

# School dropout rates: The influence of educational policies in 2013-2022

*The bulletin is developed by Centre for Civil Integration and Inter-Ethnic Relations*

12.12.2022



## School dropout rates: The influence of educational policies in 2013-2022

The bulletin presents school dropout rates from 2013-2022.

Educational reforms and factors are influencing school dropout rates.

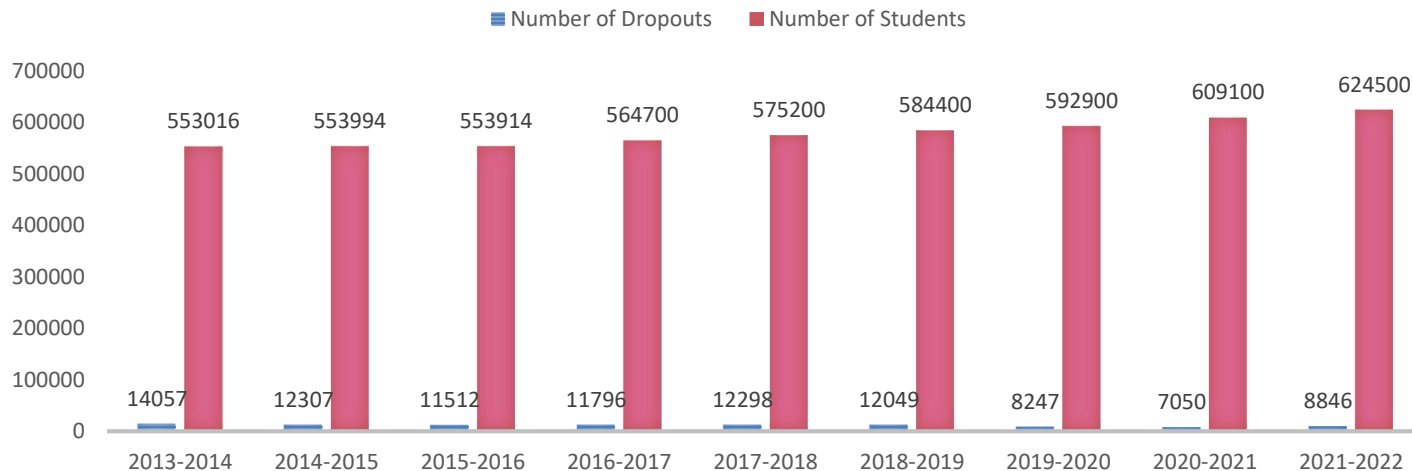
The bulletin is developed in the framework of the USAID Civil Society Engagement Program.

# Findings

- ❖ The number of school dropouts decreased from 2013 to 2022. The trend of decreasing dropouts started in 2019. The only academic year that the dropout rate increased compared to the year prior was 2021-2022;
- ❖ The decrease in dropouts at the upper secondary level is the main factor in decreasing the overall rate of school dropouts. The drastic reduction of school dropouts at the secondary level is most likely related to the elimination of the school exit/certification exams in 2018;
- ❖ The dropout rate increased at the primary grades level in 2013-2022. Not only did the share of primary education increase in dropout rates, so did the number of dropouts itself;
- ❖ Leaving the country and going abroad as a reason for dropouts doubled. This specific reason is dominant and is the main factor for the increase of the number of dropouts by 25,5% in 2021-2022 compared to the 2020-2021 academic year;
- ❖ The general education academic program was integrated into the vocational education program in 2020. This integrated program was further expanded in 2021 and 2022. However, the number of tenth graders enrolled at vocational institutions did not increase. Furthermore, it is a negative tendency of enrollment in vocational education in 2013-2022. The abolishing of school exit exams negatively affected the process of attracting students in vocational institutions from upper secondary schools;
- ❖ The school graduation rates differ by level of school education. It is very high at the primary and basic education levels; However, the upper secondary school graduation rate remains challenging and varies in different groups based on social-economic status, geographical and territorial location, and ethnic background.

# The number of students in general educational system of Georgia and the number of drop-outs from 2013 till 2021

School drop-out rates in the dynamics of the last nine years in the context of initiated and implemented educational policies and reforms. Fourteen thousand fifty-seven students suspended schooling in the 2013-2014 academic year. The tendency of decreasing drop-outs began in 2019. 2021-2022 academic year was the only year when the drop-out rate increased compared to the previous academic year.



\*The chart is developed based on data of National Statistics Office of Georgia

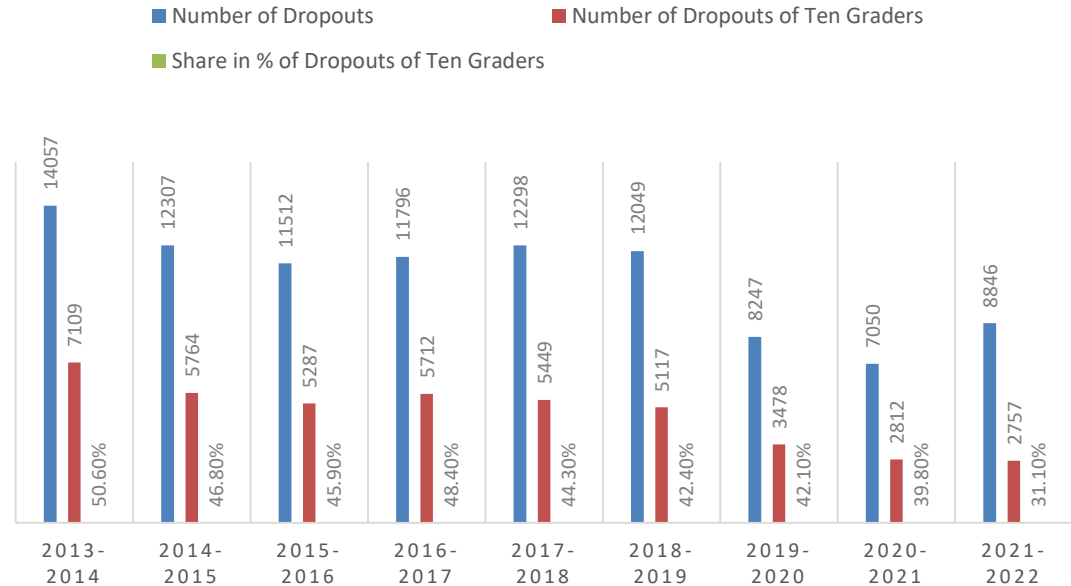
# The share of tenth graders drop-outs in drop-out rate in 2013-2021

Tenth graders have the highest share in drop-out rates. Two circumstances can explain this fact:

(a) According to Georgian legislature, the compulsory schooling consists of elementary(1-6 grades) and basic (7-9 grades) levels. Upper secondary education (10-12 grades) is not compulsory in Georgia;

(b) After graduation from the basic education level, some students choose the vocational path for their education and are enrolled at vocational institutions.

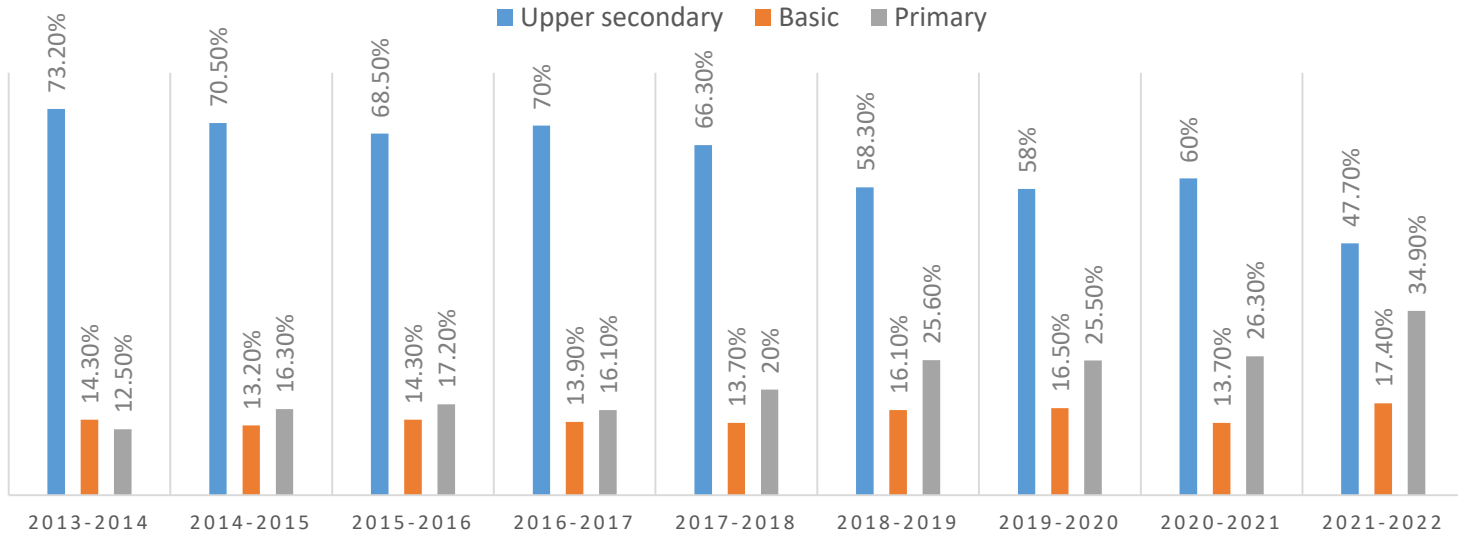
The share of tenth graders who drop-out was 50,6%. This data decreased, and in the 2021-2022 academic year, the share of drop-outs in tenth grade was only 31% of the total number of drop-outs in Georgia.



\*The chart is developed based on data of National Statistics Office of Georgia

# School drop-out rates by levels of school education

The share of drop-outs increased at primary and basic education levels. The growth was especially high at the primary education level, starting from 12,5% in 2013-2014 and ending at 34,9% in the 2021-2022 academic year.



\* The chart is developed based on data of National Statistics Office of Georgia

## School drop-out rates and educational policy

- ❖ The decrease in dropouts at the upper secondary level is obvious from the 2019-2020 academic year. The number of dropouts at the upper secondary level was 10087 in the 2013-2014 academic year, compared to only 4787 in 2019-2020. The decreased dropouts is specifically evident in grade 10. The number of student dropouts in the tenth grade in 2013-2017 was 7109, decreasing to 3478 in 2019-2020;
- ❖ Such drastic changes at the secondary level, including among 10th graders, in terms of reducing the drop-out rate, are probably related to the abolition of the school exit/certification exams in 2018;
- ❖ It seems schools force fewer students to leave school due to school exit exams. Schools were motivated to force low-achieving students to drop out to improve the overall results of the school in certification exams;
- ❖ Therefore, it is evident that a specific educational policy, abolishing the school exit/certificate examinations, reduced the drop-out rate at the secondary level.

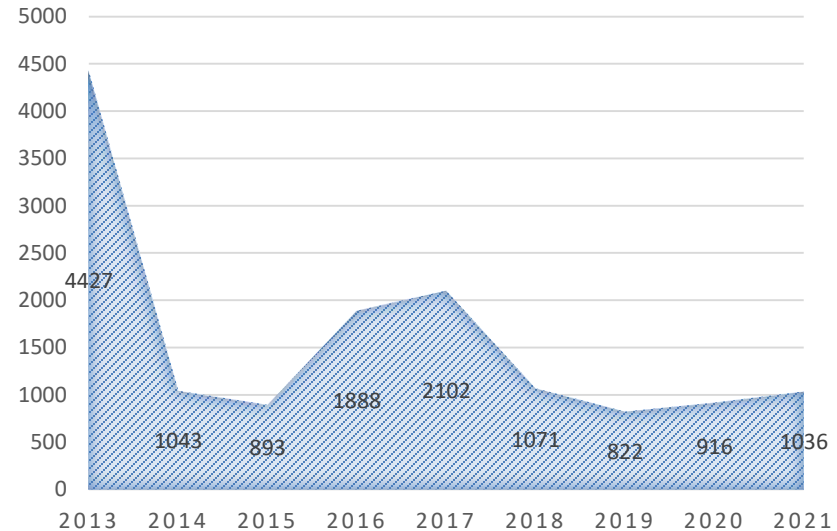
## School drop-out rates and educational policy

- ❖ The reform of vocational education and its influence on school dropouts and transfer to vocational educational institutions is worth analyzing. There was an “educational gap” between vocational and higher education until 2020. Students continuing their education at a vocational institution were losing the opportunity to receive higher education, as vocational education did not provide the academic knowledge and the corresponding academic certificate. This regulation took the opportunity to continue education at higher education institutions after graduation from the vocational program;
- ❖ Since 2020, structural and content links between professional education and other levels of education have been established. The general education academic program was integrated into the vocational education program;
- ❖ This integrated program was further expanded in 2021 and 2022. The effect of this program on the process of attracting students to vocational institutions from upper secondary schools is not yet obvious.



## Number of 15-17 years old students at vocational institutions in 2013-2021

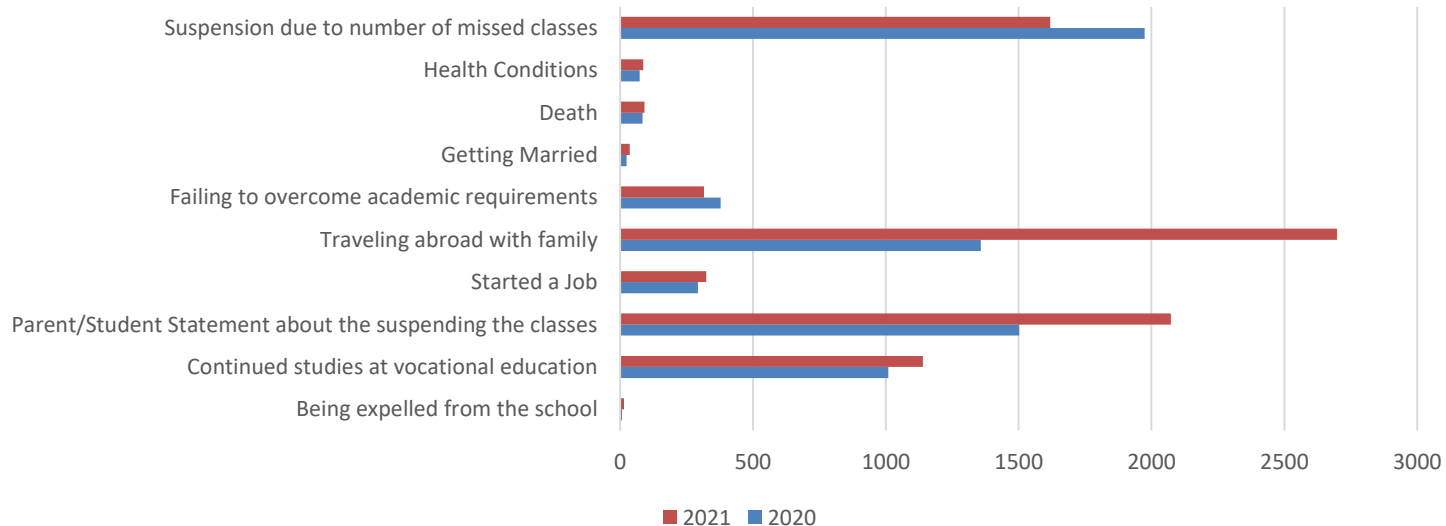
- ❖ The recent data on the number of 15-17 years old students in vocational education shows a decreasing trend. The number of 15-17 years old students at vocational educational institutions was 4427 in the 2013-2014 academic year, decreasing till 2016-2017. In 2016-2017 there was a slight increase followed by a drastic decrease in the next years. It can be assumed that the elimination of school exit exams negatively impacted the tendency of enrollment in vocational education;
- ❖ It also can be assumed that the high number of students in vocational education in 2013 was the result of the introduction of school exit exams in 2011. The approach of evaluating the effectiveness of school principals based on school exit exams was in place in the first years of introducing the school exam system. The schools and school principals tended to create uncomfortable conditions for low-achieving students, forcing them to leave the school and continue their education in vocational institutions. This policy was softened, and finally, the exams were eliminated. As a result, the drop-out rates at the upper secondary level decreased, and the number of 15-17 years old students at vocational institutions also declined.



\* The chart is developed based on data of National Statistics Office of Georgia

# The reasons for school dropouts

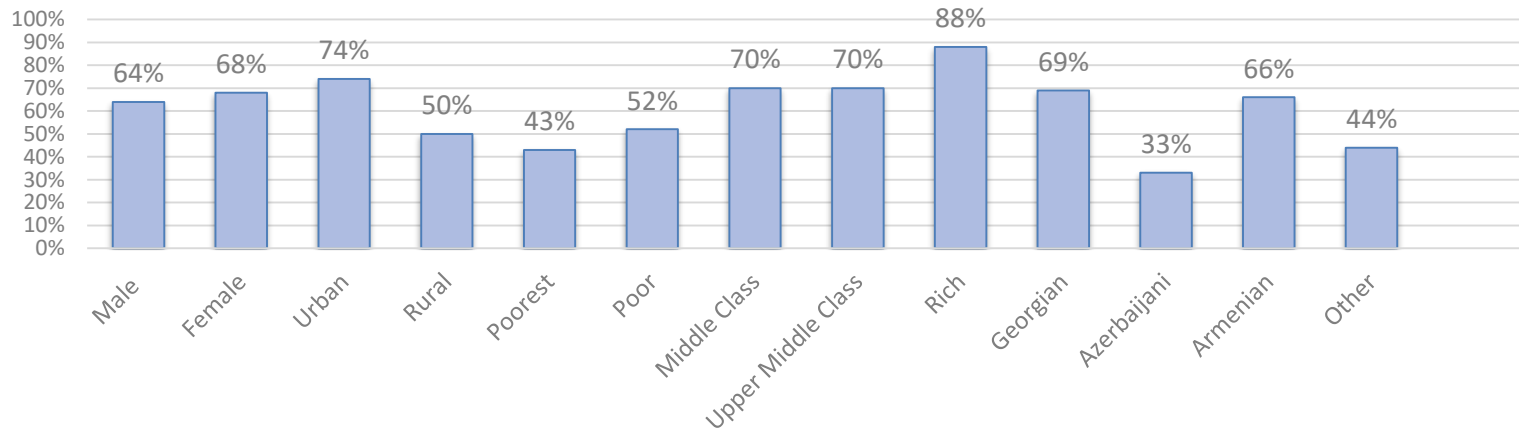
Leaving the country and going abroad as a reason for dropouts doubled. In the 2020-2021 academic year, only 1357 cases of dropping out for the reason of going abroad together with family were identified, but the number increased in 2021-2022 and equaled 2698 cases. This specific reason is dominant and is the main factor for the increase of the number of dropouts by 25,5% in 2021-2022 compared to the 2020-2021 academic year (More than 75% of the increase falls under this reason).



\*The chart is taken from Parliamentary Report of 2021 of Ombudsman of Georgia "Human Rights and Freedom in Georgia (p. 265)

## The school completion rates

- The secondary school graduation rate remains challenging and varies in different groups based on social-economic status, geographical and territorial location, and ethnic background. The school completion rate among the richest students is high at 88%, while only 43 % of the poorest students manage to complete the upper secondary level of schooling. The school completion rate is 74% in urban settlements, only 50% in rural ones, 69% in ethnic Georgians, and 33% in Azerbaijanis. It is 66%-in Armenians and 44% in other ethnic groups.

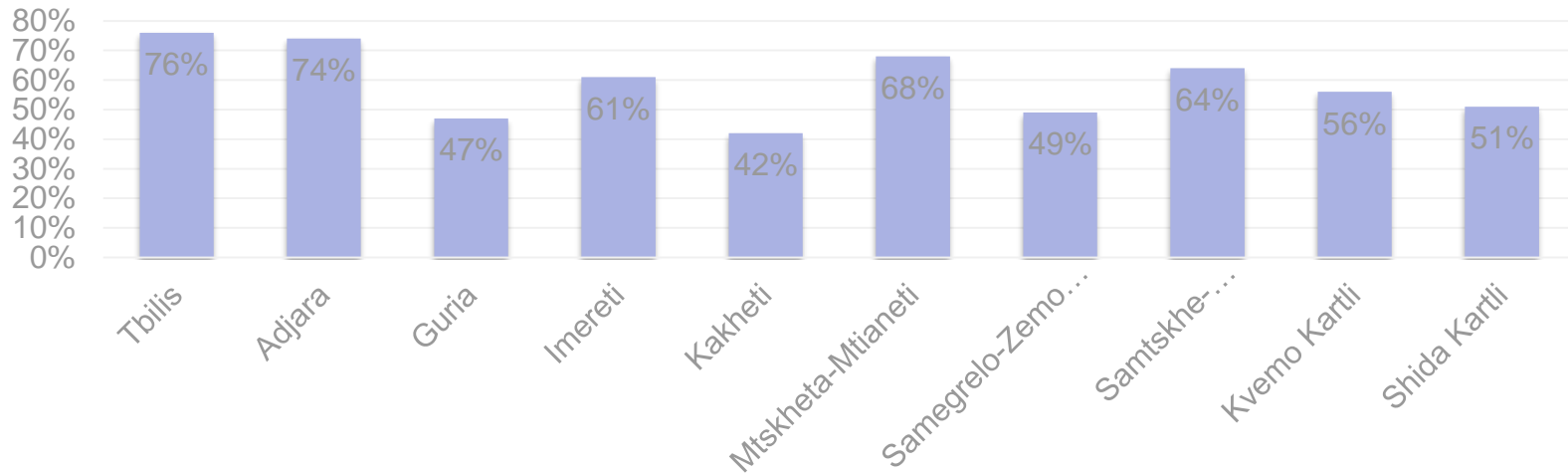


\*The chart is developed from the data.: [Georgia: Education Fact Sheets 2020 Analyses for and equity using MICS data-](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/347957318_Georgia_Education_Fact_Sheets_2020_Analyses_for_learning_and_equity_using_MICS_data/citations)

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/347957318\\_Georgia\\_Education\\_Fact\\_Sheets\\_2020\\_Analyses\\_for\\_learning\\_and\\_equity\\_using\\_MICS\\_data/citations](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/347957318_Georgia_Education_Fact_Sheets_2020_Analyses_for_learning_and_equity_using_MICS_data/citations)

## School completion rates by regions of Georgia

- ❖ The school completion rate in Tbilisi is high at 76 %, while only 42 % in Kakheti and 47% in the Guria region;
- ❖ The school graduation rates differ by level of school education. School completion at upper secondary school remains challenging and varies in different groups based on social-economic status, geographical and territorial location, and ethnic background.





EAST • WEST  
MANAGEMENT  
INSTITUTE



USAID-ის სამოქალაქო საზოგადოების ჩართულობის პროგრამა  
USAID CIVIL SOCIETY ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM

The bulletin was developed by Centre for Civil Integration and Inter –Ethnic Relations (CCIIR) with financial support of USAID Civil Engagement Support Program. This bulletin is made possible by the generous support of the American people through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The contents of this bulletin are the sole responsibility of the CCIIR and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID, the United States Government, or EWMI.

**Centre for Civil Integration and  
Inter-Ethnic Relations**

[www.cciir.ge](http://www.cciir.ge)

FB/CCIIR

[cciir.info@gmail.com](mailto:cciir.info@gmail.com)