Temporary Emigration: Who Wants to Leave Georgia and Why?

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Emigration is one of the most significant challenges in contemporary Georgia according to the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Georgia. Approximately 1.5 million Georgians live outside the country, although the exact number of undocumented migrants is almost impossible to determine.[1] This makes the issue of emigration even more complex, as it turns out that a large portion of Georgia's population lives outside its borders.

It is also noteworthy that, based on the results of CRRC-Georgia's "Caucasus Barometer 2024" survey, more than half of respondents – 58% - reported that they have a family member or close relative currently residing outside of Georgia.[2]
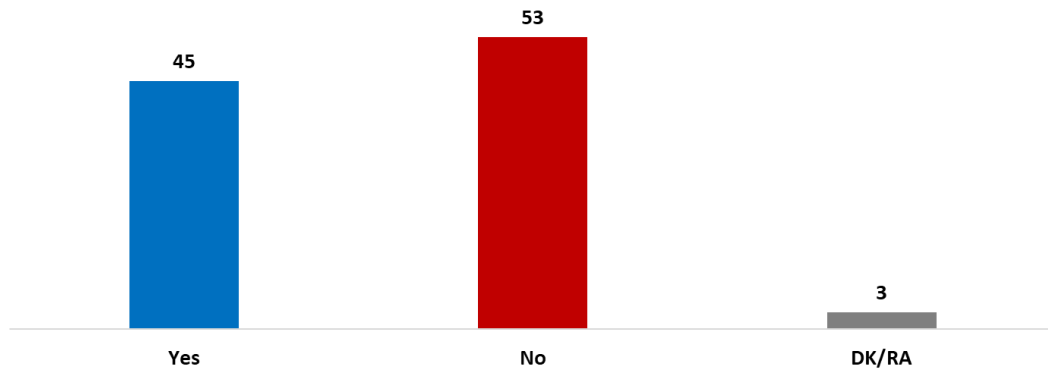
Additionally, the share of people who are interested in temporary emigration is high. According to the Caucasus Barometer, 45% of the population said that if they had the opportunity, they would leave Georgia to live in another country for some period of time.[3]
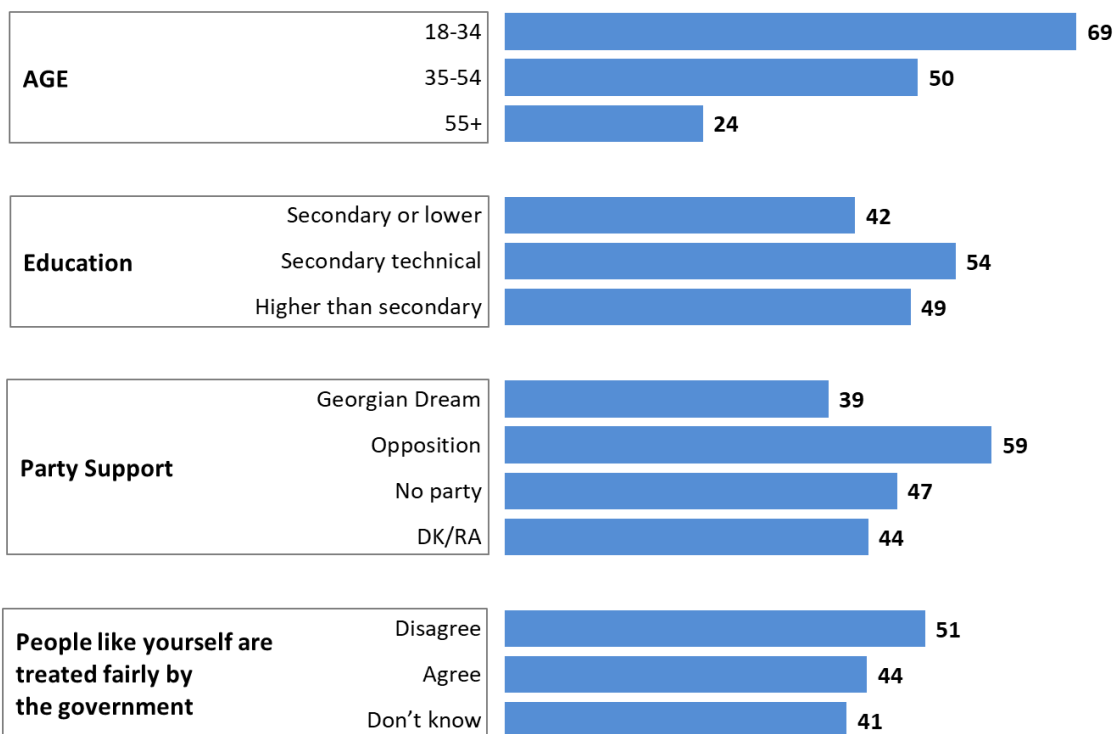
[1] https://globalnews.ge/en/georgia/1193?
[2] https://caucasusbarometer.org/en/cb2024ge/codebook/
[3] https://caucasusbarometer.org/en/cb2024ge/codebook/

If you had a chance, would you leave Georgia for a certain period of time to live somewhere else? (%)

45	53	3
Yes	No	DK/RA

Regression analyses demonstrate that certain demographic groups are more likely to consider temporary emigration compared to others.

If you had a chance, would you leave Georgia for a certain period of time to live somewhere else? (Predicted Probabilities)

AGE
- 18-34: 69
- 35-54: 50
- 55+: 24

Education
- Secondary or lower: 42
- Secondary technical: 54
- Higher than secondary: 49

Party Support
- Georgian Dream: 39
- Opposition: 59
- No party: 47
- DK/RA: 44

People like yourself are treated fairly by the government
- Disagree: 51
- Agree: 44
- Don't know: 41

Among demographic variables, age and education are statistically significantly related to the desire for temporary emigration.

Young people (ages 18-34), compared to other groups, express a greater desire for temporary emigration – they are more likely to consider leaving compared to both the middle age group (35-54) by 19 percentage points, and the older age group (55+) by 45 percentage points.

People with a secondary technical education are 12 percentage points more interested in emigration than those whose education level is only secondary or lower.

In addition to demographic factors, there is a statistically significant relationship between one's party affiliation and desire to temporarily emigrate. Supporters of the opposition are 20 percentage points more likely to want to go abroad temporarily compared to supporters of the ruling Georgian Dream party.

Interestingly one's perceptions of fairness are associated with desire to temporarily emigrate. People who disagree with the idea that the government treats people like them fairly are 7 percentage points more likely to express they would go abroad temporarily than those who think the government treats them fairly.

Overall, desire for temporary emigration in Georgia is especially evident among those groups who are actively seeking opportunities for development– young people, relatively educated individuals, and those who perceive an absence of fairness within the country's institutions.

The analysis is based on a binomial logistic regression model, where the dependent variable was: "if you had an opportunity, would you leave Georgia to live in another country for a certain period of time?" The answer options were: "Yes" or "No". independent variables included gender, age, settlement type, education lever, ethnicity, employment status, household wealth index, party affiliation and perceptions of government fairness. The results are statistically significant at the 95% confidence level (p<0.05).