

## At this time, 73.6% of teachers and school administration representatives have been vaccinated

BY THE MESSENGER STAFF

According to the Ministry of Education, 73.6 percent of teachers and school administration have been vaccinated so far.

According to a statement issued by the agency, to ensure a safer environment in schools, teachers who have been vaccinated or co-vaccinated twice a week will be tested for coronavirus every two weeks, and teachers who have been vaccinated or vaccinated once a week will have a rapid antigen test.

"As it is known, with the support of the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia, the representatives of the National Center for Disease Control and Public Health have trained more than 400 public and private school doctors.

It is the trained doctors who provide staff testing on Covid-19 in these schools. And in schools where doctors have not yet been trained, the testing process will continue, organized by the National Center for Disease Control and Public Health.

"To prevent the virus, schools are fully provided with appropriate disinfectant solutions, as well as diapers, thermo screening devices, and disinfection barriers," the statement said.



## Gharibashvili's Wife's Brother: Leasing Bakuriani Forest Was Necessary for Security Reasons



BY THE MESSENGER STAFF

Alexander Tamazashvili, the brother of Prime Minister Irakli Gharibashvili's wife, responds to the transfer of the forest to his sister in Bakuriani and notes that the lease of the territory was necessary for security reasons.

"Gifting the forest' caused a great stir. Society has been led into believing that Garibashvili and his family appropriated the Bakuriani forest.

The reality is this: half a hectare of land, which can be called half a forest and which is adjacent to a residential house, due to security, it became necessary to lease it, on which neither construction nor of course cutting of trees, on the contrary, is an obligation to maintain and annually In the budget of a solid amount of input.

I wonder how sincere and genuine the protest is from the team members and their favorite journalists who sold more than 3,000 hectares of forest in 2009 alone to cut down and reap economic benefits while in power," Tamazashvili wrote on Facebook.

The Prime Minister's wife was given 5,958 square meters of state-owned land in Bakuriani with the right of the special use of the forest for 49 years. According to the Public Registry, his representative applied to the National Forest Agency on 28 December 2021 for registration of the right of origin related to the use and ownership.

The annual starting price of the area was ₾ 5,958. One person expressed interest and he also won the same auction with a bid of ₾ 6,255.



# EU4Youth Alumni Network: the latest Idealab



On 22–23 January, the EU4Youth Alumni Network held an IdeaLab event to

develop initiatives for disadvantaged youth groups in their local communities. A total of 73

Alumni from six different countries came together to spend two days working with 70 young rep-

resentatives from the beneficiary groups.

Together they developed plans for up to 54 initiatives to be implemented between February and June this year. The programmes focus on regional support and will reach out to at least 900 disadvantaged young people in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova, Russia, and Ukraine.

Information about young people’s interests, needs and ideas had already been collected from the target groups. The IdeaLab focused on processing that data and using it as a basis for developing concrete initiatives. By the end of the event, a set of step-by-step plans was ready to be implemented.

There’s palpable excitement about the coming months. An Alumni from Georgia, Giga Tskhoidze, explained that the “IdeaLab tremendously increased our motivation about our future activities and made

us ready to start working with our target groups.” For Rezida, an Alumni from Azerbaijan, the achievements of the IdeaLab show the strength of a group of “young people with the power to make a positive contribution to our communities”. It’s truly satisfying when a plan comes together.

The EU4Youth Alumni Network will continue to provide educational opportunities, mentoring and financial support. A mid-term meeting and a final evaluation meeting will also be organised.

Established last year, the EU4Youth Alumni Network worked with 70 Alumni to develop 50 initiatives. More than 550 activities were rolled out, reaching more than 1 100 disadvantaged young people in the Eastern Partnership region. As the programme’s second year gets underway, the IdeaLab has given it a huge boost.

(*eunighbourseast.eu*)

## Georgia starts exporting snails to European market

Georgia has started exporting snails to the European market. The European Commission added Georgia to the list of approved countries back in December 2021.

This decision taken within the



framework of the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (DCFTA), between Georgia and the EU, allows Georgia to export snails and frog’s legs to the European Union among other food products.

Snails are currently being harvested across an estimated of 50 farms all over Georgia, that have ideal weather conditions for snail production.

According to the EU Delegation to Georgia’s press release, snail production is an attractive market due to the high demand, low input required and profitable returns. “Georgian farmers can get started with as little as half a hectare of land and sell one kilogram of produce for more than 10 Georgian lari on the European market.”

(*eunighbourseast.eu*)

## New Centre to accelerate ending energy poverty launched

The Energy Community Secretariat established the new Centre for Alleviating Energy Poverty in the Energy Community Contracting Parties ‘ECCP’

(including Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine).

The Centre will collect data and information on the causes and impact of energy poverty in the ECCP and promote the development of appropriate policies and measures. It will also strengthen the cooperation between energy sector stakeholders, including representatives of government authorities, civil society, private sector and finan-

cial institutions.

“Our Contracting Parties have the highest energy poverty rates in the whole of Europe. The COVID-19 pandemic and rapid increase in energy prices have further exacerbated the situation,” said Artur Lorkowski, Director of the Energy Community Secretariat.

The decision to establish the Centre follows the recommendations suggested by the Study on



Addressing Energy Poverty in the ECCP, published in Decem-

ber 2021.

(*eunighbourseast.eu*)

### Weather

Monday, January 31

Day Partly Cloudy  
High: 10°C

Night Mostly Cloudy  
Low: 1°C

Tuesday, February 1

Day Mostly Cloudy  
High: 12°C

Night Partly Cloudy  
Low: 0°C

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