

Table of Contents

China’s Expansion in Georgia’s Educational Space	2
The Chinese Model of Soft Power	2
Key Findings of the Research	4
Sino-Georgian Educational Relations	5
Chronology of Sino-Georgian scientific and educational cooperation (2024–2025).....	6
Teaching Chinese in Georgia	8
Chinese Language in Georgian Schools	8
Chinese Bridge (International Chinese Language Competition)	11
Huawei in Georgia’s Educational Space	12
Cooperation with Georgia’s Innovation and Technology Agency	12
Cooperation with Kutaisi International University	12
Participation of Georgian Students in “Seeds for the Future”	13
Huawei Smart Classrooms in Georgian Schools	13
Cooperation Between Universities	14
Tbilisi State University	14
European Central University (formerly Kutaisi University)	16
Alte University	17
Tbilisi State Medical University (TSMU)	18
Georgian Technical University	19
Sokhumi State University	21
Georgian International University (GIU)	22
Free University of Tbilisi	25
Other Georgian Universities’ Links with China	27
1. Scholarships and mobility programs	27
2. Summer Schools and Camps	28
3. Memorandums of Cooperation and Agreements	28
4. Academic Links	29
Conclusion	29
Annex #2: Research Methodology	31
Annex #3: Tbilisi Schools Where Chinese Is Taught	32

From Strategic Partnership to the Present: China's Expansion in Georgia's Educational Space

“The study of the Chinese language is becoming **increasingly popular among younger generations**. For this reason, we have decided to introduce Chinese as a second language in schools. This year, we launched Chinese language classes in nine schools in the capital. We are already seeing **growing demand**. In my country, after our native Georgian language, English is currently the most popular. Our goal is that, in the coming years, with the support of our **Chinese partners and friends**, **Chinese will reach a similar level of popularity**.”

Knowledge of the Chinese language provides access to a vast part of the world, a large share of the global population, and the scale of development we see in China. At an initial stage, of course, learning Chinese builds bridges between countries. This is followed by an even more important outcome — the development of trust. Mutual trust creates opportunities for new generations to establish connections, cooperate, and **act together on the international stage**, including advancing **shared political interests**, which is ultimately in the interest of both countries.”



Statement by Georgia's Minister of Education, Science, and Youth, Givi Mikhanadze, given to the Chinese media outlet China Daily on November 15, 2025.

The Chinese Model of Soft Power

In contemporary international politics, one of the most effective strategies used by major powers to influence the foreign policy orientation of smaller states is soft power. In this regard, the People's Republic of China has emerged as a rapidly growing actor. According to the “[2026 Global Soft Power Index](#)” published by the international consulting organization Brand Finance, China ranks second among UN member states in terms of soft power. With a score of 73.5 out of 100, China's soft power index slightly trails that of the United States (74.9/100).

The concept of “[soft power](#),” introduced by American political scientist Joseph Nye, refers to a form of influence based on attraction rather than coercion. It involves shaping the preferences of other states by cultivating goodwill and thereby achieving desired outcomes. More specifically, soft power seeks to build a positive image within the target society. In this sense, it rests on [three key dimensions](#):

- Cultural attractiveness.
- The appeal of political values.
- The attractiveness of foreign policy.

Unlike the American model of soft power, which is grounded in liberal political, economic, and social values, **China's approach** is built around the idea of national “excellence” or “success.” Within the Chinese Communist Party’s **framework**, this is closely tied to China’s economic development model. According to Joseph Nye, one of the most **effective instruments** of China’s soft power is its educational outreach. This includes:

- 1.** **Confucius Institutes**, managed by the Center for Language Education and Cooperation, which promote Chinese language and culture.
- 2.** “**Scientific diplomacy**,” encompassing government scholarships for international students, university partnerships, joint research initiatives, exchange programs, and related activities.

In the Global South, including Georgia, China’s soft power efforts are particularly visible through intensive engagement in education. These initiatives are implemented both through Confucius Institutes and broader forms of academic cooperation.

Key Findings of the Research

● The study¹ conducted by Civic IDEA found that in 2024–2025:

- Nine memoranda and cooperation agreements were signed between Georgian and Chinese universities.
- Representatives of 12 Chinese educational institutions visited Georgian universities to establish partnerships and initiate cooperation.
- Georgian universities signed agreements with the following Chinese companies and organizations: Huawei, Zhogge Cultural Development, Belt and Road Georgia Business House, and Guangzhou Dajiang E-Commerce Co. Ltd.
- Under an agreement with Huawei, the company will establish Georgia’s first Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Academy and introduce “smart classrooms” in Georgian schools.
- Georgian students participated for the first time in Huawei’s educational initiative “Seeds for the Future.”
- The Chinese Embassy in Georgia actively promoted educational cooperation and the Chinese language. Within the framework of cooperation between Georgian universities and the embassy, joint academic events were organized.
- In 2024 and 2025, Georgian students and school pupils took part in the Chinese language competition “Chinese Bridge.”
- Georgian students participated in summer schools and youth camps in China.
- Chinese language instruction was offered in 15 schools in Tbilisi.
- A Confucius Institute will be established at the Georgian Technical University in cooperation with a Chinese university.

1. For detailed information on the research methodology, see Annex 2.

Sino-Georgian Educational Relations

China's soft power engagement in Georgia began with initiatives in education and scientific cooperation. [The first Confucius Institute](#) in the country was established in 2010. In addition, under the [agreement](#) on cooperation in the field of education signed on April 13, 2001, Georgian citizens have access to [Chinese government scholarships](#), through which at least 20 students continue their studies in China each year.

In 2023, the announcement of a [strategic partnership](#) between Georgia and China marked a new phase in Sino-Georgian educational relations. The agreement outlined key areas of cooperation in the field of education (see [Annex #1](#)).

Annex 1:

The Joint Statement between Georgia and China on the Establishment of a Strategic Partnership includes a dimension focused on “people-to-people and cultural relations.” Within the framework of the agreement, this dimension covers the following areas:

3.1. Taking into account the need to deepen bilateral relations under new conditions, the parties express their readiness to actively pursue cooperation in science and technology, including renewing the agreement on cooperation in this field originally signed between the People's Republic of China and Georgia in 1993.

3.2. Recognizing the significant potential for cooperation and friendly relations in the sphere of people-to-people contacts and cultural exchange, the parties agree to strengthen cultural cooperation. This includes encouraging visits between citizens of both countries and expanding cooperation in tourism, healthcare, youth affairs, and sports. In addition, cooperation will be enhanced in the fields of cinema, media, and public diplomacy.

3.3. The parties will explore the possibility of organizing “Years of Culture” between China and Georgia and will continue consultations on the establishment of cultural centers, with appropriate support.

3.4. The parties will strengthen cooperation in science and higher education. This includes the implementation of exchange programs for academic staff and students, enhanced collaboration in the commercialization of science and new technologies, and the development of joint projects.

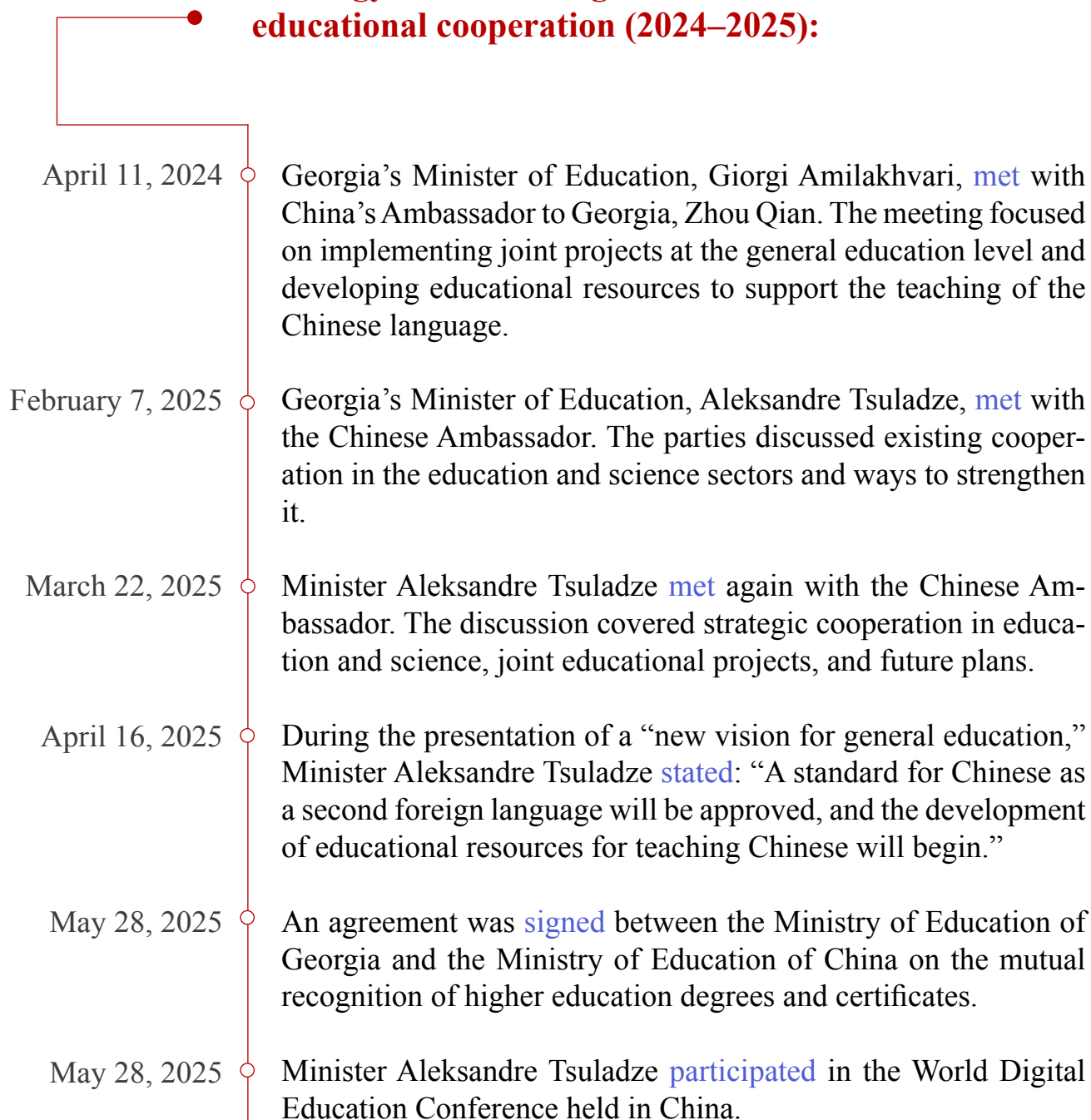
3.5. The parties will support universities in implementing practical forms of cooperation, including joint educational programs. Universities will be encouraged to make full use of high-quality digital educational resources and integrate them into both online and offline collaboration formats. The parties will also promote student exchanges and joint development through government scholarship programs and other mechanisms.

3.6. The parties emphasize the importance of language learning exchanges and cooperation programs. They will encourage schools in both countries to promote the study of Chinese and Georgian languages, support exchange and training programs for language teachers, and promote the development of Confucius Institutes (and classrooms).

In 2024–2025, cooperation between Georgia’s Ministry of Education and China’s Ministry of Education reached a qualitatively new level. In terms of its dynamics, 2025 was particularly intensive. Specifically, in 2025 alone:

- three meetings were held between the Minister of Education, Science, and Youth of Georgia and the Chinese Ambassador to Georgia;
- an agreement was signed with China’s Ministry of Education;
- representatives of Georgia’s Ministry of Education conducted three official visits to the People’s Republic of China.

Chronology of Sino-Georgian scientific and educational cooperation (2024–2025):



- 
- May 28, 2025 ○ Minister Tsuladze met with representatives of Beijing Language and Culture University, universities of foreign languages, the Center for Language Education and Cooperation, and the company Huawei.
 - June 19, 2025 ○ Deputy Minister of Education, Science, and Youth of Georgia, Ana Mghreblishvili, participated in the ministerial meeting “Belt and Road” held in Chengdu, China. During the visit, she met with China’s Vice Minister of Science and Technology, Lin Xin.
 - Nov 14-16, 2025 ○ Georgia’s Minister of Education, Givi Mikhanadze, participated in the World Chinese Language Conference in Beijing.
 - Nov 14, 2025 ○ Minister Givi Mikhanadze met with China’s Minister of Education, Huai Jinpeng.
 - Nov 15, 2025 ○ Minister Mikhanadze met with China’s Vice Minister of Education, Zheng Youcang. The parties discussed ways to expand cooperation and develop joint educational projects.
 - Nov 18, 2025 ○ Minister Mikhanadze visited the Nanjing Institute of Railway Technology. The meeting focused on cooperation between the institute and Georgia’s Railway Transport College.
 - Nov 19, 2025 ○ Minister Mikhanadze met with Huawei Vice President Zhang Chengtao. The discussion focused on Huawei’s initiative to introduce “smart classrooms” in Georgian schools.
 - Nov 25, 2025 ○ Minister Mikhanadze met with China’s Ambassador to Georgia, Zhou Qian. The parties discussed deepening the strategic partnership and implementing joint educational initiatives.
 - December 2, 2025 ○ Deputy Minister Baia Kvitsiani met with representatives of Hubei University of Education. The meeting addressed the implementation of joint projects between Hubei University and Georgian universities.

As this chronology of meetings and engagements shows, in the period following the declaration of the strategic partnership, the Georgian Dream government has actively sought to deepen educational and scientific ties with China. As a result, 2024–2025 saw an increase in diplomatic exchanges and agreements between Chinese and Georgian officials, contributing to the expansion of Chinese language education in Georgia and the strengthening of cooperation between universities in the two countries.

Teaching Chinese in Georgia

Chinese Language in Georgian Schools

Alongside the declaration on establishing a strategic partnership, on July 31, 2023, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed in Beijing between Georgia's Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China on the "Joint Teaching of the Chinese Language in General Education Institutions of Georgia." The memorandum outlines specific mechanisms through which the parties will promote the Chinese language in Georgia. The program supports the teaching of Chinese both in schools and higher education institutions. According to the memorandum:

- The Chinese side will send Chinese teachers to Georgia to assist in coordinating and developing the documentation necessary for implementing the program.
- The Chinese side will send Chinese language teachers or volunteers to Georgia or assist the Georgian side in selecting Chinese language teachers in China.
- The parties will encourage qualified universities in Georgia to establish Chinese language departments, develop academic programs or courses, and send students or young teachers to China for study.
- Experts from both countries will cooperate in developing textbooks and additional educational materials.
- The parties will encourage Georgian students to participate in Chinese language proficiency competitions such as "Chinese Bridge" and to take standardized tests (HSK, CTCSOL).
- The Chinese side will offer Georgian students opportunities to participate in "Chinese Bridge" summer camps and provide scholarships for Chinese language teachers.
- The Chinese side will cover salaries, allowances, and international travel expenses for Chinese personnel, while the Georgian side will provide health insurance, workplaces, and necessary equipment.

Although official institutions have not published detailed reports on the implementation and outcomes of this memorandum, open sources indicate that Chinese teachers are actively involved in Chinese language instruction in Georgia. For example, on July 8, 2025, Tbilisi Public School No. 102 shared a video showing school representatives bidding farewell to a Chinese language teacher, Meng Cong.



On February 26, 2025, Green School published a [video](#) on its Facebook page about Chinese language teaching at the school, featuring Liu Mengchun, a Chinese language teacher.



Under the [national curriculum](#), English is the primary foreign language taught in Georgian schools from grades 1 through 12. A second foreign language is introduced from grade 5 and typically includes French, German, Italian, Turkish, Russian, and others, with students and parents choosing based on preference.

According to a 2025 statement by the Ministry of Education, within the framework of the “new vision for general education,” a [standard for Chinese as a second foreign language](#) will be approved. Accordingly, schools with the necessary resources will be able to offer Chinese language instruction starting from grade 5.

Chinese language courses are already available in a number of schools in Tbilisi. In 2024–2025, Chinese was taught in **15 schools**, including 4 private and 11 public institutions.¹

Notably, representatives of Georgian Dream, who are strong proponents of promoting the Chinese language in Georgia, frequently emphasize its importance. On November 15, 2025, the Center for Language Education and Cooperation of China **published** an interview with Georgia’s Minister of Education, Givi Mikhanadze, on its official Facebook page. At the time, Mikhanadze was attending a Chinese language conference in China. In the interview, the minister noted **the growing popularity of Chinese in Georgia and stated that the long-term goal of the Georgina Dream is to elevate Chinese to the level of English in terms of popularity:**



“The Chinese language **is becoming increasingly popular among the younger generation**. That is why we decided to introduce Chinese as a second language in schools. This year, we launched Chinese language classes in nine schools in the capital. We see that demand is growing. In my country, after the native Georgian language, English is the most popular. Our goal is that in the coming years, with the support of our Chinese partners and friends, **Chinese will reach the same level of popularity as English**. It provides access to a vast part of the world, a large population, and the scale of development we see in China. At the initial stage, knowledge of Chinese builds bridges between countries... this is followed by the most important factor—trust. **Trust emerges between peoples, giving new generations the opportunity to build connections, cooperate, and act jointly on the international stage, representing certain political interests together, which, of course, serves the interests of both countries.**”

Givi Mikhanadze’s statement clearly points to the link between China’s soft power and the political ambitions of Georgian Dream. His remarks suggest that the government views the promotion of the Chinese language as a precondition for deepening political relations with China. At the same time, the statement indicates an intention for Georgia to engage more closely with China as part of a broader geopolitical alignment.

While the teaching of Chinese itself does not inherently pose a challenge to Georgia’s national interests, presenting it as a counterweight to English suggests that its promotion is also tied to broader political objectives.

1. For detailed information about these schools, see Annex 3.

Chinese Bridge (International Chinese Language Competition)

Another way of fostering interest in the Chinese language among young people in Georgia is through international language competitions. According to a provision in the 2023 memorandum of understanding signed between Georgia and China, the parties will encourage Georgian students to participate in the “Chinese Bridge” competition. The “[Chinese Bridge](#)” is an international language competition organized by the Center for Language Education and Cooperation of China and has been held [since 2002](#). The competition includes demonstrations of language proficiency, knowledge of China, and cultural performance (such as Chinese songs, dances, and other artistic elements).

The competition is held in two stages. At the initial stage, winners are selected at the national level. Successful candidates then represent their country in the final round held in China. Winners are ultimately awarded scholarships and opportunities to continue their studies in China.

The “Chinese Bridge” competition has been held in Georgia [since 2010](#). Initially, it was organized by the Confucius Institute at Free University and the Chinese Embassy in Georgia. In recent years, the selection stage has also been hosted by the Confucius Institute at Alte University.

On June 11, 2024, the 23rd Chinese Bridge competition selection round was [held](#) at Free University. The event was attended by [Zhou Qian](#), China’s Ambassador to Georgia, other representatives of the Chinese Embassy, faculty members from Free University, representatives of the Confucius Institute at Kutaisi University, representatives of China Road & Bridge Corporation and other Chinese companies, as well as lecturers from Tbilisi State University. Students from Free University, Tbilisi State University, and other universities participated in the competition.

The themes of the Chinese Bridge competition often reflect narratives associated with the People’s Republic of China. The theme of the 2024 competition was “One World, One Family.” The winner was a student from Free University, who later represented Georgia in the final round held in China.

From May 31 to June 1, 2025, [the final stage](#) of the Chinese Bridge competition was held at Alte University. Sixteen students from different regions of Georgia participated. Contestants completed language tests, delivered presentations, and showcased Chinese cultural works. The [winner](#) was Achi Kandelaki, a student from the Confucius class at Kutaisi University, who traveled to China in October 2025 to participate in the final stage. [During the 20-day program](#), he took part in cultural and educational activities and visited Chinese cities including Beijing and Hangzhou. He ultimately placed third among 113 participants and received a fully funded six-month scholarship at a Chinese university, covering both tuition and living expenses.

Huawei in Georgia’s Educational Space

Huawei, one of the world’s largest technology companies, is widely regarded as an active participant in China’s so-called “digital diplomacy.” Xi Jinping’s concept of digital diplomacy aims to promote a positive global image of China and develop alternative digital infrastructure to that of the West. In 2024–2025, Huawei became one of the most active Chinese companies operating in Georgia’s educational sector. During this period, several instances of cooperation between Huawei and Georgian educational institutions were observed:

Cooperation with Georgia’s Innovation and Technology Agency

On October 22, 2024, a [memorandum of cooperation](#) was signed between the Innovation and Technology Agency and Huawei. Under this agreement, Huawei became involved in the agency’s university competition, UNI4VERSE.



This initiative aims to foster interest in innovation and technology among students and involves both private and public universities in Georgia. The [competition](#) is held annually.

The final stage of the 2025 competition, focused on green technologies, [began](#) on March 27 and lasted four days. The University of Georgia was declared the winner and was awarded solar panels by Huawei.

Cooperation with Kutaisi International University

On February 20, 2025, a [memorandum of cooperation](#) was signed between Kutaisi International University (KIU) and Huawei, with Georgia’s Minister of Education Aleksandre Tsuladze attending the signing ceremony.

According to the memorandum, Huawei’s first ICT Academy in Georgia will be established at KIU. Students and faculty will have opportunities to participate in Huawei’s training programs, educational initiatives, and international projects. The agreement also includes internship opportunities.

In December 2025, Huawei’s Tbilisi office director, Liu Penghong, visited KIU. During a meeting with the university’s rector, Vakhtang Tsagareli, the parties discussed the implementation of the memorandum, including student participation in international competitions and masterclasses, internship and employment opportunities, the creation of technological laboratories at KIU, staff training, and the development of innovative educational projects.



Participation of Georgian Students in “Seeds for the Future”

From August 3 to 9, 2025, Georgian students participated for the first time in Huawei’s educational program “Seeds for the Future.” Students from [Ilia State University](#) and [Kutaisi International University](#) took part in the program held in Dongguan and Shenzhen, China.

As part of the week-long corporate program funded by Huawei, students attended ICT courses, visited Huawei and partner company factories, technological laboratories, and exhibitions. The program also included cultural activities, with participants visiting various Chinese cities and landmarks.

Huawei Smart Classrooms in Georgian Schools

In December 2025, during an official visit to China, Georgia’s Minister of Education met with Huawei Vice President Zhang Chengtao. The discussion focused on the introduction of Huawei “smart classrooms” in Georgian schools. The company’s vice president stated that Huawei would provide one school in Tbilisi with the equipment needed to establish a smart classroom free of charge.

Cooperation Between Universities

Relations between Chinese and Georgian universities encompass a broad range of cooperation, including exchange programs, joint research projects, and summer schools and camps. This section presents information on partnerships established between Georgian universities and Chinese educational institutions in 2024–2025:

Tbilisi State University

Since 2007, Tbilisi State University has offered a program in East Asian Regional Studies, which includes an undergraduate track in Sinology. The Sinology program partially fulfills functions similar to those of a Confucius Institute, promoting the teaching of the Chinese language and culture. For example, in June 2024, the program organized a [Dragon Boat Festival](#) event. Students presented Chinese poetry, their own translations, Chinese songs and dances, as well as themed visual artworks. Representatives of the Chinese Embassy also attended the event.

It is noteworthy that the Chinese Embassy cooperates with the state university in various formats. In September 2025, a two-day [conference](#) titled “The 80th Anniversary of the Chinese People’s War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression and Victory in the World Anti-Fascist War” was held at TSU, organized by the Chinese Embassy and [the Center for China and Southeast Asian Studies](#)². The conference focused on China’s role in global politics.



“It is essential to hold such a conference to remind people how important peace is for our countries. We revisit history as a lesson and learn to value peace more.”

Zhou Qian,
Chinese Ambassador to Georgia

Pictured: Beka Natsvlishvili - co-founder of the China and Southeast Asia Research Center and MP of the 9th convocation Parliament from Georgian Dream — and Zhou Qian, Ambassador of China to Georgia.

2. [The Center for China and Southeast Asian Studies](#) was founded in 2025 by Badri Nachkebia, Tornike Chivadze, and Beka Natsvlishvili, who serves as the head of the organization. According to its founding agreement, the organization’s activities include the academic study and analysis of the culture, ethics, traditions, and history of China and Southeast Asia.



“European and post-Soviet societies know relatively little about the war China fought in the East during World War II. With today’s conference, we aim to make this event better known.”

[Beka Natsvlishvili](#), Director of the Center for Chinese and Southeast Asian Studies

[Beka Natsvlishvili](#) served as a member of parliament from Georgian Dream between 2016 and 2020. In 2016, he [donated](#) 20,000 GEL to the party. In recent years, he has appeared in television programs as an “analyst,” while remaining an active proponent of Georgian Dream.

[On January 28](#), 2026, speaking on Maestro TV in Gia Gachechiladze’s program “Ark of the Stranger,” Natsvlishvili stated: “In terms of technological development, the United States is no longer leading. China has completely reshaped the global order—both geopolitically and economically.”

In 2024–2025, Tbilisi State University also established partnerships with several Chinese universities:

In September 2024, a delegation from [Shenzhen University](#) visited TSU. The parties discussed prospects for future cooperation and the development of joint programs, and agreed to sign a memorandum of understanding.

In October of the same year, TSU Rector Jaba Samushia met with the Director of the Suzhou Research Institute of [Xi’an Jiaotong University](#) and representatives of the International CORE Academy for Natural Sciences and Humanities. During the meeting, Samushia expressed interest in developing cooperation in engineering fields with Xi’an Jiaotong University.

On November 19, 2025, Jaba Samushia also hosted a delegation from the [Chinese Academy of Social Sciences](#). The parties discussed prospects for future cooperation, including TSU’s Far Eastern regional studies program.

In 2025, a bilateral cooperation memorandum was signed between Tbilisi State University and [Beijing Foreign Studies University](#). The agreement provides for joint research projects, exchange programs for students and academic staff, as well as joint academic and publishing activities. Within this framework, students of Georgian language studies at Beijing Foreign Studies University will have the opportunity to continue their studies at TSU.

TSU students, like those from other Georgian universities, also have opportunities to continue their studies in China. These include [scholarship programs](#) such as the Chinese Government Scholarship “Youth of Excellence Scheme of China Program” for the 2025–2026 academic year.

European Central University (formerly Kutaisi University)

At European Central University (formerly Kutaisi University), a [Confucius Classroom](#) has been operating since 2020, established on the basis of a memorandum of cooperation with Xinjiang Medical University. According to the university, the Confucius Classroom provides Chinese language courses, international educational exchange projects, certification testing, and promotes cultural relations between Georgia and China.

The Confucius Classroom is jointly managed by European Central University and Xinjiang Medical University. On November 25, 2025, [the third meeting of the Confucius Classroom’s supervisory board](#) was held online, during which annual and financial reports were presented. According to the university, both documents indicated an increase in the number of students. During the meeting with representatives of Xinjiang Medical University, an agreement was approved to continue cooperation in the management of the Confucius Classroom.

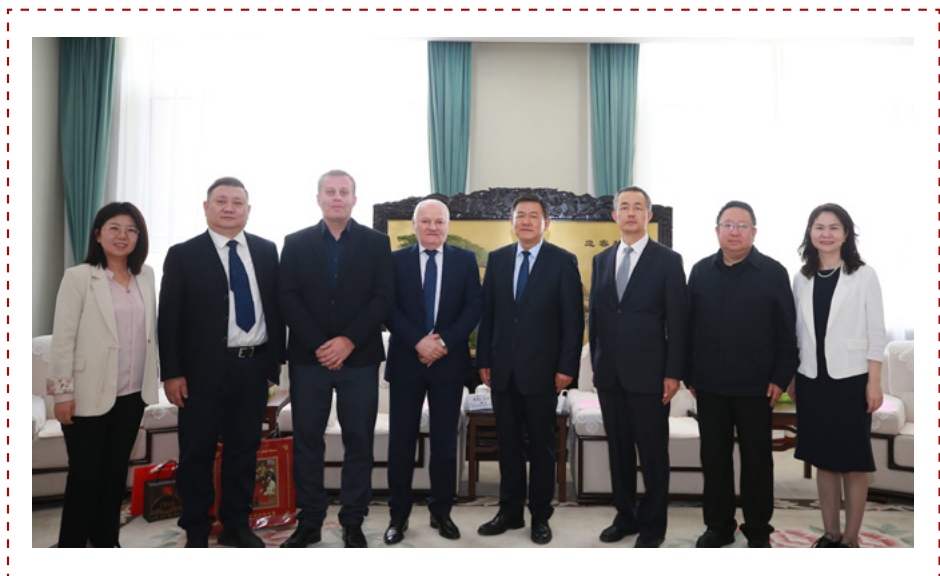


The Confucius Classroom actively collaborates with educational institutions in Kutaisi. In 2023, [a memorandum of cooperation](#) was signed between the university and the Georgian-American School “Progress,” providing for Chinese language courses for students and staff. Later, in February 2024, the Chinese New Year was celebrated at Iberia College with the participation of [the Confucius Classroom](#). According to the university, Iberia College also hosts a Confucius Classroom, offering opportunities to study the Chinese language and culture.

The Confucius Classroom is also actively engaged within the university itself. In December 2025, textbooks were purchased for the university library with the support of the [Confucius Classroom initiative](#).

Beyond the Confucius Classroom, representatives of European Central University cooperate with Chinese higher education institutions. In November 2024, the head of the university’s simulation center, Tornike Badzgaradze, attended an [international congress](#) in Xi’an titled “Holistic Integrative Oncology.”

In May 2025, the university’s rector, Gocha Tutberidze, visited China and attended the [international conference](#) “Cooperation and Integration: Industry, Education, and Scientific Technologies” held in Urumqi. During the plenary session, he presented a report titled “Integration of Industry, Education, Research, and Application at European Central University.”



As part of this visit, the university’s delegation also visited [Xinjiang Medical University](#). The parties discussed deepening cooperation, implementing exchange programs, and collaboration in research. According to a 2025 [registry extract](#), Lasha Kandelakishvili serves as president of European Central University LLC, while 100% of its shares are owned by European University LLC. In turn, Lasha Kandelakishvili is also the president and owner of [European University LLC](#).

European University, which owns European Central University, also cooperates with Xinjiang Medical University. In June 2024, [a delegation from Xinjiang Medical University](#) visited European University. The parties discussed expanding bilateral cooperation, including academic exchange programs, joint research, and staff training.

Alte University

Since November 16, 2017, Alte University has hosted a [Confucius Institute](#) established in cooperation with Lanzhou University. Within this partnership, students at Alte University have opportunities to obtain scholarships and participate in summer camps and exchange programs. In 2025, five students from the Confucius Institute received [scholarships for Chinese language teacher training](#). The one-year scholarship at Lanzhou University covered tuition, accommodation, and insurance.

The Confucius Institute at Alte University actively shares information about its activities and competitions on its official Facebook page. In April 2025, the institute hosted events dedicated to International Chinese Language Day, including activities on [tea culture](#) and [calligraphy](#).



In 2025, the Confucius Institute won the grand prize in an international video competition organized by the Chinese [International Education Foundation](#) titled “2025 CI Moments Global Short Video Collection Event,” with the project “Tea and Chinese Characters Across Mountains and Seas.”

In addition to the Confucius Institute, representatives of Alte University also cooperate with Chinese universities. In June 2024, Ani Gvetadze, head of the university’s Research Support and Project Development Department, presented her research at an international [conference](#) in China on “Social Work from the Perspective of Ethnic Minorities.” During the visit, she also delivered a lecture at Lanzhou University titled “Cultural Diversity and Social Integration.”

It is also noteworthy that on October 15, 2024, Alte University signed a [memorandum of cooperation](#) with SIAS University in China. The agreement includes exchange programs, sharing teaching methodologies, joint research projects, joint conferences, seminars, summer or winter schools, short-term academic programs, and more.

Tbilisi State Medical University (TSMU)

In 2025, Tbilisi State Medical University began actively developing formal cooperation with Chinese educational institutions. In June 2025, a university delegation [visited](#) China, during which representatives visited local clinics and educational institutions. According to the university’s rector, Irakli Natroshvili, an agreement was reached to sign a memorandum of cooperation with one of the Chinese institutions. Under this framework, and with funding from the Chinese side, 20 students annually from TSMU’s Faculty of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation will undertake [internships](#) at Guangzhou University of Chinese Medicine. During the visit, it was also planned that from July 20 to August 30, academic staff from the university would undergo [specialized training](#) at a university clinic in Shenzhen.

Georgian Technical University

According to the [official website](#) of Georgian Technical University, its current international partners from China include Lanzhou University (July 21, 2023) and Chu Hai College of Higher Education in Hong Kong (September 17, 2024). The university has signed five-year memoranda of cooperation with both institutions.

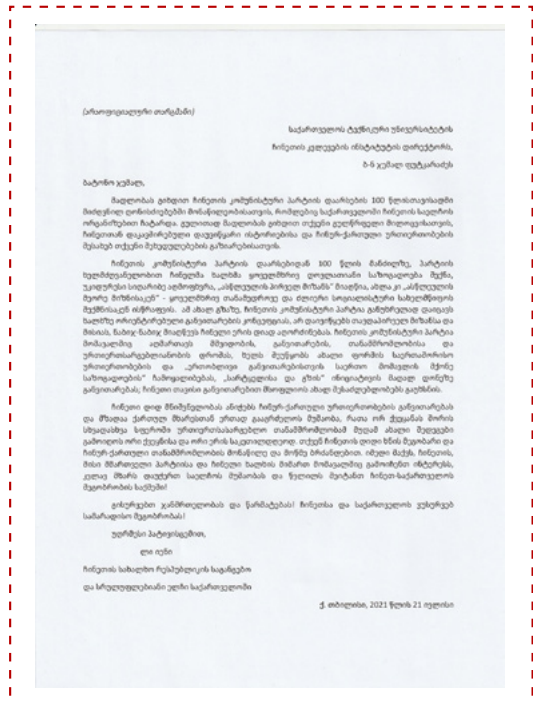
In 2024–2025, Georgian Technical University entered an active phase of establishing bilateral relations with Chinese educational institutions, holding meetings both in Georgia and China.

On September 9, 2024, the university’s rector, Davit Gurgenidze, hosted a delegation from [Tianjin University](#). The parties discussed prospects for implementing joint educational and research projects. According to the rector, the university also hosts a [Chinese Research Institute](#).



The Chinese Studies Research Institute was established on October 15, 2019, within the Faculty of Economics, Media Technologies, and Social Sciences, in cooperation with the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. Information about the institute is available on its official Facebook page. The director is Jemal Putkaradze.

In 2021, China’s former ambassador to Georgia, Li Yan, referred to him in a [letter](#) as a “longtime friend of China” and a “participant in Sino-Georgian cooperation.”



On September 17, 2024, representatives of Georgian Technical University hosted professors from [Chu Hai College of Higher Education](#) (Hong Kong). During the meeting, a memorandum of cooperation was signed. According to Vice-Rector Tamar Lominadze, the agreement includes joint academic activities, research initiatives, bilateral visits, and exchange programs.

On October 8, 2024, a delegation from [Northwestern Polytechnical University](#) of China visited the university. According to Vice-Rector Tamar Tsereteli, a memorandum of cooperation between the institutions was planned.

To further develop cooperation, in September 2024, the university’s chancellor, Karlo Kopaliani, [visited](#) Sichuan Province, China. During the visit, he held meetings with three universities: Sichuan University of Science and Engineering (Zigong), Southwest Petroleum University (Chengdu), and Southwest University of Science and Technology (Mianyang). Discussions focused on academic partnerships and cooperation development.



During his visit to Sichuan University of Science and Engineering, the chancellor spoke about ongoing efforts to establish a [Confucius Institute](#) at Georgian Technical University. According to Kopaliani, the institute will be founded based on a [memorandum of understanding](#) signed with the Sichuan institution and will contribute both to strengthening university-level cooperation and broadening Georgia–China relations.

In meetings with representatives of [Southwest Petroleum University](#), the parties discussed mobility programs for master’s and doctoral students. At [Southwest University of Science and Technology](#), discussions focused on launching joint projects and exchange programs.



In September 2025, a delegation from Georgian Technical University conducted another working visit to China, traveling to Dunhuang and Lanzhou. During the visit, representatives participated in the international scientific conference dedicated to the “[Belt and Road](#)” initiative.

Later, in Lanzhou, a [memorandum of understanding](#) was signed with Lanzhou University of Technology. According to the chairman of the university’s supervisory board, the agreement includes academic and research staff exchanges, mobility and scholarship programs, joint research projects, the establishment of a Confucius Institute, and the organization of joint events.

As a result of this cooperation, the parties also jointly established the “[Research Center for Dialogue of Civilizations and Cooperation between China and Georgia](#).” According to the university, the center will function as an interdisciplinary platform aimed at strengthening “science-based diplomacy” and “educational dialogue.”

Sokhumi State University

During the reporting period, Sokhumi State University was one of the Georgian educational institutions that received particular attention from the Chinese Embassy. On July 22, 2024, [China’s Ambassador](#) to Georgia, Zhou Qian, visited the university. In honor of the visit, the university’s student choreographic ensemble held a small concert. During a meeting with Rector Zurab Khonelidze, the ambassador expressed interest in cooperation. The parties discussed prospects for collaboration between Sokhumi State University and Chinese educational institutions.

The Chinese Embassy also actively cooperates with other universities in Georgia. China’s Ambassador to Georgia, Zhou Qian, regularly meets with university representatives to discuss prospects for cooperation with Chinese higher education institutions.

For example, on October 23, 2025, [Ambassador](#) Zhou Qian visited Caucasus University. During the meeting with university representatives, the parties discussed existing cooperation with Chinese higher education institutions, which, according to the university, includes student exchanges, short-term programs, and joint research projects.

On November 6, 2024, the rector and other university representatives, including the head of the Center for Peace Education, Levan Geradze, and Xinjiang University expert-consultant Badri Nachkebia, visited the Chinese Embassy at the [ambassador's invitation](#). The meeting focused on prospects for academic cooperation between China and Georgia.

On November 29, 2024, a seminar titled “Building a Community with a Shared Future for Mankind and China–Georgia Cooperation” was held, jointly organized by Sokhumi State University and the Chinese Embassy. The event was opened by Ambassador Zhou Qian, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Aleksandre Khvtisiashvili, and Rector Zurab Khonelidze. In his remarks, Khonelidze [stated](#):



“I would like to express special respect to the Ambassador of the People’s Republic of China to Georgia, Mr. Zhou Qian. Your support for the Georgian state and our university is clearly reflected in the relations we have already established...”

During the same period, Sokhumi State University established bilateral relations with Hunan International Business Vocational College. On September 28, 2024, a [memorandum of cooperation](#) was signed, providing for joint research, exchange of academic and administrative staff, and the development of educational programs.

Georgian International University (GIU)

Georgian International University is the first Georgian university owned by a Chinese citizen. According to a 2025 registry [extract](#), the rector and head of GIU LLC is Eliso Elisashvili, while 100% of the university’s shares are owned by Georgia International Education Investment LLC. In turn, this company is owned by Chinese citizen [Kang Zheng](#), who has served as chairman of the China International Education Group since 1999. The group aims to strengthen ties between China and international universities.

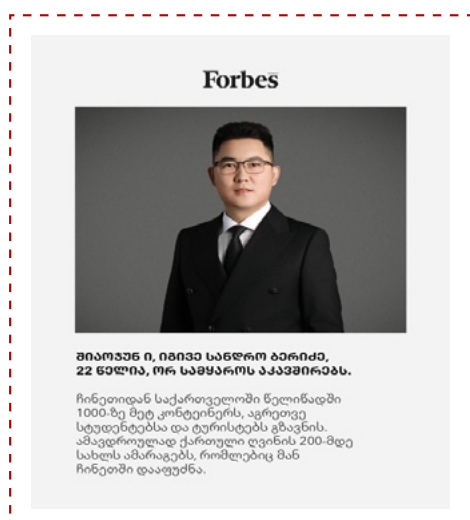
GIU cooperates with the China International Education Group in various formats. In November 2024, the head of the university's International Relations Office, Grigol Kalandadze, participated in an event organized by the group dedicated to the 25th anniversary of [Guangzhou International Economic College](#).

The university's rector, Eliso Elisashvili, is actively involved in deepening cooperation between GIU and Chinese universities. In June 2025, during a visit to China, she attended the [international conference](#) held in Dunhuang titled "The Fourth Dialogue on Exchanges and Mutual Learning Among Civilizations." She also participated in a panel discussion on "Global Dialogue on Cultural Heritage and the Digital Silk Road."

GIU students have opportunities to participate in exchange programs and scholarship competitions offered by Chinese universities. On November 13, 2024, a delegation from [Tung Wah College \(Hong Kong\)](#) visited the university. The parties discussed prospects for cooperation in education, research, and cultural exchange. It was also noted that the university's owner, Kang Zheng, would provide scholarships for students from both GIU and Tung Wah College. Within this cooperation framework,

GIU announced [mobility programs](#) to Tung Wah College in October 2024, February 2025, and April 2025. These programs were open to second and third-year undergraduate students in business administration. Successful applicants received a scholarship of 20,000 Hong Kong dollars (approximately 2,557 USD) and were exempt from tuition fees.

On April 30, 2025, GIU also [announced](#) a mobility program to SIAS International University in China for a one-year Chinese language program. The competition was open to undergraduate and graduate students. Under this program, selected students were exempt from [tuition fees](#). Notably, [the winner](#) was a psychology undergraduate student from GIU, who continued their studies in China with full funding. According to GIU, starting from 2026, ten additional students will be able to study in China under this program.



During the reporting period, GIU also established partnerships with China-related non-governmental organizations and Chinese companies. On February 19, 2025, GIU signed a [memorandum of cooperation](#) with Zhongge Cultural Development (Yiwu), providing for joint educational projects and broader collaboration.

According to Chinese [sources](#), the company was founded by businessman Yi Xiaojun (also known as Sandro Beridze), who is described as an “ambassador of Georgian culture.” The company aims to promote Chinese culture in Georgia and Georgian wine culture in China and cooperates with the Georgian Ministry of Agriculture, the National Wine Agency, and the Georgian Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

On April 1, 2025, GIU signed a [memorandum](#) with the Belt and Road Georgia Business House³. The agreement includes joint projects, development of educational products, and cooperation in student internships and employment opportunities in China. According to the university, the organization covers airfare and accommodation for selected internship candidates.



On May 15, 2025, a [trilateral memorandum](#) was signed between GIU, the Belt and Road Research Institute of Shenzhen University, and the Shenzhen Belt and Road International Cooperation and Development Institute. The agreement includes cooperation in joint research projects, exchange programs for students and academic staff, organization of international conferences and academic forums, joint publications on China–Georgia trade and economic relations, seminars and workshops on economic development and investment, joint grant applications, and opportunities for internships and study.

On October 15, 2025, GIU signed a [memorandum of cooperation](#) with Guangzhou Da-jiang E-Commerce Co. Ltd. The agreement provides students in business administration and sinology programs with internship opportunities in China at the company.

It is also noteworthy that GIU itself organizes exchange programs and summer schools for both Georgian and Chinese students. In August 2025, the university organized a [summer school](#) for Georgian students at Beijing Language and Culture University. Participants attended language courses, took part in cultural and educational workshops, visited major cultural sites, and explored interactive museums dedicated to Chinese culture.

3. The Belt and Road Georgia Business House has been registered in the public registry since 2017 as a non-entrepreneurial (non-commercial) legal entity. Its [activities](#) include import and export, education, tourism, media, the production of advanced technologies, and other areas. The organization operates both in Georgia and in China. Its head is Georgian citizen Bekar Mikaberidze, who also serves as a [representative](#) of the Georgian Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Guangdong Province, China.

In November 2025, representatives and students from [Guangzhou International Economic College](#) visited GIU. As part of the visit, Chinese guests participated in a cultural and educational program, including an English-language masterclass and a practical workshop in GIU’s forensic science laboratory. They also visited major landmarks in Tbilisi and traveled to Gori, Kazbegi, and Signaghi. The program included informational visits to Caucasus University, the Georgian Aviation University, and Coca-Cola Bottlers Georgia

Free University of Tbilisi

[The Confucius Institute](#) at the Free University of Tbilisi has been operating since 2010. Its partner institution in China is Zhengzhou University. The Confucius Institute actively [publishes](#) updates on various programs and competitions on its official Facebook page. In 2024–2025:

- The institute announced 8 competitions for undergraduate students and school pupils (grades VII–XII). These included essay competitions on the following topics: “China – An Interesting World,” “China Through My Eyes,” and “The Chinese Language – A Path to My Success.”
- The institute announced an online Olympiad for school students (grades VII–XII) four times, titled “What Do We Know About China?”
- The institute announced drawing competitions for school students three times, with themes such as “China – An Interesting World” and “Chinese New Year.”
- The institute announced video competitions four times for school students and/or university students, with themes such as “Chinese Culture and Me” and “Chinese Songs.”
- The institute also announced competitions for students and school pupils in the following areas: “Chinese Character Competition,” “Online Chinese Speech Competition,” and “Chinese Poetry Competition.”



In July 2024, the Confucius Institute hosted a delegation from the [Center for Language Education and Cooperation](#) of China’s Ministry of Education. The visit aimed to deepen educational and cultural cooperation between China and Georgia and to support the development of Chinese language teaching in Georgia. The delegation also visited the Free School, where Chinese is taught as a second foreign language. The school’s director, Amiran Ambroladze, noted during the meeting that, with the support of the Confucius Institute, “the teaching and learning of Chinese at Tbilisi Free School has made significant progress.” In turn, the head of the Center for Language Education and Cooperation, Hu Zhiping, stated that “educational and cultural cooperation between China and Georgia is an important component of bilateral relations.” As part of the visit, an official opening ceremony was also held for the Confucius Institute’s Chinese language testing center.



One of the main contributors to the activities of the Confucius Institute is its director, Marine Jibladze. On July 24, 2024, the institute’s official Facebook page published information about an [article](#) in the Chinese newspaper People’s Daily about Jibladze, titled: “The Main Goal of My Life Is to Promote the Development of Sinology.” In the article, Jibladze states:

“China is my second homeland, and my life revolves around it... My studies in China inspired me to make the development of sinology my life’s goal.”

The statement of the director of the Confucius Institute, Marine Jibladze, clearly reflects her commitment to promoting China in Georgia. Jibladze has [led](#) the Confucius Institute at the Free University since 2010, and over the past decade it has become one of the main centers for Chinese language and cultural education in Georgia.

Marine Jibladze represents an example of Georgian sinologists who actively work to increase the popularity of Chinese language and culture. These individuals actively support China’s soft power efforts in Georgia. The strategic partnership between Georgian Dream and the Chinese Communist Party creates a favorable political environment in which the spread of Chinese influence and pro-China narratives in Georgia becomes more intensive.

In 2024–2025, three graduates of the Free University of Tbilisi continued their studies at Chinese universities. Specifically, students chose the following programs: Zhejiang University’s Master’s [program](#) in Business Administration, Zhejiang University’s Chinese language and culture [program](#), and Hangzhou Normal University’s Master’s [program](#) in International Education.

Other Georgian Universities' Links with China

Some Georgian universities do not have frequent or regular relations with Chinese educational institutions. However, they cooperate with Chinese universities in various formats:

1. Scholarships and mobility programs

Grigol Robakidze University

On May 1, 2025, a [public lecture](#) titled “China’s Green Economy and Technologies in the 21st Century” was held at the university, led by sinologist Alexandra Lataria. At the end of the lecture, students were introduced to Chinese [exchange programs](#) and opportunities to obtain state funding, specifically: Chinese Government Scholarships, Confucius Institute scholarships, provincial and municipal scholarships, university scholarships, and Belt and Road scholarships.

Tbilisi State Academy of Arts named after Apolon Kutateladze

On February 12, 2025, the academy hosted a delegation from the [Central Academy of Fine Arts](#) (CAFA) in Beijing. As a result of the meeting, exchange-based cooperation between the universities was planned.

Akaki Tsereteli State University

Within the framework of cooperation with Chinese educational institutions, the following scholarship opportunities were available to students in 2025:

The Hong Kong [“Belt and Road Scholarship,”](#) funded by the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region for the 2024–2025 academic year. The program was open to both undergraduate and graduate students. [The Chinese Government Scholarship](#) competition for 2025–2026, titled “Youth of Excellence Scheme of China Program Chinese Government Scholarship.” The program was open to graduate-level students.

Kutaisi State University

The following scholarship programs were available to students:

[The Chinese Scholarship Council](#) competition for the 2025–2026 academic year, “Youth of Excellence Scheme of China Program Chinese Government Scholarship,” open to graduate students.

The Chinese Government Scholarship, Youth of Excellence Scheme, which was available to public officials, senior managers, university or research institution administrators, and individuals with experience working or interning in international organizations.

2. Summer Schools and Camps

Georgian-American University

Within the framework of cooperation between the university and SIAS University of China, in June 2024, as well as in February and July 15, 2025, the Georgian-American University informed students about the SIAS University summer camp. Students from various faculties and from both undergraduate and graduate programs were eligible to participate in the competition. A mandatory requirement for participation was proficiency in English or Chinese at the B2 level.

Black Sea International University

In July 2025, students of Black Sea International University had the opportunity to participate in a youth camp organized by SIAS University in China. The camp took place from October 26 to November 2 and included leadership-focused activities, cultural events, lectures about China, and other components.

3. Memorandums of Cooperation and Agreements

Batumi State University

In September 2024, a memorandum of cooperation was signed between the university and the Hunan Institute of Science and Technology. The memorandum provides for student and staff exchanges, the implementation of undergraduate, graduate, and other educational programs, as well as the organization of joint conferences.

On November 27, 2025, a memorandum of cooperation was signed between the university and Hubei University of Education. The agreement provides for cooperation in the following areas: exchange of students and academic staff, support for international Chinese language teaching, joint research projects, expeditions, conferences, seminars, meetings, exchange of educational, scientific, and methodological materials, joint summer schools, cultural, sports, and other activities, as well as sharing experience in educational and research management.

Black Sea International University

In June 2025, representatives of [Dalian University of Technology](#) visited the university. During the meeting, the parties discussed prospects for cooperation between the institutions.

4. Academic Links

In September 2025, Vakhtang Charaia, Deputy Rector of Grigol Robakidze University, was elected a [member](#) of the Hong Kong Academy of Sciences (CORE). The academy was established by the Hong Kong government and, according to its [official website](#), is an interdisciplinary, non-governmental scientific organization.

Conclusion

One of the most advanced and developed areas of China's soft power operations in Georgia is the educational and scientific sector. The Confucius Institute has been operating in the country since 2010. Over the past decade, Confucius classes and institutes established within Georgian universities have actively promoted Chinese language and culture.

In 2023, following the announcement of the China–Georgia strategic partnership, educational cooperation entered a qualitatively new stage. The agreement provides for a broad range of cooperation in the scientific and technological fields, including mobility programs, joint projects, partnerships between universities, and support for language learning. It should also be noted that the section on educational cooperation in the agreement reflects narratives promoted by Beijing. In particular, the document places special emphasis on the promotion of Chinese language teaching and the development of Confucius Institutes.

In addition to the strategic partnership agreement, the intensification of Sino-Georgian academic cooperation has also been reflected in frequent diplomatic exchanges at the governmental level. Since 2023, officials from Georgia and China have held numerous meetings and discussed prospects for strengthening cooperation. Agreements have also been signed between the relevant state institutions of the two countries regarding the teaching of Chinese language in Georgia and the mutual recognition of higher education qualifications.

The study found that in 2024–2025, Sino-Georgian cooperation in the education sector became more intensive and multidimensional: the number of mobility programs, joint projects, and initiatives increased; the activities of Confucius Institutes expanded and extended into the school system. At the same time, Georgian universities began cooperating

with Chinese companies, which enabled Georgian students to gain access to internships and short-term courses in China. The research also showed that after 2023, the Chinese company Huawei demonstrated particular interest and initiated cooperation with several Georgian universities.

It is noteworthy that China's soft power operations in Georgia's education sector are supported by the ruling party. Officials from Georgian Dream openly and publicly express their willingness to deepen cooperation with China, including in promoting the Chinese language in Georgia. In 2025, the Minister of Education, Givi Mikanadze, emphasized Georgian Dream's long-term goal of making the Chinese language as popular as English in Georgia. Such statements reveal the strategy of Ivanishvili's party—to shift both the Georgian state and its population, particularly its youth, away from the Western orbit.

In the context of the general education reform introduced by the Ivanishvili government, the intensification of educational ties with China is a matter of concern. As education experts note, Georgian Dream's reform risks isolating Georgia's education system from Western models. If fully implemented, the reform may create significant barriers for Georgian students seeking to continue their studies in American and European institutions. Accordingly, Georgian Dream's efforts to strengthen educational cooperation with China do not serve the goal of internationalizing higher education, but rather reflect a geopolitical reorientation of Georgia's education sector. As a result, in the future, Chinese educational institutions—characterized by limited academic freedom and strong influence from the Communist Party over curricula—may become the most accessible option for Georgian students pursuing education abroad.

Annex #2: Research Methodology

“Civic IDEA,” as a research and analytical organization, has for many years actively monitored Georgia–China bilateral relations, including China’s soft power operations in Georgia. In a 2024 report titled “[Sino-Georgian Strategic Partnership: Cooperation in the Field of Education](#),” we analyzed the dynamics of China–Georgia educational relations from the announcement of the strategic partnership on July 31, 2023, through June 2024. The present report outlines the main trends and developments in Sino-Georgian educational and scientific relations in the period following June 2024.

The report is based on a desk research methodology. Within the framework of the study, Georgian- and foreign-language open sources were analyzed, including materials published on the official websites of the Embassy of the People’s Republic of China in Georgia, as well as various Chinese and Georgian universities. The research period covers June–December 2024 and January–December 2025.

The study included monitoring of the following Georgian universities:

1. Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University
2. Tbilisi State Medical University
3. Ilia State University
4. Georgian Technical University
5. Kutaisi State University
6. Sokhumi State University
7. Tbilisi State Academy of Arts
8. Batumi State University
9. Akaki Tsereteli State University
10. European University (private university)
11. Europe University (private university)
12. Alte University (private university)
13. Georgian International University “GIU” (private university)
14. Free University of Tbilisi (private university)
15. Caucasus University (private university)
16. Grigol Robakidze University (private university)
17. Black Sea International University (private university)
18. Kutaisi International University (private university)
19. Georgian-American University (private university)
20. Sulkhani-Saba Orbeliani University (private university)
21. Caucasus International University (private university)
22. University of Georgia (private university)
23. Agricultural University of Georgia (private university)

24. Georgian Institute of Public Affairs (private university)
25. St. Andrew the First-Called Georgian University (private university)
26. Georgian National University (private university)
27. Petre Shotadze Tbilisi Medical Academy (private university)
- 28 Tbilisi Humanitarian University (private university)
29. Samtskhe-Javakheti State University (private university)
30. David Agmashenebeli University of Georgia (private university)

The subject of the research included bilateral relations between Georgian and Chinese universities, the activities of Confucius Institutes in Georgia, Chinese language education, and educational initiatives supported by the Chinese Embassy in Georgia.

Annex #3: Tbilisi Schools Where Chinese Is Taught

On April 17, 2025, the Ministry of Education, Science and Youth of Georgia issued a [statement](#) noting: “At this stage, Chinese is taught in 15 schools as an additional service.”

Below is the list of these schools:

- Green School LLC
- Robert Schuman European School LLC
- Millennium School LLC
- New Generation School LLC

private schools

- LEPL Tbilisi No. 208
- LEPL Tbilisi No. 161
- LEPL Tbilisi No. 65
- LEPL Tbilisi No. 163 named after Ekvtime Takaishvili
- LEPL Tbilisi No. 61
- LEPL Tbilisi No. 105
- LEPL Tbilisi No. 173 named after Vakhtang Gzirishvili
- LEPL Tbilisi No. 116
- LEPL Tbilisi No. 82
- LEPL Tbilisi No. 220 named after Zurab Dzumunashvili
- LEPL Tbilisi No. 217

public schools