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MIGRATION AND RETURN IN GEORGIA:
Trends, Assessments, and Potential

A report submitted to the Danish Refugee Council by

Caucasus Research Resource Centres -- Georgia

REPORT OVERVIEW

External migration from Georgia since its independence in 1991 has significantly influenced the shape and dynamics of modern Georgia. Almost everyone in Georgia knows at least someone who has migrated. Entire families are supported by remittances sent home and entire communities have been altered by these movements. Georgia's supply of labour, particularly highly-skilled labour, has also been significantly affected.

In recent years, voluntary migration and its impacts have been attracting increased interest. Concurrently, more Georgians have been shifting their destination to European countries instead of Russia and other former Soviet states. Last year's tensions in Russia, however, brought into strong relief the vital role that labour migration plays in supporting the livelihood of Georgian citizens.

The Danish Refugee Council commissioned this report from the Caucasus Research Resource Centre-Georgia as part of the first phase of its project, "Toward Durable Re-integration Mechanisms in Georgia." The project, implemented in partnership with the Georgian Ministry of Refugees and Accommodation, works toward the development of a unified, national return and reintegration process for rejected asylum seekers, returning migrants and other returnees. This 22-month project is funded by the European Commission's Aeneas programme.

This report seeks to provide context and baseline analysis of the current return population and programmatic efforts in the field. It utilizes a variety of research projects, including two different sets of focus groups, to provide as comprehensive a snapshot as possible of current migration trends. In addition, it is designed to be used for the development of a return and reintegration programme, and therefore attempts to shape the information in such a manner.

The second chapter of the report reviews the overall methodology and purpose. The third chapter reviews existing literature to provide an overview of migration trends in Georgia since its independence, with particular focus on the post-1995 period. In addition, it reviews original research on highly-skilled returnees in order to offer insights into their potential.

The fourth chapter reviews destination countries, and the fifth outlines current small scale return and reintegration efforts and provides the results and findings of the five returnee focus groups conducted in August and September 2007 across the country. It is the first available qualitative research on the return process for both programme and non-programme participants.

Chapter six offers an assessment of public awareness and the results of focus group research conducted with the general public and university students. This chapter offers both insights into current public awareness and attitudes as well as insights into potential migration behaviours.

Finally, conclusions and recommendations are offered based on the array of information contained in this report.

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1 Executive Summary

Migration, both forced and voluntary, has shaped modern day Georgia. Best estimates are that Georgia has lost at least 20% of its 1989 population to migration, and now hosts an aging population with a high level of "brain drain" and low birth rates. In fact, Georgia experienced one of the highest rates of out migration in the world between 1995 and 2000, and was ranked ninth in the world in 2003.

Unemployment, insufficient income and harsh socio-economic conditions are key drivers of Georgia's labour flows. Since 1995, an increasing number of Georgian citizens have adopted economic (or labour) migration as a household survival strategy; the best available data estimate that 6-10% of households have at least one member who has migrated abroad for work, with some fluctuation regionally. Those who migrate tend to be highly educated, married and of working age. Women have increasingly joined men in the migration flows, with each gender favouring different countries. In this century Europe, rather than Russia, has become an increasingly popular destination for labour migrants, in part due to higher remuneration and lifestyle preference.

In addition to labour migration, Georgia is experiencing anecdotally high rates of both highly-skilled and educational migration. While many of the elites and most skilled fled after the collapse, the limited skilled job market in Georgia has prompted many of the young to leave for jobs or career advancement. Others who obtain education abroad often end up travelling abroad again in search of work. Germany and the United Kingdom are popular destinations for educational migrants.

These migration patterns have significantly impacted Georgia demographically and economically. Demographers concur that Georgia is in a demographic crunch, with an aging population and too few working age citizens. This situation is exacerbated by both the loss of highly-skilled Georgians and their underutilization during migration. Remittances, however, have been vital to the economic livelihood of many Georgians, with remittances officially constituting 6.5% of GDP in 2005. In recent years, the diaspora abroad has also become increasingly engaged.

As long as the economic situation remains difficult, sustainable return remains a challenge.
The improved economic outlook for Georgia has neither mitigated the outflows of migrants nor promoted the sustainable return of any class of migrants. Labour migrants who return have a high potential for re-migration due to the lack of viable employment. Few find improved employment or incomes upon return, according to the data that has been collected. Highly-skilled returnees with work experience tend to have returned for particular opportunities offered to them. There is, as of now, no evidence of a surge of attractive positions becoming available to such highly-skilled returnees.

Returnees and the general public alike feel that migration is not a choice but a necessity. As such, both feel that the government has a responsibility both to improve the economic environment which spurs migration and, at the same time, to protect those who work abroad. In general, however, people are sceptical both of the viability of sustainable return and the government's ability to implement programmes in support of it.

2 Purpose of Study and Methodology

This report seeks to provide a current and comprehensive overview of the migration trends of Georgian citizens since 1995 as well as two sets of original focus group research: one to assess the needs and experiences of returned migrants, and the other to assess the general public's current attitudes about migrants and in order to understand those attitudes. The authors hope to offer a comprehensive collection of all relevant information and data related to migration processes in Georgia.

This report does not cover populations of refugees or internally displaced persons. An entire community has worked tirelessly for more than a decade with these vulnerable and complicated communities and has generated a wealth of meaningful information which has informed a range of programmes. Rather, this report seeks to provide a comprehensive study of the growing but understudied and under-supported community of labour and highly-skilled migrants in Georgia. We hope that this report not only assists in the development of policies and programmes for the broader population of migrants, but also provides a meaningful baseline for future evaluations.

2.1 Overall Methodology

The report consists of two primary components: 1) an overview of trends, and 2) a baseline assessment of return and reintegration programmes and the environment in which they operate. The many facets of the report required multiple data gathering strategies which were utilized in a short time frame. Below the methodologies for each part are detailed.

A) Migration Trends between Georgia and the EU:

Migration research can draw on some relevant literature. Below outlines the sources for the different aspects of the report.

- To develop the overall picture of Georgian migration trends:

    1. An exhaustive literature review of relevant Georgian, English, and Russian language sources about or related to Georgian migration since 1995.

    2. Stakeholder and expert interviews conducted by the lead researcher and research team from August to October 2007 which supplemented research conducted by the lead researchers in 2005 and 2006. Unfortunately, in spite of several attempts, the team was unable to obtain any information from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

- To develop profiles of Georgians and EU countries:

    1. A questionnaire was sent to all foreign missions in Georgia as of August 2007.

    2. Internet research was conducted to collect publicly available data on major destination countries in the EU, as well as Russia.

    3. Previous data was gathered by the lead researcher.

B) Baseline assessment of current return and reintegration efforts and of returnee profile and needs

- To assess current return and reintegration programmes and the experience of returnees in general:

    1. Interviews with return programme officials were conducted from July to October 2007 to gather information about each programme and obtain staff assessments.

    2. Focus groups with returnees were conducted in Tbilisi, Kutaisi, Batumi and Akhalkalaki in August and September 2007. Focus groups were chosen in lieu of surveys due to the nascent nature of return and reintegration programmes in Georgia, the difficulty in identifying returnees, and time constraints.

    3. For insight into highly-skilled professional returnees, a preliminary analysis consisting of 18 in-depth interviews conducted by the lead researcher (together with Aaron Erlich) in June-September 2006 was also incorporated.

- To assess public awareness and attitudes towards migration:

    1. A review of existing studies, particularly by trafficking organizations, was conducted.

    2. Assessments of experts and organizations who work in the region were solicited.

    3. A set of focus groups was conducted with a representative sample of the general public in Tbilisi, Kutaisi, Batumi and Akhalkalaki.

Note on focus group design:

To improve the comparability and complementary level of the data collected both during the focus group sessions and through the demographic surveys, particular effort was made to incorporate questions and response options from previous studies or to complement them. Studies examined included the World Bank survey conducted in 2005, CRRC's Data Initiative, and IOM's *Return and Reintegration in the South Caucasu*s. For more details about the focus groups, see Chapters 5 and 6.

2.2 Data concerns

To provide an accurate assessment, this study assessed data very cautiously. The lack of reliable statistics (one of the reasons for setting up CRRC's Data Initiative) and limited research remain a problem.

Statistics, particularly those before January 2004, are generally viewed with scepticism. In addition to corruption, demographers cite the collapse of the citizen registration system, poorly maintained birth and death records, and questionable methodologies.[1]

The shift from a forced and permanent migration pattern to more economically driven and temporary types of migration presents further challenges. At the moment, data collected at the border by the Ministry of Internal Affairs only assesses the gross numbers of entries and exits; there is no way to track individual comings and goings. Most countries, particularly European Union countries, do not require exit visas from a migrant's country of residence.

Moreover, only a handful of studies on migration and related issues have been conducted, on a limited scale. The most referenced study on labour migration in Georgia, IOM's 2003 *Labour Migration from Georgia,* surveyed the family members of 600 households with at least one

[1] See Badurashvili et al 2001, Svanidze and Kokoev 2002 and Tsuladze 2006.

member working abroad. Some data has been collected as part of annual household surveys both by the Georgian Department of Statistics (since 2003) and CRRC, as well as periodic surveys. All these sources, however, rely on reporting by relatives of the migrants rather than the migrants themselves. This approach is the most pragmatic and offers a reliable picture of the impact of the emigrants' migration on the family, but yield less reliable data about the realities for migrants while abroad, including earnings, type of employment, etc.

Studies of returnees offer a more accurate picture of the realities of migrant's life abroad and, of particular importance for this study, first-hand accounts of return and reintegration experiences. These studies are examined in Chapter 5. Unfortunately, the objective of all but one of these studies was to assess the overall migration process; no recent study has been conducted to expressly assess the needs of returnees or the effectiveness of current programmes. IOM's 2002 study of returnees in the three South Caucasus countries is the only effort to date to systematically assess programme design and impact.

Impressions, rather than data, inform the migration picture.

3 Migration Trends in Georgia, 1995 – 2007

3.1 Overview

That migration, particularly driven by economic conditions, is a defining feature of contemporary Georgia is widely understood, but little studied. Georgia today has fewer people, a smaller and less educated workforce, higher levels of ethnic concentration, and more poverty than in 1989. The high level of out migration of skilled workers and the ongoing interest of youth in educational and career opportunities abroad has contributed to a tightening of the labour market.

Migrants and members of the diaspora seem to have played a vital role in the economic development of Georgia. Over the past decade, remittances have played a key and increasingly large role as a poverty alleviation strategy for many household, particularly ethnic minorities. Since the rise of the Saakashvili administration, it is believed that migrants and members of the diaspora are also investing and promoting investment and trade in Georgia from their destination countries.

This chapter of the report will explore what is known about the story of Georgia's modern migration patterns and diaspora community from published scholarship, reports and expert interviews. After establishing the context and outlining the three waves of migration for modern Georgia, the chapter examines current patterns for labour migrants, as well as highly-skilled and student migrants.

The basics

Most experts agree that by 2003, around 20% (1.1 million) of Georgia's 1989 population of 5.4 million – primarily of working age – had migrated abroad.[2] Individual estimates vary between 300,000 and 1.5 million.

Migration (forced and voluntary) and war account for the bulk of the population loss experienced since 1989. While declining birth rates are a factor, by the late 1990s Georgia's natural population changes were converging to zero and have remained there since.[3] As a result, external migration accounts for the bulk of population shifts.

Historic Georgian diaspora reside in Iran, Turkey, Russia and France. The total number is difficult to ascertain, since many Georgians have assimilated in the host county. "Being Georgian" for many of these people is not a salient part of their identity. The most extreme claims suggesting that over eight million ethnic Georgians live outside Georgia are therefore not useful for this report. Below is a list of countries were Georgian migrants and/or diaspora currently reside.

[2] According to official Georgian statistics, the net migration from Georgia was 300,000.
[3] See for example Tsuladze et al 2004 for details.

Table 1: Countries with Georgian migrant and/or diaspora presence

*Note: the countries in each region with the most significant Georgian population are in **bold***

North America	EU-25	Eastern Europe and Former Soviet Union	Middle East
Canada	**Austria**	Azerbaijan	**Israel** (mostly Jews)
United States	**Belgium**	Kazakhstan	Saudi Arabia
	Bulgaria	**Russian Federation**	United Arab Emirates
	Czech Republic	**Turkey**	
	Denmark	Ukraine	
	Estonia		
	France		
	Germany		
	Greece		
	Ireland		
	Italy		
	Latvia		
	Lithuania		
	Poland		
	Portugal		
	Spain		
	Sweden		
	Switzerland		
	The Netherlands		
	United Kingdom		

3.2 Background : Georgia's political and economic arch

Georgia, reputed to be the wealthiest republic in the Soviet Union due to its tourism industry and bountiful agriculture, experienced a precipitous decline in its early years of independence. Per capita GDP fell from 4,646 USD in 1990 to 507 USD in 2000. As a newly independent, multi-ethnic state, it was almost immediately gripped by two civil wars with the separatist regions of South Ossetia (1991-1992) and Abkhazia (1992-1994). In the early 1990s, Georgia was plagued by chaos and general social and economic collapse. A period of lawlessness and hyperinflation followed the cessation of the civil wars. In 1995, the installation of a constitutional government under Eduard Shevardnadze finally began to bring some stability to the country. The economy's rapid growth (11.4% GDP growth in 1996, 10.6% in 1997), however, soon slowed and unemployment continued to climb, as Georgia was jolted by the 1998 Russian rouble crisis, then plagued by drought and pervasive corruption. Despite Georgia's problems with corruption and unemployment, GDP grew at an average annual rate of 6.8% between 2001 and 2004.[4]

The 2003 Rose Revolution marked a turning point in Georgia's economic and political development. The young, reform minded, Western-oriented government of Mikheil Saakashvili has aggressively pursued expansive market oriented reforms and an anti-corruption campaign which have improved both macroeconomic stability and the perception of an improved business environment. In 2006, Georgia was named the world's most reformed economy by the World Bank's *Doing Business* survey. GDP grew 5.9% in 2004, 9.3% in 2005 and 9.4% in 2006.

However, the reality for Georgians on the ground has not been as rosy. The official unemployment rate has continued to rise, reaching a decade high from 11.5% in 2003 to 13.8% in 2005, and was on pace to be stable in 2006.[5] The details paint a starker picture: about 75% of the unemployed have not had a job in at least a year, and the 20-30 year old age group has the highest overall unemployment rate, at 28.8% (the rates are lowest for the 46-65 age group). In addition, inflation recently has crept up to 8.8%, and new job creation has remained slow.

[4] World Bank 2005b

[5] National Bank of Georgia, *Annual Report 2006*.

Agriculture remains the mainstay of the Georgian economy, even as its share of GDP has fallen from 30% of GDP in 1990 to 14.8% in 2005. Trade and industry continue to be important, but financial intermediation, the booming construction and transportation industries and communications have been driving much of the growth; jobs in these sectors tend to be in urban areas. There are chinks in the armour, however. Russia, Georgia's largest trading partner, initiated an embargo on two of Georgia's largest exports (wine and mineral water) in the spring of 2006, which Georgia weathered surprisingly well.

When the Saakashvili administration came to power, 52% of Georgia's population lived below the poverty line, according to UNDP. According to the government, this number dropped to 39.4% in 2005. The World Bank noted that poverty in Georgia deepened in the final years of the Shevardnadze administration, estimating that extreme poverty rose from 14% in 1998 to 17% in 2003. Causes included rising inequality (Gini coefficient of 0.35 per capita and 0.48 total for 2003) and expanding rural poverty, particularly as subsistence farming became less viable.[6] It is unclear what impact the current growth has had on the depth of poverty.

3.3 Characteristics of migration waves

Throughout the economic stagnation and struggle, migrating abroad has been a survival strategy adopted by an increasing number of Georgian citizens.

Georgia's external migration can be viewed as occurring in three waves:

- **Collapse and conflict (1990 and 1995**): Georgia experienced significant outflows, estimated to be around 650,000 persons (12% of the 1989 population), in the form of refugees and non-Georgians returning home; this was accompanied by small scale economic migration.

- **Economic struggle (1996 to 2004**) : A substantial, but more moderate, flow of Georgian citizens (both ethnic and non-ethnic Georgians), primarily as labour and educational migrants, left in increasing numbers to Western Europe and North America.

- **Hope and economic rebuilding? (2004-?):** Georgia may be entering a third wave of more *bidirectional* migration, as some return has occurred in the post-Rose Revolution era, particularly of skilled migrants. *This is however, a fragile, nascent trend* – reliant on continued economic recovery – and there is little reliable data to develop the claim.

While the report's focus is on the latter two periods, a brief overview of the first wave is provided for context below.

3.3.1 Collapse and conflict: 1989-1995

Key characteristics:

- **Significant outflows of non-ethnic Georgians, resulting from both the dissolution of the USSR and ensuing conflicts and chaos.**

- **Massive movements of refugee and internally displaced persons due to the two armed conflicts.**

- **Flight of Georgian elites to Russia and other points, largely undocumented.**

- **Small scale, economically motivated outflows of ethnic Georgians, primarily to Russia and Turkey. Usually men of working age from Tbilisi.**

[6] World Bank 2005a

Prior to 1995, the breakup of the Soviet Union and conflict triggered substantial population outflows from Georgia. The substantial internal and external migration of Georgia's early independence period influenced subsequent migration patterns and has significantly contributed to the current diaspora abroad.

As in many post-Soviet countries after the dissolution of the USSR, much of the early external migration (1990-1994) was driven by the exodus of non-Georgians – ethnic minorities' share of the population shrank from 29.9% in 1989 to 16.2% in 2002.[7] By 2002, Greeks, Ukrainians and Jews had all but disappeared, while 80% of ethnic Russians and more than half of the substantial ethnic Armenian population had departed (see). A significant flight of members of non-titular ethnic groups was common for most of the newly independent states.[8]

Table 2: Change in ethnic composition of Georgia

	1989 census		2002 census[1]		Change	
	actual ('000)	%	actual ('000)	%	% change	as % of population
Georgians	3,787	*70.1*	3,661	*83.7*	*-3.3*	*13.6*
Azeris	308	5.7	285	*6.5*	*-7.5*	*0.8*
Armenians	438	*9.1*	249	*5.7*	*-43.2*	*-3.4*
Russians	341	*6.3*	68	*1.5*	*-80.1*	*-4.8*
Ossetians	164	*3*	38	*0.9*	*-76.8*	*-2.1*
Kurds	33	*0.6*	21	*0.5*	*-36.4*	*-0.1*
Greeks	100	*1.9*	15	*0.3*	*-85.0*	*-1.6*
Chechens and Kists[2]	...	...	8	*0.2*	*NA*	*NA*
Ukrainians	52	*1*	7	*0.2*	*-86.5*	*-0.8*
Jews	25	*0.5*	4	*0.1*	*-84.0*	*-0.4*
Abkhaz	96	*1.8*	4	*0.1*	*-95.8*	*-1.7*
Other	50	*0.9*	21	*0.5*	*-58.0*	*-0.4*
Total population	**5,401**	***100***	**4,372**	***100***	*-19.1*	

Source: Department of State Statistics, author's calculations

[1] The 2002 census does not include the territory of South Ossetia and most of Abkhazia (except the Kodori Gorge)

[2] Chechens traditionally living in Georgia.

Conflicts forced significant population shifts which continue to impact Georgia today. Georgia's civil wars with the separatist regions of South Ossetia (1991-1992) and Abkhazia (1992-1994) are currently estimated to have displaced almost 350,000 persons both internally and externally and further altered the ethnic composition of Georgia. The South Ossetia conflict prompted ethnic Ossetians to flee either to South Ossetia from Georgia (10,000 IDPs) or to the neighbouring republic of North Ossetia in the Russian Federation (40,000 refugees), while approximately 10,000 ethnic Georgians were displaced to other parts of Georgia. UNHCR estimated that the Abkhaz conflict displaced over 300,000 persons, primarily ethnic Georgians, the majority of whom (89%, according to UNHCR) remained in Georgia as IDPs. Much of these populations remain, as the conflicts continue unresolved.

Elite flight. Experts also suggest that the chaos Georgia endured in the early 1990s also spurred a small scale emigration of ethnic Georgians, particularly highly-skilled and/or elites, primarily to neighbouring Russia and Turkey, neither of which had visa regimes with Georgia at the time.[9] Limited numbers of skilled ethnic Georgian migrants and/or elites are believed to have gone to

[7] Despite the exclusion of Abkhazia and South Ossetia from the 2002 census, these numbers seem relatively accurate, according to Rowlands (2006). Rowlands compared 1989 and 2002 census data for only the territory currently under Georgian control and found a 10% shift, from 26.3% ethnic minorities in 1989 to 16.2% in 2002.

[8] Some contend that the escalating Georgian nationalism of Georgia's first president, Zviad Gamsakhurdia, provided additional motivation for ethnic non-Georgians to leave.

[9] See Chelidze 2006, Tukhanishvili 2006, IOM 2003

Western Europe (including Germany and the United Kingdom) and the United States; Israel was a popular destination for Georgia's Jewish population. Those who left for economic reasons are believed to have primarily been from urban areas.

Male dominated. During this stage, significantly more men than women migrated voluntarily. Many of the men who migrated to Russia eventually obtained Russian citizenship, brought their families over and are now relatively successful.[10]

Neighbouring countries as destination. Russia was the primary recipient of both non-ethnic Georgians and ethnic Georgians. The ease of entry due to the lack of a visa regime as well as pre-existing linkages and language knowledge made Russia an attractive place to go. Turkey is also believed to have been an important destination.

Implications of the first wave

Altered ethnic composition of Georgia. These pronounced internal and external migration trends contributed to increased ethnic clustering in Georgia[11]. The largest remaining minorities – the Armenians and Azeris – have become more concentrated in regions bordering countries where their ethnicity is the titular majority: over 95% of the Azeris in Georgia live in the Kvemo Kartli region; Armenians now constitute over 95% of the population in the Javakheti portion of Samskhe-Javakheti region, although they are slightly more dispersed throughout the country.[12] These ethnically concentrated areas are somewhat isolated and are a continued source of concern and instability.

Loss of elites and the highly-skilled. According to most experts, many of the country's elites either fled or chose to leave the country for Russia and Western Europe during this period. Russia hosted the most significant population, due in part to pre-existing networks, portability of professional and educational qualifications and familiarity. The United States was also a destination. Both experts and Georgians contacted about this issue are of the opinion that many of the country's leading scientists, artists and intellectuals departed in this period. No research exists to support this assertion.

3.3.2 Economic Struggle: 1995-2003

Key characteristics

- **Migration became primarily economically-driven and temporary, and continued at a brisk pace. Educational migration, particularly to Western countries, gained in popularity among the young.**
- **All regions of Georgia participated in external migration.**
- **Women became an increasing share of migrants, particularly from urban areas where their emigration rate seemed to equal that of men.**
- **Ethnic minorities tended to use circular migration as a primary household economic strategy.**
- **Europe and North America became increasingly popular destinations (especially for those from urban areas), although Russia remained the primary destination country.**

[10] Author's conversation with Natia Chelidze, 2006.
[11] Gachechiladze 1997
[12] See for example CHF 2005 and Wheatley 2005

Despite a significant drop in population outflows, the period's outflow rate was still significant. Up to 10% of Georgian households have at least one emigrant, although this rate varies regionally within Georgia.[13]

Georgia's migration *rate* in this period was one of the highest in the world. UNDP estimates ranked Georgia's official net migration rate between 1995-2000 (5.6 per 1,000) as the 16th highest rate worldwide for the period, and fourth among former Soviet states, behind only Kazakhstan (12.2), Tajikistan (10.3) and Estonia (8.0), and more than twice the rate of Armenia (2.5). In 2003, Georgia had the ninth highest rate of migration worldwide (almost 200 per 1,000), just behind El Salvador and ahead of Moldova.[14]

Socio-economic factors have been the primary driver of external migration since 1995.[15] High levels of unemployment, insufficient wages and a sputtering economy strangled by rampant corruption pressed people to look outwards. Over 78% of emigrants interviewed for the 2002 census had migrated in order to improve their family's economic situation. A common refrain from migrants abroad is, "if I could support my family in Georgia, I would not have left."

This labour migration seems to have intensified during the second Shevardnadze administration (1999-2004). According to Irina Badurashvili's 2003 study of 960 returned migrants, 47.3% of respondents left between 1999-2002, compared to 28.8% for the 1995-1998 period and 13.9% for 1991 to 1994. [16] Available population data, the increasing flow and share of remittances as a percent of GDP and expert opinions all support these statistics. Unfortunately, the few migration studies conducted during this time period only assessed the rate and frequency of remittances; they do not offer sufficient information to examine whether more households were receiving remittances or whether remittances became a more important survival tool for households.[17]

Youth "study abroad" and structured youth employment programmes also emerged as the political situation stabilized. Elites were able to fund education abroad for their children in Russia and Europe, as well as in the US. Exchange programmes offered an avenue for those with less means to go abroad. Popular destinations for study included the United Kingdom, Germany and the US, all of which have formal exchange programmes. With the educational system stagnating due to corruption, this was likely an attractive option to highly motivated students.

External migration became a nationwide strategy. As the economy continued to stagnate over this period, migration - both internal and external - became an increasingly popular strategy. Many experts presented the pattern thus: those from Tbilisi went abroad, whereas those from the regions would tend to migrate internally to urban areas (frequently to Tbilisi) and then might travel abroad. This pattern, however, seems to at least have shifted toward the end of this period, likely due to the development of networks and the depleting availability of jobs.

[13] See Dearshem and Khoperia 2004 and CHF 2005. A study of survey of migration processes based on border crossing data (sponsored by the EU TACIS and) conducted by the State Department of Statistics in 2002 assessed that rate at approximately 6%.
[14] Mansoor and Quillin 2007, p. 25.
[15] See for example IOM 2003, Chelidze 2006
[16] It should be noted that while Badurashvili's study is not fully representative, although based on a national sample, it is the only available study for this time period which attempts both to discern changes in migration behaviour over time and interviews *actual* returned migrants rather than family members of migrants. This data may simply reveal that distribution of her sample and/or that more recent migrants have a greater probability of returning; basic data were not available.
[17]In Dershem and Khoperia 2004, of the seven regions surveyed in 1996, 2002 and 2005, three regions experienced sharp jumps in remittances from abroad as a share of household cash income, while three experienced a pronounced drop and one remained unchanged.

Feminizing of migration. Women rapidly increased their participation in migration processes. Studies from 2001 estimated that women represented between one-third and 40% of the migrant population. In urban areas, women seemed to migrate at the same rate as men: women from Tbilisi represented 51% of the total number of migrants and women from Rustavi, 54%.[18] Alternately, in rural areas, females represented only one-third of the migrant population in the same study. Interestingly, another study found that females commanded two-thirds of the migrants in the ethnic Armenian population.

Reasons for the "feminization" of labour migrants include market demand in destination countries, a perception that females were less conspicuous to the authorities there, and an apparent motivation to provide for their family's well-being.[19]

Ethnic minorities engaged in seasonal/circular migration. Ethnic Armenians and Azeri in Samskhe-Javakheti and Kvemo Kartli often used external migration as a primary income generating strategy.[20] In these communities, migrants were more likely than not male and travelled primarily to Russia.

Europe and North America grew in popularity. In the second wave, a more complex destination map emerges. According to IOM, the most popular destinations as of 2003 were the Russian Federation (39%), the US (14%), Greece (14%) and Germany (13%).[21] The more highly-skilled tended to go to the US and Germany, while those who went to Russia and Greece were more likely to engage in unskilled labour. For study, the most popular destinations were the United Kingdom and Germany. Belgium, the Netherlands and France were also consistent destinations for Georgians.

3.3.3 Hope and economic rebuilding?: 2004 - ongoing

Key characteristics

- **Ongoing labour migration at a relatively stable rate and similar characteristics to the previous wave.**
- **High profile returns of highly-skilled Georgians and perception of increased returns of Georgians abroad.**
- **Increased engagement of the diaspora, both economically and culturally.**

The Rose Revolution sparked excitement and interest among the populations of Georgians living abroad – the highly-skilled, labourers and refugees alike. Previously, other than a few diaspora organizations, the community was loosely organized (particularly relative to the Armenian diaspora) and engagement with Georgia was primarily on the family level. In the wake of the Rose Revolution and the government's encouragement to return, many Georgians returned home to "check out" the changes, and some have stayed.

Visible engagement of Georgians abroad. Over time, this renewed interest has manifested itself in various ways:

- The appearance of a number of visible returnees, whether current senior government officials (e.g., the current State Minister for Economic Reforms, the former Foreign Minister turned

[18] IOM 2003
[19] For an adept discussion of this phenomena, see Zurabishvili and Zurabishvili's unpublished article "Feminization of Labour Emigration from Georgia: Case of Tianeti" based on their work with CRRC in 2006.
[20] Wheatley 2004, 2005 and IOM 2003.
[21] IOM 2003

opposition leader, and various deputy ministers) or high level players in public and private sectors (e.g., a prominent US cardiologist returned to rebuild the main hospital in Tbilisi, another returned to run a commercial bank, etc.).

- Increased investment in real estate (sparking a boom in Tbilisi) and businesses - $250 million by 2006 according to the President - and more foreign investment.

In addition, the Saakashvili administration has more actively reached out to the diaspora community, which has been more interested in being engaged. As a result, a number of nascent social institutions have emerged to foster this engagement. *Chvenebrebi,* a diaspora cultural festival, has been held annually since November 2004. Also, a government-supported diaspora conference has been held in Tbilisi the last two years.

Increased interest in return has yet to translate into meaningful movements. The level of sustainable return has been lower than some officials have claimed and has not reversed Georgia's net emigration balance. Discussion with highly-skilled returnees in 2006 revealed that many professionals and elites abroad did return in the early post-Revolution period, usually due to lack of appropriate career opportunities (including salary). Instead, there seems to have been a significant increase in visits to the country by Georgians abroad, sometimes to assess the viability of return. Thus, by all accounts, labour migration continues unabated.

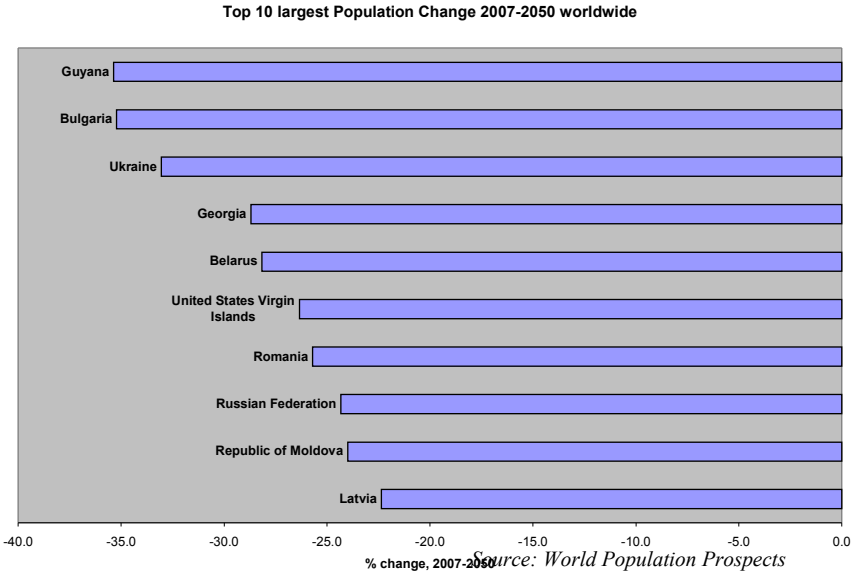
What has changed, however, is the *attitude* of people toward returning. Whereas in the previous waves people were wistful and pessimistic about returning, now increasing numbers are optimistic and choose to monitor the situation in Georgia and entertain the notion of returning. Quality of life, not simply salary, seems to be a key factor.

3.4 Implications of post-1995 migration trends for Georgia

Migration trends in Georgia over the past 12 years have played a significant, albeit largely unrecognised, role in shaping modern Georgia.

Demographic Crunch

Georgia is in the midst of a demographic crunch, with an aging population and a stagnant natural population growth which is only expected to worsen in the future. Recent UN projections predict that Georgia will experience the ninth largest rate of population loss in the world between 2005 and 2010; this is primarily due to the combination of emigration, low birth rates and an aging population.[22] By 2050, Georgia is predicted to have experienced the fourth largest decline in population worldwide (see Figure 1).



Source: World Population Prospects

Migration has significantly contributed to this problem. The mostly permanent nature of the early 1990s outflows affected both absolute numbers and Georgia's population growth potential. The current, mostly temporary migrant population continues to deplete Georgia of a significant share of its working age population and likely contributes to depressed birth rates.

Labour force impacts

Brain Drain

Georgia seems to have an ongoing exodus of the highly-skilled and young. It is believed that many of the highly-skilled left in the early 1990s, and this trend has continued. A significant portion of Georgian labour migrants possess a university degree: estimates range from 44% to 55%.[23] Estimates are that up to two-thirds of this population goes to the United States, although Russia continues to be a popular destination. Germany is also popular, particularly for those seeking educational opportunities.[24]

The impact of this is being felt acutely in the post-Revolution period, when the weak demand for skilled labour that led many to go abroad was sharply reversed. The government has sought to recruit young, preferably Western-educated professionals, and businesses in the expanding economy are increasingly looking for professionals, construction companies are seeking skilled engineers, etc. Interviews with skilled returnees, however, revealed that demand is still somewhat weak and that wage and quality of life concerns continue to hinder professional

[22] *The Economist*, 3 April 2007, "Boomers and Losers," based on data in the UN Populations Division's *World Population Prospects 2006.*
[23] IOM 2003, Badurashvili 2004, Guchashvili 2005.
[24] IOM 2003, Chelidze 2006.

returns. Most skilled migrants who have returned have done so for an opportunity that offers significant career advancement, and often do not bring their families.

Brain Waste

"Brain waste," or underemployment, is a significant challenge posed by modern Georgian migration patterns. When abroad, over 90% are not employed in their profession and many engage in unskilled labour.[25]

The shift towards Western countries as destination countries has had a distinct impact on the experiences of migrants, particularly the access to work opportunities. Issues such as language, lack of transferable credentials and legal status hinder Georgians from obtaining jobs that build their skills. Migrants to Europe are more likely to work in manual or unskilled jobs than those to Russia for many of the aforementioned reasons.

Irina Badurashvili *et al's* 2001 study of returned migrants offers a valuable picture of the varying experiences of Georgian migrants in CIS and non-CIS countries. Key information is summarized in Table 3 below.

Table 3: CIS v. non CIS migrants

	CIS	**Non-CIS**
Type of job	60% either owned a business or worked according to qualifications	▪ 60% unskilled manual labour ▪ 20% unemployed
Remittances/assistance to home	90% significantly helped family	20% could not provide assistance
Average sum of remittances	$127	$121
Savings	78%	70%
Work issues	NA	▪ Majority felt significant wage discrimination ▪ Language barrier
Problems in country	Police harassment (bribing to register)	Trouble with visa renewal
Social lives	Broad social networks (likely due to language)	Mostly confined to migrant community
Opinion of lifestyle	26% liked living in CIS 10% did not	4% liked living in non-CIS 18% did not like
Like to return?	More would like to stay abroad in non-CIS countries than CIS countries	

Source : Badurashvili et al 2001

Few found improved employment prospects upon return. While many leave at least in part due to insufficient demand for their skills, migrants often return to underemployment or no employment. Unemployment among returnees was roughly equal to prior to departure, although 42% of the previously unemployed found jobs. This trend carries over to the highly-skilled population: of those who held senior and/or skilled positions before departing, only about 50% retained a similar occupational status upon return; between 25-33% found themselves unemployed.[26] (For further analysis, please see the section of this report on returnees.)

Georgia gains limited skills/technology transfer. Since the bulk of labour migrants work in unskilled jobs overseas, when they return they bring limited technical knowledge, which can be leveraged. However, the "social remittances" of working in different work environments (e.g., discipline, understanding of expectations, etc.) and of living abroad likely have a positive impact on the quality of the labour force.

Loss of working age Georgians, particularly youth

[25] IOM 2003, Sakevarishvili 2005.
[26] Data from the 2007 World Bank survey.

A high potential for youth migration remains. A recent study by the Migration Studies Centre at Tbilisi State University reveals that a large and growing number of university students want to study and work abroad, and that they are turning increasingly to Europe and the United States rather than neighbouring Russia and Turkey. On one hand, this migration could represent a brain gain, as aggressive government-led reforms seeks to revitalize a higher education system severely undermined by pervasive corruption and a chronic lack of resources. However, most students are turning to Western countries for study with the thought of working there afterwards, according to the study. Attracting these educated migrants back with job opportunities is already proving challenging, as noted in the diaspora section. If this potential is realized, it could significantly impact Georgia's already fragile demographic picture.

Health impacts

The transmission of HIV/AIDS has increased by temporary migration patterns. Cynthia Buckley of the University of Texas has observed that the interaction of migration patterns with family systems in the South Caucasus has facilitated the spread of HIV/AIDS. Directly, migrant behaviour patterns increase risk of exposure. In turn, *relational risk* (having a spouse who may be infected) increases risk of spread within Georgia.[27]

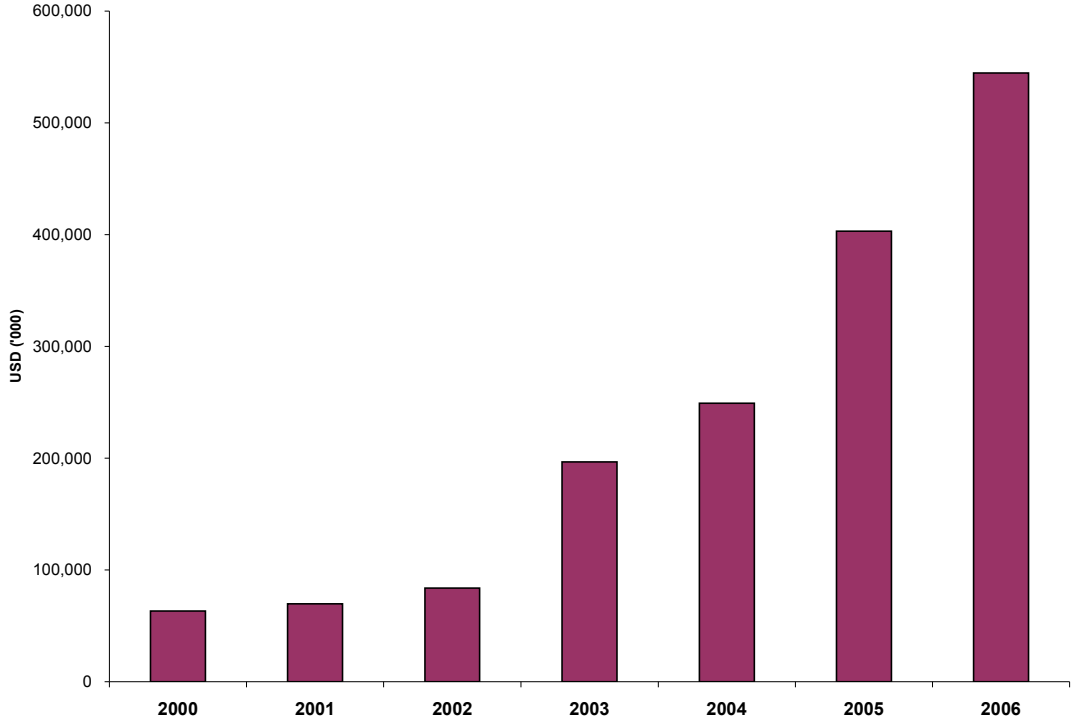
Economic impacts

Remittances

In the absence of rigorous studies or reliable statistics, much of the discussion of remittances is impressionistic and pieced together. Below is a snapshot using the best available data.

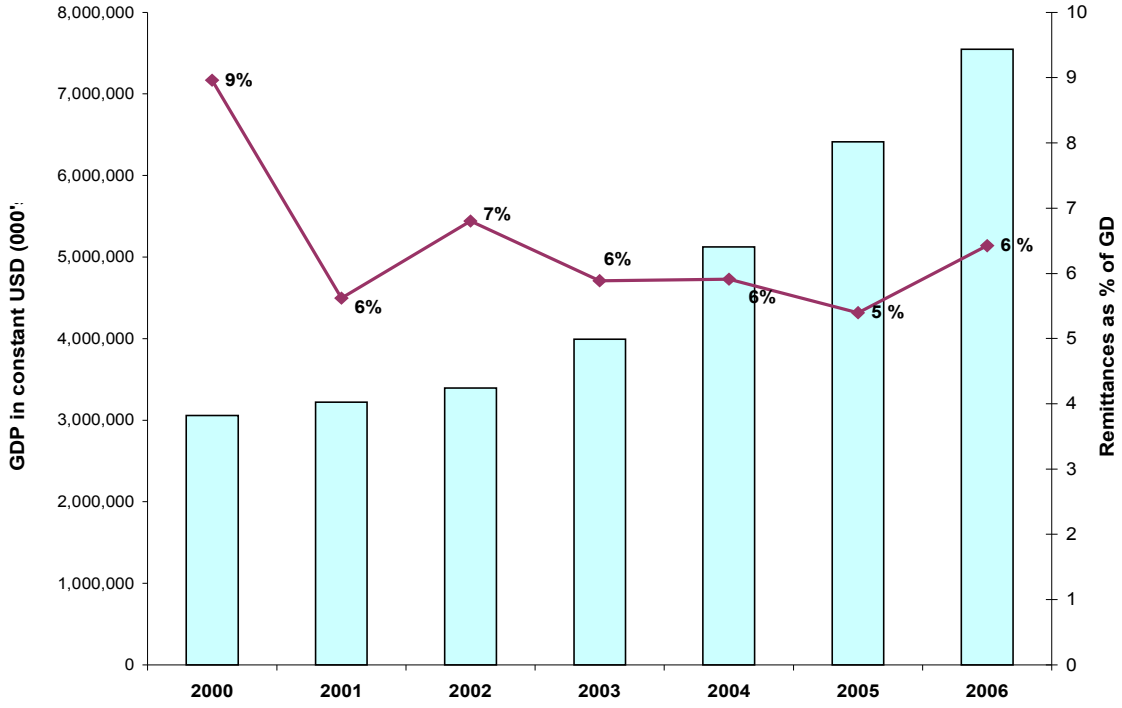
[27] See Buckley 2005.

Figure 1: Total Remittance Flows to Georgia, 2000-2006



Source: National Bank of Georgia Statistical Bulletins 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007

Figure 2: Remittances as % of GDP



Source: World Development Indicators

Remittance flows to Georgia have rapidly increased since 2000.
According to the National Bank of Georgia, remittances from abroad have constituted an increasing share of GDP – from 4.8% in 2003 to 6.3% in 2005 – even as GDP itself has grown.[28] This data, based on money transfer operators using the banking system, is believed to capture

[28] See National Bank of Georgia 2006 and World Development Indicators.

approximately one-third or less of the actual flows, given the high utilization of informal channels.[29] Remittances actually may constitute as much as 20% of GDP.

Using just official numbers, however, remittances are a significant flow of capital into Georgia: in 2004, remittances equalled 50% of FDI and 96% of official direct assistance, according to the World Development Indicators. Since 2004, the volume of "remittances" have sharply increased as Figure 1 demonstrates; this trend is expected to continue, even as Georgia's macroeconomic picture expands.

Officially, Russia is the largest source of remittances, accounting for 63% (253 million USD) of official flows in 2005. The US accounted for 11%. Most studies have found that the amount that individual migrants remit home from the US is substantially larger than that from Russia.

In recent years, Russia has used Georgia's reliance on these remittances as a political tool. In 2006, the Russian parliament threatened to prohibit financial transfers to Georgia; Russia then tightened the visa regime with Georgia and engaged in large scale deportations.

Anywhere from 40% to 80% of labour migrants send remittances home to their families.[30] Remittances seem to play an important role in economic survival. According to IOM's 2003 survey, more than 60% of families that receive remittances have an average monthly income of 50 GEL, which is below the poverty line;

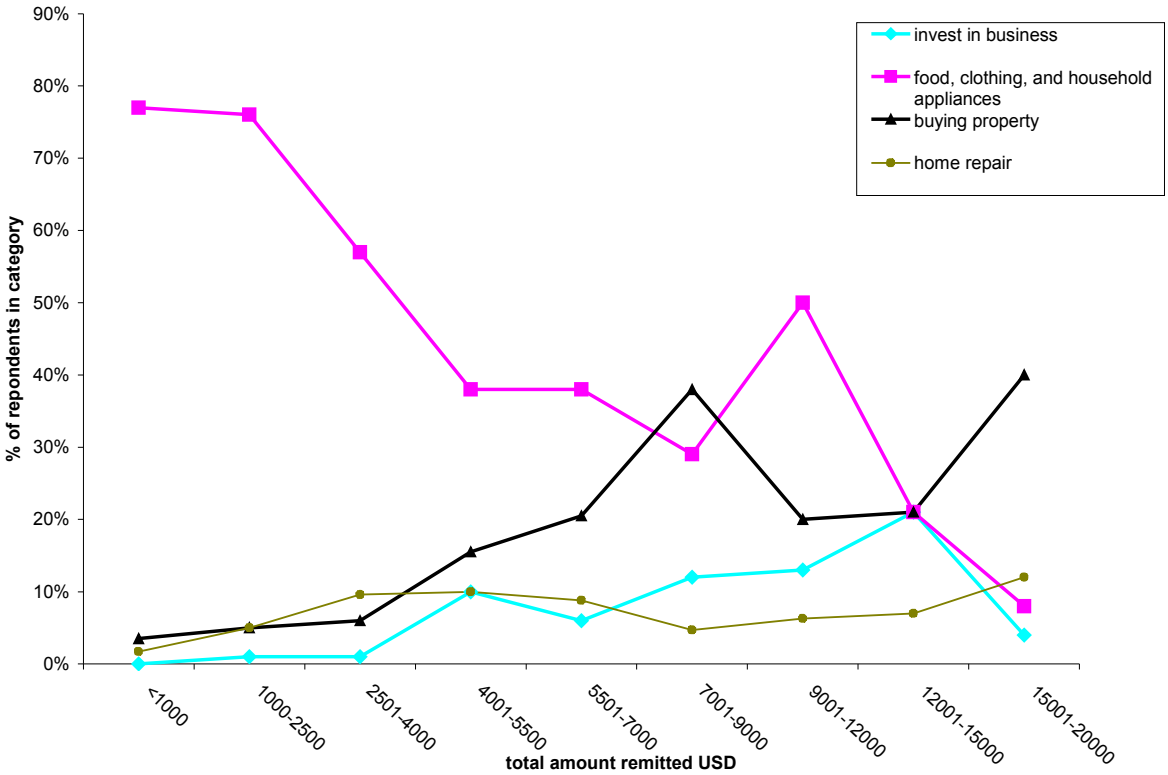
remittances serve as the primary source of income for 21% of recipient households.[31] This role is particularly true in the Javakheti and Kvemo Kartli regions, which have significant ethnic minority populations.[32]

Remittances are used primarily for household consumption needs and occasionally for real estate purchases. The 2005 World Bank survey offers the best available information on remittances usage. Its data show that *as the amount remitted rises, its use shifts from consumption needs to property purchases.* Relatively few respondents reported using remittances to expand a business; in fact, home repair is a more popular use for 63% of the households receiving remittances.

This picture becomes sharper when the distribution of remittances is taken into account. While the amount of *total* remittances varies widely – from 10 USD to 50,000, most of them are less than 7,000 USD. According to the World Bank survey, of the 52% of respondents who reported remitting funds, 63% remitted 5,500 USD or less and 75% remitted 9,000 USD or less.

Figure 3: Use of remittances by volume of remittances sent annually

[29] Data from the 2005 World Bank survey indicates that only 38.5% of remitters use either bank transfers or money transfer services (32% for amounts less than 300 USD, which represents 75% of remittances sent); 47% of remitters utilized informal channels.
[30] SDSG 2004, IOM 2003
[31] IOM 2003.
[32] Wheatley 2004, 2005; CHF 2005



Source: World Bank 2007

Diaspora investment and its promotion

While no data exists on investments made by Georgians abroad, anecdotally their activities have increased since the Rose Revolution. In addition to real estate purchases, Georgians abroad have invested in small and medium size businesses such as cinemas and financial institutions. Government officials also assert that they actively promote investment and trade engagements by companies in their destination countries. Georgians abroad can also promote trade with their destination countries. In the United States, the Georgian-American Business Development Council was quite active in promoting Georgian wines in the wake of the 2006 Russian embargo.

3.5 Diaspora presence and engagement of communities abroad

There are pockets of more traditional diaspora communities which Georgia is increasingly seeking to cultivate. One official estimates that eight million ethnic Georgians live abroad.

- **Turkey** is believed to be home to around 2.5 million ethnic Georgians. Movements began there during the Middle Ages.

- **Israel** hosts a Georgian Jewish population of roughly 100,000, most of whom arrived in the 1970s and 1980s; this community is perhaps the most organized. There are approximately 25 Georgian cultural centres across the country, including in Jerusalem and Ashkelon.

- **Iran** is home to a small, yet cohesive enclave of Iranian Georgians centred primarily around the town of Pheidan, where they were brought during the 15th Century.

- **Russia** is believed to host a large diaspora of ethnic Georgians in addition to the largest Georgian migrant population. Estimates are around 635,000 people (although some estimates of combined presence go as high as 1.5. million), concentrated in St. Petersburg and Moscow, although there are pockets across the country from the Northern Caucasus to Siberia.

- While home to many recent labour migrants, **France** also hosts active members of the exiled Menshevik-friendly government and their descendants who have lived in France since the end of Georgia's brief independence between 1918 and 1921. This community is concentrated in the town of Leville.

- Various former Soviet countries such as **Ukraine and the Baltic states** are also host to more recent diasporas.

A handful of diaspora organizations have emerged over the years; however, such organizations are rare and tend to have limited capacity. Instead, as in Georgia proper, the diaspora tends to be organized around informal social networks. Russia is home to various Georgian social institutions, including the Georgian Culture House, schools, and the diaspora organization CREDO, which has become active in recent years. In the United States, a few organizations headed by diaspora members have been engaged in charity and advocacy work on behalf of Georgia for some time. These organizations include American Friends of Georgia and the Georgian Association.

A number of transnational communities of Georgians have emerged in recent years. Students and others have formed listservs that are both country and profession specific. A network of Georgian MBAs has emerged and proven to be a formidable tool for recruiting highly qualified professionals into different industries in Georgia. These transnational networks seem to be emerging as another powerful informal information conduit.

The Rose Revolution did spark an increase in activity among the diaspora and those living abroad. Protests were organized in front of embassies in various countries. In its wake, various groups attempted to organize and influence the shape of the new government's policies, with limited success.

The Saakashvili government has sought to rebuild ties with these communities, as well as to build stronger cultural ties with Georgian labour migrants.

- In 2004, it launched the annual cultural festival Chvenebrebi in Tbilisi that features Georgian music and dance groups from across the globe, and held a diaspora conference.

- It plans to open cultural centres in various countries in the coming years; these will include Georgian language schools.

- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is planning to open more consulates to support Georgian communities abroad.

In 2004, Georgia introduced dual citizenship. By August 2007, 3,010 persons had become dual citizens, more of half of these also possess Russian citizenship.

3.6 Dynamics of Migration

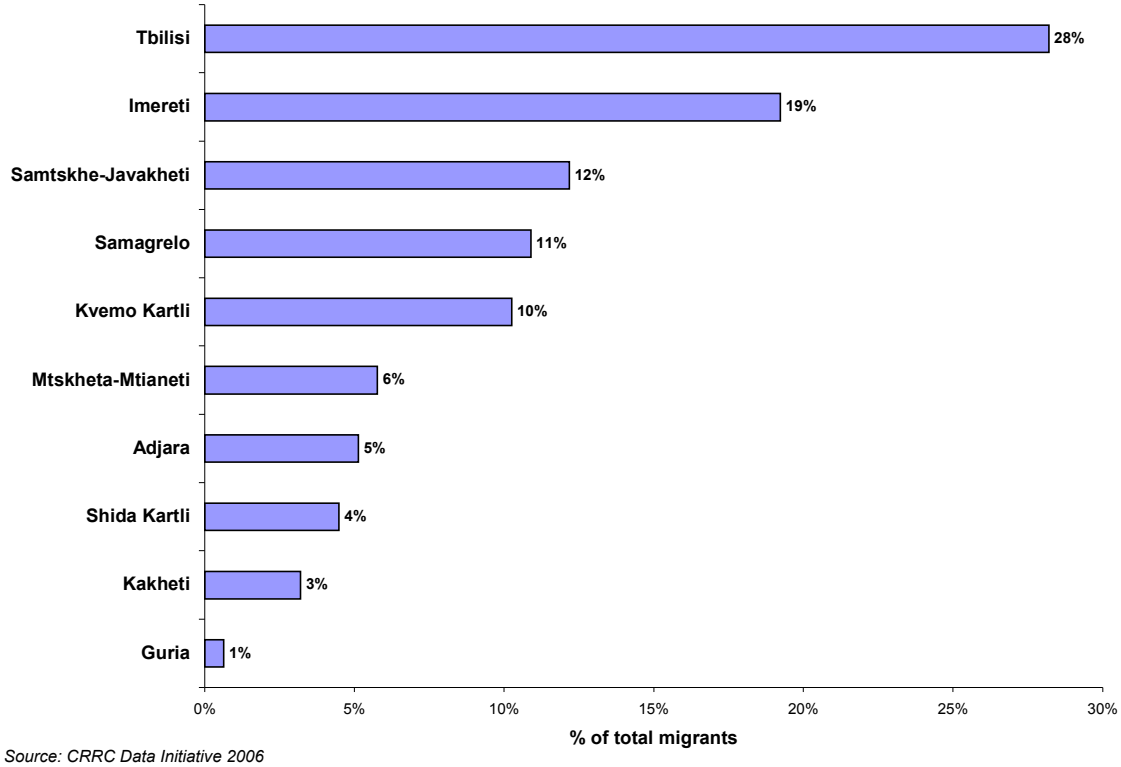
This section will offer a more in-depth picture of migration patterns of the past decade for labour migrants (focusing on the past five years) and will examine some recent evidence about youth migration and that of the highly-skilled. Particular emphasis will be placed on those areas relevant to the design of return and reintegration programmes.[33]

Demographics of migration

It is believed that the overall rate of migration is between 6-10% of the population and that this rate has remained relatively stable over the past few years. Of those households who report having a migrant, two-thirds had one member abroad, according to CRRC's Data Initiative.[34]

Almost all regions of Georgia have experienced out migration, usually external migration.

Figure 4: Distribution of migrants by region, 2006



Source: CRRC Data Initiative 2006

Figure 4 offers the breakdown of estimated external migration rates per region for 2006.[35] According to the IOM, most of these labour migrants are highly educated: 44% of migrants possess university-level education[36]; 15% are highly-skilled professionals, and 12% are self-employed. At least one-third of those who choose to migrate are unemployed. According to World Bank findings, 83% of those who migrate earn less than 100 USD per month, and almost half report that they cannot provide for the basic needs of their families.

[33] Details such as the cost of going abroad, while important, are not incorporated into this report, as this is somewhat redundant information. Instead, this report seeks to highlight key drivers and provide a framework in which to assess these pieces of information.
[34] In 2005, Tbilisi and Kvemo Kartli were the only regions surveyed and had 68% with one member. In 2006, the nationwide survey yielded 66%.
[35] Based on CRRC Data Initiative 2006, though this data is not representative at the regional level.
[36] IOM 2003.

Women are now believed to constitute nearly half of the labour migrant population. Female migrants tend to be younger. The decision to migrate may be made either by the individual or the household, according to the World Bank survey. Women made up 70% of the Georgian labour migrant population in Greece and Germany (IOM 2003).

Information sources

Georgian migrants heavily rely on networks and money lenders for the means to depart.

Who goes where?

Most migrants tend to stay in a single country, regardless of how they originally got there.

Males of working age, particularly from ethnic minorities, tend to engage in seasonal migration to Russia, usually in construction. Those migrating with families also tend to go to Russia.

Working age women tend to travel to Greece to be maids or nurses, and youth gravitate toward Western Europe.[37] According to IOM, their major destination countries are Greece (24% of surveyed female labour emigrants), Germany (23.5%), the US (18.7%) and Russia (14.3%).

The highly-skilled: Migrate to improve their skills and qualifications, earn higher salaries, and for better career development opportunities.

IDPs who migrate tend to be slightly older, are more often female, and usually go to Russia and neighbouring countries due to lack of financial resources (IOM 2001).

Older migrants, with more limited language skills, tend to migrate to CIS countries, while **younger migrants** go to Western Europe and North America, as many speak English or German.

While available data reflects little difference in the rates of external emigration from rural and urban areas, destinations do differ. Most experts concur with Chelidze's contention that **migrants from rural areas** more often go to Russia or other Russian speaking countries, while **migrants from Tbilisi** (who also are likely to have more education, according to IOM 2003) are inclined to go to Western Europe and North America.
In aggregate, the most educated are more likely to go to the US (65%) rather than Greece (34%) or Russia (35%).

Means of migration

Most migrants rely on family and friends to help with financing and organizing the migration process.

While most Georgians enter countries legally, they end up as irregular migrants. While some labour migrants do enter on resident or long-term visas, most use legal means to enter and then become irregular. Many migrants indicated in our focus group that they would prefer to migrate legally but have little if any access to such an opportunity.

Popular methods:

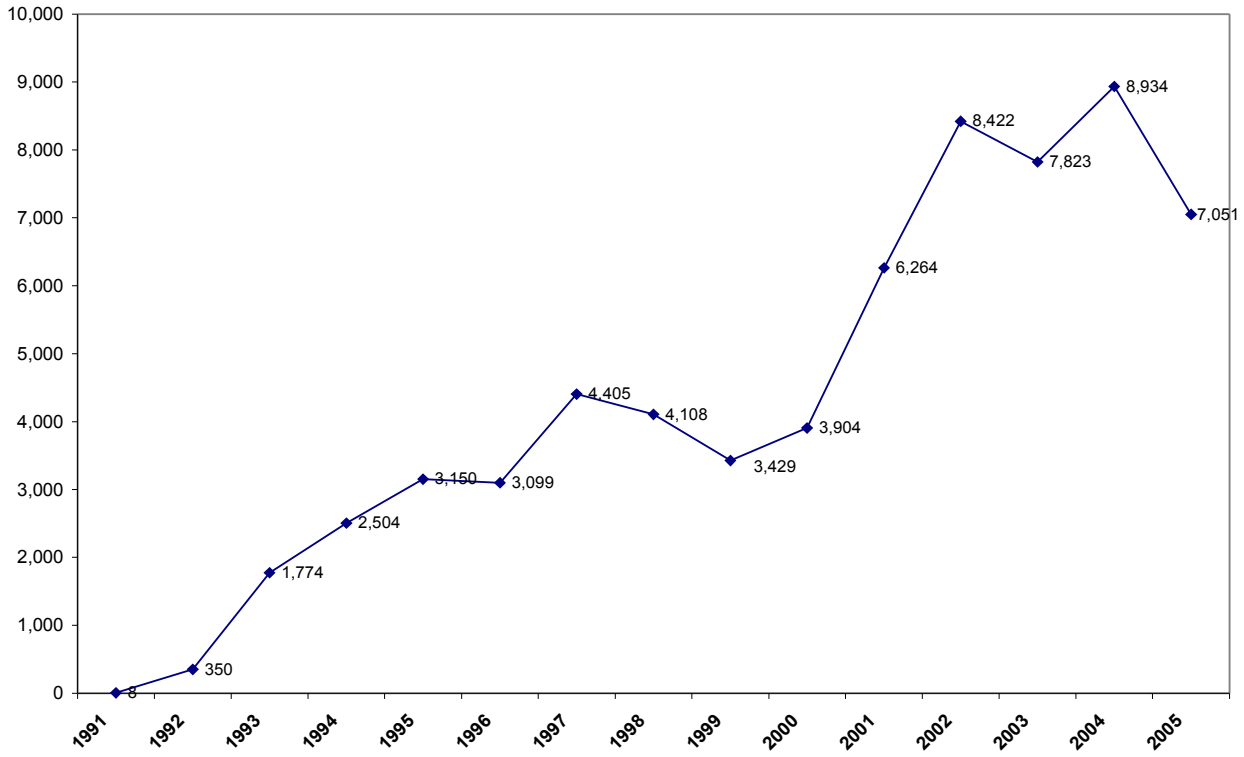
- Overstaying tourist or business visas
- Obtaining students visas and working as well.

[37] Chelidze 2006; IOM 2003.

- Entering a gateway (transit) country legally and then travelling to a destination country.

Asylum seeking has become a popular strategy to remain abroad legally, say most experts. The number of applications for asylum status reflects this finding. Asylum applications, primarily in European countries, jumped 115% (to 8,400) between 2000 and 2002, and have remained at this level since. New EU member states are increasingly popular for Georgians seeking asylum, and the number of applicants increased five-fold between 1996 and 2003, according to ICPMD's analysis of available asylum data. Many of these countries are also known to be used as transit countries to Western Europe.

Figure 5: Asylum Applications by Georgian citizens since 1991



Source: UNHCR 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006

Irregular migration

Evidence supports the widely held belief that irregular migration intensified in the second wave. Few left with jobs in hand, instead leveraging networks rather than finding a job in advance (Badurashvili 2004, Census 2002).

Trafficking

Experts agree that Turkey, Greece and, to a lesser extent, Russia are frequent destination countries for trafficking. Germany and the United Arab Emirates were also mentioned as destinations. In the case of Turkey, experts contend that most victims enter the country legally and criminal activities only occur once on Turkish soil.

While men and women seem to equally be victims of trafficking, most of the time women are being sexually exploited. Men, on the other hand, are trafficked for manual labour, frequently construction work.

Table 4: Known Smuggling Routes from Georgia

Georgia → Moscow or St. Petersburg → **Israel**
Turkey via Istanbul → **Greece**
Russia → Ukraine → Romania → Bulgaria → **Greece**
Ukraine → Slovakia → **Austria**

Tbilisi → France (with visa) → **Switzerland/ Holland/Austria**
Turkey (Izmir) → Italy (Brindisi) → **Spain (Barcelona)**
Moscow → Belarus → Poland → **Denmark**

Source: ICPMD 2005

People who migrate using tourist or employment agencies are the most frequent victims of trafficking. They often experience a "bait and switch" trick in which they end up working many more hours for the same amount of money originally promised.

Destination country experiences

Work experiences

Given that many labour migrants are undocumented in some form or another, women usually work as nurses and cooks. Men tend to be construction workers and/or plant managers. Lack of sufficient language skills tends to hinder highly-skilled migrants from working in their professions.[38]

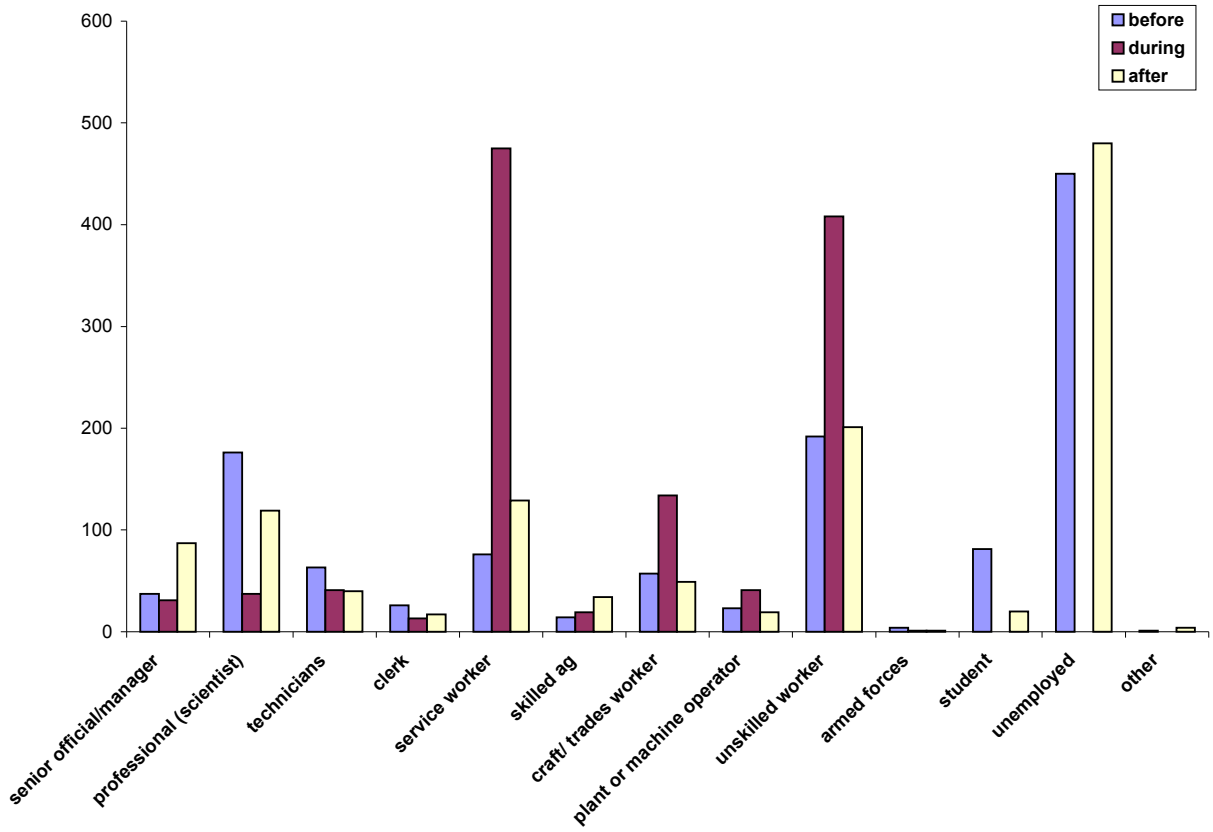
Many migrants stay longer then they expected because they have not met their goals. However, those who work and study are more likely to find work commensurate with their experience.

Somewhat surprisingly, a reasonable number of labour migrants report having difficulty adapting to life in Russia, despite the close ties. IOM posits that those who have migrated from the regions possess poorer Russian language skills and therefore struggle. It also may be due to the social stratification and more recent discrimination in Russian society.

Young persons report relative ease adapting to life in Germany and the US. This in part may be due to their more urban background, as well as the opportunity to be part of formal programmes and the greater sociability of youth.

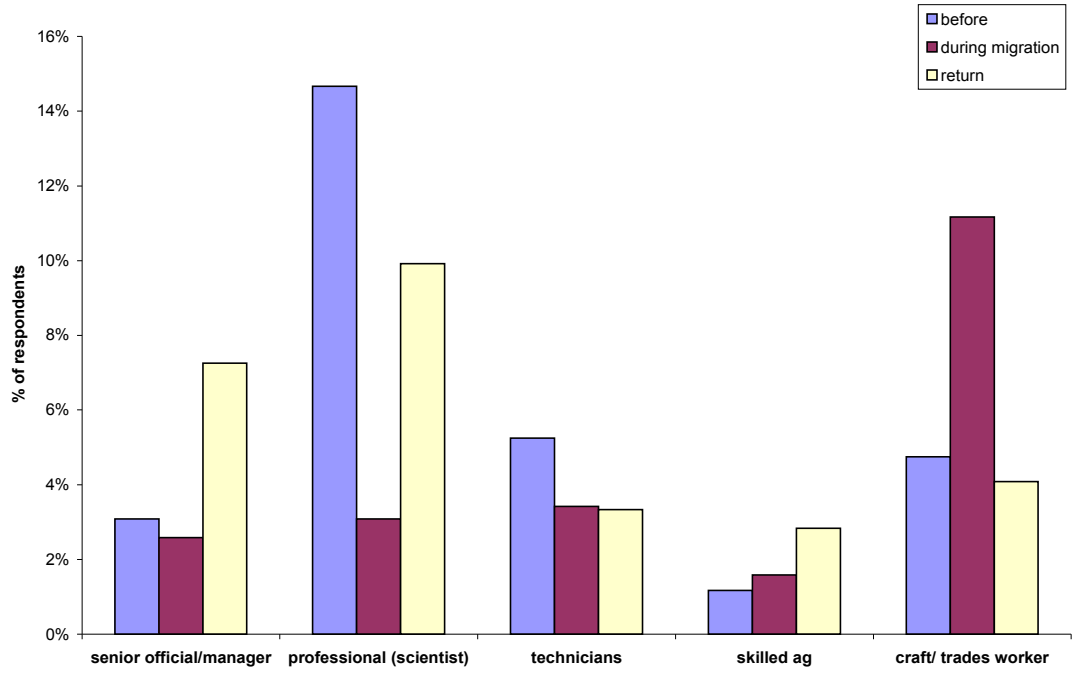
[38] Sakevarishvili 2005

Figure 6: Occupational Status before-during-after (WB survey)



Source: World Bank 2007

Figure 7: Impact on Skilled migrants



Source: World Bank 2007

Frequent challenges

IOM 2003 observes that those who use irregular channels to go abroad also tend to avoid official institutions – whether Georgian or host country – when in need. Instead, they turn to relatives and friends for help.

3.7 Returnees

While returnees have been targeted respondents for studies about migration, only a few recent studies have sought to evaluate their return experience as well. Moreover, only three studies sought to assess the return experience and its impact; IOM's 2002 "Return and Reintegration in the South Caucasus," Mariam Sakevarishvili's series of in-depth interviews with returnees in 2005, and a survey conducted in 2005 for the recently-published World Bank assessment of migration in Europe and Central Asia. (see Table 5 for details). while not explicit, these studies FOCUS on labour migrants only and offer limited insights on the behaviours of highly-skilled returnees.

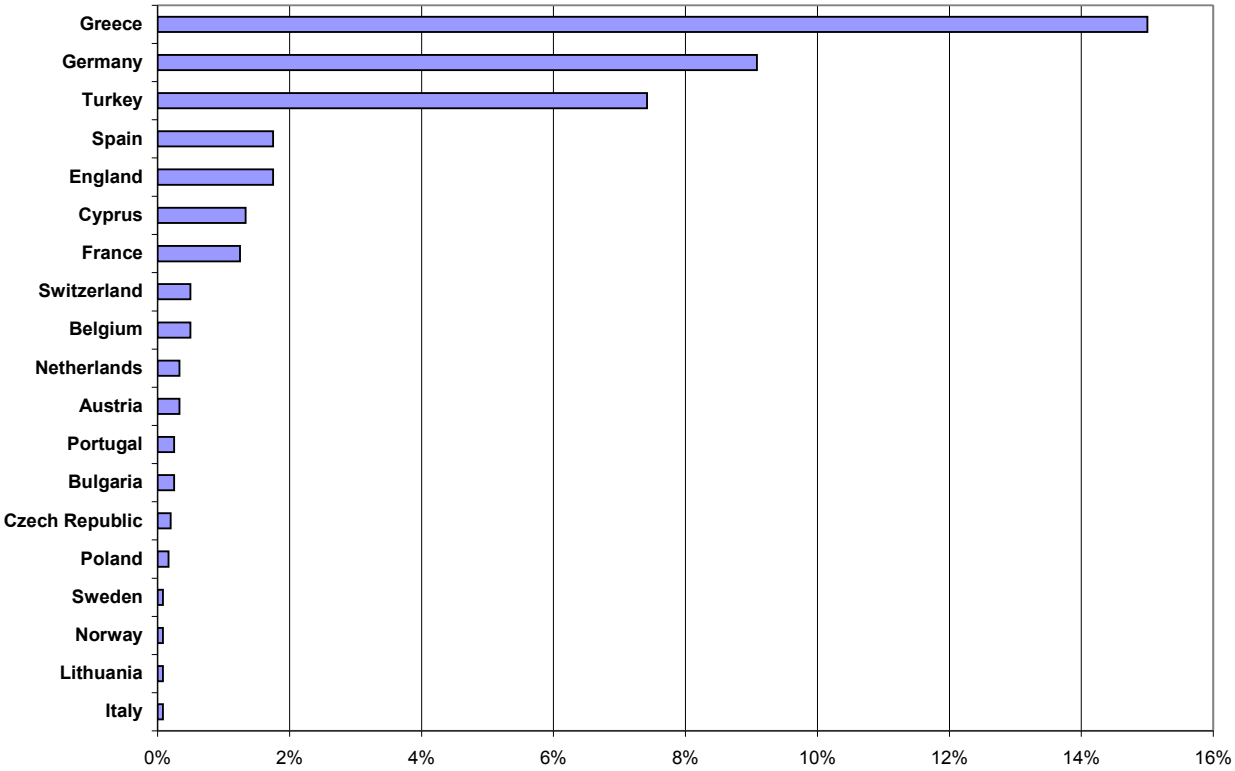
This section is divided into two subsections – general information on returnees who are predominantly labour migrants, and a brief look at highly-skilled/professional returnees. The first section is primarily based on the findings of the Sakevarishvili study and the unpublished dataset of the World Bank survey. The second relies on findings from 20 in-depth interviews of highly-skilled/professional returnees conducted between May and September 2006 in Tbilisi.

3.7.1 General/Labour migrant returnees

Data seem to show that returnees leave one or another country in greater proportions.

In Europe, most returnees come from Greece, Germany, Turkey and Spain; the least from Italy, Lithuania, Norway and Sweden. While these volumes are most likely in correlation with the overall flows to each country, the character of migration could also influence these rates; for example, the top four countries host high levels of short-term Georgian migrants and students.

Figure 8: EU Destination Countries of Returnees



Source: World Bank 2007

Returnees have diverse reasons to return. While family issues is the most often cited reason to return, others return due to dissatisfaction with life and opportunities abroad or because of legal issues. Also, families with younger children are likely to return for affordable education. Consequently, returnees are not representative of migrants as a whole.

Most view their time abroad positively. Whether it be the higher levels of remuneration or the ability to improve the financial security of their families, most returnees reported they were content with their experiences abroad.

Social remittances can contribute to difficult adaptation. In both social and work situations, returnees are likely to experience tensions due to changes in behaviours and approach. Sakevarishvili contends that returnees have a more liberated approach to work (more open with opinions, greater sense of power *vis- a-vis* his or her employer), which creates tensions. In addition, she reports they are less willing to endure difficult work conditions, since they had already endured them for high remuneration abroad.

Other changes which returnees identified include:

- Increased assertiveness and self-reliance
- Higher expectations and standards of themselves and their environment
- A greater understanding and expectation of professionalism
- Greater openness and tolerance as well as sense of responsibility
- Better sense of self and goals

Most returnees find their employment situation unchanged or more difficult. As illustrated in Figure 6, work abroad does not alter employment status upon return. Unemployment inched up slightly, but the distribution of occupations remained almost as it was before migration. There was an expansion in the less-skilled categories of service worker and skilled agricultural

worker, as well as in senior management positions. Highly-skilled employment declined however; Figure 7 reveals the decline in the science sector in particular.

In terms of the impact for individuals, anywhere from 40% (e.g., professional scientist) to 60% (e.g., unemployed) of returnees reclaimed their former occupational status. There was little upward mobility for returnees: the previously unemployed tended to swap the remaining slots with those previously in each status (e.g., service workers either continued as service workers or became newly unemployed and were replaced by the previously unemployed). Professionals either became senior managers or unemployed. Returnees' perception of their situation supports this observation: 45% believe that their job opportunities are the same and only 10% feel they have improved.

This stagnation may be due in part to the continued need to rely on social networks to obtain employment.

While self-employment seems a more popular choice among returnees than the general public, most returnees left either unemployed or an employee of somebody else, according to the World Bank survey. However, almost one-third became either employers or self-employed after returning to Georgia.

Most are not interested in starting a business. Only 18% of respondents to the World Bank survey were certain they wanted to start a business, while 54% were certain they did not. Lack of capital/savings is the primary reason for not wanting to start a business (61%); the high cost of entry and no idea where to invest were distant seconds. If returnees were to start a business, however, most would be interested in retail/wholesale or agricultural endeavours.

There are concerns about children: Georgian parents worried about their children's adaptation, Georgian language abilities, the possibility of resentment for having to return, and the quality of opportunities.

Table 5: Return experiences: Studies of Returnees

	IOM 2002	Badurashvili 2003	Saqevarishvili 2005	Mansoor and Quillin 2007 (Georgia survey conducted by Irina Badurashvili)
Year conducted	*2001-2002*	*2003*	*2005*	*2005*
Type of study	In-depth interviews of returnees in programme, 2 stage (n=27/12)	Survey of returnees (n=960) nationwide	In-depth interviews of returnees nationwide (n=50)	Survey of returnees (n=1200) nationwide
Destination countries	▪ Germany: 63% ▪ Netherlands: 19% ▪ Greece: 4% ▪ Denmark: 7% ▪ Switzerland: 4% ▪ Spain: 4%	**1991-1994: 13.9%** ▪ FSU: 25% ▪ Non FSU: 8% **1995-1998: 38.8%** ▪ FSU: 37% ▪ Non FSU: 40% **1999-2002: 47.3%** ▪ FSU: 38% ▪ Non FSU: 52%	▪ Russia: 31% ▪ Greece: 16% ▪ Germany: 13% ▪ USA: 13% ▪ Israel: 7% ▪ UK: 7% ▪ France: 6%	▪ Russia: 44.7% ▪ Greece: 15.0% ▪ Germany: 9.1% ▪ Turkey: 7.4% ▪ USA: 6.7% ▪ Israel: 3.4% ▪ England: 1.8% ▪ Spain: 1.8%
Reasons to return	▪ Legal issues (rejected asylum and prefer not to be illegal, etc.) ▪ Homesickness	▪ 37% reported family problems or requests ▪ 19% fulfilled goals ▪ 18% reported not wanting to remain abroad. ▪ 10% visa troubles or deportation.	▪ Family ▪ Dissatisfied with life abroad ▪ Accomplished goal ▪ Hopes from Rose Revolution ▪ Legal status expire/deported ▪ Education for children abroad costly	
Return process	▪ 48% report problems returning home ▪ 25% said authorities harassed (esp Yezidi) ▪ Few receive financial or other support.			
Employment upon return	▪ Overall, worse employment opportunities ▪ Few newly acquired skills		▪ More skilled note lack of demand ▪ Heavily rely on patronage and friends to find employment ▪ Employee empowerment and expectations of working conditions mismatch reality	No notable change in job prospects ▪ Increase in management positions and service workers ▪ Unemployment remained around 40%; 50% of previously unemployed did find employment ▪ Earning potential not improved
Health upon return	▪ Worse due to stress from "failure to stay abroad"			
Community relations	▪ Not changed significantly ▪ Community members assume have money and ask for loans		▪ Elevated status for having lived abroad- assumed successful.	
Key stressors	▪ Earned insufficient money abroad to cover financial debts		▪ New values clash with Georgian ones ▪ Finances	
Reintegration	▪ Some problem: 82%		▪ Increased assertiveness	▪ 40% reported quality of life not change;

	IOM 2002	Badurashvili 2003	Saqevarishvili 2005	Mansoor and Quillin 2007 (Georgia survey conducted by Irina Badurashvili)
impact	▪ Housing problems, because sold home ▪ Increased pessimism due to difficulty with employment ▪ Family relations strained		▪ Elevated aspirations ▪ Increase familial bonds ▪ Increased punctuality etc.	40% report life more comfortable. ▪ 68% reported job prospects equal or worse.
Potential	67% want to go abroad again: ▪ Improve socio-economic situation ▪ Lack of economic opportunity ▪ If could earn, would stay		Majority would like to go again ▪ Most strongly prefer legal means ▪ Ambitious migrants less inclined to migrate again; prefer to succeed in Georgia and sacrifice salary ▪ Lower skilled migrants more likely	

3.7.2 Highly-skilled returnees

Since the Rose Revolution, there has been much rhetoric and speculation about a mass return of highly-skilled professional returnees. A government populated by alumni of graduate study abroad programmes and peppered with a number of high profile members such as former Foreign Minister Salome Zourabishvili (a French ambassador) and Kakha Bendukidze (a successful Russian businessman turned State Minister for Economic Reforms) projects such an image. However, there is no data to verify this picture.

The reality of this proposed trend is somewhat different both according to discussion and preliminary findings of a study of highly-skilled professional returnees (see Figure 9 for further details).

Why they came back

While the Rose Revolution prompted many to consider returning, the decision to return was based on career and family considerations. The change in administration and the ongoing transformation of Georgia prompted young professional and other highly-skilled Georgians abroad to entertain the idea of return. However, patriotic fervour usually was insufficient to motivate a move back. Rather, career opportunities, family situations and lifestyle choices were usually more important factors. For many, returning to Georgia offered a significant leap for career advancement, whether it be a recent college graduate obtaining a coveted position in an economic institution or an established professional offered the chance to take over an executive position which would otherwise be years away. Most, however, explained that they had always intended to return.

Figure 9: Background of Highly-skilled Returnee Study

In the summer of 2006, the author and Aaron Erlich conducted 18 in-depth interviews with highly-skilled and professional returnees residing in Tbilisi who had returned since the Rose Revolution. The goals were to assess motivations for return, understand their return experience and to solicit their perspectives about promoting high skilled return..

The sample, developed using snowball methodology, was 67% male returnees and 83% held management positions (67% executive positions) in a variety of fields.

Professional fields

	# of returnees	%
Economic	8	44%
Democratization	3	17%
IT	3	17%
Politics	2	11%
Services	1	6%
Social	1	6%
	18	100%

Forty four percent of those interviewed had worked in the US, 17% in the United Kingdom and 11% in both Israel and Russia.

Return Experiences

Those who were recruited to return found the transition easier than those without. A large number of those interviewed were senior government officials and executives who had been recruited for their positions. As a result, they avoided the difficulty of navigating the still underdeveloped labour market. Those who returned without jobs in hand often struggled to find appropriate opportunities or to find them in an environment they found professional and comfortable.

Social and cultural adjustment is often difficult, particularly in the first few months. Like other returnees, interviewees found it difficult to connect with family and friends and encountered frequent misunderstandings.

The financial strain of a lower salary was difficult for many, particularly those with extended family in Georgia who had relied on remittances. Some interviewees indicated that they will likely need to find a job abroad again after a certain amount of time. While they intended their return to be temporary and perhaps a stepping stone to a more senior job, others discovered the financial stresses on their extended family and immediate family was more significant than expected.

That said, quality of life considerations rank high in the decision to return and stay. Such considerations can be positive or negative. Some interviewees explained that the lifestyle in Georgia was preferable to them, particularly if they had been close to their families.

Sustainability of return

Return not necessarily permanent. The commitment of highly-skilled migrants to remain in Georgia is not solid, particularly if career opportunities stagnate or political and social conditions worsen. While patriotism and family are pull factors to stay, career and quality of life are push factors to go. Additionally, a majority of interviewees who were married did not return with their spouses and children; most remained in the countries from which they had returned.

Potential for more highly-skilled returnees

Most interviewees identified issues which influence the ability of people to return.

Need to increase quality opportunities for highly-skilled migrants. In addition to high quality opportunities, interviewees indicated that there needs to be a shift in the business culture in Georgia if more highly-skilled returnees are to be convinced to return. In particular, they explained that rather than valuing the skills and knowledge that a highly-skilled professional who has worked abroad could offer, the managers in Georgia tend to only look at the bottom line. In addition to compensation, concerns about business culture, work ethics, transparency and business models were raised.

Quality-of-life concerns need to be addressed. As with many labour migrants, the quality of education and access to goods and services are of concern to professionals. Educational concerns may not have precluded some from returning, but it did preclude them from bringing their families.

Interestingly, many noted concerns about the political environment as a key hindrance. Frequently, interviewees remarked that many of those they knew abroad were hesitant to return, given the news of human rights violations and government actions. Some explained that, having lived in Western democracies, others were willing to return to support a government that they felt was making sincere efforts to move in that direction.

4 Destination Countries

Overview of EU countries increasing importance

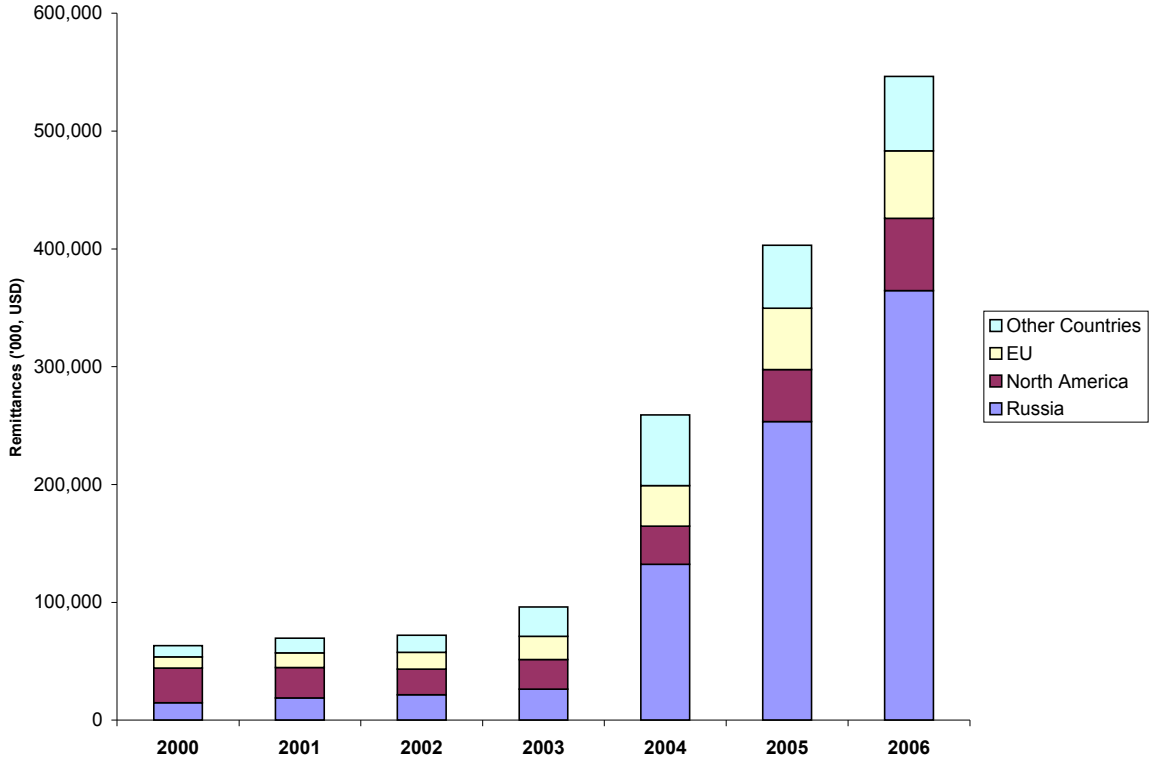
Georgians often view themselves as European and the current administration has been aggressively pursuing admission to the European Union. EU countries have also become increasingly popular destinations for migrants from Georgia. Proxies like remittances and interest of potential migrants reveal the growing popularity of EU countries for work and study.

Remittances reveal EU popularity

Annual money transfer data from the National Bank of Georgia offers a crude proxy of how the European Union countries have become increasingly important destinations in Georgia's migration picture.

The EU is an increasingly important source of remittances. The EU seems to be an increasingly popular choice for migrants. First, the absolute value of EU transfers has increased five-fold since 2000. This rate of growth is more rapid than that of either the United States or any other country except Russia. However, the large jump in flows from Russia is likely not due to remittances from migrants, but rather large transfers from the Georgian diaspora in Russia.[39]

Figure 10: Remittances by region, 2000-2006

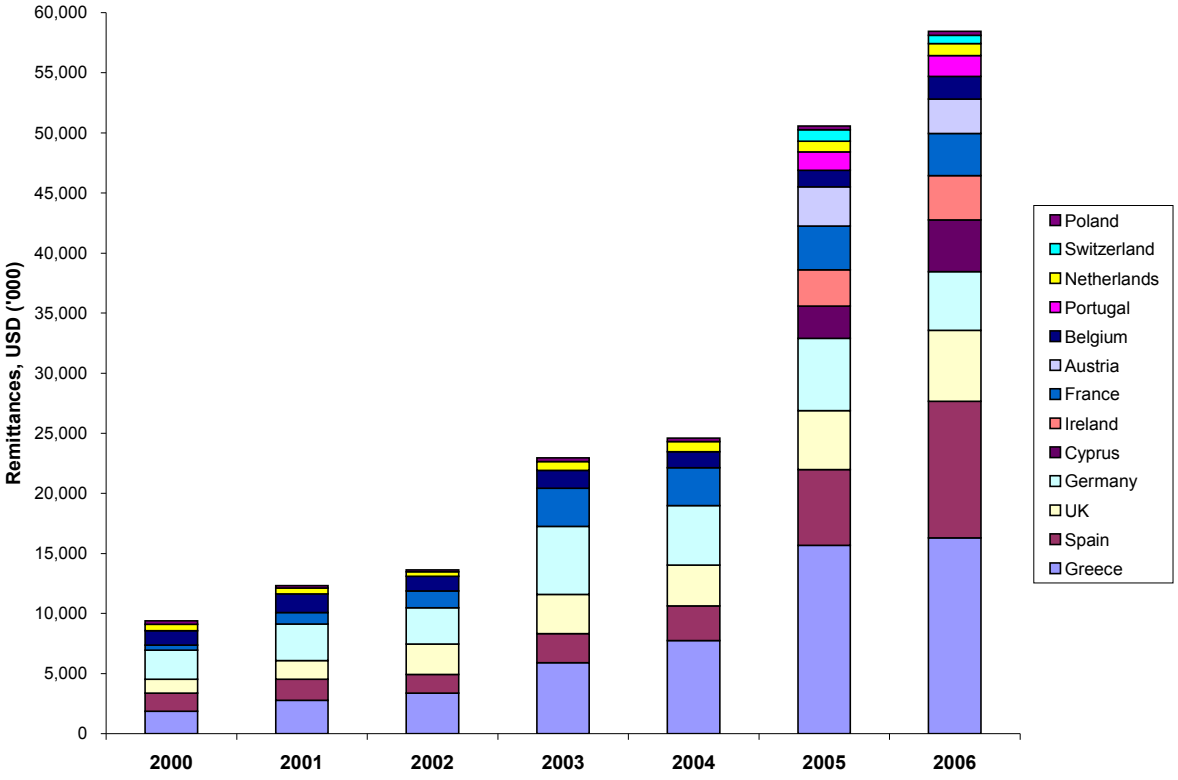


Source: National Bank of Georgia 2003-2007

Georgians seem to be seeking employment in a more diverse set of EU countries. The number of countries of the European Union from which official remittances are received has also increased, from seven to 13, since 2000. This corroborates the research findings that Georgians are seeking work in a more diverse set of countries in the European Union.

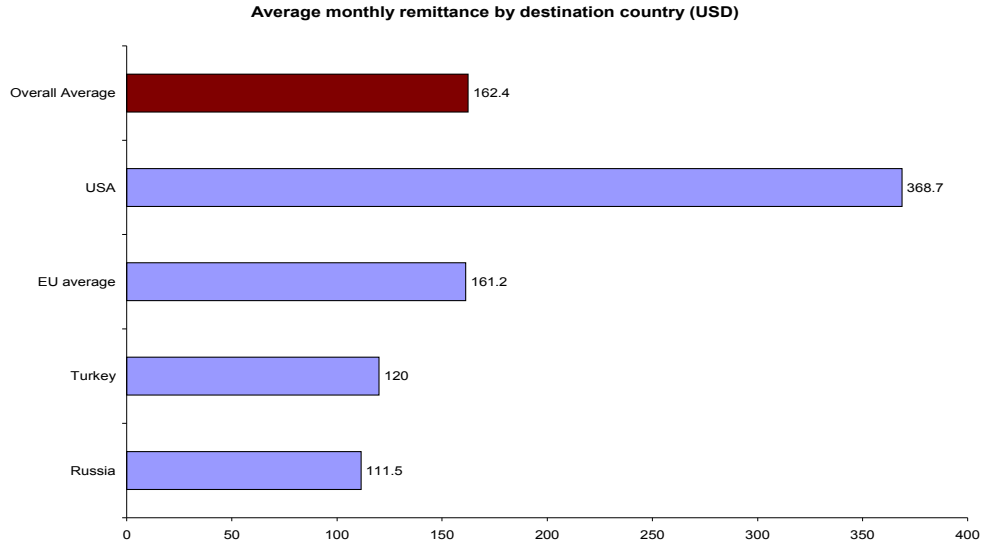
[39] This assertion is based on 1) World Bank survey findings that money transfers tend to be used for sums larger than 300 USD (40% v. 20%); 2) conversations with various experts, including those in the financial industry, who noted that there has been a sharp increase in real estate and other investments by Georgians in Russia in recent years, particularly since the Russian blockade in 2006, and 3) the Russian blockade most likely negatively impacted labour migration flows and employment prospects.

Figure 11: Remittances from European countries, 2000-2006



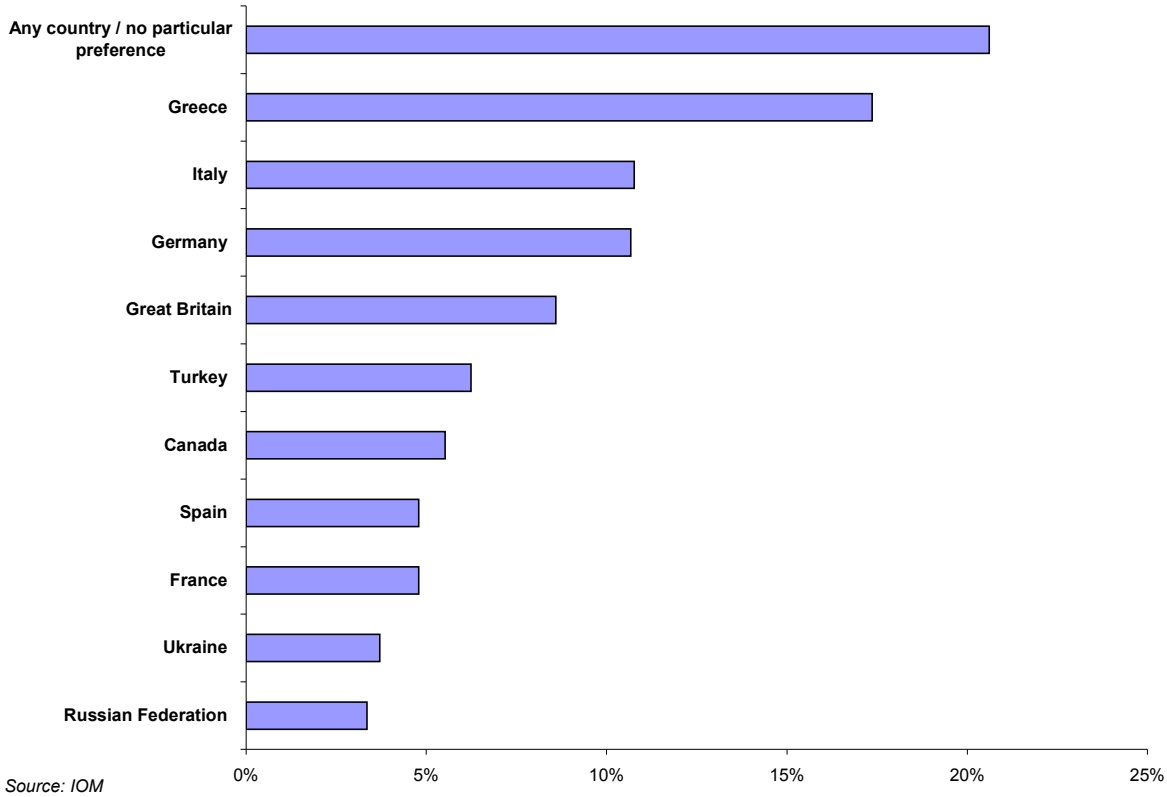
Source: National Bank of Georgia 2003-2007

The popularity of the EU can partly be explained by the higher average remittances. To Georgian labour migrant, Europe not only offers a better quality of life, but also better salaries.



Potential migrants also reveal Europe's popularity in data collected at IOM's Migration Resource Centres. EU countries are overwhelmingly preferred to the Russian Federation.

Figure 12: EU countries dominate potential migrants' destinations of choice


Any country / no particular preference
Greece
Italy
Germany
Great Britain
Turkey
Canada
Spain
France
Ukraine
Russian Federation
0%
5%
10%
15%
20%
25%

Source: IOM

Table 6: Destination Country Characteristics

	Overall character	Why attractive	Type of work	Who	Other
Russia	Most popular destination for Georgian and non Georgian citizens. Home to a range of migrants.	▪ Highly-skilled prefer because more career opportunities ▪ Ease of adaptation; cultural affinity	▪ Professional including financial services ▪ Labour such as construction ▪ High share of migrants own their own businesses (18%)[40]	▪ Highly-skilled ▪ People from rural areas ▪ Families ▪ Ethnic Armenians[41]	
Israel	Home to most of Georgia's Jewish population; is a generous country with strong ties to Georgia	Ease of adaptation due to large Georgian community	▪ Unskilled ▪ Professionals		
European Destinations					
Germany	A popular destination for labour migrants, professionals and youth Most popular study abroad destination	▪ Formal work and study programmes, e.g., *au pair* programme s ▪ Western life style ▪ Higher remunerations	▪ *Au pair* ▪ *students*	▪ Students ▪ Younger migrants	Least random migration[42]
Greece	Heavily female temporary labour migration		▪ Women tend to work in homes and as health care workers	▪ Older migrants tend to go there ▪ Less educated	Difficulty adapting
US	Attractive to younger migrants and highly-skilled				Rely on acquaintances
Spain	Increasingly popular country. Little is known	Ease of adaptation due to cultural affinity		▪ There are networks from Svaneti	
Portugal		Ease of adaptation due to cultural affinity			
United Kingdom	Popular study destination				
Turkey	Convenient location for labour migration, particularly for ethnic Azeris	▪ Proximity to Georgia ▪ Visa free regime for tourist		▪ People from western Georgia[43] ▪ Ethnic Azeris	▪

[40] IOM 2003
[41] According to IOM 2003 87% of ethnic Armenians who migrated left for Russia.
[42] IOM 2003
[43] IOM 2003

	Overall character	Why attractive	Type of work	Who	Other
	Popular transit route from Georgia due to visa regime				
Belgium					High end of random migration
Czech Republic	Transit country				

5 Return and Reintegration Programmes: Assessments and Needs

Few return and reintegration programmes currently operate in Georgia. Those that do exist have served a limited number of persons and have conducted no formal evaluations. This chapter seeks to provide an overview of those existing programmes as well as profile some current returnees through the use of focus groups across the country.

Job generation and socio-economic conditions are key concerns for returnees and the current struggle in both creates a high potential of re-emigration among returnees. These concerns had originally prompted most of the participants' initial migration. Those who were aware of the programmes felt that they offered an attractive way to return home.

5.1 Overview of existing programmes

Current return and reintegration programmes are relatively new and operate on a limited scale. Unfortunately, this means that relatively few returnees have been through the full programmes and that few if any evaluations exist. For this report, the author was unable to obtain copies of any evaluations – formal or internal – from the organizations. However, People in Need (PIN), Caritas and World Vision were particularly gracious with their time, assistance and willingness to answer our questions.

For the most part, current efforts are targeted toward rejected asylum seekers, who represent a small proportion of returnees. Limited awareness and a small number of countries with programmes also limit the scale of the initiative.

Most programmes follow a similar model. They are centred around assisting returnees to find some means of income generation, whether it be through job placement and training or support in opening one's own business. The programmes provide funding and access to resources such as training on how to write a business plan. Additional services include housing assistance, counselling, adaptation training, and health care.

Most programme officers interviewed indicated that, in their opinion, the programmes were effective given the contexts in which they operated. When asked what role the government could play in promoting return and reintegration, the officers echoed the sentiments of participants in our two focus groups: improve the economy, particularly job availability, and improve the quality of life.

Programme participants were quite positive about the programmes and particularly praised the programme officers, regardless of programme, for being accessible, engaged and very helpful.

Table 7: Existing Return Programme Partners

Country	Georgia Partner(s)	Managing Agency	Years of operation	# of returnees served
Belgium	Caritas	FEDASIL	April 26, 2006 – April 2008	1 case (plus one exception – person from Austria)
Czech Republic	PIN	Czech and German Government	2005-2008	44 families (total)
Czech Republic	IOM	NA	NA	NA
Great Britain	IOM	The Home Office of the UK and the European Refugee Fund.	2003 – present	88 individuals
Netherlands	Caritas	CORDAID	2006-2007	2 cases
Switzerland	World Vision/IOM	Federal Office for Migration (FOM)/Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)	February 2006 – March 2008	51 individuals
Switzerland	IOM	Swiss Government	Since 15 January 2006	48 individuals

Table 8: Existing Return Programmes Programme Overviews

Programme	Organization	Type of returnee served	Goals/Objectives	Type of Services Provided	Target Population	Formal programme evaluations?
FEDASIL (Belgium)	Caritas	Voluntary Migrants (from which all of them were asylum seekers)	▪ Assist migrants in return to their home country ▪ Provide support for returned migrants of Georgian nationality, regardless their age, racial background, religion or sex up to 3 months ▪ Provide returnees with necessary information, help in selection of re-qualification courses, help in job's seeking, creation of small business, etc.	▪ Assist migrants in reintegration ▪ Arrange different business trainings for the returnees ▪ help in job search	Georgian Migrants in Belgium	No
CORDAID (The Netherlands)	Caritas	Rejected asylum seekers	▪ Smoothing the reintegration process of returnees from the Netherlands to Georgia through facilitation, counselling and monitoring services ▪ Support for 6 months, which can be extended ▪ Enhancing economic self reliance of returnees from the Netherlands to Georgia by stimulation of entrepreneurship through technical assistance, and loans if needed, for income generating activities.	▪ Help migrants in reintegration and resettlement ▪ Arrange different business trainings for the returnees ▪ help in job search	Voluntary migrants from the Netherlands	No
"Return Assistance to Georgian citizens returning back from Switzerland"	World Vision IOM (handles health and documentation concerns)	Voluntary return	▪ Ensures sustainable economic and social reinsertion of Georgian citizens, who decided to return voluntarily back home from Switzerland. ▪ Contribute to poverty reduction and economic development.	▪ Social work counselling ▪ Assist with placement in an appropriate business ▪ Aid to access to micro-credits ▪ Advocate with relevant agencies ▪ Assist with developing business plans ▪ Cultural integration/adaptation training	Voluntary Migrants from Switzerland	

				▪ Psychosocial rehabilitation ▪ Logistical support (such as housing search, temporary accommodation etc.) ▪ Vocational training ▪ Business training/business plan development ▪ Small grants in support of business plan implementation ▪ Facilitation the access to the micro-loans		
Assisted Voluntary Return to Georgia from Switzerland	IOM	Voluntary returnees	facilitates the assisted voluntary return and reintegration of those asylum seekers from Georgia, who have applied for asylum in Switzerland prior to January 1st, 2007	▪ Return-relevant country-of-origin information ▪ Return counselling ▪ Airport reception assistance, and organization of onward transportation ▪ Medical treatment ▪ Social reintegration	Migrants from Switzerland	NA
Assisted Voluntary Return (AVR) and Reintegration Programme from the UK to Georgia	IOM	Asylum seekers	Helps Georgian rejected asylum seekers return home and reintegrate into their communities with dignity and a tangible hope for the future.	Reintegration assistance can cover vocational training courses, setting up small businesses, public education, costs related to attending a training course or educational institution.	Rejected asylum seekers migrants from UK	NA
Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration from Poland, Czech Republic, Ireland	IOM	Voluntary returnees	provides countries of return with up-to-date information on Georgia, including spheres such as education, employment, medical care, social assistance programmes, benefits, accommodation, etc.	Reintegration assistance covers vocational training courses, setting up small businesses, public education.	Voluntary returnees from Poland, Czech Republic, Ireland	Not Identified
Programme of returnees and reintegration of returnees from France	PIN	Alternative to deportation	Prevention of illegal migration through organizing seminars (for students, youth, young children, middle-aged people, basically everyone is welcome), media trainings (that is for journalists), education through TV, radio programmes. They give legal aid (e.g. how to get visas, scholarships for and in destination countries).	PIN helps them with social, psychological issues to check what kind of support they need. Help with setting up small- or middle-sized businesses through discussing business ideas, identifying market needs, giving financial aid (French government is giving finances for that). After 1 year they have a follow-up whether this money was actually spent on business, or not.	Georgian migrants in France, returned Georgians from France	Not identifies

Table 9: (Pre)existing Returnee Programme Self Assessments

Programme	Organization	Most effective services and why	Least utilized and/or effective services and why	Key difficulties and challenges with implementation	3 ways to improve programme	How successful at meeting returnee needs?	Metrics by which evaluate success
CORDAIL FEDASIL	CARITAS	Trainings and help with the job search	Not identified	Few cases	More finances	Medium	Not identified
"Return Assistance to Georgian citizens returning back from Switzerland"	World Vision	Not Identified; They cover everything except health;	Not identified	--	--	--	Monitoring, constant contacts with beneficiaries
Programme of returnees and reintegration of returnees from France	PIN	Business Trainings and financial aid	Not identified	Not identified		Not identified	No evaluation done so far

Table 10: Existing Returnee Programmes – Beneficiary Profiles

Programme	**Organization**	**# served**	**Demographic profiles** (by sex, age, education etc.)	**Reason left Georgia**	**Reason returned to Georgia**	**Regions where from**
CORDAIL	Caritas	1 case (1 more from Austria, as an exception)	So far, served only Georgians, although programme is open to all citizens of Georgia;	Economic hardship	Rejected asylum seekers must return	Tbilisi
FEDASIL	Caritas	2 cases	A couple returned from Belgium are accountants by profession. .	Economic hardship	One participant returned to receive health care.	Tbilisi
"Return Assistance to Georgian citizens returning back from Switzerland"	World Vision	51 individuals	WV mostly serves men, aged 22-66, unskilled.	Economic conditions, unemployment	Mostly due to families	Georgia
Programme of returnees and reintegration of returnees from France	PIN	44 families	Until 2000, it was mainly women who migrated, not its both men and women, mostly young.	Economic hardship	Threat of deportation	Georgia

5.2 Returnee Focus Groups

Given the lack of information on the experience of returnees, at the request of the Danish Refugee Council the authors of this report conducted a series of focus groups across the country. The objectives of the focus groups were to:

- Assess motivations for departure and return as well as types of migration.
- Evaluate returnees' awareness and use of available resources and the services' utility to them.
- Identify challenges/needs in return and reintegration process and possible interventions.

Methodology

Snowball methodology was used to identify returnees. We relied on and were quite grateful for referrals and assistance from the return and reintegration programmes of World Vision, People in Need and Caritas. We also relied on already identified returnees.

Initially we intended to limit the groups to returnees who arrived since January 2006. However, given the challenge in recruiting returnees, the time frame was expanded to after November 2003 in order to limit to those who have returned during the current administration.

Groups were conducted in Tbilisi, Kutaisi, Batumi and Akhalkalaki. Cities were chosen for logistical reasons, including the ability to work with organizations for support. Kutaisi was selected because it has a history of high migration rates. Both Tbilisi and Batumi have growing economies and are departure points for migrants. Akhalkalki was selected in order to evaluate a community of ethnic minorities with an established history of migration.

Overview: Economic security is key to sustainable return

Economic insecurity was overwhelmingly reported as the key driver of emigration from Georgia – and the primary concern of returnees. Those returnees who were employed and earning a comfortable living currently in Georgia expressed no desire to leave again. Conversely, the majority of those who continue to face economic hardship report that they would migrate again.

This desire to earn money also made participants relatively elastic in the choice of destination countries and in their given employment. Almost all participants who worked in EU countries reported that they did not work in their profession, although those who migrated to Russia more frequently did. In part due to this "brain waste," the overwhelming majority reported that their earning potential and/or employment prospects did not improve in Georgia upon their return.

Many returnees indicated that their preference would be to stay in Georgia and almost all viewed their migration abroad as a temporary phenomenon. Family and nostalgia were as popular motives to return as was legal status, regardless of ethnicity. Thus, a strong inclination to remain home is present which could be capitalized.

In general, return programme participants were satisfied with the support received through the programme. They tended to emphasize the economic components of the programme and rarely spoke of those parts which supported adaptation. This focus may be a function of using focus groups rather than one-on-one interviews, however.

Profile of Returnees

The sample of returnees who participated in the focus groups shares a similar demographic make-up with respondents of other studies. Men represented 67% of the sample. While the largest group of returnees were 25-35 year olds, all groups are represented. (If Akhalkalki data is excluded, the share of men declines to 60% and the 25-35 year old age group for males bulges). Women returnees tend to be younger than male: 70% of women were 18-35 whereas 50% of men were 25-45.

Fifty three percent of the sample reported that they are married, although females tend to be single or divorced more often. Similar to previous studies, the average household size for the participants was 4.1 persons with an average number of 1.4 children.

Significantly, participating returnees reflects the highly educated/skilled nature of Georgian migrants: 43% of male and 50% of female participants possessed a bachelor's degree or greater (see Figure 7). One third of this population of returnees reported being unemployed before migrating.

Slightly more than one-third of returnees (35%) reported that they speak a Western European language well (German – 12.5%; English – 12.5%; French - 6.3%; and other European languages – 3.1%). Students account for a large share of German speakers.

Similarly, one-third of all returnees reported being unemployed before they first migrated; 45% of the unemployed were highly educated. Another 30% reported owning a business prior to migrating. The large share of students (20%) reflects the popularity of studying abroad as a motivation to migrate. Participants with technical occupations (12.5%) were another significant group of migrants. Fifteen percent reported being managers or professionals. No participant reported being a non-scientist professional.

Reflecting the economic motivations of their migration, most returnees lacked sustainable income. Only 20% reported earning more than 100 GEL a month before migration.

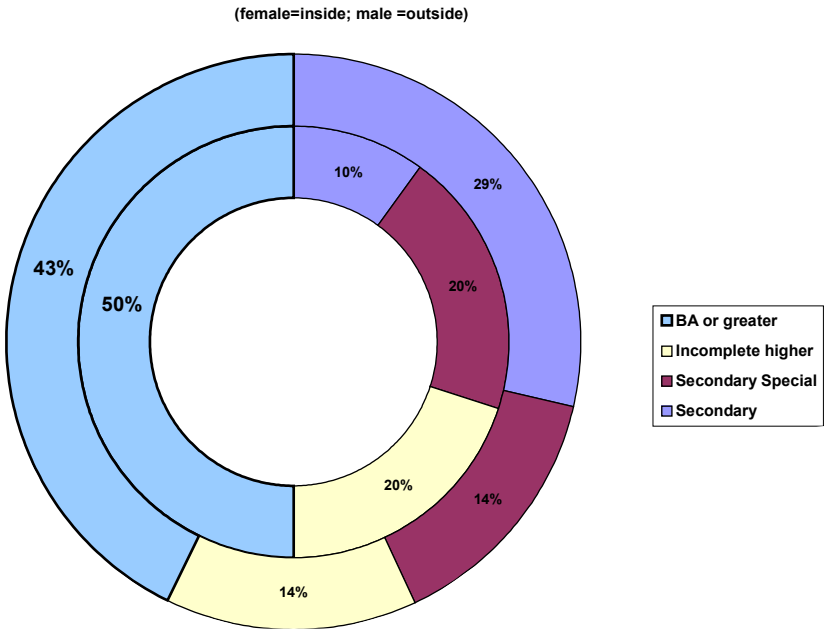
Table 11: Occupations before departure

Occupation	%
senior official/manager	9.4%
professional (scientist)	6.3%
professional (non scientist)	0.0%
technical professions	3.1%
clerk, service worker	0.0%
skilled agricultural worker	0.0%
craft/ trades worker	9.4%
unskilled worker	0.0%
armed forces	0.0%
Student	18.8%
Unemployed	34.4%
Other	6.3%
no response	12.5%
Total	*100.0%*

Table 12: Demographic profile of returnee groups

	Total	Male	Female
# of returnees	32	22	10
		68.8%	**31.3%**
Age groups			
18-24	**17%**	9%	20%
25-35	**34.4%**	27.2%	50%
36-45	**18.8%**	22.7%	10%
46-65	**34.4%**	40.9%	20%
Education			
Secondary	**21.9%**	27.3%	10%
Secondary Special	**15.6%**	13.6%	20%
Incomplete higher	**15.6%**	13.6%	20%
BA	**6.3%**	9.0%	0%
MA	**6.3%**	9.0%	0%
Specialist degree	**31.3%**	22.7%	50%
Marital Status			
Single	**34%**	36.4%	30%
Married	**53%**	59.1%	40%
Divorced	**3%**	0	10%
Separated	**6%**	0	20%
Widowed	**3%**	4.5%	0
Average children	**1.4**	1.3	1.4
Average Household size	**4.1**	4.3	4.1

Figure 13: Returnees are highly educated



Each focus group had a distinctive character, reflecting the diverse nature of migration in Georgia. The heavily ethnic Armenian city of Akhalkalaki offered mostly male returnees who travelled seasonally and/or regularly to Russia and Greece; the other cities offered a wider range of age, gender balance and more highly educated migrants who tended to go abroad for long periods of time. The youngest groups of returnees were surprisingly not in Tbilisi, but in Kutaisi and Batumi.

Table 13: Comparison of Demographics of Focus Groups by City

Akhalkalaki	Batumi	Kutaisi	Tbilisi (Pilot+FG)
▪ Male ▪ Oldest (average age 50.5) ▪ Least educated (incomplete high school) ▪ Married ▪ Most children (2.4) ▪ Larger household size (4.7)	▪ Largely male (68%) ▪ Younger group (33.7) ▪ Second least educated (many students) ▪ 50% married ▪ 1.2 kids ▪ Smaller household size (3.3)	▪ Mix of males and females ▪ Youngest group of migrants (29.8) ▪ Highly educated (BA or greater) ▪ 67% never married ▪ 0.9 children ▪ Larger household size (4.7)[44]	▪ Mix of male and female ▪ Average age (40.7) with largest variation. ▪ Highly educated (BA or greater) ▪ 60% married ▪ Least children (0.85) ▪ Smaller household size (3.3)

Each focus group had a prevailing character that, while not necessarily reflecting the dominate characteristics of migration in that particular city, did offer snapshots of the different types of migration from Georgia. Nearly half of the Kutaisi group had worked and studied in Europe on a structured programme.

It is also important to consider that the returnees identified and interviewed are likely not representative of the spectrum of Georgians who choose to migrate, but rather of those who currently are forced to or choose to return.

Destination Countries

Russia, Germany and Greece were the most popular destinations for participants. The EU as a region attracted 50% of returnees, while Russia only attracted about one-third. Both are consistent with other migration studies. These findings also reflect beliefs revealed during the focus groups that earning potential is higher in Europe and that the quality of life – including treatment by the authorities – is better.

During the discussions, participants noted that Italy, Spain and Greece were easier countries to adapt to – and therefore more attractive – due to lifestyle similarities.

It is also of interest to note that of the participants who made multiple migratory journeys, nearly 90% reported returning to the same country of their previous journey.

Figure 14: Destination Countries for Returnees (first country)

[44] Large size is likely due to many returnees residing with their parents/nuclear family.

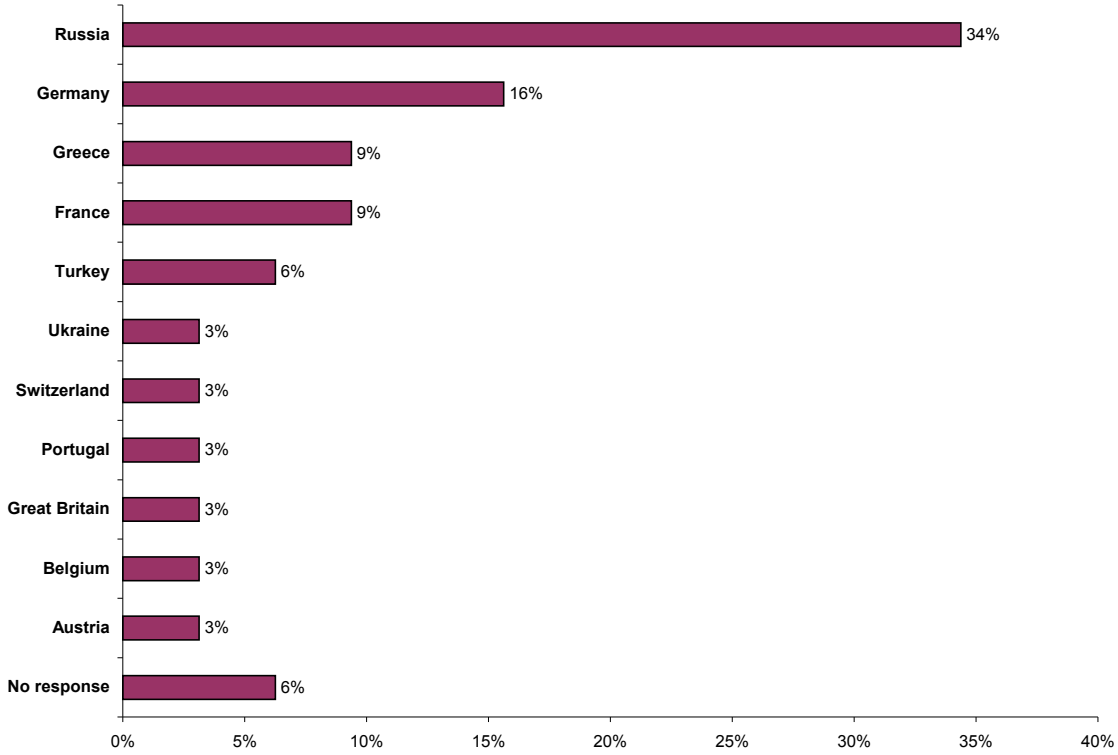
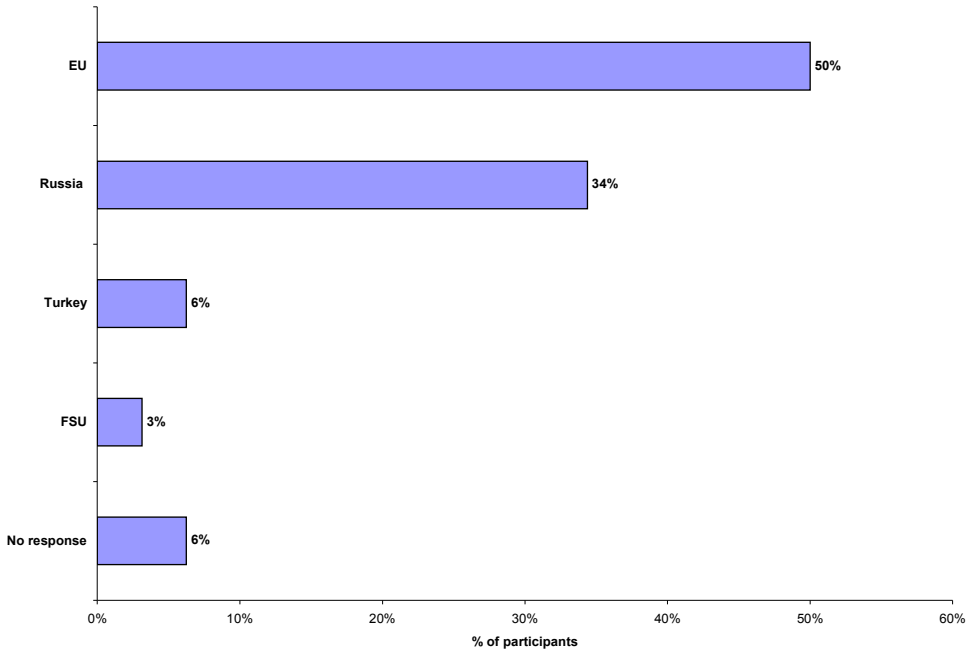


Figure 15: EU most popular region for migration



Process of Migrating Abroad

Reasons for migration

The returnee focus groups confirmed that economic hardship is the dominate driver of migratory movements from Georgia, regardless of skill level and gender. For younger participants, travel and study were important factors as well. All were seeking opportunities they could not find in Georgia.

Destination countries are mostly chosen based on networks, ease of access and reputation not a desire to reside in a particular country. Most participants reported that they went places because friends or families were there, consistent with the networked migration pattern revealed in existing literature. Often, participants entered Europe through a "gateway" country (e.g., Greece, Ukraine), usually where their contact was, and travelled until they found a country where they could work. Older migrants, however, seemed to care less about where they were and more about access, unless extended family resided in the destination country. The low correlation between language fluency and countries chosen further illustrates the indifference to destination (see appendix A). The network effect is also evident in repeat migration: participants who reported making multiple trips (67%) usually returned to their first destination country (89%).

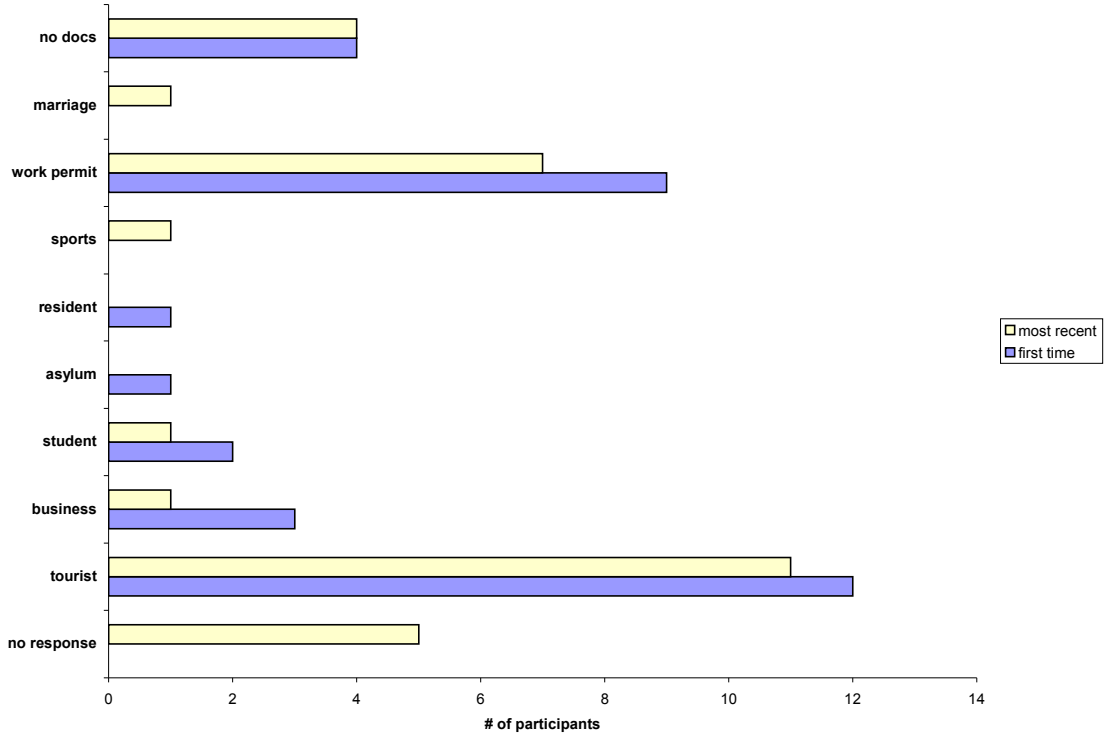
Yet, **younger migrants seemed to be more deliberative about their destinations.** Most of the younger migrant participants had travelled on a structured programme, either to study or to work. Germany's *au pair* placement programme was popular, as well as study abroad programmes. Younger migrants reported specific reasons for wanting to go to their destination, such as improving language skills. They also more frequently noted a general desire to explore other cultures and countries.

While migration often is the strategy of last resort for ethnic Georgians, in Akhalkalaki migration seems to be more of an accepted lifestyle. Returnees in Akhalkalaki preferred to stay in their "homeland," like those in other cities. Yet, their attitude towards migration was less tinged by frustration and the discussion of the process was more systematic. Unlike other cities where returnees seem to feel thrust into migration as a strategy, participants in Akhalkalaki seemed to embrace it as one of many strategies.

Means of entry

Most participants entered their first gateway and/or destination country legally. In Europe, many reported that they relied on invitations from friends and/or family to obtain tourist visas. As the figure below demonstrates, work permits and business visas were the second and third most popular means. Only 12.5% of respondents had no documents.

Figure 16: Tourist visas and work permits most popular documents used



Document use differed by destination country:

- Returnees had employed the most diverse set of documents for Russia (4) as well as no documents.

- Tourists visas were employed for most European countries, including popular Greece. However, for Germany only business visas or work permits were utilized. For Switzerland, however, all respondents entered illegally. This phenomenon likely occurred because as returnees explained, they arrived at Switzerland via a "gateway" country.

- Only one participant had entered a country as an asylum seeker or with refugee status. This data confirms the pattern of asylum seeking as a means to remain abroad legally, rather than to enter.

Figure 16 also indicates that people mostly stayed with the same strategy they initially employed. One exception is students, who would often later return to the same country of study to work.

Type of Migration

Returnees seemed to have had diverse intentions when migrating abroad. While many returnees intended to migrate permanently (35%), a large number also reported that they engaged in seasonal migration (34%). [45] Within the groups, Batumi returnees had the largest intention to emigrate permanently (60%), while only 22% of the Kutaisi participants did. Seasonal migration was most popular in Javakheti (50%), as expected, but it was also popular in Kutaisi (33%).

Most of the returnees (70%) stayed for less than 2 years abroad on their most recent trip.

Experience abroad

[45] The exclusion of Javakheti only slightly alters these proportions; 50% of participants from Javakheti engaged in seasonal migration while 30% intended to emigrate permanently.

Economic activities abroad

The activities which returnees reported reflect the intention to support household livelihood in Georgia.

Most participants reported being employed overseas although the security of their jobs was usually low.

Most returnees were employed in low skill jobs, either as unskilled labourers or service workers, particularly in EU countries. Those unemployed in Georgia primarily found work as unskilled labourers (63%), while students tended to find jobs as clerks or in agriculture.

Interestingly, returnees in managerial positions more than doubled abroad. In addition to senior officials retaining their status, those with skilled professional backgrounds (i.e., trades workers and technical professions) increased their professional status. As expected, the majority of such positions were held in Russia (57%). Also worth noting, none of those in senior positions were part of the Tbilisi groups.

Reported remittances reflect the economic nature of the migration from Georgia. Nearly two-thirds (63%) of the participants reported that they sent home money to their families while working abroad. Those over 35 were most likely to remit monies home (see Appendix A). However, while all women who sent money home did so on a monthly basis, 44% men sent money home every two-three months while 38% reported remitting on a monthly basis. No one reported sending money less than twice a year.

Georgian social lives abroad:

While participants who lived in European countries usually had some contact with Georgians where they lived, this contact was informal. Many knew of other Georgians in their locations. The Orthodox Church – rarely the Georgian Orthodox Church – was frequently mentioned as a place where Georgians could be found. In France, cafés and the "Russian Orthodox church with the Georgian priest" were identified as places where Georgians would socialize. Ethnic Armenians from Javakheti tended to join the activities of the highly organized Armenian diaspora in Greece and Russia.

Most dismissed the idea of a "community" and few knew of any formal organizations. One respondent in the Tbilisi group commented that any such organizations were meant for those who resided in the countries "*legally and had high remuneration; Georgians who are working and suffering abroad have no access to those ... communities*". This separation from the Georgian "elite" could impact employment and social opportunities, as migrants rely on their social networks, which tend to be horizontal and therefore limit vertical opportunities.

Some participants felt that Georgians abroad don't trust one another, particularly those outside their social networks, and that this contributes to a lack of community. Some participants described other Georgians as "criminals" or as untrustworthy. This perspective varied strongly by focus group, however. While near unanimous in the Batumi focus group, most in the Kutaisi group indicated that they primarily socialized with Georgians.

This picture starkly contrasts with the one drawn by participants of the community of Georgians in Russia. Not only did participants have large networks of Georgian acquaintances as well as friends, but they also reported more formal cultural infrastructure, such as dance troupes for children and schools. This description is consistent with the author's research in Moscow,

where a variety of formal social institutions such as schools, churches and cultural organizations serve a diverse population. As one participant in Kutaisi noted, "the routine of our [social] life in St. Petersburg was very similar to the Georgian one."

Many participants report socializing outside their ethnic group with both migrants from Russian-speaking post-Soviet states, and migrants from elsewhere. As one participant explained, he socialized with those who shared a "common cultural situation." In Germany in particular, Georgians reported befriending the local population. Those who spoke relevant languages tended to socialize with locals more than those who did not.

Difficulties abroad

Health concerns were commonly mentioned difficulties in addition to cash flow.

When in need of assistance, respondents reported that they would turn to their informal networks of Georgian relatives and friends or even other ethnic groups. International organizations, particularly the International Committee of the Red Cross, and social workers were also mentioned as a place to turn with confidence.

Interaction with the Georgian embassy was mostly limited to legal issues and passport renewal. The embassy is not viewed as a place to turn with confidence when in need. One participant related a story of how a Georgian colleague had been killed and the embassy had refused to repatriate the remains. Another participant in Batumi described ultimately turning to the Croatian embassy for assistance after the Georgian embassy had declined.

Return

Motivation to Return

Family obligation and nostalgia seem to play as significant a role in motivating return as legal status, whether in Europe or Russia. Quality of life and the failure to fulfil financial goals while abroad was also an often mentioned motivation. In every focus group, returnees propagated a strong sentiment akin to the following: "*Georgians can't stay abroad for a long time; they are homesick with nostalgic feelings*." Despite this romanticism, most participants coupled their nostalgia with more pragmatic reasons, such as family necessity.

Younger participants were conscientious about legal concerns; many mentioned the desire not to violate the visas for their programmes in Germany so that they could return legally in the future.

Those returning from Russia also noted the increasing difficulties for Georgians in the country and the tougher employment situation.

Strategies for Return

Overall, participants in all cities seemed well informed on how to manoeuvre informal and formal mechanisms to facilitate their return. Some participants were creative about exploiting opportunities.

One strategy was to request a "white passport" from the embassy in Switzerland. The white passport entitles the requester to a free return trip home. As Switzerland is not part of the Schengen agreement, to be deported from there does not interfere with the chance to obtain a Schengen visa in the future, though this will evidently soon change.

Table 14: Assistance received during return

Family	31%
Return Programme	16%
Community	6%
GOG	3%
Friends	3%
no response	41%

In general, participants relied on their families to assist them to return home. Of the 59% who responded, 31% reported relying on their families and only 3% on the Georgian government.

The challenges of return

In terms of physical return, a number of returnees reported difficulties "begin at customs." Those with temporary and white passports in particular noted difficulties.

Most participants expressed that they "knew what to expect". They knew that it would not be as good a quality of life as they felt they had abroad. Those who had been away for long periods of time reported that they were aware of what the reality of the changes were.

Despite this awareness, most reported the initial euphoria of return and reuniting with friends and family dissipated quickly as realities set in. One sentiment frequently repeated was that nothing had really changed. Interestingly, those who had returned from Russia tended to be most pessimistic.

This depressive statement is likely heavily informed by the struggle to generate income upon return.

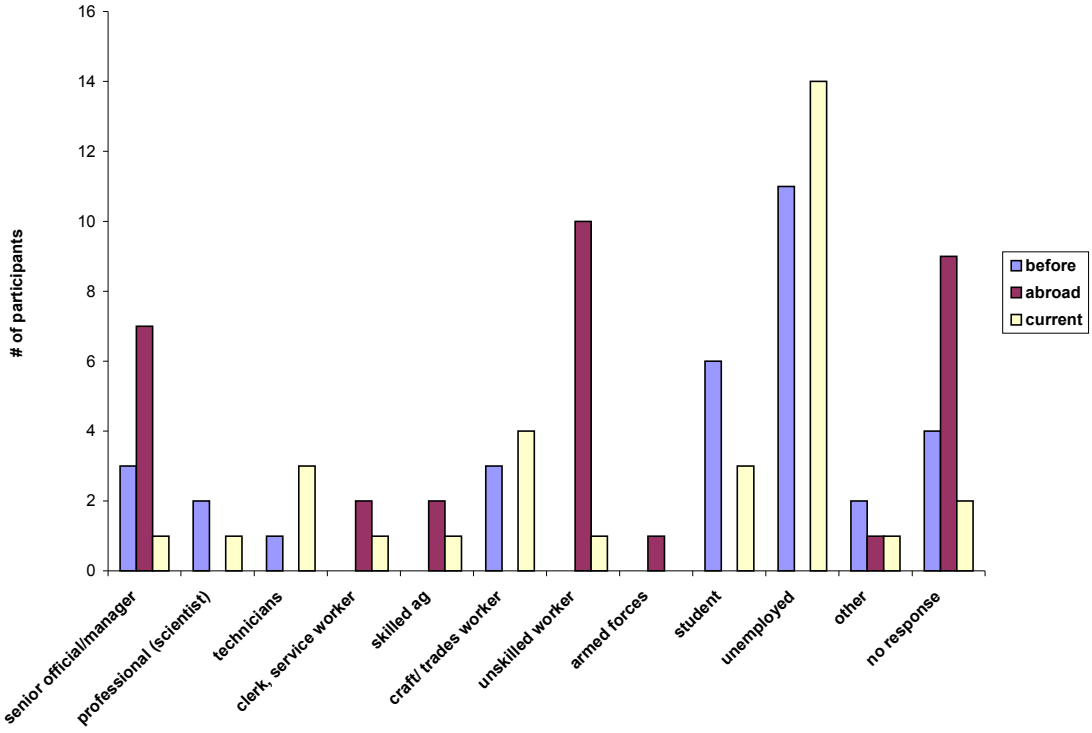
Most participants indicated that **the biggest challenge they have faced is financial livelihood.** For most, it is both finding a job and one that pays sufficiently. Others reported difficulties starting their own business, often connected to capital for the business. One participant complained that inflation was causing his savings to rapidly deplete. Only a few participants noted cultural adaptations as a key struggle.

Most participants returned to similar employment situations to before they left. Unemployment rose from 34% to 44%, and there is a notable up tick in technical and unskilled jobs in the return period. Those who owned businesses *before* migrating account for most of the jump in unemployment, while 78% of those who were unemployed before continued to be upon return.

Income did not improve nor did the distribution change. The statistical story matches the perception of returnees, most of whom felt that their time abroad had not improved their employability. Only returnees from Greece in Akhalkalaki indicate that they had acquired new skills relevant to their professions. This finding is consistent with other studies, which found that most labour migrants to European countries are underemployed abroad.

The loss of remittances and the low salaries of employment in Georgia likely put significant strain on households. Many respondents spoke of the strain of not being able to support their families.

Figure 17: Occupational status before - during - after



While many returnees reported that **relationships in the community and friends had not changed** significantly, it was evident that their realities were more in line with sentiments of disconnect reported by the IOM and Sakevarishvili's studies.

- Many respondents expressed frustration that they no longer understood Georgians and vice versa. Those who had lived abroad for extended periods of time most frequently observed a difference in thinking and attitude. Another challenge was not understanding offhand references, etc.

- Others reported that their community expected success and new-found wealth as a result of travelling abroad. Consequently, community members frequently approached them for assistance. Given that participants themselves often actually needed assistance, this created complex feelings.

Return Programmes

Despite word of mouth, there is a quite limited knowledge of return programmes among returnee participants. Only five participants (15%) had participated in programmes: three in PIN's programme, two in World Vision's programme with Switzerland and one with IOM. Few others knew of their existence. This is particularly true in the Akhalkalaki focus groups. In addition, there were some misconceptions, such as the belief that to participate in the French programme, one had to have been abroad for two years and have refugee status.

Those who did participate in programmes were usually informed of the opportunities through interactions with government organizations prior to departure or upon arrival at the airport.

Distrust seems to have been a significant obstacle. In general, participants expressed scepticism that programmes were genuinely intended to help them: "*when I was informed about [a return programme] … I did not believe it at first. I thought that it was their effort to make us return*"

said one Batumi participant. There is a feeling that European countries are just trying to get Georgians out.

Participants also seem to distrust or lack confidence in the Georgian government. When asked who should run a return programme, almost all participants suggested non-governmental organizations, either local or international. In Akhalkalaki, participants suggested that, instead of running return programmes, the government should help them migrate legally.

When asked what an ideal return programme would look like, most participants expressed doubt that such programmes could be effective. Explained a participant in Tbilisi: "No programme can offer the conditions in Georgia they have abroad. People are employed abroad and they are sending money to their families in Georgia. That is why they do not participate in those kinds of programmes." Another participant who had lived in France noted that the programmes cannot replicate the level of employment and quality of life that Georgians find abroad.

Unsurprisingly, when asked what an ideal return programme would include, the responses focused on jobs and income generation opportunities. As noted in another section, most returnees have been unable to improve their financial situation as a result of travelling abroad and few have savings to rely on.

Other ideas involved ways to mitigate the financial impacts on families, including assistance with health care, free school books for children and general financial assistance for the poor.

Evaluation by programme participants

All of the participants who were involved in a return programme identified the **employment assistance** – job training and placement or business development – as what attracted them to the programme. None of the participants mentioned non-economic related service components without prompting.

Participants offered mixed reviews of the programmes.

Criticisms of the programmes often focused on the insufficient level of funding for implementing business plans and/or to support one's family. Participants noted that the amount of funding available significantly constrained the choice of businesses and were often insufficient for anything other than opening a café or starting a small taxi service. Participants suggested expanding the funding to enable larger projects.

Another concern raised in the pilot focus group related to World Vision's business plan requirements. The participant explained that the initial business plan, which must be submitted as application for the World Vision programme while overseas, must be written in German. To fulfil this requirement, the participant hired a translator. This requirement has the potential to exclude many of those whom the programme target because of insufficient language skills and/or financing. Of the returnees who went to German-speaking countries (excluding those who went to study), only two (25%) indicated that they spoke German fluently.

When asked what an ideal programme would consist of, the job creation and placement and business development were the overwhelming response. One participant in Akhalkalaki suggested that facilitating legal migration to Europe would be most helpful.

All programme participants were enthusiastic about the organizations sponsoring their programme. They praised the accessibility and helpfulness of the staff and were in general quite happy with the training and support that they received.

Housing assistance was mentioned as well, since some returnees reported that they had sold their real estate in order to pay for their travel abroad. Other suggestions include: providing school books for the children of returnees; economic support for the poor; health insurance;

Psychological and social adaptation assistance was only mentioned by a participant of the Swiss World Vision programme in Batumi. However, many returnees reported some kind of struggle with adaptation. Many reported an initial let-down once the honeymoon of return wore off and the reality of life in Georgia sunk in. Others noted that they often felt that their family and friends did not understand them, although most also reported no change in relationships. The stress of their community's expectation that they now had ample money to lend to others was also mentioned. Given the group setting, it is possible that participants underplayed the distress they have endured for social acceptability reasons.

Although psychological assistance was not identified as a need, the stresses that the participants have mentioned do indicate a need for them. Since no evaluations of return programmes in Georgia have been conducted, there is no data on the actual utilization or efficacy of these services.

A Batumi participant in the Swiss World Vision programme reported that she wanted to start an association of Swiss returned migrants to support inform other Georgians in Switzerland of their options.

How to educate the public

The general consensus was that television advertising on Georgian channels was the best way to raise awareness about the programmes. This also reflects how most returnees report they get their news: 75% report getting it from television (national, local or international).

Others encourage official letters. Interestingly, one participant was confident that the Georgian government knows where all Georgians are in any given country and therefore could send each an official letter.

Word-of-mouth was also a suggestion, which given the way information is disseminated does seem the most efficacious manner.

In the Tbilisi focus group, all of the participants in their 20s and 30s expressed regret about having returned. Although initially happy about their reunions with family and friends, within a few weeks, they wanted to re-migrate.

6 Public Awareness of Migration

In recent years, increased efforts have been undertaken to raise the general public's awareness about issues related to migration. Anti-trafficking education has been a primary focus. Other campaigns have attempted to educate the general public about the dangers of illegal migration. Efforts have now expanded to promoting and informing the public about legal means of migrating. Table 15 details various efforts both with the public and relevant governmental institutions. It is not exhaustive, but it gives a sense of the overall efforts.

Again, we had difficulty locating assessments of public awareness about migration issues, particularly those not targeted to trafficking.

Overall, assessments and the focus groups conducted for this study revealed that while the public may be well informed, this information has not necessarily translated to their attitudes or activities. Cultural beliefs and economic needs continue to prevail.

6.1 The effectiveness of trafficking efforts

Most experts believe that the public education efforts on trafficking have resulted in both better knowledge and a shift in attitudes towards victims of trafficking. As such, anti-trafficking efforts provide a strong proxy.

Current awareness and attitudes about trafficking were assessed by World Vision in a nationwide survey of 327 respondents in 2006. The survey found that the public awareness campaigns had been quite effective in increasing the general public's understanding about trafficking, but that stigma still remained.

In particular:

- 94% of respondents had heard of human trafficking.
- Television was the most common source of information (48%).
- Most respondents associated trafficking with a person being deceived about a job (35.2%), being engaged in illegal labour (26%), or prostitutes going abroad for work (21%)
- 81.2% stated they would confirm the authenticity of a job offer.

But

- One third of respondents said they would not feel comfortable working with a trafficking victim. Only 37% said they would feel comfortable.

Table 15: Public Awareness Efforts in Georgia

Organization	Programme	Year(s) of Operation	Location(s)	Description (objectives and services provided; public awareness components only)	Target population	Outcomes/Comments
State Fund	Public Service Announcements	Jan-March 07	All regions of Georgia	▪ PSOs ran about 25 times a day on three TV channels; radio show broadcasts, ▪ public debates organized in higher educational institutions and the office of the Public Defender of Georgia ▪ July 07- anti-trafficking documentary aired in Tbilisi		
State Fund	Training Curriculum	2007	Tbilisi, all regions of Georgia	▪ Inclusion of crime of trafficking and related issues now in training manuals for the Office of the Prosecutor General and police academy		
People in Need	"Prevention of Illegal Migration and Aid for Regions in Need"	2003-2007	Tbilisi, Samske-Javakheti, Batumi	▪ General awareness-raising about risks of illegal immigration and trafficking, ▪ Disseminate information about legal means to work abroad and its benefits. ▪ Tools use include: o Media training o Seminars o TV and radio programmes o Film festivals o comics		
Women's Information Centre	Informational support to the implementation of the National Action Plan on Combating Trafficking	ongoing	Focus on regions with highly vulnerable groups such as IDPs and ethnic minorities, Tskhinvali	▪ Exchange of information between civil society-based and government-based stakeholders; ▪ General public awareness raising ▪ Disseminate of preventive information among risk-groups (economically and socially vulnerable groups – IDPs, ethnic minorities, labour migrants, youth).	Trafficking victims, civil society, governmental agencies, international organizations	

Organization	Programme	Year(s) of Operation	Location(s)	Description (objectives and services provided; public awareness components only)	Target population	Outcomes/Comments
			region and Samtskhe-Javakheti.			
IOM	"Informed Migration- An Integrated Approach to Promoting Legal Migration through National Capacity Building and Inter-regional Dialogue between the South Caucasus and the EU"	Dec 2005-2008	Migration Centres in Tbilisi, Kutaisi, Batumi, Gurijani	▪ Establish Migration Resource Centres and build their capacity to conduct surveys, studies, and data analysis on migration flows ▪ Disseminate objective information on foreign and domestic employment opportunities, conditions abroad, legal counsel ▪ Enhance labour administration skills of public and private sector authorities in marketing workers nationally and abroad to prevent recruitment abuse ▪ Public information meetings in towns around Georgia took place in 11/06		▪ Increased understanding of IOM's role (protection not visa agency) ▪ Decline in acceptance of dubious employment schemes
GYLA	"No To Trafficking in Persons"	2005-2008	GEO	▪ Improve Georgian legislation, victim protection, legal aid to victims, ▪ Trainings, awareness-raising programmes, ▪ Shelters, hotline to support victims	General population; trainings for judges, ombudsmen, NGOs	
OSCE	"Anti Human Trafficking Media Campaign"	2007	GEO	▪ Radio public service announcements (PSAs) and radio programmes to raise awareness of the Georgian society on the risks of human trafficking and labour exploitation. explains legal employment rights and where to go for assistance	General population	
OSCE	"Human Trafficking Prevention-Theatre Performance 'The	2007	GEO	▪ Explain the probability of risks	General population,	

Organization	Programme	Year(s) of Operation	Location(s)	Description (objectives and services provided; public awareness components only)	Target population	Outcomes/Comments
	Blinds'"				especially youth and potential victims	
World Vision						
WomenAid	Be Smart! Be Safe! Anti-Trafficking Multimedia Campaign in Georgia"	2000-?	Throughout Georgia	▪ Roundtable discussions on trafficking legislation, trafficking experts, methodologies of research ▪ Media Advocacy Network Platform project (	General population for awareness raising, vulnerable populations	
People's Harmonious Development Society	Regional training and information campaign	2003		▪ Trained regional trainers on anti trafficking issues and awareness-raising techniques ▪ Meetings with local officials		
People's Harmonious Development Society	Information Dissemination	2003	11 regions of GEO (undisclosed)	▪ 2 issues of newspaper "UnderLined",		
People's Harmonious Development Society	Programme of Prevention of Illegal Migration and Trafficking in Human Beings—The Study of "Psycho-Type of Potential Victim of Trafficking"	2002-2003	Tbilisi	▪ Study of potential victims of trafficking		

6.2 General Public Focus Groups

Migration is not stigmatized among the general public; rather, it is viewed by most as a survival strategy made necessary by the economic and social conditions in Georgia. Until job prospects and conditions improve, migration will continue to be necessary and return will be limited, participants believe. That said, most participants were hesitant to recommend pursuing emigration either for themselves or for close relatives and friends.

For the most part, participants seemed reasonably well informed about the realities of migration, its advantages as well as disadvantages. Yet, although illegal migration is frowned upon in principle, personal relationships still trump this understanding. Most participants (except in Akhalkalaki) indicated they would help relatives obtain forged documents if asked.

European countries are the most popular potential destinations because participants believe that salaries are higher and that the quality of life is better.

In general, participants respect and support migrants. Not only would they be happy to work with returned migrants, many participants highly valued the work ethic and exposure they believed the migrants would have gained. For the most part, participants seemed to welcome the return of migrants.

While participants believe the Georgian government should take an active role in protecting citizens working and studying abroad, most are sceptical of its will and capacity to do so. They are also doubtful that the conditions which prompt migration will improve in the near future. Therefore, for the most part they believe that promoting and/or supporting return will be unlikely to succeed.

Methodology

Objectives of the focus groups were to:

- Determine the basic knowledge base of public regarding migration
- Assess overall perceptions of migrants and returnees
- Identify what information sources most influence those perceptions
- Assess opinions and perceptions of government, NGO and INGO activities.

Profile of General Public Participants

The demographic profile of the 36 general public focus group participants closely reflect that of the general population. Men constituted 44% of the sample, while females constitute 56%. Overall, the age distribution was a bit older than 36. However, women between 25 and 35 and men between 18 and 25 were under-represented in the sample.

The majority of participants were married (56%); one third were single. All single men were younger than 36, while single women were distributed across the age groups. The average number of children was 1.3 and the average household size was 3.9, likely reflecting multi-generational households.

Participants were highly educated: 70% possessed a bachelor's degree or higher. The majority of males reported possessing specialist degrees while women possessed a variety of different degrees.

Few participants speak languages other than Russian (75%) well[46]. Only five participants (13%) spoke a Western language (German – 2; English – 2; French – 1).

A variety of occupations were represented in the sample. One third of the sample was unemployed. However, 28% were managers or professionals, and non-scientist technical professions were represented by about 8% of the sample.

Monthly income represented this occupational distribution (see Figure 13). Participants were mostly poorly remunerated. While more than half reported earning less than 100 GEL per month, one third earned between 101-300 GEL.

Table 16: Occupations of General Public participants

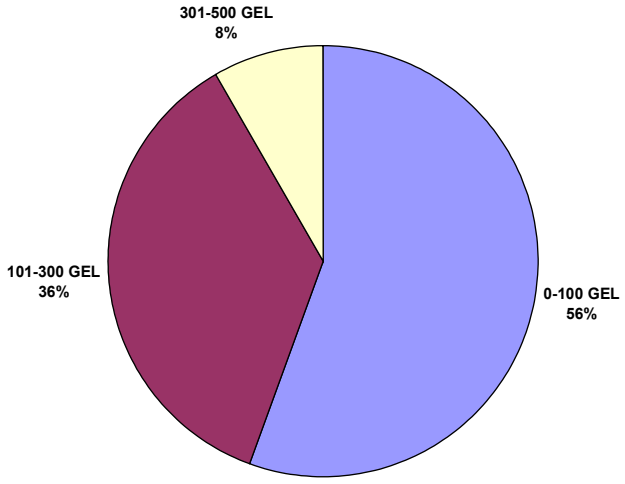
Occupation	%
legislator/senior official	5.6%
professional (scientist)	16.7%
professional (non scientist)	5.6%
technical professions	5.6%
clerk, service worker	2.8%
skilled agricultural worker	0.0%
craft/ trades worker	2.8%
unskilled	8.3%
armed forces	2.8%
student	2.8%
unemployed	33.3%
other	13.9%
no response	0.0%

[46] The Armenians in Akhalkalaki all spoke Armenian as well.

Table 17: Basic Demographic Data for General Public Sample

	Focus Group			*Census*		
	Total	**Male**	**Female**	**Total**	**Male**	**Female**
# of participants	36	16	20			
		44%	**56%**		**46%**	**53%**
Age groups						
18-24	**19.4%**	12.5%	25%	**17%**	19%	16%
25-35	**19.4%**	31.3%	10%	**25%**	25%	24%
36-45	**25%**	18.8%	30%	**25%**	24%	25%
46-65	**36.1%**	37.5%	35%	**33%**	32%	35%
Education						
Secondary	**13.5%**	18.8%	10%			
Secondary Special	**13.5%**	12.5%	15%			
Incomplete higher	**-**	--	--			
BA	**8.1%**	0%	15%			
MA	**10.8%**	6.3%	15%			
Specialist degree	**51.4%**	62.5%	45%			
No response	**2.7%**	0%	0%			
Marital Status						
Single	**33%**	31%	35%			
Married	**56%**	56%	55%			
Cohabitate	**3%**	3%	0%			
Divorced	**3%**	0%	5%			
Separated	**0%**	0%	0%			
Widowed	**6%**	6.3%	5%			
Average children	**1.3**	1.6	1.1			
Average Household size	**3.9**	4.0	3.9			

Figure 18: Salary Distribution for Public Awareness participants



Impressions and observations of the migration process

"Villages are emptying as people go abroad for money."
- Batumi participant

It is evident from the focus groups that migration is a part of everyday life; the majority of participants know someone who has left to work abroad. Each focus group was filled with stories of the experiences of relatives or friends who were living and had lived abroad.

The big picture

Participants observed that, while flows have slowed relative to the early 1990s, migration abroad continues and few have returned. Contrary to the government's pronouncements that more people are returning than departing, participants concurred that more people are departing than are returning. And their pessimistic outlook for the country implies they expect the exodus to continue.

Return is usually not permanent due to the lack of opportunity, according to participants. While more people are visiting, few have the desire to come back. Most explained, however, that those have returned usually end up "disappointed" and leave again, usually because they cannot find work. This pattern was particularly true for those who returned in response to President Saakashvili's call for Georgians to contribute to post-Rose Revolution Georgia. While most participants liked the idea, they were critical about the failure to "implement" this programme. The lack of demand also prompted many returning students to depart again, this time to find suitable work abroad. Many Georgians living abroad are "waiting for change" and poised to come back when it becomes economically realistic.

Motives to migrate

Lack of jobs and sufficient income is the overwhelming motivation for migration, according to participants. While study is another reason, participants concur that it accounts for a small share of the overall movements. Participants characterized the current situation as "unbearable" and bemoaned the low quality of life in Georgia. As one participant in the pilot explained, "I have been abroad and know that it is not so easy to live there… [but] unemployment makes people run away."

The desire to seek career development or "self-realization" given the limited opportunities, usually attributed to those highly-skilled, was also noted.

Selecting destinations
If participants were to migrate, most would mimic the patterns reported in the returnee section, particularly the reliance on networks. Most participants assert that locations would be chosen based on the presence of a friend or relative. High salary and a comfortable quality of life was another strong preference. Others noted that cultural similarities would be important to ease adaptation; they pointed to Italy and Spain as countries with a strong affinity with Georgia. Finally, language was usually mentioned by one or two persons per group.

Friends and Relatives	High Salary and Quality of Life
▪ Russia ▪ Greece ▪ Italy ▪ Spain	All of Europe, including: ▪ Spain (affinity) ▪ Italy (affinity) ▪ Germany

▪ US (ethnic Armenians)	▪ France (language)

Realities of life abroad

Participants seemed aware of many challenges of migrating for work. In all focus groups, the difficulty of finding a job was identified as a significant problem. One participant in Kutaisi explained that people take jobs abroad that they would not do if they were in Georgia. Finding a job with sufficient income was not mentioned, however.

In accordance with strong negative sentiments about illegal migration, the problems surrounding it were the focus of the discussion about challenges of migration. Entering countries illegally was viewed as treacherous. The constant fear of problems with local authorities and deportation was also frequently mentioned. One Batumi participant also observed that illegal status depressed wages. Tensions with the local population were also of concern.

Other challenges mentioned included:

- Adaptation to a new environment and the stress of relocation
- Social isolation
- Homesickness (nostalgia)
- Language obstacles

In Akhalkalaki, most focused on finding a job with a good salary and obtaining a visa. But some related that they never heard of difficulties and that money keeps coming. While this observation may be due to the well-established ethnic Armenian migration, it does also put a spotlight on the potential false perceptions. Money flow is viewed as a sign that things are successful overseas. While many may understand the difficulties in abstract, few participants related negative experiences of close family members.

The prevalence of migration in each city seemed to inform the knowledge base and character of each focus group. For example, in Kutaisi where migration is rather frequent, participants displayed a nuanced perspective of both the process and its impact on the community. This also may influence the sample we obtained: those who were present may be those who have chosen not to migrate, whether for patriotic reasons or pragmatic household decision-making.

The impact of migration on families and communities was also discussed. In the Kutaisi group, participants noted the difficulties of children who are left either with one parent or with their grandparents or other relatives. They also noted that economic migration often resulted in divorce.

Information sources

Participants seem to rely on three sources of information regarding migration.

1) Friends and relatives who have migrated abroad themselves or have close friends who have migrated abroad are trusted as a credible source.
2) Educational institutions as well as embassies are trusted sources of information for study abroad in particular.
3) Television serves two primary purposes. Most frequently, it is seen as an effective medium for organizations to convey messages about migration. Many participants referred to the anti-trafficking campaign. Others use television for information about what life abroad offers. One participant in Akhalkalalki explained that he learned he could earn lots of money abroad.

Some participants did seek to verify information using current institutions. A participant in Tbilisi explained that she had called the "anti-trafficking hotline" to verify that an employment agency was credible. This practice is rare, however.

One suggestion was to regulated firms offering employment abroad so that people would know which was reputable.

The importance of friends and relatives as an information source contradicts the information participants provided on the questionnaires. Local and national television is the overwhelming source of information for participants (75%). Newspapers are a distant second.

Putting knowledge to the test: attitudes and choices

"If I had a good job here, I would not leave. I earn only 30 USD per month. How can I live on this amount of money?" - Akhalkalaki participant

"No one is willing to leave unless they have to." - Batumi participant

Participants expressed much sympathy and respect for migrants. The sentiment that most would not leave Georgia if circumstances did not force them to permeated many of the discussions. Some pronounced that their "Georgian character" precluded them from leaving. As the comments above denote, most participants felt that migrants were making responsible choices for their families and themselves.

Many participants also value the work experience of migrants abroad. When asked whether they would hire or start a business with a returnee, response ranged from migration history being irrelevant to being a distinct advantage. Many believed that working abroad made people better workers – that they had learned discipline, the value of work, and were more willing to work hard. Some even would work with returnees in order to learn from them.

This respect seemed particularly strong for highly-skilled returnees. There was overwhelming support for President Saakashvili's plan to recruit diaspora members. One participant in Tbilisi argued that scientists should be a target as they could help "make products" that would generate jobs. However, many felt realistically it was better for these people to stay abroad, given the limited opportunities in Georgia. As a result, most participants seemed to harbour some resentment towards the diaspora and their perceived lack of engagement in Georgia's development.

Although many participants expressed openness and even the intent to go abroad themselves if conditions do not improve, the majority seemed ambivalent when considering migration. Most responded that they would support a relative's decision to migrate abroad only if it was to study or perhaps for the sake of educating their children. To depart for the purpose of work is an accepted necessity, but is not encouraged. Akhalkalaki was an exception, however, as most there would encourage relatives and friends to migrate abroad for economic prospects. This division is consistent with split between a last resort strategy for most Georgians and an accepted way of life in Akhalkalki.

Illegal labour migration was particularly frowned upon in the abstract. Yet, when asked if they would loan a relative or friend money for a counterfeit visa, the bulk of respondents said they would. Many said they would first encourage them to migrate legally or would need to be confident the person had carefully thought it through. Ultimately, however, almost all would

help. A few participants proposed that they would give the relative the money instead to support the person remaining in Georgia.

This behaviour was rejected in Akhalkalaki, however, where all participants were adamantly opposed to counterfeit visas. The premium on legal movement is likely due to the established nature of migration there.

Attitudes towards trafficking are somewhat complex and evoked strong opinions. The majority of participants would support their child's marriage to a foreigner – often after attempts to dissuade their son or nephew. Opposition was strong, with some expressing suspicion ("it is impossible that the girl could have been a victim") or disdain ("she should have known better"). Of interest is the strong variance between cities. As expected, Tbilisi participants were mostly tolerant of the full diversity of attitudes. Unexpected was the strong forgiveness for victims in Akhalkalaki ("as long as she's a good girl") and the vehement opposition expressed in Kutaisi, which was also one of the more highly educated groups.

Awareness of migration related programmes seems rather low among the general public. One participant noted the opening of an employment centre (which may be an IOM resource centre). Another mentioned the anti-trafficking hotline. No one had any knowledge of return programmes.

Government role

To most participants, the Georgian government has an obligation to both actively protect its citizens living overseas and to improve economic conditions in order to ameliorate the need to migrate.

In general, participants felt the government was not engaged or interested in labour migrants. Many shared similar sentiments; as one Tbilisi participant regarding anti-trafficking efforts expressed, "I am afraid the government is not interested in these kinds of programmes and there is no effort by the Georgian government to combat trafficking."

They also lacked confidence in the government's ability to implement programmes. While many knew of the initiatives to recruit highly-skilled diaspora to return, most believed that nothing had been implemented. Others recounted specific cases of how people had heeded the call to return, only to be disappointed – with no job prospects – and then had to depart again.

There was a strong sentiment that the government needs to facilitate improved access to legal avenues for migration. In the words of the participants, if the government has been unable to create the economic and social conditions that would allow people to remain home with their families, then it should at least enable people to leave by legal means.

Across the country, participants argued that the government should protect Georgians citizens who work and study abroad, and that it has failed to do so. "Georgians living abroad are not assisted by the embassy," complained one participant.

Some of the disappointment in the government seems due to poor advertising. No participants knew of the government's significant involvement in efforts to counter trafficking. Those who did know of such programmes attributed them to local or international NGOs.

To support migrants and lure them back to Georgia, the government should generate jobs and improve socio-economic conditions, according to participants. This prescription is consistent with the belief that the economic and socio-economic conditions in Georgia hinder return. In

addition to raising salaries, participants also highlighted the need to create a supply of jobs which would both attract and leverage the experience of the highly-skilled. One participant suggested partnering with foreign companies to do so. Other concrete suggestions duplicate existing programmes – job training, job placement and loans for business start up.

6.3 Student Focus Group

As noted previously in this report, university students have a high potential for migration abroad both for study and for work.

In an effort to gauge their perceptions about and potential for migration, a special focus group was conducted in Tbilisi with students selected from two universities.

Overall, students were better informed than the general public and had a broader range of responses and attitudes. (The latter may be because they are more comfortable expressing opinions and speaking in groups.) Migration for them should have a specific purpose or goal, whether that is employment or to gain more skills.

Methodology

To select participants, students were recruited in Tbilisi from Ilia Chavchavadze State University of Language and Culture, a public university, and the Georgian University of Social Sciences, a private university. At each university, departments with high migration potential were approached: International Relations, International Law, Business, Economics and Foreign Languages. Administrators were asked to invite one male and one female from each department to participate in our focus group. A mix of bachelor's and masters students was requested.

Profile of Students

As expected, the demographics of the student groups contrasted with the other general public focus groups. While the majority of female participants (58%) was in concert with the average for all groups, almost everything else differed. The average age of 20 was far below the general average of 38.5. Few were married or had children, and most lived at home with their parents.

Students also possessed stronger language skills: 100% speak Russian well, 75% English and 8% German.

Table 18: Educational background of student focus group

	Total	*Male*	*Female*
First year	**0%**	0%	0%
Second year	**17%**	0%	29%
Third year	**67%**	80%	57%
Masters	**17%**	20%	14%
Department			
IR	**17%**	20%	14%
Economics	**17%**	20%	14%
Business	**17%**	20%	14%
English language	**17%**	20%	14%
Maths/Physics	**8%**	20%	0%
Int'l. Law	**8%**	0%	14%

Humanities	**8%**	0%	14%
PS	**8%**	20%	0%

Impressions and observations of the migration process

The big picture

Students observed the same trends that other focus groups did: **people continue to leave and the few who return tend to leave again**. One student noted that those who leave for work abroad seem to be staying abroad for longer periods of time.

Motives to migrate

Students agree that unemployment, insufficient salary and socio-economic conditions are the primary motivators. However, they also view migration as an opportunity to improve skills and gain qualifications through study.

Motives can be viewed according to age groups, suggested one student: the younger migrants go to pursue study and self growth, whereas most older migrants go in order to work and improve the economic conditions of their families.

Selecting destinations

Unlike the general public, opportunities for higher education were a key criteria for destination countries, more important than networks. As such, language and the credibility of educational institutions became key factors in decisions. **Germany, the United States and the United Kingdom** were all named as possible destinations.

Realities of life abroad

Students had a negative view of Georgian social relations abroad. "They do not have enough respect for one another. They treat each other very roughly," observed one student.

Concerns about trafficking and illegal migration were also raised. One student explained that people often are "promised a good job abroad," and are then disappointed.

Other challenges noted included:
- Homesickness
- Prejudice about certain jobs
- Adapting to a different environment

Information sources

To learn about study abroad opportunities, students explained that there are many resources such as websites, magazine and literature.

They did note that there is a lack of formal information about legal opportunities abroad. Most believed that people relied on people who lived abroad, particularly in Greece, Turkey and Spain.

Most students (83%) reported that they rely on national television for news; 41% also read newspapers. They also had a much higher Internet use (59%) compared to the general public.

Putting knowledge to the test: attitudes and choices

Overall, students presented themselves as more consistent than the general public in applying their beliefs to reality.

Students were much less willing than the general public to assist a friend or relative to migrate illegally and were in general more sceptical of its efficacy. Most indicated that they would advise the person not to depart and would encourage him/her to find an alternative way to remain. Like a few members of the public groups, some said that they would lend money only so the person would remain in Georgia. The minority who were willing to lend money had more stringent criteria. Either they needed to be confident the decision was well thought out or that the stated goal of the migration was achievable.

Attitudes towards victims of trafficking were mixed, ranging from strong opposition to marrying a victim of trafficking to forgiveness and non-interference. Males tended to have stronger reactions and were the only ones who would interfere with the possible marriage. Women tended to either to feel opposed but to forgive because the women were "victims," or refused to judge. No participant blamed the victim, although some felt the experience altered her.

Migrants were viewed with respect or indifference in the professional arena. Like the general public, many focused on the positive aspects of having worked abroad and valued the knowledge and experience gained there and the opportunity to learn from it. Others indicated that education and experience overall were more important than travel abroad.

Government role

Students lacked awareness about the government's anti-trafficking efforts. Those who did have knowledge of activities to combat trafficking primarily attributed them to the work of international NGOs.

Overwhelmingly, students believe that the government needs to address the reason they believe people are migrating – the economy – and work to reduce migration. While one student mentioned that the government should protect its citizens' rights abroad, sentiment focused on the need to improve job and educational opportunities.

Students were supportive of the initiative to recruit Georgian professionals abroad to return and felt the efforts should be increased.

Conclusions

Key findings

People are migrating abroad in order to access opportunities not available in Georgia, whether this is employment, a larger salary, educational opportunities or career advancement opportunities. Therefore, return and reintegration will have limited sustainability unless these concerns are addressed, or the economic environment improves.

Network migration, affinity for European values and lifestyle and high levels of remuneration will likely continue to drive an increase in labour migration to European Union countries. The ongoing shift away from Russia and the continued obstacles to work there will likely bolster this trend. As we have seen, visa regimes have limited impact on access and informal information networks provide information on how to best navigate them.

Georgians in general would prefer to migrate legally and often enter countries legally.
For the most part, they are already moving throughout the European Community with limited impediment. Structured work programmes targeted at youth seem to offer an incentive for participants to maintain their legal status. This may be due to the fewer economic obligations these students face.

Little is known about the presence of Georgians in particular countries abroad. Since they are largely illegal communities, official government statistics provide an unreliable snapshot.

Information sources

- While television is an effective means to raise awareness, it seems less effective in altering actual behaviours.

- The prevalence of word-of-mouth as an information source creates a high risk of the propagation of myths and other misinformation.

- **An assessment of the psychological states of returnees and assessment of current service utilization**

- **Risks of myths**

Policy implication and recommendations

The informal nature of the community of economic migrants has several implications for the design of a return and reintegration programme.

- **Outreach/information dissemination:** Attempts to use formal diaspora organizations to disseminate information about various programmes or to organize Georgian migrants will prove futile for the most part. Those likely to be reached will probably not fit the profile of a programme geared towards labour migrants. Word-of-mouth strategies, media campaigns, and canvassing churches will likely prove more fruitful. In addition, in many countries, working through the formal diaspora organizations of other former Soviet countries may prove useful as well.

- **Assessment of population size and needs**: Given the lack of community structure and the estimated high proportion of illegal migrants, it will be difficult to get a scientific assessment of the locations, numbers and professions of migrants. Conversations and relationship building will be the best route to gather information, albeit this will be time consuming.

- **Different approaches for different target populations**: Policies aimed at illegal migrants will need to utilize strategies other than those seeking to engage Georgians who are employed in professional positions or studying.

Filling in the knowledge gaps:

- **Regular assessments of public awareness and attitudes through a combination of omnibus surveys and focus groups.**

- **Information gathering on Georgian populations and communities in each country on a regular basis.** This effort would both facilitate better policy planning and offer insights into country specific trends.

- **Comparable evaluations for the return programmes**

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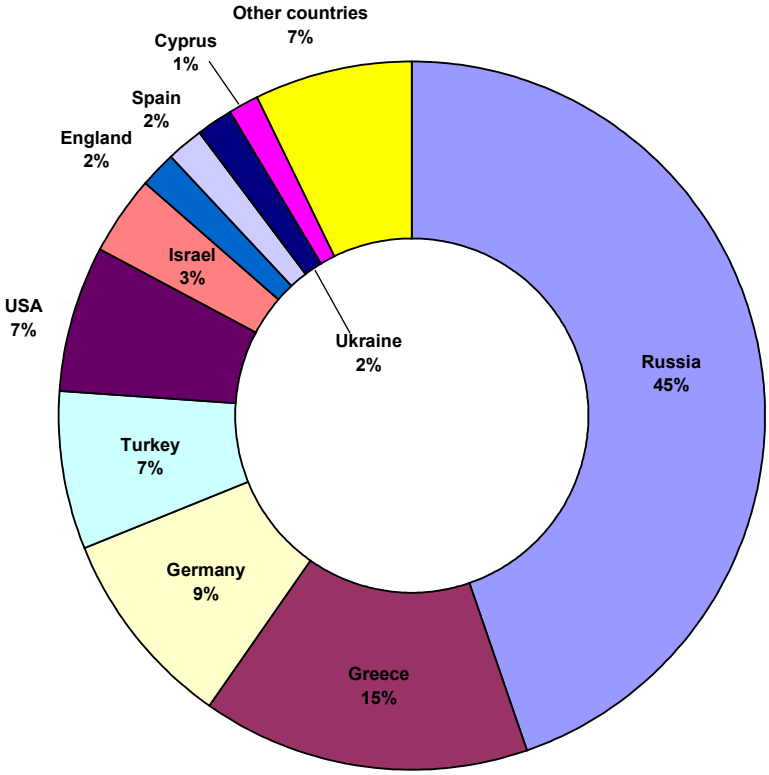
APPENDICES

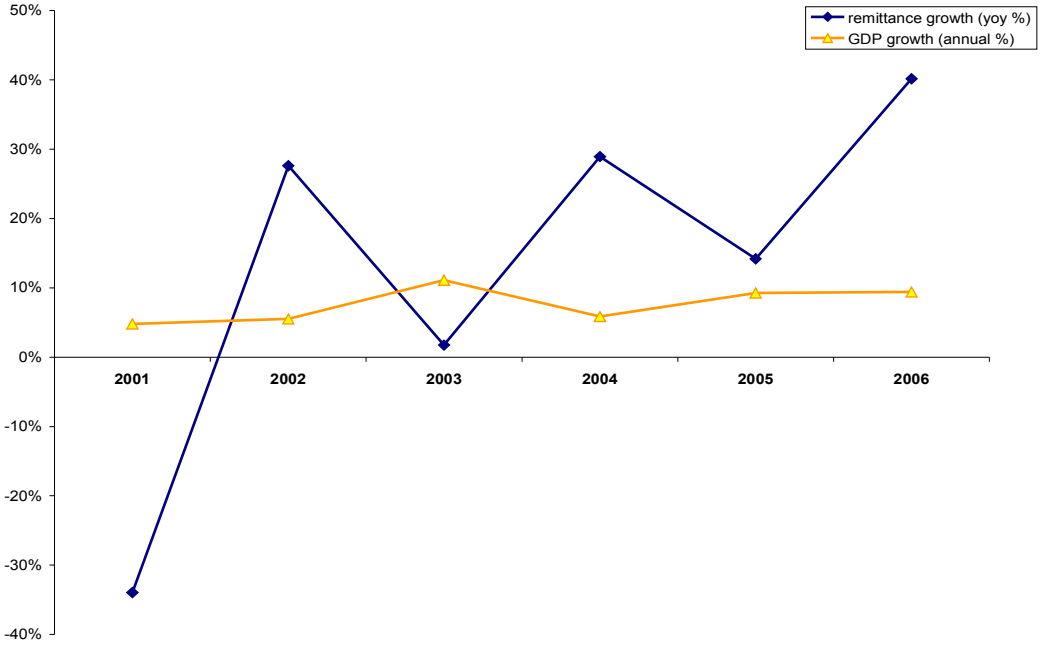
Appendix A General Migration Data

Figure 19: Top Destination Countries, 2005



Source: World Bank 2007

Figure 20: Annual Remittance growth outpaces GDP growth



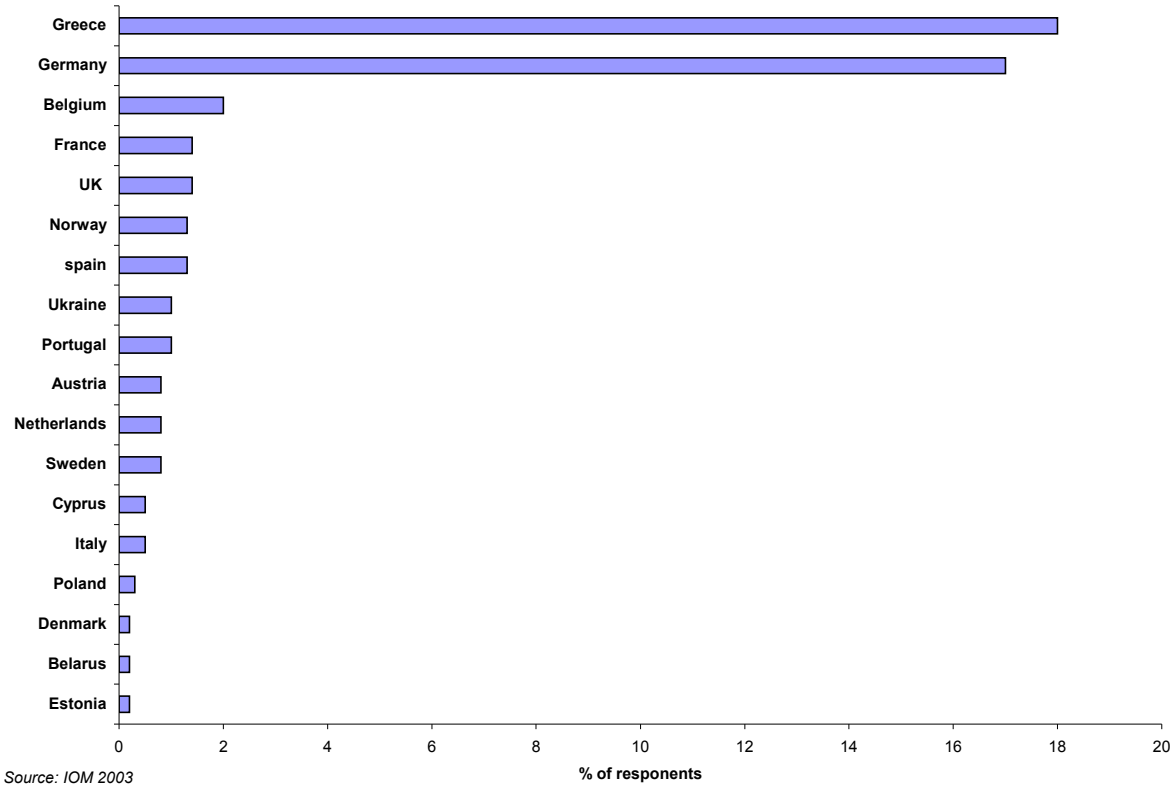
Source: World Development Indicators

Table 19: Distribution of Labour Migrants by Duration of Stay in Receiving Country

Researched Region / Duration of Emigration	Answers according replaced respondents								Interviewed labour migrants in immigration countries						RETURNEES
	Tbilisi Average	Rustavi	Ambrolauri	Tkibuli	Zugdidi Senaki	Telavi	Akhalkaliaki	**Total**	Russia	Germany	Greece	USA	Total	Youth interviewed through internet	Tbilisi
Up to 3 month	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	**0.0**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3-6 month	-	-	3	4	2	-	2	**1.9**	3.2	15.9	8	-	9.4	-	-
6 month -1 year	21	18	15	16	7	38.1	16	**18.7**	16.1	34.9	20	5	23.6	16.7	35
1-2 year	19	32	34	31	23	33.3	25	**28.2**	22.6	23.8	24	5	20.9	16.7	28
2-3 year	15	17	21	14	16	7.1	21	**16.1**	9.7	9.5	8	50	15.1	28.8	15
3-4 year	13	13	11	12	12	4.8	14	**11.4**	9.7	9.5	4	30	11.5	16.7	4
4-5 year	14	12	10	9	19	9.5	13	**12.4**	19.4	6.3	32	5	13.7	15.2	8
5 years and more	15	8	6	14	21	7.2	8	**11.3**	19.4	-	4	5	5.8	6.1	10
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	**100**	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Chelidze 2006 p. 70

Figure 21: Distribution of migrants in EU countries



Source: IOM 2003

Appendix B : Programmes and Organizations related to Migration

Organization	Area	Programme	Partners	Years of operation	Location(s)	Description (objectives and services provided)	Target population	No. served annually
Caritas - Georgia	Migration	Prevention of migration	MOIA (Georgia) Czech Government	2005-2007 (might January 2008)	Tbilisi, Samtskhe-Javakheti, Imereti, Guria	Helping to stabilize the situation of inhabitants of Georgia, so that they would not be forced to migrate through - Development of rural communities through training of their active members; - Courses in small business management or farm management in Tbilisi and in rural areas; - Support to small business and establishment of production shops in Tbilisi	Potential migrants in Georgia	Not identified
People in Need	Migration	Information distribution of migration	Czech government	End of 2005 – December 2007, probably will continue in 2008	Kakheti, Samtskhe-Javakheti, Batumi, Tkibuli	Prevention of illegal migration through organizing seminars (for students, youth, young children, middle-aged people, basically everyone is welcome), media trainings (that is for journalists), education through TV, radio programmes. They give legal aid (e.g. how to get visas, scholarships for and in destination countries	Youth, children, middle-aged people, journalists, people living in bordering regions where illegal migration prevails	More than 2000 people (very dynamic, changes very quickly)
People in Need	Migration	Programme of returnees and reintegration of returnees from France	French government	autumn 2006 - ongoing	Tbilisi	PIN helps them with social, psychological issues to check what kind of support they need. Help with setting up small- or middle-sized businesses through discussing business ideas, identifying market needs, giving financial aid (French government is giving finances for that). After 1 year they have a follow-up whether this money was actually spent on business, or not.	Georgian migrants in France, returned Georgians from France	44 families (total)
UNA	Refugee and Migration	Asylum seekers, refugees (Chechens), stateless people			Tbilisi, Kutaisi, Gori, Batumi			
Caritas - Georgia	Return and Reintegration	Programmes of Return and Reintegration CORDAID	IOM, PIN	2006 – present	Georgia	Smoothening the reintegration process of returnees from the Netherlands to Georgia through facilitation, counselling and monitoring services (support for 6 months, can be extended); Enhancing economic self reliance of returnees from the Netherlands to Georgia by stimulation of entrepreneurship through technical assistance, and loans if needed, for income generating activities.	Georgian migrants in Belgium	They have had 2 cases so far.
Caritas - Georgia	Return and	FEDASIL	IOM, PIN	2006 –	Georgia	Support returned migrants with the Georgian	Georgian	One in the

Organization	Area	Programme	Partners	Years of operation	Location(s)	Description (objectives and services provided)	Target population	No. served annually
	Reintegration	Programmes of Return and Reintegration		present		nationality, regardless their age, racial background, religion or sex up to 3 months; - Use the beneficiary costs given by the Belgian government, only to carry out the tasks in the framework of this project; - Provide returnees with necessary information, help in selection of re-qualification courses, help in job's seeking, creation of small business, etc	migrants in Netherlands	Netherlands , Two in Belgium One (exception) from Austria
IOM	Return and Reintegration	Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration from Poland, Czech Republic, Ireland				Provides countries of return with up-to-date information on Georgia, including spheres such as education, employment, medical care, social assistance programmes, benefits, accommodation, etc. Reintegration assistance covers vocational training courses, setting up small businesses, public education.	Voluntary returnees from Poland, Czech Republic, Ireland	
World Vision	Return and Reintegration	Programme of Return and Reintegration	IOM	February 2006 – March 2008	Tbilisi Batumi Kutaisi	The project ensures sustainable economic and social reinsertion of Georgian citizens, who decided to return voluntarily back home from Switzerland. In addition to addressing migration issues, the project contributes towards poverty reduction and economic development.	Georgian migrants in Switzerland voluntary returnees	51 individuals (total)
IOM	Return and reintegration	Assisted Voluntary Return to Georgia from Switzerland	▪ Swiss Federal Office for Migration (FOM) ▪ Swiss Agency for Development and Co-operation (SDC) ▪ World Vision International ▪ Other NGOs, as	15 January 2006	Georgia	Facilitates the assisted voluntary return and reintegration of those asylum seekers from Georgia, who have applied for asylum in Switzerland prior to January 1st, 2007 IOM provides ▪ return-relevant country-of-origin information, ▪ return counseling, ▪ airport reception assistance, and organization of onward transportation ▪ medical treatment ▪ and social reintegration	▪ Asylum seekers from Georgia currently residing in Switzerland including: ▪ those who are still in the screening process, ▪ rejected asylum seekers for whom the formal process to leave the country has not yet started, ▪ and those in	48 people

Organization	Area	Programme	Partners	Years of operation	Location(s)	Description (objectives and services provided)	Target population	No. served annually
			well as national and local authorities in Georgia.			▪	possession of a provisional admission, recognized refugees.	
IOM	Return and reintegration	Assisted Voluntary Return (AVR) and Reintegration Programme from the UK to Georgia		2003 - present	Georgia	Helps Georgian rejected asylum seekers return home and reintegrate into their communities with dignity and a tangible hope for the future. Reintegration assistance can cover vocational training courses, setting up small businesses, public education, costs related to attending a training course or educational institution.	Asylum seekers migrants from UK	88 people
GYLA	Trafficking	"No To Trafficking in Persons"	USAID- funded	2005-2008	GEO	Improve Georgian legislation, victim protection, legal aid to victims, trainings for, awareness-raising programmes, shelters, hotline to support victims	General population; trainings for judges, ombudsmen, NGOs	
OSCE/ILO	Trafficking	"Development of a comprehensive anti-trafficking response in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia" (confer ence held 7/19)		2007-2009	GEO, ARM, AZE	Measures trafficking in human beings in S Caucasus by building on existing NAP and enhancing legal framework		
People's Harmonious Development Society	Trafficking	Training and Information Campaign	Eurasia Foundation, Urban Institute, OSCE/ODIHR European Commission Joint Programme for Combating Trafficking in Hum Beings	2003		Campaign in various regions of Georgia with participation of local governmental bodies. Meetings w/ local govt in these regions: Kakheti: Signagi, Telavi, Lagodekhi; Shida Kartli: Gori; Kvemo Kartli: Rustavi; Racha: Ambrolauri; Imereti: Zestaponi, Kutaisi; Guria: Lanchkhuti, Ozurgeti.		
People's Harmonious Development Society	Trafficking	Information Dissemination	Women's Programme-OSGF	2003	11 regions of GEO (undisclosed	▪ Published 2 issues of newspaper "UnderLined", disseminated in 11 regions of GEO		
People's Harmonious Development	Trafficking	Anti Trafficking Conference for Hot-Line	OSCE	2003	Tbilisi, Kutaisi, Gurdjaani,	Participants included Ministry of Interior, NGOs, Chief of "Check Point Station," State		

Organization	Area	Programme	Partners	Years of operation	Location(s)	Description (objectives and services provided)	Target population	No. served annually
Society		Operators			Gori and others(?)	Dept of Georgian Border Defense -Publishing of an anti-trafficking manual for hotline operators		
People's Harmonious Development Society	Trafficking	Programme of Prevention of Illegal Migration and Trafficking in Human Beings—The Study of "Psycho-Type of Potential Victim of Trafficking"	MercyCorps/ USAID	2002-2003	Tbilisi – (i) Isani-Samgori and (ii) Gldani-Nadzaladevi)	▪ Survey – the advertisement was placed in newspaper and on one of the Georgian TV channels that the organization will help those who wants to travel abroad for work. The aim was to identify the risk group for these kinds of agencies. ▪ Study of Psycho-type of potential victim of Trafficking: 2 Focus Groups and In-depth interviews		12 persons applied. Focus Group N1 had 20 participants, N2 – 10 participants.
People's Harmonious Development Society	Trafficking	Women Human Rights Advanced Leadership Training	OSI	1999-2000	Unknown	▪ Research of problem ▪ Series of trainings ▪ Publication of booklet		
People's Harmonious Development Society	Trafficking	Anti Trafficking Training	OSI, International Human Rights Internship Programmes	2002		2-week professional development programme (preventative education, lobbying, hotline and social help for victims, institutional development and networking) for Ministry of Interior and National Security.		
People's Harmonious Development Society	Trafficking	Training	OSCE/ODIHR	2003		Trained regional trainers on anti trafficking issues and awareness-raising techniques		
WomenAid	Trafficking	Be Smart! Be Safe! Anti-Trafficking Multimedia Campaign in Georgia	UN Association, IOM, WomenAid Intl	2000-?	Georgia	▪ Roundtable discussions on trafficking legislation, trafficking experts, methodologies of research ▪ Media Advocacy Network Platform project	General population for awareness raising, vulnerable populations	

Appendix C Focus Group Interview Guides and Questionnaires

I. RETURNEES

Returnee Interview Guide

Purpose: To develop an understanding of the different challenges and needs of returnees and a baseline of how they are currently being addressed.

Objectives:

- Assess motivations for departure and return as well as means and types of migration.
- Gain an understanding of how information is spread and how
- Evaluate returnees' awareness and use of available resources and the services' utility to them.
- Identify challenges/needs in return and reintegration process and possible interventions.

SCRIPT

Welcome to our group discussion about your experiences living abroad and returning to Georgia. We appreciate your taking the time to share your valuable insights with us.

My name is Koba and I am the director of the Caucasus Research Resource Centre in Georgia. I will be moderating our discussion today. I look forward to spending the next two hours with you.

Today's discussion is part of a series of discussions we are conducting across Georgia to better understand the experiences and needs of people who have returned to Georgia from living and working abroad for more than three months. We are conducting another series of discussions with the general public as well.

The results of these discussions will be used in a report about migration trends in Georgia since 1995 that focuses on return and reintegration efforts. There is little information about returnees, so your insights are very powerful.

The report is part of a larger initiative to develop a comprehensive return and reintegration programme for Georgia being led by the Danish Refugee Council in partnership with the Ministry of Refugees and Accommodation, and funded by the AENEAS Programmeme of the European Commission.

Before we begin our discussion, I would like to ask you to sign a Confidentiality agreement.

[Go over/have people sign the agreement]

Thank you! At the end our discussion, I will ask you to fill out an important and brief questionnaire.

Now we will begin our group discussion. Before we begin, I want to establish some guidelines for how we will speak. Each of your thoughts are valuable to us and we want to hear them. Please help us do so by following these guidelines:

1. Please speak one at a time.

2. Please keep your responses as brief as possible. I will ask you to finish your comments if we need to move on.

3. Please talk only about what is relevant to the question being answered. We have a very limited amount of time and want to learn as much from you as possible.

4. Please do not comment on what other people say and refrain from judging or dismissing it.. Focus instead on your own experience and opinion.

5. Please avoid profanity or derogatory terms.

6. Please be candid.

7. Please remember that what is said in this room is confidential.
Any questions? Let's begin!

I. We are interested in learning about your experiences migrating and living abroad and would appreciate your answers to some questions.

Why did you leave Georgia to go abroad? For those of you who left multiple times, if your purpose and reasons differed, could you please describe all of your reasons?
(Objective: Motivations – unemployed? Career development opportunity? Family?)

Once you decided to leave, how did you decide where to go and figure out how to get there?
(Objective: information sources for means)

- *prompt – With what status did you ultimately enter the country?*

One part of your experience we are interested in understanding is who you spent time with outside of work and got support from while you were **last** living overseas. **Could you tell us what town/city you lived in and describe your social activities and what was typical of the community of Georgians more generally?**
(social networks and information resources)

Follow up:

- Did you interact with citizens of the country where you were living? With other migrants?
- Did you spend time with other people from Georgia, either as part of an active community or with a particular group who you knew?
- In general, is there an active community of people from Georgia and organizations to belong to where you lived?

Did you take trips back to Georgia and visit?

If you had difficulties (legal, financial, health) while living overseas who would you turn to for help? Would you contact the Georgian embassy? What is your sense of other Georgian migrant's attitudes?

[BREAK]

II. Very important to the efforts to design programmes to help people return and re-establish themselves in Georgia is an understanding of your experiences with your own recent return.

Could you tell us why did you decide to return to Georgia? Why do you think others decided to come back?
(objective: motivation for return; assess if due to policy shifts (e.g., Rose Revolution, tightening of migration regimes or family/nostalgia.)

For some host countries, formal programmes exist to help you return and reintegrate in Georgia, which many of you were able to utilize. Why did you decide to either participate or not participate in a programme to help you return?
(objective: assess decision making calculus)

In your opinion, do people know about chances to get assistance to come back to Georgia?

- If no, if you were in charge of the assistance, what would you do to inform and build trust?
- If yes, why or why are they not participating?

(objective: assess information sources and decision making)

How was your experience travelling back?
(assess needs in physical return process)

What is it like to come back after being abroad? Is it what you expected? How do you feel about being back?
(objective: gauge adjustment, attitudes)

What are the biggest challenges you have faced since you returned? (e.g., finding a job? Change in financial situation? Adjusting to a different environment?, re-entering the community? etc.)
(Identify key challenges to address)

- what was the hardest moment in your first 6 months back?

If you participated in a programme here, could you tell me:

- What services have you found most useful? Least helpful? Why?
- If you had a friend coming home, would you recommend participate in the programme?

(objective: evaluation of current programmes)

List of typical menu of services (from World Vision's programme):

- Social work counselling
- Assist with placement in an appropriate enterprise
- Aiding in getting access to micro-credits
- Advocating with relevant agencies
- Assisting in developing business plans
- Cultural integration/adaptation training
- Psychosocial rehabilitation
- Logistical support (such as housing search, temporary accommodation etc)
- Vocational training
- Business training/business plan development
- Small grants in support of business plan implementation

If you were in charge of designing your ideal programme for people coming back, what menu of services would it have to help them reintegrate? Who would you have run it?
(objective: needs assessment and gauging who is trusted)

- *push people beyond income support.*
- *Ask if they would do anything BEFORE arriving home or with help getting home.*

Part of what we want to understand is how your return has impacted your family. Have your relationships in your family changed? How has your family's financial situation changed since you returned, if at all?
(objective: assess family impact)
- did you support your families while abroad? How does your ability to support your family now compare?
- do you have bank account?

How has your work experience abroad affected your work opportunities here and your satisfaction with your work?

- *New and/or improved opportunities?*
- *Prejudice?*
- *Utilize new skills?*
- *Leverage professional networks from abroad?*

As a result of your time abroad, could you describe how, if at all, your role and relationships in your community have changed? Do you have the same friends?

What would motivate you to work and live overseas again?

Returnee Demographic Questionnaire

INTERNAL USE ONLY

Goals of the questionnaire:

- Obtain basic demographic picture of participants
- Understand how participants entered destination countries
- Understand how connected participants are to family (*remittances*)
- Ascertain effects of working or studying overseas:
    - Skill match and/or building (*skilled underemployed overseas? Acquired new skills?*
    - How is experience overseas valued and/or utilized (*e.g., change in employment status or income upon return*)
    - Any shifts in health

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Participant Demographic Survey

Dear Focus Group Participant:

Thank you very much for giving us your time to share your experiences living and working abroad and what it has been like to come back to Georgia.

Before we have our group conversation, we ask that you take a few minutes and fill out this brief questionnaire. The purpose of the questionnaire is to give us some basic information about your experiences, which is important, but may not be discussed in our conversation.

Please circle the appropriate answer to each question or fill in the requested information. If you have any questions, please ask one of the survey managers.

Thank you!

|___|___| FOCUS GROUP NUMBER

|_____| LOCATION

1. In the space below, please write your participant number:

|___| |___| |___|

2. Please circle the code of your sex:

Male	1
Female	2

3. Please write the DATE, MONTH and YEAR of your birth:

|____|____| |_____|_____| |____|____|____|____|
Date Month Year

4. Please circle the country of your citizenship? [IF YOU HAVE DUAL CITIZENSHIP, PLEASE CIRCLE BOTH THAT APPLY]

Armenia	1
Azerbaijan	2
Georgia	3
Russia	4
Other	5
If other, please fill in what country	

5. Please write down which ethnic group you consider yourself a part of [WRITE ONE ANSWER IN THE SPACE PROVIDED]

_____

6. Please circle the codes corresponding to all languages in which you speak well. By "well" we mean you can carry on a complex conversation about current events.[PLEASE CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY]

Armenian	1
Azeri	2
Georgian	3
Other Kartvelian language (Mingrelian, Svan)	4
Russian	5
German	6
French	7
English	8
Other European Language	9
Other language	10

7. Please circle the code corresponding to the highest level of education you have completed so far:

Primary	1
Secondary	2
Secondary special ("technikum")	3
Incomplete higher / Student	4
Higher (BA degree)	5
Higher (MA degree)	6
Higher ("Specialist" degree)	7
Post-graduate degree	8

8. Please circle the code of the category that best describes your current employment status:

Run my own business / Self-employed	1
Employee in a state organization	2
Employee in a foreign / international organization	3
Employee in a local or international non-governmental / non-profit organization	4
Employee in a local or international business	5
Student	6
Housewife	7
Unemployed	8
Retired	9
Other (please specify below)	10

|_____|

9. Please circle you current occupational status:

Legislator, senior official or manager (public or business sectors)	1
Professional, scientist (i.e. scientists, engineers, professor)	2
Professional, non-scientist (i.e. lawyer, banker, programme manager for NGO)	3
Technical professions (i.e. engineering technicians, equipment operators, nursing and midwifery)	4
Clerk, service worker or shop/market sales worker	5
Skilled agricultural or fisheries worker	6
Craft or related trades worker	7
Unskilled worker	8
Armed forces	9
Student	10
Unemployed	11
Other (please specify below)	12

|_____|

10. What is currently your average or normal monthly (net) income in GEL?

0 – 100 GEL	1
101 – 300 GEL	2
301 – 500 GEL	3
501 – 1000 GEL	4
1001 – 2000 GEL	5
2001 GEL or more	6

11. Please circle the category that describes your current marital status :

Never married	1
Married: official state marriage only, no religious ceremony	2
Married: religious ceremony only, not registered with state	3
Married: both religious ceremony and state marriage	4
Married but spouse lives separately	5
Cohabiting without civil or religious marriage	6
Divorced	7
Separated	8
Widow / Widower	9

12. Please write down how many children you have:

|____|____| NUMBER

13. Please write down, how many members, including yourself, are there currently in your household? By household, we mean all the people who currently live with you and share a budget.

|____|____| NUMBER

14. Please describe your current health:

Very good	1
Good	2

Reasonable/few complaints	3
Regular complaints	4
Chronically ill	5

15. Where do you usually get your news from? [PLEASE SELECT ALL THAT APPLY]

Television news, nationwide channel	1
Television news, local channel	2
Television news, international channel	3
Newspapers	4
Internet	5
Friends, family, neighbours	6
Radio, local	7
Radio, international	8

MIGRATION HISTORY

16. What was your usual or normal monthly (net) income prior to working abroad?

0 – 100 GEL	1
101 – 300 GEL	2
301 – 500 GEL	3
501 – 1000 GEL	4
1001 – 2000 GEL	5
2001 GEL or more	6

17. Please circle the code of the category that best describes your employment status *before* your first stay abroad:

Run my own business / Self-employed	1
Employee in a state organization	2
Employee in a foreign / international organization	3
Employee in a local or international non-governmental / non-profit organization	4
Employee in a local or international business	5
Student	6
Housewife	7
Unemployed	8
Retired	9
Other (please specify below)	10

|_____|

18. Please circle your occupational status *before* your first stay abroad:

Legislator, senior official or manager (public or business sectors)	1
Professional, scientist (i.e. scientists, engineers, professor)	2
Professional, non-scientist (i.e. lawyer, banker, programme manager for NGO)	3
Technical professions (i.e. engineering technicians, equipment operators, nursing and midwifery)	4
Clerk, service worker or shop/market sales worker	5

Skilled agricultural or fisheries worker	6
Craft or related trades worker	7
Unskilled worker	8
Armed forces	9
Student	10
Unemployed	11
Other (please specify below)	12

|_____|

19. Please describe your health *before* you left to live abroad for the first time:

Very good	1
Good	2
Reasonable/few complaints	3
Regular complaints	4
Chronically ill	5

20. What year did you first travel to work or study abroad?

|____|____|____|____| YEAR

21. Please write down which country you worked or studied in when you first travelled abroad?

_____

22. Please select the answer that best describes the document(s) that permitted you to enter the country the *first* time you worked or studied abroad?

Tourist visa	1
Business visa	2
Student visa	3
Sports delegation visa	4
Cultural exchange (dance, theatre, orchestra troupe) visa	5
Asylum or refugee visa	6
Internally displaced person identification	7
Passport of this country	8
Residence permit for this country	9
Work permit or visa	10
Marriage visa / certificate	11
Entered without showing documents	12

23. What best describes your migration experience

I go away the same time every year and then return home	1
I go abroad for long periods of time and then come home for short periods	2
I intended to go abroad temporarily but stayed a long time	3
I intended to go abroad permanently but ended up coming back	4

24. Have your worked abroad for more than three months more than once?

Yes	1
No	2

[IF NO, → GO TO QUESTION 30]
[IF YES, → GO TO NEXT QUESTION]

25. Please, tell us which country you worked or studied in most recently?

_____

26. What year did you travel to work or study abroad most recently?

|____|____|____|____| YEAR

27. Please select the answer that best describes the document(s) that permitted you to enter the country the *most recent* time you worked or studied abroad?

Tourist visa	1
Business visa	2
Student visa	3
Sports delegation visa	4
Cultural exchange (dance, theatre, orchestra troupe) visa	5
Asylum or refugee visa	6
Internally displaced person identification	7
Passport of this country	8
Residence permit for this country	9
Work permit or visa	10
Marriage visa / certificate	11
Entered without showing documents	12

28. Please circle the code of the category that best describes your employment status in your most recent time abroad:

Run my own business / Self-employed	1
Employee in a state organization	2
Employee in a foreign / international organization	3
Employee in a local or international non-governmental / non-profit organization	4
Employee in a local or international business	5
Student	6
Housewife	7
Unemployed	8
Retired	9
Other (please specify below)	10

|_____|

29. Please circle the code that best describes your occupational status in your most recent time abroad:

Legislator, senior official or manager (public or business sectors)	1
Professional, scientist (i.e. scientists, engineers, professor)	2
Professional, non-scientist (i.e. lawyer, banker, programme manager for NGO)	3
Technical professions (i.e. engineering technicians, equipment operators, nursing and midwifery)	4
Clerk, service worker or shop/market sales worker	5
Skilled agricultural or fisheries worker	6
Craft or related trades worker	7
Unskilled worker	8
Armed forces	9
Student	10
Unemployed	11
Other (please specify below)	12

|_____|

[IF YOU SKIPPED → CONTINUE HERE]

30. How long did you stay abroad most recently for work or study more than three months?

3-6 months	1
6-12 months	2
1-2 years	3
2-4 years	4
More than 4 years	5

31. Did you send money back home during the most recent time you worked or studied abroad for more than three months?

Yes	1
No	2

32. If YES, how often did you send money home?

At least once a month	1
Approximately every 2-3 months	2
Approximately every 4-6 months	3
Once a year	4
Less than once a year	5

33. When did you return from your most recent trip?

|_____|_____| |____|____|____|____|
Month Year

34. Did you or do you receive any assistance in returning and re-establishing yourself from:

A return and reintegration programme

CIRCLE: ***IOM World Vision Caritas Other***	1
The national government of Georgia	2
Family	3
Friends	4
Your home community	5
Local officials	6
NGOs	7

35. How would your describe you experience in the group discussion today?

I found the questions interesting and enjoyed sharing my opinions	1
I learned about others' opinions, but found it difficult to participate because everyone was talking	2
I preferred to listen to others rather than share my thoughts.	3
I enjoyed sharing my thoughts and wanted to shared more.	4
I did not fully understand the questions and did not talk much..	5
I thought the questions were not useful and did not care to talk much.	6

36. How would you rate usefulness of questions?

Relevant to my experience	1
Some were relevant, some weren't	2
Did not seem relevant.	3

37. Would you participate in another group discussion if asked?

Yes.	1

II. General Public Awareness

General Public Interview Guide

Purpose: To assess the general public's awareness of migration issues and their perception of migrants.

Objectives:

- Determine general attitudes towards migrants
- Assess awareness of dangers of irregular migration and how to legally migrate
- Gather opinions/expectations about what role government should play.

SCRIPT

Welcome to our group discussion about your impressions about migration related issues for Georgians. We appreciate your taking the time to share your valuable insights with us.

My name is Koba and I am the director of the Caucasus Research Resource Centre in Georgia. I will be moderating our discussion today. I look forward to spending the next two hours with you.

Today's discussion is part of a series of discussions we are conducting across Georgia to better understand people's impressions about migration related issues in Georgia. We are conducting another series of discussions with people who have previously lived and worked abroad as well.

The results of these discussions will be used in a report about migration trends in Georgia since 1995. The report is part of a larger initiative to develop a comprehensive return and reintegration programme for Georgia being led by the Danish Refugee Council in partnership with the Ministry of Refugees and Accommodation and funded by the AENEAS Programmeme of the European Commission.

Before we begin our discussion, I would like to sign a Confidentiality agreement.

[Go over/have people sign the questionnaire]

Thank you! At the end our discussion, I will ask you to fill out an important and brief questionnaire.

But now we will begin our group discussion. Before we begin, I want to establish some guidelines for how we will speak. Each of your thoughts are valuable to us and we want to hear them. Please help us do so by following these guidelines:

1. Please speak one at a time.

2. Please keep your responses as brief as possible. I will ask you to finish your comments if we need to move on.

3. Please do not dismiss or judge what other people say. Focus instead on your own experience and opinion.

4. Please avoid profanity or derogatory terms.

5. Please be candid.

6. Please remember that what is said in this room is confidential.

Any questions?

Let's begin!

QUESTIONS

Why do you think people choose to migrate to another country?

If you have members of your family or community who migrated, what do you think about that decision?

What do you think are the biggest problems people face when they go to work or study abroad? How have you heard of people overcoming them?

If you were going to migrate for work purposes, how would you decide where to go? What factors would determine your destination?

If your friend told you about a job abroad, would you check for the truthfulness of the information?

How do you learn about working and studying abroad?

Have you seen any programmes, commercials or pamphlets about how to migrate legally?

(newspapers, radio, friends, etc.?)

If your relative asked you for money to obtain a counterfeit visa or a job through an agency would you lend the money? Why or why not?

What would you do if your son or nephew decided to marry a woman who was a victim of sexual trafficking?

What responsibilities, if any, do you think the Georgian government has towards Georgian citizens who choose to live and work abroad?

Have you heard about the government's efforts to combat trafficking?

If yes, what do you know about it? What is your opinion about it?

Have you noticed people who left your community to work abroad returning?

Are there more or fewer than last year?

Would you hire or and start a business with someone who has worked overseas?

Why or why not?

The government of Georgia is in the process of designing a programme to help Georgian citizens [including ethnic Azeris and ethnic Armenians] who want to return to Georgia from living abroad to resettle. If you were asked to design that programme, what would you include?

- what should the government do and not do?

(*protection, advocacy, assistance*?)

If someone in your community came back from living and working abroad and was receiving special assistance (like business plan training, microloans for start up costs, etc.) from the government and NGOs to start his own business, how would you feel? Would you support his business?

What do you think about the Saakashvili's efforts to recruit Georgians abroad to return and work on behalf of Georgia's development and to forge stronger ties with the diaspora?

Do you know of any programmes or organizations that either help people while they are working abroad or that assist them to come back home? If so which ones? Where did you learn about the programmes? Can you describe them?

Do you believe these programmes work?

If you were in charge of designing a nationwide programme to educate everyone about how to work abroad legally, the dangers of illegal ways of getting abroad and about different help to return, what would the programme do?

INTERNAL USE ONLY

Goals of the questionnaire:

- Obtain basic demographic picture of participants
- Understand how participants entered destination countries
- Understand how connected participants are to family (*remittances*)
- Ascertain effects of working or studying overseas:
    - Skill match and/or building (*skilled underemployed overseas? Acquired new skills?*
    - How is experience overseas valued and/or utilized (*e.g., change in employment status or income upon return*)
    - Any shifts in health

Dear Focus Group Participant:

Thank you very much for giving us your time to share your experiences living and working abroad and what it has been like to come back to Georgia.

Before we have our group conversation, we ask that you take a few minutes and fill out this brief questionnaire. The purpose of the questionnaire is to give us some basic information about your experiences, which is important, but may not be discussed in our conversation.

Please circle the appropriate answer to each question or fill in the requested information. If you have any questions, please ask one of the survey managers.

Thank you!

|___|____| FOCUS GROUP NUMBER

|_____| LOCATION

1. In the space below, please write your participant number:

|___| |___| |___|

2. Please circle the code of your sex:

Male	1
Female	2

3. Please write the DATE, MONTH and YEAR of your birth:

|____|____| |_____|_____| |____|____|____|____|
Date Month Year

4. **Please circle the country of your citizenship?** [IF YOU HAVE DUAL CITIZENSHIP, PLEASE CIRCLE BOTH THAT APPLY]

Armenia	1
Azerbaijan	2
Georgia	3
Russia	4
Other	5
If other, please fill in what country	

|_____|

5. **Please write down which ethnic group you consider yourself a part of** [WRITE ONE ANSWER IN THE SPACE PROVIDED]

_____

6. **Please circle the codes corresponding to all languages in which you speak well. By "well" we mean you can carry on a complex conversation about current events.**[PLEASE CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY]

Armenian	1
Azeri	2
Georgian	3
Other Kartvelian language (Mingrelian, Svan)	4
Russian	5
German	6
French	7
English	8
Other European Language	9
Other language	10

7. **Please circle the code corresponding to the <u>highest</u> level of education you have completed so far:**

Primary	1
Secondary	2
Secondary special ("technikum")	3
Incomplete higher / Student	4
Higher (BA degree)	5
Higher (MA degree)	6
Higher ("Specialist" degree)	7
Post-graduate degree	8

8. Please circle the code of the category that best describes your current employment status:

Run my own business / Self-employed	1
Employee in a state organization	2
Employee in a foreign / international organization	3
Employee in a local or international non-governmental / non-profit organization	4
Employee in a local or international business	5
Student	6
Housewife	7
Unemployed	8
Retired	9
Other (please specify below)	10

|_____|

9. Please circle you current occupational status:

Legislator, senior official or manager (public or business sectors)	1
Professional, scientist (i.e. scientists, engineers, professor)	2
Professional, non-scientist (i.e. lawyer, banker, programme manager for NGO)	3
Technical professions (i.e. engineering technicians, equipment operators, nursing and midwifery)	4
Clerk, service worker or shop/market sales worker	5
Skilled agricultural or fisheries worker	6
Craft or related trades worker	7
Unskilled worker	8
Armed forces	9
Student	10
Unemployed	11
Other (please specify below)	12

|_____|

10. What is currently your average or normal monthly (net) income in GEL?

0 – 100 GEL	1
101 – 300 GEL	2
301 – 500 GEL	3
501 – 1000 GEL	4
1001 – 2000 GEL	5
2001 GEL or more	6

11. Please circle the category that describes your current marital status :

Never married	1
Married: official state marriage only, no religious ceremony	2
Married: religious ceremony only, not registered with state	3
Married: both religious ceremony and state marriage	4
Married but spouse lives separately	5
Cohabiting without civil or religious marriage	6
Divorced	7
Separated	8
Widow / Widower	9

12. Please write down how many children you have:

|____|____| NUMBER

13. Please write down, how many members, including yourself, are there currently in your household? By household, we mean all the people who currently live with you and share a budget.

|____|____| NUMBER

14. Please describe your current health:

Very good	1
Good	2

Reasonable/few complaints	3
Regular complaints	4
Chronically ill	5

15. **Where do you usually get your news from?** [PLEASE SELECT ALL THAT APPLY]

Television news, nationwide channel	1
Television news, local channel	2
Television news, international channel	3
Newspapers	4
Internet	5
Friends, family, neighbours	6
Radio, local	7
Radio, international	8

16. How would your describe you experience in the group discussion today?

I found the questions interesting and enjoyed sharing my opinions	1
I learned about others' opinions, but found it difficult to participate because everyone was talking	2
I preferred to listen to others rather than share my thoughts.	3
I enjoyed sharing my thoughts and wanted to shared more.	4
I did not fully understand the questions and did not talk much..	5
I thought the questions were not useful and did not care to talk much.	6

17. How would you rate usefulness of questions?

Relevant to my experience	1
Some were relevant, some weren't	2
Did not seem relevant.	3

18. Would you participate in another group discussion if asked?

Yes.	1
No	2

THANK YOU FOR FILLING OUT THE QUESTIONNAIRE!

APPENDIX D: FOCUS GROUP DATA

Returnee Focus Groups

Table 20: Basic Demographic Profile by Returnee Groups

		Cities				Tbilisi Groups	
	ALL	Akhalkalaki	Batumi	Kutaisi	Tbilisi	*Pilot*	*Tbilisi*
sex	1.3	1.1	1.3	1.4	1.4	*1.5*	*1.3*
age	39.4	50.5	33.7	29.8	40.7	*38.0*	*44.3*
education	4.7	4.0	4.7	5.1	5.0	*4.0*	*6.3*
marital status	2.7	2.7	2.8	1.6	4.1	*5.3*	*2.7*
kids	1.4	2.4	1.2	0.9	0.9	*1.0*	*0.7*
hh size	4.1	4.7	3.3	4.7	3.3	*3.3*	*3.3*
# of participants	32	10	6	9	7	*4*	*3*

Note: Please see questionnaires for corresponding numbers for each category.

Figure 22: Education of Returnees, by sex

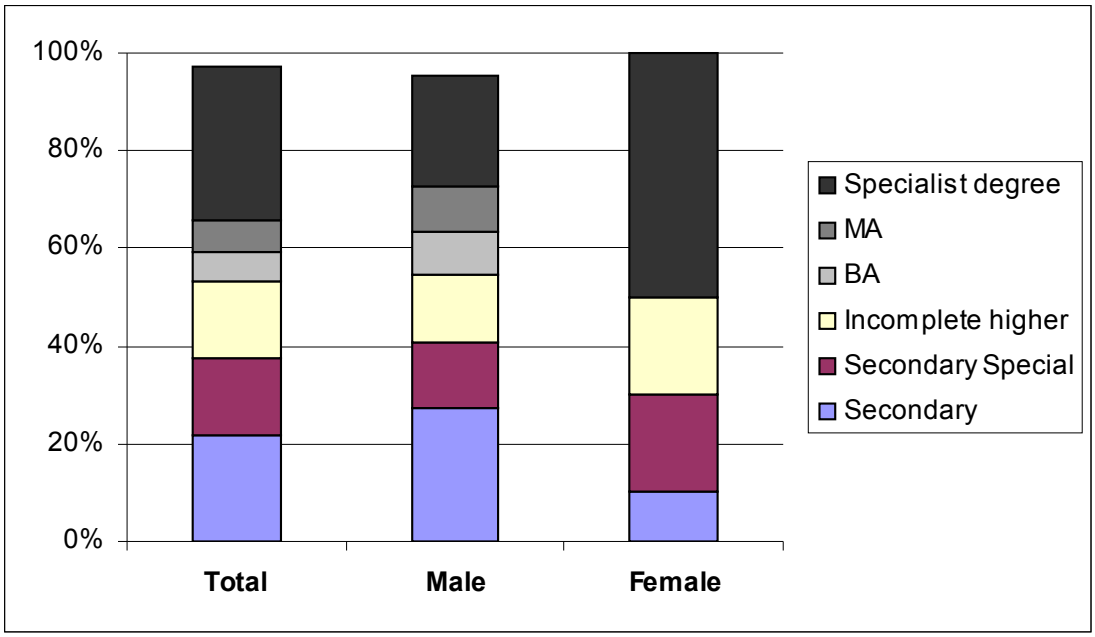


Figure 23: Majority report maintaining health

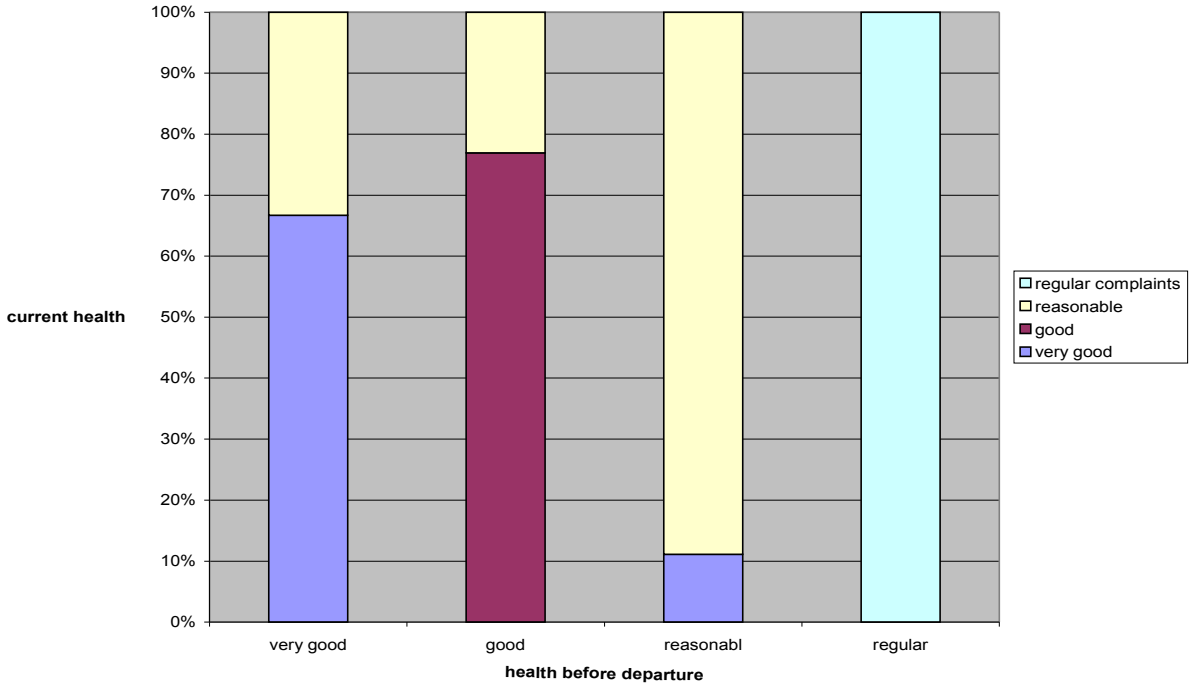


Figure 24: Frequency of remittances by sex

(female =inside; male=outside)

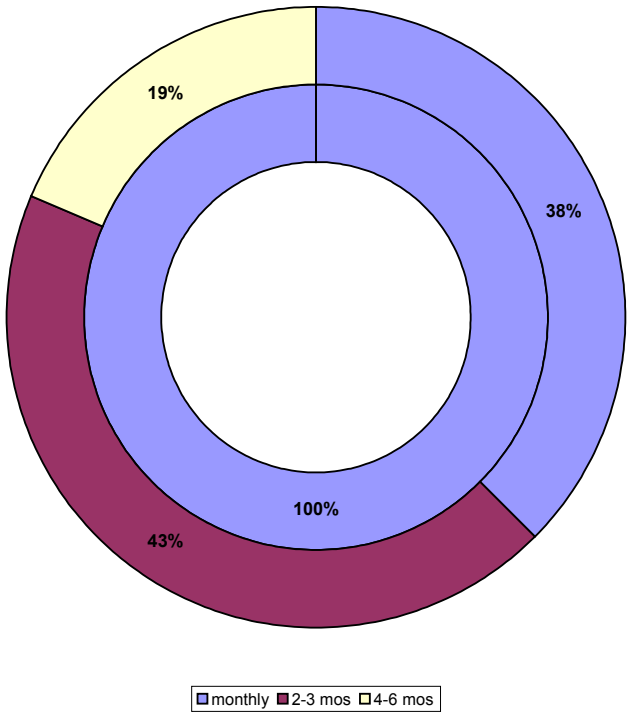


Table 21: Share of each age group which remits

	% who remit
18-24	25%
25-35	55%
36-45	83%
46-65	73%

Public Awareness

Table 22: Number of Voters (ages 18-55) in focus group cities of Georgia

City	Voters
Akhalkalaki	5,173
Batumi	68,821
Kutaisi	108,164
Tbilisi	629,311

Source: Voter list of Central Electoral Commission of Georgia – 2007

Table 23: Response Rates for General Public Focus Groups

Location	Date	accept/invite	show/ invite	show/ accept
Batumi	1-Sep	33%	27%	80%
Javakheti	16-Sep	25%	10%	40%
Kutaisi	9-Sep	8%	5%	63%
Tbilisi 2	25-Sep	7%	3%	43%
Tbilisi 3	3-Oct	53%	47%	88%
Tbilisi/pilot	18-Aug	11%	10%	89%
Student	28-Sep	100%	80%	80%
TOTAL EXCLUDING STUDENTS				
w/ pilot				**60%**
w/o pilot				**55%**

Table 24: Basic Demographic Data for Public Awareness by Groups

		Cities				*Tbilisi Groups*			
	ALL	**Akhal-kalaki**	**Batumi**	**Kutaisi**	**Tbilisi**	*Pilot*	*Random*	*Construct*	**Students**
sex	1.6	1.4	1.8	1.6	1.5	*1.5*	*2*	*1.2*	1.6
age	38.5	30.8	40.4	35.8	40.6	*33.9*	*47.7*	*45.1*	20.3
education	5.5	4	4.4	6	6.2	*5.8*	*6.7*	*6.5*	4.3
marital status	2.9	2.4	2.8	2.2	3.2	*2.4*	*2.3*	*4.5*	1.5
kids	1.3	0.6	1	1.2	1.7	*1.1*	*1.7*	*2.4*	0.08
hh size	3.9	5	3.8	3.6	4.1	*4.6*	*4*	*3.7*	4.4
# of participants	36	5	8	5	18	*8*	*3*	*7*	12

Figure 25: Education of General Public by sex

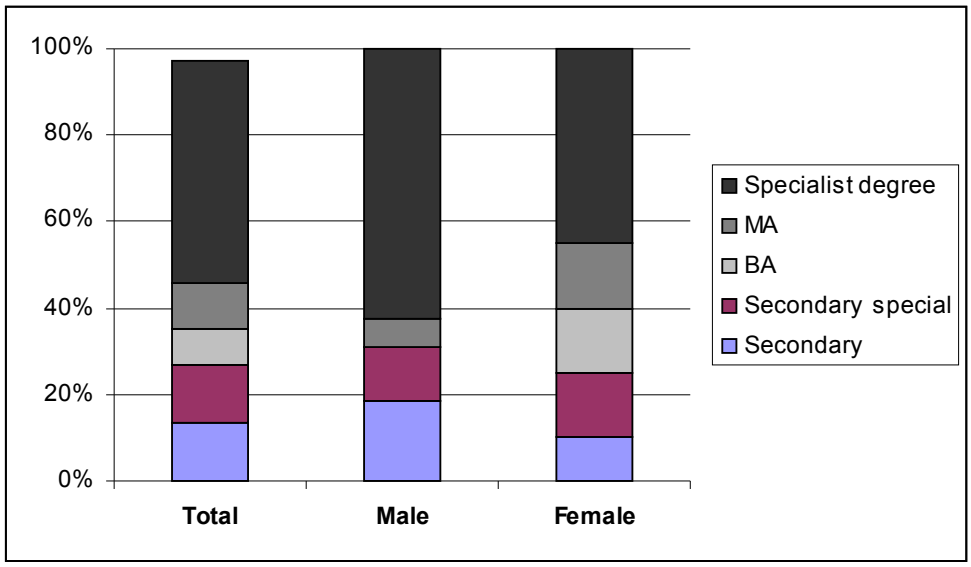
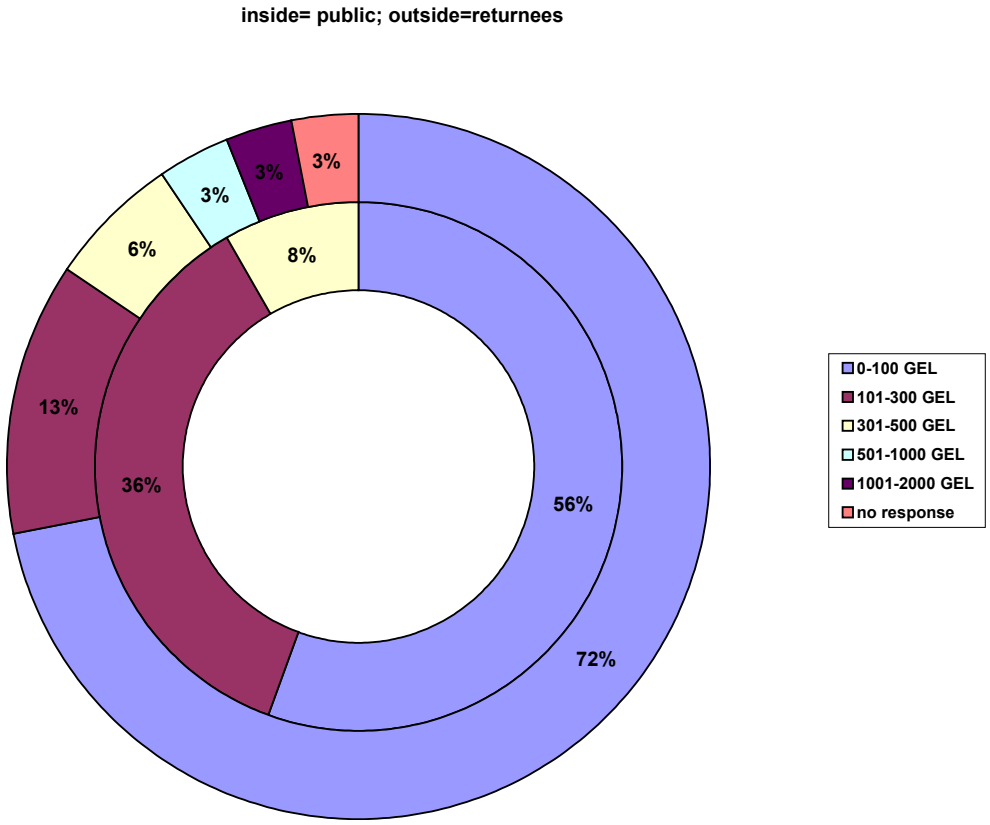


Figure 26: Returnee earnings lower than general public



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report was a major undertaking in an extremely brief period of time. In effort it went far beyond its limited budget frame. It incorporates every dimension of research – reviewing, data gathering and original research, and layers upon layers of analysis. This was made even more complicated by the fact that the lead researcher was unable to be in Georgia to conduct the field research, but had to coordinate remotely from Washington DC.

Maggie Osdoby Katz was the lead researcher, taking this report far beyond its original scope, for everyone's benefit. She was supported by CRRC's team: Koba Turmanidze (leading 12 focus groups), Nana Papiashvili (organized focus groups, tracking down information), Jen Weedon, Liili Abuladze and Gigi Mushkudiani contributed research. Aaron Erlich provided advice and migration expertise.

A special thanks is also extended to the staffs of Caritas, World Vision and People in Need who graciously helped us identify returnees for our focus groups as well as spaces to conduct them. And of course we are grateful for the time and candor of all our focus group participants.

Much of the work in this report is the result of the lead researcher's work on various projects, complete and incomplete, over the past three and a half years. So, there are numerous persons and institutions to thank, in particular all the staff at the International Organization for Migration; the Georgian Foundation for Strategic and International Studies for supporting thesis research and offering a base of operations; and earlier research assistants, Maka Ghlighvashvili and Gvantsa Kvinkadze.

CRRC would like to acknowledge the community of practitioners and researchers on migration in Georgia. This report is a testament to the vast collective knowledge of a dedicated few who work on a vital and much neglected issue.

Maggie Osdoby Katz would like to thank people at Adams Mill Road, hosts on Lorenzo Lane and Amanda Wooden for their support. Without them, this would never have been done.