

LEPL - DAVID AGHMASHENEBELI NATIONAL DEFENCE ACADEMY OF GEORGIA



RECTOR'S VISION

2025





BRIGADIER GENERAL MAMIA BALAKHADZE

RECTOR'S SPEECH

A necessary precondition for building a democratic, strong, and prosperous state is the establishment of the Ministry of Defense of Georgia with officers who possess a strong sense of national values, ideals, and essential leadership skills, along with the best military and academic education.

To fulfill this mission, the Academy operates several effective schools and structural units, including the Junker Training Battalion, Junior Officers Training School, Bachelor's and Master's Programs, Training Support Center, Sports and Physical Training Service, Library, Sports Complex, Scientific Research, Examination, and Distance Learning Centers.

The Academy focuses on creating a student-oriented environment, employing highly qualified military personnel, instructors, academic staff, and visiting lecturers. Their primary goal is to educate Junkers and students based on core values such as Homeland, Dignity, Loyalty, Courage, Respect, Honesty, Knowledge, and Selfless Service.

In addition, the Academy implements a leadership program designed to cultivate professional and worthy officers, ensuring the formation and development of military leadership skills. Special attention is given to understanding the philosophy of task-based management and the development of practical skills. By introducing a culture of task-based management, graduates of the Academy, as junior commanders, will be equipped to show initiative, take reasonable risks, and make independent decisions when necessary.

To meet the standards of initial military education for officers, the Academy has introduced and will continue to implement various military training programs, including "lone warrior," mountain training, water training, and airmobile training courses. Junkers will participate in these courses at relevant Defense Forces bases throughout the country.

As a military higher education institution, the Academy constantly faces challenges. Our primary goal is to ensure that the educational programs align with the requirements of

the Ministry of Defense of Georgia and the Defense Forces. Additionally, we strive to provide theoretical and practical knowledge to Junkers and students that will meet the needs of the defense system. Furthermore, the Academy must continually align with national and international educational standards.

To achieve the goals of the Bologna Process, the Academy focuses on several key areas: continually enhancing the quality of the teaching and learning process, internationalizing higher education programs, fostering ongoing collaboration with educational institutions in partner countries, and facilitating exchange programs for students and staff within the international educational community. Through these efforts, the Academy fully complies with both internal and international standards for educational programs.

It is essential for both military and civilian staff at the Academy to recognize the significance of their role in shaping and developing future military leaders. This understanding ensures that the Academy is prepared to address the various challenges it faces, including pandemic situations and the transition to distance learning.

Based on an analysis of activities conducted in 2024, the Academy has identified its main priorities for improvement and development by 2025. These include institutional development, obtaining NATO accreditation, and admitting military personnel, state security workers, and civilians into the master's program. Additionally, the Academy aims to enhance existing educational programs and introduce a new master's program in international relations and diplomacy.

The Academy is committed to improving scientific and research activities at both the bachelor's and master's levels, developing a distance learning center, strengthening international cooperation, and implementing joint international projects. A goal is to raise the level of military training for students and introduce new courses.

Last year, the Academy created educational and cognitive spaces focused on Georgian military weapons and fortifications, practical law training, and command and control information systems. These spaces will be expanded to include topics such as the history of united Georgia, Georgian military campaigns and battles, the evolution of military forces, and the struggle of the Georgian nation against foreign invasions and occupation.

We will continue to support our personnel by improving our social packages, increasing scholarships, enhancing infrastructure, developing logistics, and raising awareness of the Academy among the public.

It is a great honor for me to serve our country, the Ministry of Defense of Georgia, and the Defense Forces as the Rector of the David Agmashenebeli Georgian National Defense Academy. Together with the Academy's leadership and every member of our staff, we will exert every effort to achieve the goals set forth by the Academy. To this end, we present our vision for 2025 as a guiding document.

Rector of the Academy
Brigadier General Mamia Balakhadze



RECTOR'S VISION

1. MILITARY TRAINING OF THE JUNKERS/STUDENTS

The most important issue for the academy is the formation of worthy future military leaders. All graduates of the Academy must have the necessary skills of a leader and a level of military training that determines their competitiveness in the defense and security sector of the country.

We will take all necessary measures to make all the graduates of the Academy among the best. The academy must ensure that Junkers/students are progressive thinkers, equipped with the characteristics of a military leader and the necessary knowledge. They must be prepared to lead units of appropriate size in peacetime and crises.

The relevant structural units of the Academy should ensure that Junkers/students have the theoretical and practical knowledge pertinent to the qualification requirements for military training defined for the military personnel of the Defense Forces of Georgia.

To improve the level of military training, in 2025 we will continue to improve the quality of training in the military disciplines of the Academy, focused on the requirements of the Defense Forces, in the direction of combat training (tactics, military topography, fire training, etc., as well as military-support training courses). The main focus of the mentioned process will be to share international best practices, to bring the Academy's educational programs into compliance with the requirements of the Defense Forces, and to address the existing challenges.

In addition, along with theoretical training, we will support the development of military-practical skills of Junkers/students. The Academy conducts practical exercises and field trainings by using modern technologies. We plan joint field exercises/training for Junkers/students with the involvement of active military personnel who have experience in military trainings conducted by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Various commands of the Defense Forces will be actively involved in the implementation of the aforementioned field exercises and courses, sharing their knowledge and experience with the Academy's Junkers and students.

In 2025, active cooperation with partner military educational institutions of foreign countries will continue.

In a given pandemic situation, cooperation will also be carried out remotely. The Academy ensures equal access for Junkers/students to participate in planned programs.

High-level command visits to the Academy, as part of the speakers' program, visits to various agencies, a lone warrior course, a mountain training course, a water training course, and an airmobile training course will continue throughout 2025. These military practical exercises will take the level of military training currently underway at the Academy to a new level.

1.1 LEADER DEVELOPMENT

The Academy is continuously studying the skills characteristic of a leader for Junkers. In the process of training, when developing skills by Junkers, attention should be paid to the distribution and rotation of Junkers to command positions of various levels, to receiving practice in units, and to creating/maintaining a fair and competitive environment.

It is noteworthy that the Academy will pay special attention to understanding the philosophy of task-based management and developing practical skills. By introducing the culture of “task-based management”, graduates of the Academy, as junior commanders, will be able to show initiative, take reasonable risks, and make decisions independently if necessary.

1.2 CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

We consider the development of critical thinking skills as an integral part of developing a military serviceman as a leader. That is why it is necessary to integrate critical thinking, military scenarios, and after-action reviews into the programs implemented by the Academy.

At the Academy, the Junkers must learn analytical, critical, and creative thinking; realize the supremacy of law and discipline. The Junkers must realize principles of statesmanship and their obligation as citizens as well as military servicemen to the homeland.

1.3. IMPROVEMENT OF PHYSICAL TRAINING

Without proper physical training, a Junker/student, military personnel of the Academy can't have the appropriate endurance and strength to participate in the military exercises. To improve the level of physical fitness of the Junkers /students, military personnel of the Academy, priority should be given to general military endurance/strength training, development/implementation of individual (special) military training and physical training programs.

Physical training programs of the Academy should serve to bring the level of physical fitness of the Junkers/students in line with established standards and to raise the level of individual as well as group training.

2. INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Academy is a military education institution and is oriented to constant development. That is why, in 2024, in accordance with the requirements of the Ministry of Defense system, we have implemented the admission of Junkers to new bachelor's programs in law and aeronautical engineering. In 2025, we plan to admit students to new master's programs in international relations and diplomacy. We will also continue to admit military, state security and civilian personnel to master's programs.

In addition, a distance learning center is successfully operating/working at the National Defence Academy, which trains both military personnel and civilian personnel, taking into account the requirements and priorities of the Defense Forces and the Ministry of Defense. For the first time in the Defense Forces, the National Defense

Academy hosted an international distance learning conference in 2022, which will be held again in November 2025, and this process will be ongoing.

3. ACADEMIC PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

As the Academy is the only military higher education institution in Georgia, we properly understand the importance of the academic programs we have implemented for the country and the Defense Forces of Georgia.

In 2023, the Academy provided for the development of a voluntary military training program for junior reserve officers, and since 2024, the Academy has been accepting students for the program for the first time and starting their training process, which will continue in the following years.

In order to increase the level of foreign language proficiency in the Defense Forces, the main educational units of the Academy, within the framework of their training programs, will study English, German, French and Turkish at the B2 (B2+) level, including, in addition to the main foreign language to be studied, optional foreign languages (English, German, French and Turkish) will be offered.

In 2025, the National Defense Academy plans to successfully complete the cluster reaccreditation of the Master's Degree in State Resources Management, Management and Informatics Bachelor's Degree educational programs.

4. SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT

In 2025, scientific research activities will be more developed at the Academy. While implementing the scientific-research component, the Academy should be focused on: the requirements of the system of the Ministry of Defense, the research required for obtaining and implementing various grant projects supporting the undergraduate/graduate academic programs of the Academy.

Also, the Scientific-Research Center should actively start working in the following areas: research activities in priority areas in accordance with the requirements of the Ministry of Defense system, organization and holding of international and domestic scientific research conferences and symposiums, search and acquisition of international grants, search for new contacts and establishment of communication with foreign scientific research organizations, printing and publishing of collections of scientific papers and conference proceedings journals.

The Academy encourages the participation of international personnel in scientific conferences and their scientific research activities. In addition, it will support the organization of conferences involving military and civilian personnel of the Ministry of Defense.

It is also worth noting that in 2024, a permanent working group, "Think Tank," was created to activate scientific and research activities. In 2025, the Academy will further develop the electronic library system, including access to international scientific databases, which will allow individuals employed in the Georgian defense system and interested in research activities to have access to a significant part of the world's electronic book collection.

5. DISTANCE LEARNING CENTER DEVELOPMENT

Due to the latest challenge in the academic field, in 2025, the distance learning center of the Academy should expand its area of activity. This structural unit will play an important role in facilitating the ongoing academic process in the Academy. In 2025, the staff of the center should be trained, and the experience of foreign partners should be shared.

The Center ensures the conduct of training offered on the Defense Forces, the creation of new paid courses for the target audience to improve their qualifications and the conduct of existing courses, the holding of an international conference on distance learning, the creation/implementation of other necessary training courses in accordance with the requirements of the Ministry of Defense system, and the maintenance of English language skills.

Access to education will be increased for the Junkers/students of the Academy, for the military, and civilians of the system of the Ministry of Defense, through the activities carried out by the Center. In addition, the operation of the Center will help bring the Defense Forces of Georgia closer to the standards of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

6. STRENGTHENING INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

Under bilateral cooperation and a memorandum of understanding, the Academy will continue to build relationships with universities, military academies, and international organizations in the United States and Europe. In addition, based on the Academy's priorities, new connections will be established and, accordingly, additional opportunities will be sought for the Academy's Junkers, students and personnel to actively participate in short-term/long-term exchange programs and various international events, deepen theoretical knowledge, practical experience and cooperate with representatives of the world's leading military academies. In 2025, involvement in activities organized by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) within the framework of five programs and the "Erasmus +" format will continue.

The number of students/Junkers, instructors, academic and visiting faculty from partner countries who will be involved in the ongoing academic and scientific processes at the Academy will be increased. Significant attention will be paid to strengthening international cooperation, especially the internationalization of master's programs, during 2025, so that through targeted and best-practice sharing, the Academy can contribute to the training of highly qualified personnel and increase the institution's awareness in the international arena.

7. PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT

To overcome any challenge facing the academy, you need not only a good leader, but also a staff with the appropriate qualifications and skills. I strongly believe that competent staff is the foundation for the successful completion of any task.

Given the importance of the above, in 2025 special emphasis will be placed on personnel development. The Academy should develop and approve the concept of human resource management and professional development, as well as a strategy for attracting highly qualified academic/visiting faculty.

In order to support the development of the personnel, the Academy plans to implement a professional development program, where the staff of the Academy will have the opportunity to participate in various events planned by Georgia and partner countries.

It is worth noting that events to encourage high-achieving Junkers and students are ongoing and will continue in 2025. In particular, the best-performing Junkers/students and their parents will be awarded a certificate of appreciation from the Rector, while letters of appreciation are sent home to other categories of Junkers/students with high results.

8. Social Support for Students/Junkers and Academy Employees

In 2025, students, Junkers, personnel, and employees of the National Defence Academy, along with their family members, will have access to free or discounted services in various institutions, including educational, sports, medical-rehabilitation, cultural, and children's entertainment facilities, as outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding. Notably, the Academy will continue to provide medical insurance for students/Junkers, personnel/employees, and their family members and, if needed, offer financial assistance to address health issues. Additionally, the Academy will organize several social and charitable initiatives nationwide and regionally in 2025, including support for socially vulnerable families.

9. SERVICES FOR STUDENTS/JUNKERS AND ACADEMY EMPLOYEES

In 2025, the Academy will prioritize offering unique services to its students and Junkers, which will include guaranteed 100% employment within the Defence Forces, housing provisions, free meals, necessary equipment, and essential materials related to the educational process. The Academy will cover full tuition fees and provide various scholarships, including a fixed scholarship of 1,200 GEL for fourth-year students, as well as scholarships named after Donald Rumsfeld and local municipalities. Students will also receive personal laptops and corporate phone numbers and will have access to educational and information platforms, international scientific databases, and both electronic and physical literature from national and international libraries.

The Academy is committed to offering these unique services not only to students and Junkers but also to its personnel. In 2025, personnel will continue to benefit from services such as 50% financing for studies at authorized universities in Georgia, free access to various online courses developed at the Academy's distance learning center, and opportunities to complete qualification and professional skills development programs at higher military institutions abroad.

10. LOGISTICAL DEVELOPMENT

In 2024, a monument to the Holy King David Aghmashenebeli was unveiled on the Academy's grounds. Intensive efforts are ongoing to create a recreational square and to plant greenery around the monument, with this work expected to continue into 2025. Additionally, last year,

the sports field underwent a complete renovation, including a new surface and a modern-standard running track installation. In 2025, the Academy will once again focus on updating infrastructure and resources. The expansion of cognitive, recre-

ational, and sports spaces will proceed, with thematic auditoriums and classrooms being organized to enhance the knowledge and motivation of the Junkers and students. Auditoriums named after academy graduates who lost their lives in the fight for territorial integrity and during peacekeeping missions have been established. To improve military training, existing training facilities will be renovated, and new ones will continue to be developed. Enhanced medical care and services will also be provided.

11. RAISING AWARENESS ABOUT THE ACADEMY

To attract Junkers, students, and highly qualified personnel, the Academy plans to increase awareness about its offerings. This includes identifying and informing target groups through practical information sessions with graduating students at public schools nationwide, distributing printed advertising materials in community centers, and airing promotional videos on social media and in the media. The Academy will disseminate information about its activities and achievements according to a developed communication strategy. Efforts will also be made to raise awareness, introduce successful Junkers, students, and faculty, popularize educational programs, and provide comprehensive information about these programs to the public.

