should more precisely be described as a single shared development process in which both institutions participate equally in developing the curricular, professional, and student dimensions of Peace Education.

The summarizing trajectory of this shared process can be expressed as follows:

curriculum development → professional competence → transfer into practice → student engagement → institutional cooperation → sustainable educational practice.

It is precisely within this trajectory that Peace Education acquires a more sustainable significance: it is no longer merely what the university teaches about peace, but gradually becomes also **how the university teaches for peace and how it creates conditions for transferring this knowledge into practice.**

Conclusion

The study revealed that Peace Education is not represented through a unified model within the Georgian higher education space. Its integration is implemented in various forms: through direct curricular, disciplinary, and values-based integration, as well as through project-based, institutional, and community-oriented activities.

One of the main conclusions of the study is that the development trend of Peace Education in Georgia can be defined as a transition from thematic and disciplinary integration towards its academic and institutional establishment and, subsequently, towards competence-based curricular integration. PESTUGE and PeaceEdu should be considered not as substitutes for one another, but as two interconnected stages of a broader developmental process: PESTUGE created the academic and institutional foundation for Peace Studies, while PeaceEdu connects this foundation more directly with education, professional competencies, pedagogical practice, and student engagement.

This is particularly evident in the collaboration between Sokhumi State University and Ilia State University. The interrelationship between the two PeaceEdu courses demonstrates a transition from knowledge to competence and from competence to practice. At the same time, an essential component of

Peace Education is not only the teaching of relevant content, but also the creation of an educational experience that itself is based on dialogue, cooperation, respect for diversity, and non-violent conflict management.

At this stage, the main challenge is no longer merely the creation of new initiatives. Their sustainability and interconnectedness are becoming more important. The next stage of development should involve the systematic alignment of peace competencies with programme objectives, learning outcomes, courses, teaching methods, assessment, and professional practice. From this perspective, one of the key indicators of the success of an international project should be not only the existence of the product created, but also its institutional continuation after the completion of the project.

Thus, Peace Education in Georgian higher education can be viewed as a developing educational ecosystem, whose key components are already emerging, although their systematic interconnection is still in progress. It is precisely the quality of this interconnection that will determine whether existing experience will evolve from a collection of individual initiatives into sustainable, professional, and institutionally embedded Peace Education.

Thus, the study demonstrates that the integration of Peace Education in Georgian higher education is multifaceted and encompasses thematic, disciplinary, direct curricular, values-based, and institutional practices. The main trend identified is a shift from the separate and disciplinary integration of peace-related themes towards a more systematic, competence-based form of integration connected to professional practice. Within this dynamic, the experience of PESTUGE provides the academic and institutional foundation for Peace Studies, while PeaceEdu connects this foundation more directly with education, teacher professional preparation, and pedagogical practice. At the same time, according to the study, the major challenge remains the sustainable institutionalization of existing experience—the systematic interconnection of project-based initiatives, courses, competencies, teaching methods, assessment, and professional practice. Accordingly, the next stage in the development of Peace Education in Georgian higher education should be defined not only by the creation of new initiatives, but also by the transformation of existing experience into sustainable educational and institutional practice.

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