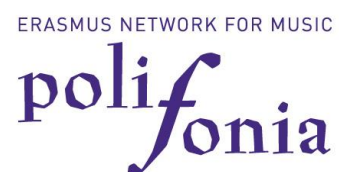


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Association Européenne des Conservatoires, Académies de Musique et
Musikhochschulen
Polifonia WG 5: Recognition, Monitoring and Joint Degrees



The V. Saradjishvili Tbilisi State Conservatoire
Site Visit Report

by

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1. General introduction

1.1 Background: Georgian reality

The post-Soviet reality is very present in the Republic of Georgia. Two Georgian regions have declared their independence (not recognised by the world community but a few states).

Russian military units are present 40 kilometres from the capital Tbilisi and the current crisis in nearby Ukraine is being followed closely in Georgia. The situation in-between two main regional cultural identity areas, EU and Russia, is a part of daily life in Georgia. This has also affected the cultural and musical expression of the Georgian society. Tbilisi is an architectural mixture of brand modern post-modernistic European-style buildings, orthodox churches and Soviet-style living areas. On one hand with a wide influx of dominant neighbouring cultures, at the same time very uniquely Georgian styled. The Georgian Church is older than any other church; the Georgian vocal choir tradition is renowned world-wide and Georgian musicians are well known as high-level composers and performers.

The proximity to other cultures and traditions like Russia, Iran, Turkey, Armenia and the Arab World makes the Caucasian Cultures highly interesting and with the recent very close links to Europe and western mind-set, Georgia is an outstanding example of a modern nation with a highly fertile ground for a future diverse and rich musical life.

1.2 Tbilisi State Conservatory



The V. Saradjishvili Tbilisi State Conservatoire was established 1st of May 1917, thus being the first higher education institution in Georgia. In 2014, the Conservatory is the main institution for Higher Music Education as well as the bearer of traditions of national music education.

The Conservatoire comprises two faculties: Performing Faculty and Composition and Music Theory Faculty. The student population in 2014/2015 is 495, the majority being classical music students, but including also 10 jazz students and a substantial number of musicology students. The teaching staff includes 95 permanent teachers plus 60-65 contract teachers. Many of the administrators are also teaching, most of them musicologists.

The language of instruction is Georgian, but with a possibility to use English as a second language

TSC has implemented the Bologna process with the three-cycle level of education and the use of ECTS participates actively in European organisations, among them AEC.

2. Internationalisation at TSC

2.1 International orientation

Tbilisi State Conservatoire has been actively involved in shaping the institutional policy on relations with foreign higher academic institutions and other institutional organisations. The Conservatoire has developed a rather ambitious international strategy that is currently being revised. The attitude of the staff is very internationally oriented and the students are very keen to get international contact. There is a certain sense of isolation due to the geographical situation, but simultaneously a strong wish to establish more partnerships with European institutions, both to secure possibilities for students and staff exchanges as well as a flow of know-how and capacity building projects.

2.2 Capacity Building Project with Norway

In 2010, TSC launched a joint project with Norwegian Academy of Music “Modernisation of Georgian Higher Music Education”. The focus has been on quality assurance as well as curriculum building targeted to developing the institution in a more international and open-

mindful way. This cooperation was financed through the Eurasia programme and has been highly beneficial for TSC.

2.3 Mobility

Currently there is certain inflow of international students from neighbouring countries such as Iran, Turkey and Armenia, whereas the connections to EU are very limited and there is a strong wish among TSC students to change this situation.

A meeting with a group of students clearly gave the impression that there is strong need for feeling more connected to Europe, of more freedom (“to unlock the door”, as a student expressed it). The students also expressed a wish for more modern study methodology. Some of them had done a period of their studies abroad (one as a part of the Norwegian project) and they all expressed satisfaction with the diversity of study methodologies abroad.

A set of obstacles for mobility was identified:

- residence permits
- finances
- visa
- language

The visa and residence permit situation seems to be a big challenge which is very dependent on the political development and the financial situation and makes it very challenging for students to get abroad. There are high hopes that the new Erasmus+ Credit mobility scheme will assist in this area.

In the area of Teaching Staff mobility, the main identified challenge is the lack of a systematic approach. The nature of incoming international exchanges and master-classes is rather arbitrary and therefore not necessarily in line with the needs of the institution and the students.

2.3 Entrepreneurship and Arts Management – high ambitions

Two areas of high interest for TSC are developing modules in arts entrepreneurship for students and the establishment of an MA programme in Arts Management. Both are considered to be of highest priority and a Tempus application for development in the

respective fields was submitted under the action Curricular Reform in 2013, but it did not receive funding. There is a strong wish to reapply for funding to improve this area, and to enable capacity building for the staff as well as to support the competitiveness of the graduates in the labour market both regionally and internationally.

3. Recommendations

Based on our discussions and findings during the visit, we have three overall recommendations for TSC to consider in the future.

3.1 Benchmarking of the International Strategy - Version 2

TSC newly developed international strategy could be strengthened by being compared to and discussed with European partners. One way of obtaining relevant benchmarking partners would be to engage in Strategic Partnerships or alliances.

3.2 Full use of Erasmus +

New possibilities in the Erasmus+ programme need full attention and exploration. The credit mobility for partner countries (non-EU) could be very beneficial for the mobility in Georgia. It would be very rewarding for the students if they got access to Erasmus funding for studies abroad.

The possibility for involvement in Strategic Partnership applications (e.g. in the areas of entrepreneurship and capacity building) should be pro-actively sought for.

Based on the discussion with students and staff at TSC it is clear that there is a need to include more teachers and staff into internationalisation efforts.

3.3. Focus on Curriculum Development in an international context

The long term perspective should preferably be on curricular reforms in the direction of student centred learning and with the full implementation of learning outcomes for all study components. Furthermore the current strive to include more entrepreneurial elements into the curriculum for all students is positive and should be further implemented.

In this process we recommend that external experts are used, and in this area AEC could play an important role by supporting visits to Tbilisi.

4. Appendix

4.1 Whom we met

We would like to thank the following group of key persons whom we met and had extensive talks with:

Reso Kiknadze, Rector, composer, professor of saxophone

Nana Sharikadze, Head of International Relations, assistant professor of music education

Avto Revishvili, Dean of Performing Faculty

Nino Zervania, assistant professor of contemporary composition

Nika Pasuri, student of composition

Koka Nikoladze, student of composition

4.2. International Strategy, TSC

V. Sarajishvili Tbilisi State Conservatoire
International Relations Office
Strategy (2010-2016)

Mission:

International co-operation and integration of Tbilisi State Conservatoire into general European educational system.

Goals:

- steady formation, development, and staged perfection of international relations;
- support and improve mobility;
- formation of conservatoire as a competitive institution on international level;
- Improve cooperation between Tbilisi and private/public sectors, also international organizations.

Outcome:

- Long and short term joint educational and art projects;
- Mobility of academic, scientific and administrative staff of Tbilisi State Conservatoire;
- Invitation on international level highly qualified academic, scientific and creative staff;
- Cooperation with other high institutions and growth of competitiveness.

Main Concepts:

- Systematic planning of joint long and short term educational and scientific projects/events;
- Active involvement of students, academic and administrative staff into international educational scientific projects;
- Transparency of information about Conservatoire;
- Improvement of cooperation between institutions and academic/scientific students as well, Also support Conservatoire to full fill European dimensions;

Planned Activities:

- Involvement of scientific, academic and administration staff into elaboration and perfection of educational projects (long term, short term);
- Involvement of scientific, academic and administration staff of relevant foreign institutions into elaboration and perfection of educational projects (long term, short term);
- Integration of Conservatoire staff into European educational system;

- Involvement of students into various international events (Competitions, master classes, summer schools, workshops);
- Carry out innovative mutual projects;
- Carryout international projects serving professional growth of academic and administrative staff; (long and short term training courses)
- Participation of Conservatoire into international forums, conferences, seminars and congress work groups.
- To work on international network and partnership growth;
- Mutual international projects focusing on performing specialties in music institutions at BA and MA levels;
- Institutional growth and formation of new technological studio;
- Involvement of alumni and worldwide famous academic personal, associations and agencies into study process at Tbilisi State Conservatoire;
- Increase the number of international students and preparation of English study course specially for them;
- Improvement of “custody” system for foreign students in order of better integration in high institution;
- Provide balanced mobility for students and academic staff;
- To announce vacancies for Full Professors and Assoc. Professors in international network system;
- Advertisement of international projects via web-page and media;
- Ensuring free and transparent information service for students

Tbilisi State Conservatory

V. Saradjishvili Tbilisi State Conservatoire

General Information

The V. Saradjishvili Tbilisi State Conservatoire was founded in 1917. It was the first conservatoire in Georgia. It has a long and rich history of musical education and performance. The conservatoire is named after the famous Georgian composer and pianist V. Saradjishvili. It has a large number of students and faculty members. The conservatoire is a member of the International Association of Music Schools (AIMS) and the European Association of Conservatoires (AEC).

Studies

The conservatoire offers a wide range of studies in music, including:

- Instrumental studies (Piano, Violin, Viola, Cello, Double Bass, Trumpet, Trombone, Saxophone, Clarinet, Flute, Oboe, Bassoon, Percussion)
- Vocal studies (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass)
- Music Theory and Composition
- Music History and Criticism
- Music Business and Management
- Music Education

Through Bologna Process

The conservatoire has implemented the Bologna Process, which aims to harmonize higher education across Europe. This process has led to the introduction of a three-cycle system of studies (Bachelor's, Master's, and Doctoral degrees) and the adoption of common standards for quality assurance and accreditation.

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