

**This is a letter from a colleague from Georgia to the Civil Movement for Support of Science and Education in Bulgaria. The Bulgarian Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Simeon Djankov participated in 1997 in a World Bank enterprise restructuring project in Georgia. Since 2004 Simeon Djankov has been financial adviser of the Georgian government. The same person is the mastermind behind the ongoing government "reform" of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences.**

Dear Colleagues,

Here you will find some comments on the sad story, about what happened to our Academy of Sciences. Hope this experience will be helpful to you.

Our Academy of Science was perhaps the last big system with big estate properties, particularly buildings of Institutes, which was out of States control. According to the Law about Academy of Sciences, it is forbidden to privatize the property of Academy.

In 2005 the newly founded Ministry of Science and Education (before we had Ministry of Education, and the role of Ministry of Sciences was played by Academy) found a decision: instead of changing the Law about Academy (this will not look very correct) they decided to disintegrate the academy. The first step was change of funding of Academy. Before that Academy was funded directly from the State Budget. In 2006 it was included in the budget of Ministry.

The Academy was the entity of Research Institutions and the entity of, approx. 100 Academy members. The Ministry decided to remove all Institutes from Academy. Now they are under direct jurisdiction of Ministry, and the Academy remains only as the entity of 100 academy members. The function of this new, reduced Academy is to be a scientific advisor of Government, and to run National Evaluation, namely, all universities and scientific institutions are sending annual reports to Academy for scientific evaluation. Nothing more, the further decisions about funding of scientific programs are made by ministerial bodies. Pay attention, the scientific research is no more a function of Academy.

The formal ground for such disintegration was the following: each Institute was so called Legal Entity (Justice Person) under the jurisdiction of Academy, which, in its turn, was a Legal Entity too. But according to new laws one legal entity can not be a part of another one (but as some lawyers said it was very easy to fix this contradiction).

So, it was 2006, when the institutes left Academy and became so called Legal Entity under the jurisdiction of Ministry. Consequently, the Law about Academy do not protect the buildings of Institutes anymore. All the buildings become a State property

under the control of Ministry of Economics. In the 16.03.2006 the Governmental Act about the founding of new research institutions out of Academy it was mentioned that the Ministry of Economics must in 6 months clarify the situation about the buildings of Institutes, but it was not done. So the Institutes continued to stay in their buildings but by unclear legal status concerning property.

On 14.12.2006 the Parliament approved the following changes to the Law about the Sciences: (i) a research institute can be a structural unit of an University (this was the novelty, before the universities could not have research institution as structural subunits), (ii) by a decision of Government an Institute can be established as private institution, both these statements assumed to begin to function from 2011.

And now it is clear that this was the preparation to what happens now.

By the new Act of Government (10.09.2010) all Research Institutes are distributed to various universities. Some of them already lost their buildings, some of them not yet.

Well, the building is just one part of problem. But what will be the function of an Institute in University, what about funding, will they keep their staff, does, at last, an university need so many new research institutions? All this is unclear.

So, seems this was the general plan: first remove Institutes from Academy, then keep them for some time (5 years in our case), and then distribute them to various universities. How long, and in which status, will the universities keep them is unclear, this step of the program just starts. But if the closing or reorganization of an Institute was possible before only by a decision of Government, now a decision of Rector is enough.

**The author of the letter is a highly respected Georgian scientist who prefers his name and institution not to be disclosed.**