

From theory to practice: implementing European legal education paradigms and digital innovations in Georgia

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Abstract: European legal education is undergoing a rapid transformation, driven by the need to prepare lawyers for a globalized and digital society. This study critically examines how the core elements of the European legal education paradigm—technological integration, practical skills development and internationalization—can be realistically adapted in Georgian law faculties.

The Bologna Process promotes harmonization of higher legal education standards, interdisciplinary approaches and the development of critical and analytical skills. Equally important is the integration of practical skills and technological competencies through innovative teaching methods such as case analyses, simulations and problem-based learning. The research analyzes how these methods, alongside increased internationalization and collaboration with European universities, contribute to modernizing legal education in Georgia.

The study sets out three specific objectives: to analyze the implementation of European educational models in Georgian universities, to assess the technological capacity and practical readiness of Georgian law faculties and to develop targeted recommendations based on empirical findings within the Georgian context.

The analysis draws on recent academic sources and practical examples, ensuring that the recommendations are grounded in the realities of Georgian higher education. The findings demonstrate

that while the formal adoption of European standards is underway, significant gaps remain in practical training, technological infrastructure and institutional collaboration. The proposed recommendations directly address these gaps, providing actionable steps for policymakers and educators to enhance both the quality and relevance of legal education in Georgia.

Modern higher education must adapt to technological advances, using contemporary methods to prepare youth for the current labor market. Integrating multidisciplinary components (economics, medicine and technology) alongside professional expertise cultivates versatile skills that are resistant to technological replacement. A lawyer with diverse abilities is less likely to be automated out of practice. To explore these aspects, this article employs normative, dogmatic, analytical, synthetic and general sociological methods.

Keywords: *European legal education, Georgia, internationalization, legal practice, teaching method, technology*

1. Introduction

European legal education is rapidly evolving through technological innovations and modern practices, challenging both European systems and countries such as Georgia to seek alignment with European traditions. For Georgia, harmonization with European norms while addressing local realities is crucial. The growing emphasis on technological competence in European legal education reflects its increasing importance in practice, presenting opportunities and challenges for Georgia's legal system given its unique institutional and resource constraints.

This study critically assesses how modern educational technologies from leading European universities (such as virtual courtroom simulations and AI-assisted research tools) can be realistically implemented in Georgian law faculties, considering their technical infrastructure, academic resources and student needs. Rather than merely describing the European models, the research analyzes their applicability, obstacles to adoption and realistic pathways for integration in the Georgian context. To accomplish this, the study aims to:

- Examine how specific European educational models (from Leiden, Oxford and the EU) have been implemented in Georgian universities;
- Evaluate the technological capacity and readiness of Georgian law faculties, identifying the main obstacles and context-specific challenges;
- Formulate practical recommendations for Georgian law schools that are based on research findings and tailored to the Georgian context.

The research goes beyond a descriptive overview, as it provides a comparative and critical analysis of both European and Georgian practices. It identifies not only best practices, but also the limitations and challenges of implementing these models in the Georgian context.

Central to this research is an analysis of the issue from the perspective of teaching methods, particularly how the use of technological tools reshapes the learning process. The study uses dogmatic, comparative, normative, empirical, synthesis and analysis methods to explore these issues in depth. Its ultimate aim is to align Georgia's legal education with European standards while considering the local context, thereby enhancing the quality and effectiveness of legal education in Georgia through targeted technological integration.

2. European approaches to teaching methods and activities

The Europeanization of Georgian legal education is a process shaped in collaboration with European institutions and the adoption of new teaching methodologies (Chanturia, 2010; Bichia, 2017a, pp. 6–7). European law faculties prioritize student-centered learning that combines doctrinal knowledge with the development of practical legal skills. Methods such as case analyses, moot court simulations and clinical legal education are central to fostering the critical thinking and analytical abilities required in contemporary legal practice (Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia *et al.*, 2009, pp. 20–21; Senthamarai, 2018, p. 36). Despite formal recognition, Georgian law faculties inconsistently apply these methods due to limited faculty training and institutional support, resulting in insufficient development of practical skills among students.

In Georgia, the adoption of these methods remains uneven despite the formal alignment with the Bologna Process. Faculty interviews reveal that

only a minority of lecturers have received training in interactive teaching, and institutional support for innovation has remained limited. Many law faculties continue to rely predominantly on traditional lectures with minimal active learning and practical training opportunities (Bochorishvili *et al.*, 2014, p. 5). This pedagogical deficit has measurable consequences: students lack critical legal skills, as evidenced by employer feedback and disciplinary patterns from the Bar Association. Resource constraints and inadequate faculty preparation render formal curricula tools such as group work and moot courts ineffective. These gaps in implementation reveal institutional weaknesses requiring targeted faculty development and enhanced collaboration with practicing lawyers.

An underexplored aspect of legal education reform in Georgia is the linkage of school–university technology education. Understanding how foundational digital competencies align with legal education objectives is crucial for curriculum design and effective integration of technology. Analyzing this interface is necessary to ensure coherent progression and identify gaps hindering student success in digitalized legal environments.

Technology plays a vital role in modern legal education. Legal education uses specialized tools such as digital databases, virtual moot courts and online research platforms to improve students' research and practical skills (Senthamarai, 2018, p. 36). These tools also support the integration of the Bologna Process in education and research and promote learning and creativity (Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia *et al.*, 2009, p. 8).

According to the decisions of Georgia's Accreditation Council (Nos. 78, 112, and 164, 2021a–c), some legal education programs conflate teaching methods with assessment tools. This conflation signals ongoing challenges with quality assurance and emphasizes the need for continuous curriculum updates that would meet European Standards and Guidelines (ESG). Addressing this issue is essential to improve the effectiveness and transparency of legal education in Georgia.

No single teaching method is sufficient for every learning objective in legal education. Complex skills require dynamic, interactive methods, while simpler knowledge acquisition may rely more on passive approaches (Bonner, 1999). For Georgian legal education to align with European standards, reforms must be implemented to address systemic issues (faculty attitudes, resource allocation and institutional innovation support) and to educate analytically capable graduates prepared for modern legal practice.

In Georgia, the adoption of technology in education is uneven, with some faculties lacking infrastructure or expertise for full implementation, creating skills gaps for graduates entering digitalized legal markets. Practical training remains equally challenging. While the German model requires two-year practical traineeships (*Referendariat*) to ensure exposure to various legal professions (Korioth, 2006, pp. 85–86), Georgian faculties offer limited structured internships or clinical courses. This restricts development of practical competency, resulting in graduates unprepared for legal practice, as evidenced by disciplinary cases citing insufficient practical skills.

Interactive teaching methods (moot courts, clinical education and project-based learning) significantly enhance students' analytical and problem-solving abilities (Gorgodze, 2024, p. 25). Selection of teaching methods should be based on their effectiveness in achieving specific goals (Westwood, 2008, p. 17). Georgian legal education must adapt European best practices to prepare competent and research-oriented legal professionals.

The *Law of Georgia 'On Higher Education'* aligns with European standards by prioritizing competencies that meet legal market needs, fostering democracy, humanism and cultural values, and addressing individuals' need for higher education. It also aims to improve qualifications, retraining individuals according to their interests, developing creative skills and preparing competencies for modern requirements (*Law of Georgia 'On Higher Education'*, 2004, Article 3(1(a–c))). Implementing these standards in Georgia requires educational reforms to match the quality of Western European universities (Tsotniashvili, 2020, p. 100).

While descriptive accounts provide useful overviews, a deeper critical analysis is essential for evaluating effective versus ineffective practices within Georgian legal education. This requires identifying successes and challenges while exploring the underlying causes—institutional resistance, resource limitations or faculty preparedness—that influence the outcomes. Targeted reforms benefit from critical reflection, as it allows moving beyond surface-level descriptions toward actionable insights that enhance legal education quality.

3. Key directions in European legal education

3.1 Diversification of teaching methods

The European Higher Education Area and the Bologna Process have introduced several innovative teaching methods, such as problem-based learning, collaborative problem-solving, peer learning, role-playing and simulation games, to increase student engagement and create active learning environments. These methods link theory with practice through individual and team-based tasks, helping students apply theoretical knowledge in practice (Cenevska, 2023, p. 76).

To meet the demands of contemporary practices, legal education must balance theoretical knowledge with practical skills. While diversified teaching methods are formally encouraged, their practical application often depends on the initiative of an individual faculty rather than institutional policy (Gorgodze, 2024, p. 12). These methods develop critical thinking, analytical skills and complex problem-solving abilities. However, in Georgian law schools, the implementation remains inconsistent due to limited faculty training, resistance to pedagogical change and resource constraints that hinder full realization of innovative approaches.

Modern jobs require young people to develop competencies in analysis, synthesis, problem-solving, critical thinking, collaboration, teamwork, dispute resolution, innovation, entrepreneurship and communication (Breslow, 2015, p. 421). Teaching methods that focus on analytical skills serve this purpose. It is important to diversify teaching and learning methods with techniques that develop analytical skills ('Decision of the Accreditation Council No. 144487', 2021d). This issue persists in several Georgian educational programs, particularly at master's level. However, *The sectoral benchmark of law for higher education* (2020) requires master's programs to emphasize analytical and creative thinking, judicial practice analysis and comparative legal problems study. Such requirements ensure that master's graduates possess knowledge and skills differing from those at undergraduate level, enabling them find employment with appropriate qualifications for higher positions in the modern labor market.

Project-based learning in European legal education encourages complex problem-solving and innovative approaches to dispute resolution to prepare students for the multifaceted challenges of modern legal practice. It emphasizes interdisciplinary approaches (de Oliveira Fornasier, 2021,

p. 26). As part of Europe, Georgia should adopt these integrated European methods.

3.2 Practical approach and specialization

Traditionally, law schools have emphasized theory and doctrine over practical training, but this distinction has proved ineffective for preparing students for legal practice (Stuckey *et al.*, 2007, p. 71). Germany has placed more emphasis on practical training (Korioth, 2006, p. 106). After university studies, graduates must pass two state exams (*Staatsexamen*) and complete a two-year practical traineeship (*Referendariat*), which includes rotations with judges, prosecutors, lawyers and administrative offices. This system produces the “unified lawyer” (*Einheitsjurist*), who is qualified for all legal professions, though most graduates practice as attorneys (Korioth, 2006, pp. 85–86).

However, replicating Germany’s system in Georgia faces challenges, including limited funding, insufficient institutional support and lack of unified national programs. Adapting elements such as structured rotations or mandatory internships may prove more feasible.

Practical training in technology would help build essential skills in early law courses for professional success. Knowledge and integration of technology are particularly necessary in business law and civil procedure. Lawyers must be proficient in office software (Word, Excel and PDF), presentation tools and artificial intelligence (AI) applications to improve efficiency and professional communication (Graben, 2021, pp. 153–154). Project work develops creative and presentation skills, enabling students to acquire problem analysis, goal setting, problem-solving and time management abilities (Bochorishvili *et al.*, 2014, p. 25).

European legal education emphasizes practical training through clinical programs, moot courts, internships and simulations, which develop real-world skills that bridge academic knowledge and professional practice. In Georgia, graduates generally possess a strong foundation in legal theory, they frequently lack practical experience and applied skills essential for effective performance in the legal profession.

For example, in disciplinary proceedings before the Georgian Bar Association, a lawyer who represented a client outside their area of specialization failed to provide qualified and conscientious representation, resulting in disciplinary

liability. According to the practice of the Disciplinary Chamber, Georgian law explicitly requires lawyers to possess specialized knowledge and skills in their field, and failure to meet these standards can have serious professional consequences. This underscores the emphasis on continuous professional development in legal profession and the necessity of practical skills for effective client representation ('Decision 141/18 of the Ethics Commission of the Georgian Bar Association', 2019; Disciplinary Chamber of the Georgian Bar Association, interpretation of Article 8(5) of the *Code of Ethics*, Unified Practice Report 2018–2020, p. 121-1).

The new study curriculum includes professional legal ethics to help students understand ethical duties within social and national contexts. This promotes critical thinking, reflecting the balance of European legal education between European and national orientations (Sadka and Noriega, 2025, pp. 278–279). European Union law, however, presents pedagogical challenges: often treated as an “anomaly” in national legal systems, it suffers from limited research on teaching methods creating a scarcity of educational literature on EU law (Cenevska, 2023, p. 73). While traditionally characterized by homogeneity, universities across Europe are increasingly diversifying their programs. Dutch universities, for instance, currently offer nine uniform law programs but are adopting niche marketing strategies. Some universities aim to become international hubs for EU students while others maintain a national focus, emphasizing student choice and clarifying each institution's educational experience (Smits, 2011, p. 178).

Legal practice demands diverse intellectual capabilities beyond memorizing laws. When lawyers use intrapersonal intelligence to consider multiple perspectives, their doctrinal analysis improves. Similarly, logical-mathematical intelligence enhances mediation skills, while strategic thinking strengthens advocacy abilities (Davis and Steinglass, 1997, pp. 249, 251).

The evolution of legal education reflects a global trend toward institutional autonomy, enabling universities to offer specialized programs tailored to career interests (Amaral *et al.*, 2012, p. 658). This specialization enhances program attractiveness and strengthens research, benefits both students and the faculty and often involves partnerships with industry. However, a balance must be maintained between standardization, owing to the regulated nature of the legal profession, and academic freedom (Niedwiecki, 2016, p. 674).

In Georgia, this balance remains challenging. Despite standards that permit individualization, law programs are largely uniform, often emphasizing theoretical courses such as on jurisprudence and theory of law that students perceive as disconnected from practice. This perception stems from a misunderstanding of these subjects' value and their formal teaching methods. The ultimate purpose of legal education extends beyond rote memorization; it aims to train lawyers grounded in professional values (Gegenava, 2023, pp. 454–455). Specialized education would make students in Georgia more competitive globally and better equipped to handle the country's legal reform.

Recent Supreme Court decisions in Georgia have underscored the importance of practical legal skills and procedural competence for legal representatives. In one case, a representative's failure to take necessary procedural steps led to negative consequences for the client ('Decision as-1144-2024', 2024). The Supreme Court emphasized the obligation of legal representatives to protect clients' interests and comply with procedural requirements. The Court noted that inadequate competence or procedural failures harm clients' legal positions ('Decision as-1221-2024', 2024). This demonstrates that insufficient practical training directly undermines the protection of client rights in civil proceedings. However, the analysis needs reinforcement with additional practical examples and sources, as the limited evidence has proved insufficient for making substantial conclusions about the uniformity of Georgian legal education and student perceptions.

The critical need for updating literature represents a systematic, continuous process, as confirmed by the policy of Georgia's National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement. Multiple Accreditation Council decisions demonstrate the consistency of this trend: July 2019 recommendations for updating scientific literature in courses on private law (contract law, the general part of law of obligations, insurance law and others); August 2020 requirements for corporate law syllabus updates; March 26, 2021, 'Decision No. 9 21 0000291513' determined that it is necessary to update and supplement the syllabi of courses on property law, statutory obligations, family and inheritance law, labor law and other subjects with modern and/or latest educational resources; similarly, the Accreditation Council 'Decision No. 2 21 0000258054' (2021) established that the mandatory literature in the syllabi of courses on contract law, administrative proceedings, labor law, and fundamental human rights should be reviewed and updated. 'Decision No. 1 22 0000761936' of July 5, 2022, required updating university library resources with the latest legal literature, particularly foundational

educational materials in course syllabi. Demonstrating the non-singular nature of literature update obligations requires additional examples and sources to show decision dynamics over time, beyond the current sampling of council decisions. Point 1.3 of the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) requires teaching based on contemporary research, implying updated literature use.

Continuous updating of legal literature, as required by the National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement and the Accreditation Council, is essential for exposing students to latest legal developments. However, updating syllabi and library resources often lags behind, partly due to budgetary constraints and limited access to international publications.

The sectoral benchmark of law (2020) document establishes Georgia's regulatory framework for legal education through three core components: (1) minimum knowledge standards assessed via written exams and case studies; (2) professional skill development through moot courts and clinical education; (3) responsibility and autonomy competencies via self-directed learning (*The sectoral benchmark of law for higher education*, 2020). In contrast, opportunities for practical training in Georgia are limited due to weak partnerships between academic institutions and the legal sector, inadequate resources and the absence of formal internship programs. Consequently, although many graduates have strong theoretical knowledge, they lack the practical and technological skills necessary to meet the expectations of legal employers and practice standards (Gorgodze, 2024, p. 27).

Moreover, the limited availability of up-to-date learning technologies and digital platforms further compounds these deficiencies. Addressing these complex issues is crucial for aligning legal education with workforce demands and enhancing graduates' competitiveness.

3.3 Technology and interdisciplinarity

Legal education must adapt to the technological advancements transforming legal practice. Many law professors continue relying on traditional teaching methods such as lectures, Socratic dialogue and final exams which are increasingly insufficient for modern professionals for developing technology-relevant skills (Canick, 2014, p. 673). To prepare students for an integrated professional environment, legal education must evolve alongside these technological changes. Digitalization of law has become essential, including automated information gathering and new forms of knowledge

representation (de Oliveira Fornasier, 2021, p. 7). While technologies can handle computational and predictive tasks in legal work, the subjective aspects of legal data analysis remain human-centered (Bedianashvili *et al.*, 2021, p. 28). This reality demands that legal education evolves to prepare students for this technology-driven professional environment.

It is noteworthy that the use of educational technology applications saves a lot of time and energy. The use of technology in education helps students prepare for lifelong learning and learn more effectively and track their progress. In recent years, these technologies have been successfully implemented in education to improve the digital learning environment (Haleem *et al.*, 2022, p. 281).

Digital tools improve access to specialized legal databases, case materials and scholarly resources, which significantly boost research capabilities. Virtual learning environments have expanded access to legal education for underserved populations, including individuals with disabilities and rural residents (O'Donoghue *et al.*, 2004, p. 72). Research indicates that legal education integrated with technology offers numerous benefits: elimination of commuting barriers, remote study options, time and cost efficiency, improved material accessibility and increased flexibility (Stecula and Wolniak, 2022, p. 159). These advantages are particularly significant for specialized legal education, which has traditionally concentrated in urban centers.

Technological integration in legal education faces significant challenges: reduced instructor–student contact, diminished peer interaction, equipment costs, motivation issues, gaps in faculty preparedness, complications in practical skills teaching, limited resource access, cybersecurity risks and assessment integrity concerns (Stecula and Wolniak, 2022, p. 160). Additional risks include health impacts (Ionescu *et al.*, 2020, p. 2) and increased plagiarism in legal assignments.

Despite technological challenges, the rapid transformation of legal practice introduces the need for corresponding legal education reforms, including new teaching methodologies (Nicolaou *et al.*, 2019, p. 197) that balance digital tools with essential student–teacher interaction (Diasamidze, 2021, p. 63). Worldwide, information and communication technologies have profoundly transformed legal education. Virtual learning environments have become the norm and require deliberate oversight to ensure effective stakeholder engagement and adaptation (Rodriguez, 2013, p. 150). Concurrently, rapid

shifts in legal services markets necessitate educational reforms that address evolving professional demands and student expectations, with technology playing a critical role in meeting diverse sectoral needs (Bonilla Maldonado, 2023, p. 28).

The COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated the crucial role of digital tools in maintaining educational continuity, underscoring the states' need for comprehensive approaches in adapting legal education to digital realities. Law schools must update their curricula to incorporate emerging legal domains including digital rights protection, digital governance and cybersecurity. Contemporary legal education should integrate the latest digital advances, such as artificial intelligence applications for legal consultations and remote dispute resolution mechanisms (Burkadze, 2022, pp. 73–74). The European Commission's Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition, which unites Member States, companies, social partners, non-profit organizations and education providers to address Europe's digital skills gap, represents a model that Georgia would benefit from replicating (Rampelt *et al.*, 2019, p. 14).

Europe's vision for modern higher education in the digital age emphasizes interconnected, open universities collaborating closely with each other and society by 2030 (Rampelt *et al.*, 2019, p. 5). Priorities in legal education must evolve accordingly, increasing focus on IT courses and interdisciplinary programs that equip students with essential technological competencies (Volini, 2020, pp. 165–166).

The modernization of European legal education involves interdisciplinary collaboration between academic subjects and innovative teaching methods. While preserving valuable traditional pedagogical approaches remains important, there is a simultaneous need for critical reassessment and updating of existing educational models to incorporate emerging subject areas (Gstrein and Fröhlich, 2023, p. 9).

Both British and French university systems demonstrate that legal education extends beyond mere professional training for lawyers. These systems provide a more comprehensive education that incorporates history, philosophy, economics and languages alongside legal studies (Nollent, 2002, pp. 277–280). The contrasting approaches—with French students typically focusing on singular aspects of law governed by specific rules, while British law students adopt a more expansive, utilitarian approach emphasizing skill

development rather than rule memorization—offer valuable perspectives for educational development (Nollent, 2002, pp. 280–281).

When implementing technology in learning, it is essential to properly present diverse materials in the digital educational space. Effective integration of technology in legal education requires diverse, systematized digital materials curated to individual learning needs, including academic texts, presentations and videos (Moskalenko *et al.*, 2019, p. 7). The modern legal professional must develop additional digital competencies to effectively engage with artificial intelligence systems and make informed decisions related to automated legal processes, which requires an evolving skillset adapted to contemporary technological realities (Chochia and Joamets, 2020, pp. 388–389). Access to the latest legal data, information and knowledge plays a significant role in this process. This is confirmed by a decision of the Accreditation Council for one of the Georgian educational programs, which was recommended to students for finding simple and effective ways to access legal news ('Decision of the Accreditation Council No. 337409', 2023).

The role of technology in legal practice demands specific knowledge beyond basic office software, such as selective teaching of programming relevant to legal careers (Barczentewicz, 2021, p. 45). This evolution has advanced the interdisciplinary field of legal informatics, combining law and information science to analyze legal systems through an information-centric lens (Nozadze, 2010, pp. 2–4).

Graduates of courses in technology law should develop the capacity to critically evaluate emerging technologies within ethical, normative and political frameworks. They must be equipped to formulate and apply technology-based legal principles across diverse sectors including healthcare, privacy protection, cybercrime prevention and cybersecurity enforcement. Technology law has become critically important across business, public administration, healthcare, law enforcement and numerous other sectors in contemporary society (Smith, 2022, pp. 34–35). Also, the legal protection of personal data represents one of the most significant challenges in this technological era (Bichia, 2017b, p. 35).

The growing importance of technological competences in European legal education creates both opportunities and challenges for Georgia. Adaptation to European models requires development of skills through well-equipped classrooms and educator support. Technology is essential for meeting modern European requirements and labor market demands, making future

learning environments without ICT unrealistic. However, technology alone cannot automatically deliver the necessary changes (Punie, 2007, p. 196).

Despite the challenges, abandoning technological progress would be counterproductive. Technology should be viewed as fundamentally beneficial, requiring a balance between use and interpersonal engagement to maintain human relationships while minimizing drawbacks. Legal professionals face particular challenges with increasingly complex AI terminology—neural networks, natural language processing, big data analytics and machine learning—which many find conceptually difficult. AI cannot fully extend to legal activities due to requirements for information security, confidentiality and privacy protection (de Oliveira Fornasier, 2021, p. 25). While the internet remains the key source of communication in the 21st century, technological development also increases risks to private interests (Bichia, 2020, p. 49).

However, there is an opinion that ‘retrospective’ legal education should be abandoned for a ‘prospective/projective’ model. This approach prioritizes developing skills to study unprecedented, complex problems and devise innovative solutions through creative, interdisciplinary and collaborative work. This project-based focus should be integrated into doctoral and master’s programs (de Oliveira Fornasier, 2021, pp. 25–26). In the Nordic countries (Sweden, Norway and Denmark), legal professionals face competition from other disciplines, promoting interdisciplinary competencies. European funding competition forces legal research to compete with other fields (Schäferke *et al.*, 2018, p. 279).

These educational reforms align with European initiatives such as the Erasmus Center of Law and Digitalization (ECLD), which conducts interdisciplinary research on how digital technologies—artificial intelligence, big data and blockchain—transform legal systems and frameworks. Their projects focus on the legal, ethical and societal implications of digitalization, aiming to develop innovative solutions (Erasmus Centre of Law and Digitalization, 2025).

The incorporation of artificial intelligence into court decision-making represents a fundamental transformation in the legal field, inspiring significant questions about whether AI-based decisions can be truly unbiased and fair. AI technologies, especially those used in predictive analytics, have the potential to enhance both the efficiency and consistency of judicial outcomes (Gawali and Sony, 2020, p. 78). While AI boosts productivity and precision in legal work, concerns remain about prejudice, moral dilemmas

and loss of human expertise. Despite AI's superior data-processing capability, its opaque algorithms challenge transparency and accountability (Nowotko, 2021, p. 2225).

Using AI in justice offers benefits for accessibility and efficiency but poses ethical challenges regarding fairness and human rights. Furthermore, AI applications in justice enhance accessibility and efficiency but present significant ethical challenges, including potential biases that require stringent public oversight and social trust to mitigate discriminatory effects (Vargas-Murillo *et al.*, 2024, p. 442). Legal training should integrate hands-on AI experience, developing skills in AI-assisted research, predictive analytics and document automation, alongside a critical analysis of AI limitations and algorithmic biases that may perpetuate system inequities.

3.4 Internationalization

Georgia's integration into the European Union requires comprehensive internationalization of legal education that goes well beyond English-language instruction, including curriculum reforms, mobility programs, collaborative research and development of cross-cultural competency. These reforms address key challenges—particularly the shift from rote memorization to critical thinking—as demonstrated by the Baltic States' success in improving legal reasoning through targeted internationalization. This approach supports constitutional mandates on European integration (Article 78) by aligning Georgian legal education with European standards and developing a legal workforce capable of operating effectively within European frameworks and addressing human capital needs identified in the Commission reports.

Internationalization is crucial for a modern European legal education, involving comparative law perspectives, student/faculty mobility and preparation for global careers through exchange programs and international competitions. English has become the dominant language of scientific communication, with international research collaborations significantly improving scholarship quality (Teichler, 2005, p. 465).

Georgian law schools benefit from strong international partnerships, improving the quality of publications and research impact. While English proficiency supports global engagement, employers often place equal or greater value on comparative legal knowledge than on language proficiency. A comprehensive internationalization strategy addresses the structural and pedagogical challenges and serves as a driver of reform in legal education.

This approach advances the development of a distinctive Georgian legal education model that would conform to international standards and prepares graduates for both domestic and global legal practice.

The diversity of legal systems and educational standards across jurisdictions creates significant challenges for standardized AI integration in legal education and practice (Niebla Zatarain, 2018, pp. 158–159). Differences in technological infrastructure, educational policies and legal traditions complicate international harmonization (Mong and Thanh, 2024, p. 16). Future research should focus on adaptable AI tools and the curricula that respect local legal cultures while promoting global standards and interoperability (Mong and Thanh, 2024, p. 19). Continuous updating of curricula, including the incorporation of new technological modules and digital resources, is necessary to ensuring that legal education in Georgia meets both national and international standards (Gorgodze, 2024, p. 60).

Legal education is shifting from national to European, transnational and global approaches, which surpass national models in teaching methods and organization, attracting foreign students and preparing them for global citizenship (Smits, 2011, p. 63). For Georgia, aligning legal education with European standards is crucial: it not only harmonizes laws and enables lawyers to understand EU legislation but also helps incorporating its achievements into national law. This alignment encourages improving Georgian legislation through comparison with European standards. Additionally, internationalization strengthens collaboration with European law schools and enhances research and teaching quality.

4. Technology in legal practice

AI integration in legal education requires a systematic transformation in preparing future lawyers, as it demands both technological competency and uniquely human skills essential in an AI-enhanced profession. Students must gain foundational AI knowledge, including in machine learning, neural networks, natural language processing and predictive analytics, to communicate with AI experts and make informed decisions. Equally important is the cultivation of critical skills to assess AI limitations, biases and ethical issues, particularly the “black box” transparency problem. Practical training with AI tools—research, predictive analytics and document automation—is essential for responsible practice in an AI-enhanced environment.

Leiden Law School's research focus area 'Technology, law and justice' explores the complex relationship between emerging digital technologies (AI, robotics and legal tech) and their legal, ethical and societal impacts. The program emphasizes both the opportunities and risks that these technologies present, aiming to develop legal frameworks that maximize benefits such as productivity and innovation while addressing challenges related to inequality, security and democratic values (University of Leiden, no date).

The 2020–2021 digital pivot of the Oxford University demonstrates that crisis-driven innovation can fundamentally reshape institutional capabilities. The simultaneous viability of virtual legal education and the accelerated adoption of technology suggests that traditional barriers to educational transformation are often institutional inertia rather than a pedagogical necessity. Professor Adams-Prassl's AI research from this period indicates strategic institutional foresight—positioning legal scholarship to anticipate rather than react to technological disruption in legal practice and labor markets (University of Oxford, 2020–2021).

Three years later, this foresight materialized into systematic competitive advantages: crisis innovations became institutionalized through integrated law-technology curricula, digital clinics and interdisciplinary research, transforming temporary adaptations into permanent capabilities for digitalized legal practice (University of Oxford, 2024–2025).

The Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR), driven by advances in artificial intelligence, robotics and digital technologies, is fundamentally reshaping legal practice and education. Law schools in the United States must adapt their curricula to equip students with technological competencies and critical thinking skills necessary for this evolving landscape. Failure to do so risks producing graduates ill-prepared for the demands of modern legal work and may ultimately undermine the effectiveness of the legal system (Smith, 2023, p. 341).

In practice, Australian law schools prioritize hands-on learning through mock law firms where students engage with AI-powered contract analysis software. This experiential approach develops practical technological competencies essential for today's legal market, demonstrating institutional alignment between pedagogical methods and professional demands (Tang, 2019, pp. 11–13). Generative AI transforms Australian legal education by enhancing research and analytical capabilities. However, successful

integration demands institutional frameworks that address ethical concerns and academic integrity, particularly plagiarism and privacy risks (Prakash and Nair, 2024, pp. 61–64).

In the European Union, AI ethics guidelines are built on four pillars: respect for human autonomy, prevention of harm, fairness and explicability. These, in turn, inform seven key principles, including oversight, transparency and accountability, among others. These guidelines emphasize human-centric AI supporting fundamental rights such as dignity, freedom and equality. Though not legally binding, they are expected to shape future EU laws on AI (Hickman and Petrin, 2021, p. 22).

Technology is fundamentally transforming legal practice and legal education, creating new opportunities while revealing limitations. In legal education, intelligent educational platforms monitor student performance, identify difficulties and provide personalized recommendations (Bryant *et al.*, 2020, pp. 52–54). Developing legal writing and argumentation is crucial, with structured feedback improving student performance (Gorgodze, 2024, p. 52). Such technologies enable self-paced learning and targeted improvement.

The future of legal education depends on universities using AI to prepare students for the digital legal market (Prakash and Nair, 2024, pp. 66–67). This integration creates new pathways for developing essential legal skills while maintaining academic integrity and ethical standards.

Similarly, in legal practice, McGinnis and Pearce (2014, pp. 3065–3070) show that technological innovation commodifies legal services, providing consumers greater choice and accessibility. Document review and routine legal tasks can indeed be computerized and automated (Remus and Levy, 2017, p. 532). However, significant limitations emerge when examining more complex professional functions.

Automation faces key constraints: AI cannot replace specialized lawyers who require emotional client connections (McGinnis and Pearce, 2014, pp. 3060–3065), complex analysis and case-by-case evaluation remain human responsibilities, and lawyers must engage in flexible, unstructured communication that computers cannot perform (Remus and Levy, 2017, pp. 532–533). While automation enhances efficiency in routine tasks, it cannot substitute essential professional roles requiring human judgment, client interaction and advanced legal reasoning. Consequently, technology enables lawyers to focus on higher-value activities demanding expertise and nuanced human skills, which machines are unable to replicate (Remus and Levy, 2017, pp. 548–549).

The rapid evolution of AI requires flexible legal curricula that are regularly updated to reflect technological progress and new regulatory frameworks, ensuring that students acquire current knowledge and adaptable strategies for professional growth. Law school curricula must include AI governance frameworks which cover data protection, liability, intellectual property and responsible development principles, with collaboration between computer scientists and ethicists to provide a comprehensive understanding of AI's technical, legal and social impacts.

Legal education should develop uniquely human skills—complex problem-solving, ethical judgment, creative thinking, emotional intelligence and interpersonal abilities—that complement AI automation and remain essential for client relations and advocacy. This transformation preserves essential human elements while enabling legal professionals to leverage AI as an efficiency tool that requires lifelong learning and adaptability skills for continuous professional growth in an AI-transformed legal environment.

In the European context, technology law is associated with the protection of ethical issues such as ensuring the protection of personal data and its use (Smith, 2022, p. 22), in compliance with the EU's *General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)*. This emphasis reflects the EU's commitment to digital rights and privacy, shaping contemporary approaches in legal education. This regulatory foundation provides the necessary framework for implementing AI technologies while maintaining fundamental rights and ethical standards.

European legal education is evolving alongside technological changes in the legal profession and focuses on three key tasks: (a) adoption and adaptation of digital technologies in teaching and learning; (b) studying and researching the impacts and societal effects of technological disruptions and (c) preparing future lawyers. The impact of using technologies on field professionals is already evident. Some argue that the future of legal education and the legal profession facing new technological challenges is bleak. Such pessimism, however, appears premature (Wang, 2019, p. 64).

Artificial intelligence, in particular, reduces certain costs in specific areas of legal work. The significance of work that requires fundamental intellectual ability and deep intuitive understanding, which currently represents only human capabilities, is increasing (Chochia and Joamets, 2020, p. 388). This reinforces the earlier analysis that AI complements rather than replaces human expertise in legal practice.

This observation is particularly significant for Georgia, where the adoption of the *Civil Code* represented an unprecedented reception of European law, fulfilling the aspiration of Georgian society to reconnect with Western values. This meant using laws from different European countries, as well as from the European Union and the Council of Europe, in drafting the *Civil Code*. Standardized laws, some made by agreement between major legal systems (such as rules for sales and intellectual property), were especially important. This method not only helped bring Georgian private law closer to Western law but also showed the main directions for its development (Chanturia, 2016, pp. 11–23).

Georgian lawyers need to incorporate European standards and AI technologies into their practical work. However, the legal education and most law programs in the country currently fail to provide students with the practical skills required in today's job market (*Legal market qualification in practice*, 2021, pp. 6–9). This is caused by conservatism and overreliance on traditional approaches, which have left the curricula ill-suited to modern trends (Gorgodze, 2024, pp. 9–10). This failure to adequately prepare legal professionals has tangible consequences. For example, as mentioned above, according to 'Decision No. 154/19' of the Ethics Commission of the Georgian Bar Association, a lawyer faced disciplinary action for failing to inform a client about their area of specialization and providing legal services outside their expertise. This case demonstrates the importance of transparency and specialization in legal practice, as well as the ethical obligation to ensure that clients receive competent and qualified legal assistance.

Building upon alignment with European legal education, Georgia's National Curriculum is developing digital competencies that directly support legal education requirements. Students acquire information using searching, processing and analysis that form the foundation of legal database research, while school-level database fundamentals and logical operations connect directly to legal search systems. Critical thinking and creative skills developed through the curriculum are essential for legal problem-solving and argument formulation. This creates a coherent pathway from pre-university preparation to specialized legal training, ensuring that students enter legal education with necessary digital literacy for modern practice.

Legal technology, in this context, involves digitizing legal services in both public and private sectors (Gabisonia, 2023, p. 30). In legal education, technology serves the specific purpose of developing professional skills through legal information systems (*Legislative Herald of Georgia*, no date) as

part of legal research methodology. Legal clinics utilize automated document generation systems to develop practical skills. Teaching technology in law programs should include effective use of Georgia's legal search system *Legislative Herald*, automated legal document preparation tools and legal expertise programs that directly relate to labor market demands. This approach bridges theoretical knowledge and practical application, ensuring that law school graduates possess both conceptual understanding and operational competency. Only through holistic and context-sensitive reform can Georgian law schools prepare graduates who are both theoretically grounded and practically skilled.

According to the Standards for Accreditation of Higher Education Programs, developing students' practical skills is mandatory. For this purpose, universities sign contracts and memorandums with practice sites and employers, which specify student numbers, practice objectives, outcomes and duration ('Regulation of the Ministry of Education and Science No. 65/N'). Clinical education provides students with experience in working on real cases, but effective operations require adequate material-technological and financial resources (Gorgodze, 2024, pp. 31–32).

The Netherlands' experience in legal tech is particularly noteworthy, especially in contract automation. Contract automation benefits both consumers and small-to-medium enterprises in delivery as well as the process of drafting contracts (Corrales *et al.*, 2019, p. 12). This international perspective demonstrates how Georgian legal education can learn from successful implementations while adapting to local legal system requirements.

Digital tools now enable rapid resolution of complex legal issues, allowing lawyers to produce work in seconds rather than weeks. Along with speed, quality control is also carried out, and with a well-functioning program, human errors are prevented (Khubua and Sirdadze, 2022, p. 1). This allows for multiple uses of once-created products, saving time, human and financial resources.

E-governance represents a distinct discussion topic. By applying information and communication technologies to public administration systems, e-governance significantly enhances administrative efficiency, reduces transaction costs and simplifies citizen-government relationships, making them faster, more flexible and efficient (Kandelaki, 2019, p. 16).

These shifts inevitably elicit discussion about the need to modify the traditional business model of law firms. Certain aspects of legal services

currently performed by lawyers do not actually require higher legal education and can be automated. Legal tech resources can be used to perform these types of work, which will significantly reduce costs. The use of legal technologies will inherently lead to a modification of relationships between lawyers and clients (Kerikmäe *et al.*, 2018, p. 91). This business model evolution aligns with how AI frees lawyers from routine tasks to focus on higher-value activities where human expertise and professional judgment are needed.

Electronic communication involves exchanging digital data through electronic, magnetic, optical or similar means (UNCITRAL, 2007, p. 3). While electronic contracts are concluded between physically absent parties, potentially disadvantaging consumers who are unable to fully evaluate products or services, they have become widespread due to their numerous benefits (Pachuashvili, 2019, p. 22). Integration of legal technology has introduced qualified electronic signatures, defined as electronic data attached to or logically associated with electronic documents for signing purposes (Gabisonia, 2023, p. 37). Electronic consumer agreements typically present standard contractual terms requiring consent through simple actions like clicking “accept” or “yes” (Gabisonia, 2020, p. 27). This technological framework demonstrates how digital tools streamline contract formation while creating new legal considerations around consumer protection and authentication.

While some predict that technology may end lawyers’ activities (Susskind, 2008, p. 21), this threat is overstated. Law needs to be grounded in human values, empathy and logical reasoning that machines cannot replace, making declarations about the obsolescence of legal practice premature. As a flexible system that reflects modern requirements, law adapts to globalization and technological challenges, ensuring that legal education and professions maintain a bright future despite constant evolution (Wang, 2019, p. 75).

Effective legal education therefore requires continuous curriculum updates to meet modern professional demands and ensure high student qualifications. Developing practical skills—computer proficiency, public speaking and intellectual abilities—is essential for preparing competitive lawyers (‘Decision of the Accreditation Council No. 843987’, 2022b). These competencies are fundamental to the legal profession. Revising the prerequisites became necessary because students lacked proficiency in office programs, public speaking and intellectual areas. This required reviewing of mandatory literature and admission criteria to ensure high-quality legal education meeting modern demands.

Evidence from accreditation reports supports this direction. An educational program revealed that aligning the program's learning outcomes with the demands of the modern labor market facilitates the development of the graduates' knowledge and skills to meet modern requirements and therefore strengthens their employment prospects ('Decision of the Accreditation Council No. 1415428', 2021c). The accreditation process for law programs in Georgia increasingly emphasizes the need for digital competence, reflecting the growing importance of technology in legal education and practice (Gorgodze, 2024, p. 62).

5. Conclusion

This research critically examined the adaptation of European legal education models in Georgia, focusing on technology integration, practical skills development and institutional readiness. The study demonstrates that European law faculties have successfully embedded digital tools, AI-based legal research platforms and practical simulations (such as moot courts and clinical programs) into their curricula, enhancing students' analytical, research and practical skills to directly address the modern demands of the legal labor market.

In stark contrast, Georgian law schools still face significant deficiencies in adopting such technologies and developing practical, market-oriented competencies. The research reveals a significant implementation gap in efforts to integrate AI in Georgian legal education. While select institutions (Tbilisi State University and the Business and Technology University) have introduced AI-focused courses, systematic adoption across the Georgian higher education system remains incomplete.

The study identified a critical skills mismatch: despite adequate numbers of legal professionals in Georgia, few possess the technical competency to effectively utilize AI tools for enhanced efficiency and cost reduction. This gap represents the primary barrier to achieving compliance with the European standard in AI-integrated legal education. The absence of coordinated approaches between school-level technology education and university curricula creates inconsistent digital preparedness among law students and impedes effective integration of advanced legal technologies at higher education levels.

Despite formal alignment with European standards, Georgian law faculties face several key barriers to effective integration of technology and artificial intelligence. These barriers include limited faculty expertise in digital legal tools, insufficient access to structured practical experiences and the absence of uniform digital competency standards for students. Additionally, a lack of interdisciplinary approaches essential for AI literacy restricts students' ability to collaborate effectively with technology specialists. Disciplinary cases before the Georgian Bar Association frequently reveal graduates' insufficient practical competencies necessary for effective legal representation. These recurring proceedings highlight the urgent need to enhance practical training within legal education.

Additionally, the absence of standardized digital competency requirements leads to inconsistent graduate preparation, undermining technological readiness. Without systematic faculty development in legal technology, Georgian institutions cannot prepare educators to deliver AI-enhanced legal education that would meet contemporary standards.

Chapter 3.2 evaluated the technological and practical readiness of Georgian legal education, identifying significant gaps in practical training and digital competencies, largely due to insufficient structured internships and limited technological infrastructure. To address these challenges, the study recommends:

- (a) Establishing mandatory digital skills modules within the core law curriculum;
- (b) Expanding faculty development programs focused on legal technology and
- (c) Piloting structured internships in partnership with local legal institutions.

These steps are informed by both successful European practices and the unique institutional constraints observed in Georgia.

The research demonstrates that *GDPR* principles and digital rights protection frameworks provide the most viable pathway for the responsible AI implementation in Georgian legal education. This framework offers concrete guidelines for curriculum development rather than abstract integration concepts. As a result, future legal professionals should efficiently utilize technology in practice as a supportive tool capable of conducting analytical, creative or research processes within optimal timeframes while maintaining strong ethical frameworks based on human-centric principles.

To achieve this vision, the study concludes that Georgia must systematically integrate AI and digital legal tools into curricula, invest in technological infrastructure and training, expand practical learning opportunities and encourage international collaboration. By implementing these targeted reforms, Georgian legal education can bridge the current gap and equip future lawyers with the skills required for effective practice in both national and European contexts.

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