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The European Union for Georgia



# Migration Management: Needs and Challenges of the Returned and Potential Migrants in four Municipalities of Georgia

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## Preface

The research was conducted in the framework of the project “People on the move: Addressing challenges of migration and providing alternative opportunities to potential and returned migrants in remote communities of Georgia”, which is implemented by the Institute for International Cooperation of the Adult Education Association “Project Office Tbilisi/Georgia” (DVV International) and financed by the European Union. DVV International implements projects in the field of adult education since 2002 in Georgia. The aim of the organization is to promote the concept of Lifelong Learning.

The research group would like to thank the focus group members and respondents for participation in the research. We also would like to thank the staff members of Adult and Community Education Centers for their support.

The content of the present research might not reflect the views of the European Union or DVV International.

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## Abstract

A few positive changes were made recently in the process of migration management in Georgia. The development of strategic and institutional mechanisms and documents is supported by the agreement between Georgia and the European Union. In spite of the progress, migration management still remains a challenge for the country. The aim of the following research is to analyze the migration processes in four municipalities of Georgia. More precisely the capacity of the local municipalities in terms of migration management will be assessed; the main reasons for emigration will be revealed; needs and problems of the returned migrants will be analyzed. According to the research results the migration management in Georgia is mainly centralized and the migration issues are not reflected in the strategic documents of the local municipalities. The qualification of the local municipality staff members have to be strengthened. Similarly to other research, a tough socio-economic situation was revealed as one of the main 'push factors' for emigration. There are various programs for re-integration. However, these programs are not accessible for most of the returned migrants, mainly due to the lack of information and trust. On the other hand the collaboration among the main actors (municipality and NGO sector) is less effective. Despite the fact that the research was conducted only in four municipalities of Georgia, the results can be used for reviewing the strategic documents on migration and for planning further activities in the field.

**Key words:** Migration management, returned migrants, municipality, emigration

## Introduction

The following study was conducted in the framework of the project „People on the Move: Addressing challenges of migration and providing alternative opportunities to potential and returned migrants in remote communities of Georgia“. It aimed at describing, assessing and analyzing the migration trends in the following four municipalities of Georgia: Chokhatauri, Tsalenjikha, Tetritskaro and Lagodekhi. Main results and recommendations of the study will be used for learning purposes to improve designing, planning and implementing further activities of the project.

The project is implemented by the Institute for International Cooperation of the German Adult Education Association (DVV International), Georgia Country Office and is financially supported by the European Commission. The project aims at improving the migration processes in the regions of Georgia, by strengthening the capacities of returned and potential migrants. The project is carried out in partnership with Jvari, Leliani, Chokhatauri and Koda Adult Education Centers (AECs). The beneficiaries of the project at all four locations will be offered a structured multicomponent educational program, which will enable them to improve their personal and professional skills, gain more insight into various legal and financial issues and become more efficient on the job market.

The unified education program offered to the beneficiaries will consist of the following components: 1. Vocational education; 2. Personality development; 3. Self-presentation and job-finding skills; 4. Financial literacy; 5. Legal literacy; 6. Basic English/German language; 7. Human Rights awareness program. The project will be completed by June 2017.

In order to have a clear picture of migration processes in the targeted municipalities, a descriptive research was initiated on the first stage of the project implementation period. The following research was carried out in the period of August – December 2016. The goal of the study was on the one hand to analyze the needs and the problems of returned and potential migrants and on the other hand to describe governmental or non-governmental programs and projects targeting returned and potential migrants that are available in these municipalities.

Consequently the objectives of the study were:

- To reveal main problems and needs of the returned and potential migrants;
- To understand what are the main reasons forcing people to migrate;
- To assess the capacity of the local governments related to migration;
- To produce an overview of the local actors/stakeholders (government, donors, civil society) in the field of migration;
- To identify a gap in addressing the needs of returned and potential migrants.

## Study Methodology

In order to address the objectives outlined above, qualitative research methods were applied. Desk research, face-to-face interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs) were used to collect the data. The research tools - interviews and FGD guides per project target group were developed prior to the field visits (See Appendix 1). The Organization Capacity Assessment tool was developed with the aim to evaluate the capabilities of the local municipalities for migration management (see Appendix 2). Besides, a secondary data review was applied for the purpose of the project.

Desk research included analyses of a. state and local level policy documents (laws, strategy documents with action plans, municipality budgets); b. project documents of the NGOs working in the field of migration; c. international and local research reports conducted on the issues of migration (for the list of the analyzed documents see Appendix 3). The analysis of the above mentioned materials was used to create a general overview of the migration situation in Georgia.

The data collection process has started on September 1, 2016, and ended by October 31, 2016. At the first stage, face-to-face interviews were conducted with the representatives of the state, non-governmental organizations and local government of the targeted regions (for the list of the interviewees see Appendix 4). In total 16 interviews were conducted, audio-recorded, transcribed and analyzed.

The Organization Capacity Assessment tool (see Appendix 2) was developed prior to conducting interviews with the local municipality representatives. The tool evaluated the following aspects of the municipalities' work in the field of migration: 1. Structural assessment (existence of migration department or division); 2. Assessment of policy documents (strategy, action plan); 3. Assessment of implemented migration project(s); 4. Assessment of existing resources (finances, staff members); 5. Assessment of collaboration with other organizations.

FGDs were conducted with three different target groups: 1. Returned migrants – those who have been living abroad for studying or working purposes at least for three months; 2. Potential migrants – those who are willing to live abroad for studying or working purposes; 3. Active citizens – those who are members of the “Active Citizen's Clubs” at the partner organizations – Jvari, Chokhatauri, Leliani and Koda AECs. In total 11 FGDs were conducted and 74 persons took part in it. On average, 6-7 participants attended each focus group at each targeted location.

The Qualitative data was analyzed using the method of content analysis. In order to avoid subjectivity two researchers analyzed the data separately and the results were at first compared and then unified.

Secondary statistical data from the National Statistics office of Georgia, such as number of population and the number of emigrants in the targeted municipalities, were analyzed. Furthermore, the data from the Caucasus Barometer (2015) by the Caucasus Research

Resource Center (CRRC) was used to identify the characteristics of those who are willing to migrate.

With the purpose of accountability and transparency the report of the study was distributed among the key stakeholders of the study for their review and feedback after considering of which the final research report was elaborated.

## Study Limitations

The study has certain limitations. A brief overview of the limitations and challenges is provided below:

- At the initial stage of the study, it was planned to answer certain research questions such as distinguishing different groups of potential and returned migrants based on their level of education and skills for each target municipalities. To provide such data, it was essential to conduct a quantitative research (survey with a representative sample). However, considering the project's limited budget for the study, it was impossible to conduct quantitative study for collecting such data and answering those initially set research questions.
- The project research team conducted FGDs with active citizens in all target municipalities except Jvari due to technical arrangements. Instead an interview with Jvari AEC director was conducted.
- Even though the project research team had certain guidelines and definitions to identify potential migrants, still to mobilize and clearly identify groups of potential migrants seemed to be a challenge.



## Migration Management in Georgia

There is no single factor that determines emigration flow from Georgia, but rather an intersection of various factors that contribute to the emigration tendencies. During the 90's emigration was caused by political instability, security threats and thus critical social and economic factors. Since then, Georgia has achieved political stability to some extent, but socio-economic factors (alongside with the willingness to leave the country for educational purposes and due to other reasons) remain the key determining factors for emigration. On the other hand, the current political context in the world and neighboring areas alongside with the achieved political stability and increased security in Georgia stimulated the increasing numbers of migrants to Georgia from the Middle East as well as other neighboring countries<sup>1</sup>.

Migration management is one of the main strategic areas within the Georgia-EU integration policy. Accordingly, with the effort of government, local and international organizations, significant positive changes are/were achieved in this regard. However, emigration from Georgia still remains a challenge to be regulated. As mentioned above, during the past five years, notable progresses were made in the development of Georgia's migration policy framework as well as strategic planning and administration. Despite the progress made in the field of migration management in Georgia, the key stakeholders identified challenges overcoming of which could significantly contribute to the improved migration management, especially on the regional level. This chapter will provide a detailed overview of the strategic documents and institutional mechanisms for migration management and also of existing statistics and programs aiming at the re-integration of returned migrants into Georgian society.

Migration management is outlined as one of the priority areas within the strategic documents signed between Georgia and the EU (Association Agenda between the European Union and Georgia and the Visa Liberalization Action Plan granted to Georgia by the EU). To fulfill the obligations, strategic framework including Migration Strategy and its Action Plan (2013-15; 2016-20) were developed. Besides, migration issues are incorporated in various strategic documents of the relevant government entities<sup>2</sup>.

The latest Migration Strategy for the years of 2016-20 includes five years of implementation phase, while the detailed plan of its actions covers two years of implementation period. The Migration Strategy covers returned migrants as one of the priority target groups. Accordingly, the resources are focused on reintegration of returned migrants and identification of their potential for the country's socio-economic development. In order to promote legal migration, Migration Strategy outlines the importance of the activities aiming at raising awareness of the

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<sup>1</sup> During the last decades, the number of asylum seekers, refugees and those seeking educational and employment opportunities in Georgia have been increasing ([Migration Profile, 2015](#)).

<sup>2</sup> Such as concept of the Migration Risk Analysis System accompanied by the 2016-2017 Action Plan; 2015-2018 State Strategy for the Labor Market Development of the Ministry of Labor, Health, and Social Protection; Strategy for the Development of the Professional Education in Georgia (2013-2020); Information and Communication Strategy of the Government of Georgia in the sphere of EU Integration (2014-2017); and the newly adopted Strategy for the Reform of the Political Planning System (2015-2017). (Migration Profile, 2015)

local population about the processes and outcomes of the Visa liberalization<sup>3</sup>. Besides, the document outlines the role of local government in the process of migration management. Specifically, capacity building of the employees of local government around the topics related to migration and also organizing public events/meetings aiming at raising awareness of the population at the local level.

The State Commission on Migration Issues (SCMI) was established by the Government of Georgia in 2010 with the aim of improving migration policy and its process management. The respondents participating in this study positively evaluated the role and function of SCMI in the migration framework development in Georgia<sup>4</sup>. In 2012, the SCMI Secretariat was formed with financial support of the European Union (EU). The secretariat is hosted by the Public Service Development Agency under the Ministry of Justice in Georgia and supports the SCMI operations. SCMI is coordinating the cooperation between 13 state agencies. The chairman of the commission is the Minister of Justice. 12 organizations (7 international organizations and 5 local non-profit organizations) are presented in the commission for consultation, additional expertise, cooperation and information sharing<sup>5</sup>. The commission operates 6 subject-specific working groups including a working group focusing on integration of returned migrants. Returned migrants are not directly represented in the working groups but non-profit organizations represent them<sup>6</sup>.

Despite the diverse composition of the Commission, local government (employees of the municipality) as an independent entity is not represented neither as a member of the Commission nor in its working groups. However, the interest of the local government is represented by the Ministry of Infrastructure of Georgia<sup>7</sup>. Hereby, it is worth noting that migration management is mostly centralized and therefore managed at the national level and less delegated to the local government.

## Data on Migration

According to the National Census 2014, the population of Georgia significantly decreased compared to the last census results of 2002. On January 1, 2015, the population of Georgia was 3,729,500. Data on emigration was also collected during the census<sup>8</sup>, according to which there are 88.5 thousand people, including 45.4% men and 54.6% women, considered as emigrants. From the regional perspective, for the majority of the emigrants the previous residences were Tbilisi, Imereti and Kvemo Kartli. The age of the majority of emigrants ranges from 20 to 54

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<sup>3</sup> Migration Strategy 2016-2020

<sup>4</sup> The first migration profile – a document with the elaborated analytical information regarding migration management was developed by SCMI in 2015.

<sup>5</sup> [State Commission on Migration Issues](#)

<sup>6</sup> [Migration Center](#)

<sup>7</sup> There is a lack of coordination and cooperation between the Ministry and Local Government Representatives (phone interview with the representative of Ministry of Infrastructure)

<sup>8</sup> According to the definition applied by GeoStat, “Emigrant is a person, who left Georgia from January 1, 2002 to a foreign country for the purpose of permanent or temporary residence or a person who is living abroad for more than 12 months or who left Georgia with the purpose to stay abroad for more than 12 months.”

years. According to the census results, the majority of emigrants are living in the Russian Federation (21.7%)<sup>9</sup>, Greece (15.9%) and Turkey (11.2%). The table below displays the distribution of population and the number of emigrants by regions (research locations).

Municipality	Distribution of population	Number of emigrants
<b>Chokhatauri</b>	19,001	94
<b>Lagodekhi</b>	41,678	736
<b>Tsalenjikha</b>	26,158	609
<b>Tetritskaro</b>	21,127	289

Source: Geostat, General Population Census of 2014<sup>10</sup>

The net migration rate in Georgia was negative (-3.4) in 2015, which indicates that more people are leaving than entering the country<sup>11</sup>. The same trend was observed from 2012 till present. The trend of the previous years could not be observed since different data collection methodologies were applied by National Statistics Office of Georgia (GeoStat).

Data on returned migrants is almost unavailable. There is a database of returned migrants but only of those who are/were beneficiaries of State or International Organizations' reintegration programs. Considering the lack of the statistical data, one of the challenges that remains is to collect reliable data on emigration numbers in Georgia, especially divided up by regions. The Migration Strategy of Georgia focuses on the need of proper migration data management and it is planned to create a united analytical system, which will unify data collected by different state agencies. The system will ensure that all the migration related data is unified in the system and that the data analysis is simplified. It should be noted that local government (through relevant capacity building of the employees) could be considered as one of the key stakeholders in data collection and analysis at the regional level.

## Programs for returned migrants

Governmental as well as non-governmental organizations are providing programs that focus on reintegration of returned emigrants into Georgian mainstream society. Existing programs are quite diverse, though not accessible for all types of returned migrants due to eligibility criteria, lack of information or other issues. Besides, there is no information about the total number of returned migrants, but information regarding numbers of selected beneficiaries and numbers of those who referred to the existing programs is available. Furthermore, there is no analysis of the demand and provision aspect of the issue, thus what is the share of the returned migrants, who have been provided with the support, is not explored.

<sup>9</sup> [State of Migration, ENIGMA, 2015](#)

<sup>10</sup> GeoStat analyzes migration data according to the data collected by the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia, according to which an emigrant is a person who stays abroad for at least six months and a day. Therefore, a person who goes abroad for seasonal work for a duration of three months is not considered in the data analysis.

<sup>11</sup> [National Statistics Office of Georgia](#)

Since 2015 government of Georgia<sup>12</sup> allocates money from state budget to implement programs and projects supporting the reintegration of migrants. These programs are implemented by the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Accommodation and Refugees of Georgia. The “Reintegration assistance program for Georgian returnees” includes the following services.

- Financing of medical assistance and medications, including psycho-social rehabilitation
- Financing social projects to create sources of income and facilitate self-employment
- Legal Assistance
- Ensuring temporary housing in special cases
- Ensuring inclusion of the beneficiaries into the program led by LEPL Social Service Agency. The program focuses on professional skills development and VET education.

Target groups of the existing programs are Georgian citizens or stateless persons with a permanent residence permit in Georgia; who:

- were residing abroad illegally for more than one year, or had an asylum application abroad;
- Registered for inclusion in “Reintegration assistance program for Georgian returnees” after having been returned to homeland for one year.

The program covers the following regions of Georgia: Tbilisi, Qvemo-Kartli, Mtskheta-Mtianeti, Samtskhe-Javakheti, Shida-Kartli, Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti, Adjara and Guria. In other regions programs for reintegration of returned migrants are held by the International Organization of Migration (IOM). It is worth mentioning that state reintegration programs are implemented by NGOs that won the state tenders<sup>13</sup>.

As mentioned, besides the state program, a reintegration program for returned migrants was also implemented by IOM.<sup>14</sup> IOM established mobility centers to provide information and support to the returned migrants. From 2014 to 2016 with financial support from the EU, mobility centers were established in four cities of Georgia (Tbilisi, Kutaisi, Telavi, and Batumi). Once the program is finished, mobility centers will be integrated into the programs initiated by the government of Georgia.

In general, during the implementation period of two years, 6,252 people addressed mobility centers to get different types of services (medical aid, temporary accommodation, professional training, business consultation etc.). Out of these, 2008 people<sup>15</sup> were helped based on their individual needs. Based on this project, the government of Georgia initiated a program focusing

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<sup>12</sup>Source: [Web page](#) of the Ministry of the internally displaced persons from the occupied territories, accommodation and refugees of Georgia

<sup>13</sup>The tender winning organizations are: Public defender; Samtskhe-Javakheti Regional Association “Toleranti”; Charity Humanitarian Center Apkhazeti; The Gorgian Center for Psychological and Medical Rehabilitation of Future Victims (GCRT); Young Barristers.

<sup>14</sup> Interview: Tsiuri Antadze (IOM); [Information Leaflet](#) available in english.

<sup>15</sup> The indicated amount is identified by IOM as the number of beneficiaries.

on the reintegration of returned migrants. During the implementation process, these two entities were successfully collaborating to identify and address the needs of the returned migrants.

## Evaluate the capabilities of the Municipalities<sup>16</sup>

In the context of migration management, local self-government can be determined as one of the important actors in terms of implementation of the programs as well as dissemination of information. In the strategy of migration policy in general, the role of municipalities and their training on migration issues are emphasized. The results of this study confirm that delegating the management of centralized migration and developing adequate competencies at the local level are also very important. To be more precise, the results of the research confirm that they do not have migration policy in the Tsalenjikha, Lagodekhi, Tetrtskaro and Chokhatauri municipalities. Accordingly, migration-related issues are foreseen neither in the strategy nor in the action plan, nor the budget. No projects which address the problems and needs of migrants are implemented within the municipalities,.

Migration is not a priority for the local municipalities

According to the officials of the municipalities, though immigration affects the demography negatively, it is not the most important problem in their municipalities. The infrastructural and social problems are named as the most severe ones.

It is very difficult to talk about the scales of migration in the target municipalities because the officials do not have statistical or analytical information. According to the law of self- government of Georgia, the self-governing unit/body shall periodically report information about migration to the governor (Article 42.4) However, according to the interviews this is not implemented.

Unfortunately, we do not have statistical information, such information has not been collected. Nobody has asked for it, otherwise we would have done it.

[State representative; Lagodekhi Municipality]

According to the representative of the local government in the city of Jvari

High level of migration is very notable. But it is not the duty of state representative to work on migration-related issues, thus I do not have any statistical data and I can evaluate the situation depending only on my personal observations. In the summer emptiness of the city it is more visible. You can see neither men nor women in the streets, as they are gone to seasonal jobs either in Abkhazia or Turkey.

[State representative, Tsalenjikha municipality]

No statistical data is available in the local government of Chokhatauri either, thus the representative of the local municipality gives approximate numbers. Around 50% of young people are involved in seasonal jobs. The head of the local municipality says that migration is

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<sup>16</sup> Tetrtskaro, Lagodekhi, Tsalenjikha and Chokhatauri Municipalities

not a significant problem nowadays for his municipality. There is no need for creating a working group about this issue because there are more urgent problems to be solved in the municipality.

At this stage we have two main directions: infrastructural, I mean, constructing roads in the villages, water supply problems, and social programs. Those are priorities because the level of poverty is still very high, hence the problem of migration is less important.

[State representative, Chokhatauri municipality]

As noted above there are no implemented programs specifically for migrants in the target locations. However, the migrants are welcomed to participate in social programs.

The social program is designed for vulnerable people. Returned migrants can also be included there.

[State representative, Tetrtskhari municipality]

IDP Unit works on all social issues because our work is a social service. We make no differences, we work with everyone (including returned migrants) and give them information about everything.

[State representative, Tsalenjikha municipality]

It is worth mentioning that Lagodekhi municipality has a program for eco-migrants. The number of eco-migrants in this region is quite high, thus the local municipality offers them assistance on legal issues, mostly about property and land ownership cases.

None of the municipalities have a department which works on migration issues. However, they participate in information dissemination processes. On the one hand various state bodies (e.g. ministries) use the space of local municipalities for holding meetings about migration issues. On the other hand, in some municipalities (e.g. in Tsalenjikha) there is a particular staff member who is responsible for disseminating information about local organizations which work on migration issues.

We are informed about these issues and we know which organization works in this field. So if somebody asks we can redirect them to those who have more information.

[State representative, Tsalenjikha municipality]

However, another problem is that the number of individuals who address the municipalities regarding migration issues is very low - around 3-4 persons per year.

[Returned migrants] come here, mostly via land registrations. People who were abroad have land registration problems and as soon as they find out that we have a free registration program they address us.

[State representative, Tetrtskaro municipality]

State representatives of the municipalities express readiness to gain more information about migration. Though they do not think this topic is urgent, they believe that additional information will be better for the development of staff members.

More knowledge is not bad and the problem of migration is always present. The more we know about it the better.

[State representative, Lagodekhi municipality]

The representatives of the local governments talk about money transfers as a positive aspect of international labor migration.

Of course there is a positive side! Money they send from foreign country is spent on the health and education of their children and grandchildren. Families are developing... I know some families who started businesses with the money sent from abroad.

[State representative, Tetrtskaro municipality]

The possible actions of the local municipalities towards migration management were also discussed during the interviews. The representatives of the municipalities said that they could train one staff member in migration issues, and that one particular person could be responsible for migration. They believe that having such staff members will be especially important after visa liberalization.

We could have one representative who would assist citizens. As soon as we get visa liberalization, more people will leave the country and more people will need detailed information. Thus we will spread information more efficiently and we will have one more employed person.

[State representative, Tetrtskaro municipality]

To sum up, the municipalities do not have a specific role in migration management, they do not have qualified and competent staff members to spread information about the existing programs and the process of visa liberalization. On the one hand they would like to have more information and trainings in this field; however, they believe that the municipalities nowadays have other priorities.

## **Desire to emigrate and related issues**

The data from the Caucasus Barometer (2015) was applied to reveal the main factors connected to the willingness to emigrate. The results reveal that 88% of the respondents are not willing to go to permanent emigration, whilst 46% of population wishes to emigrate temporarily. The desire to emigrate is linked to certain demographic, economic or social variables, such as age, sex, employment status, income, acquaintances abroad, etc. According to data provided by CRRC, the respondents' age is in negative correlation with the desire to emigrate permanently or temporarily, which means that as age increases the interest to emigrate decreases (Temporarily  $r=.42$ ;  $p<.01$ ; Permanent  $r=-.14$ ;  $p<.01$ ). The desire to emigrate is linked to sex. To



be more precise, men desire to emigrate, temporarily or permanently, more than women do. Also, results show that the place of residence is in correlation with the desire to emigrate; urban residents desire to emigrate more than rural residents.

Economic issues, such as employment status, income and whether one has a loan or not are related to emigration, too. According to the research results, unemployed persons express their willingness to emigrate permanently. But it is worth mentioning that both, unemployed and employed (employed or self-employed) respondents, want to emigrate temporarily. 90% of unemployed students express the desire to leave the country temporarily. In case of permanent emigration, income is not a significant variable, while a wish for temporary migration is expressed more by the people with higher income. Similarly, having a loan and the desire to emigrate temporarily are interconnected. The majority of respondents who have a loan express their wish to emigrate temporarily (52%).

Having a close relative or a friend abroad is connected to the desire to emigrate temporarily or permanently. Respondents who have close relative abroad express their wish to emigrate on a permanent basis (close relative 12%; friend 14%) more than those respondents who do not have any acquaintances abroad (close relative 6%; friend 6%). Similarly, respondents who had close relatives abroad wanted to emigrate temporarily (close relative 53%; friend 60%) more than those respondents who didn't have anyone abroad (close relatives 31%; friend 32%). Accordingly, having social connections abroad has a significant influence on the desire to emigrate.

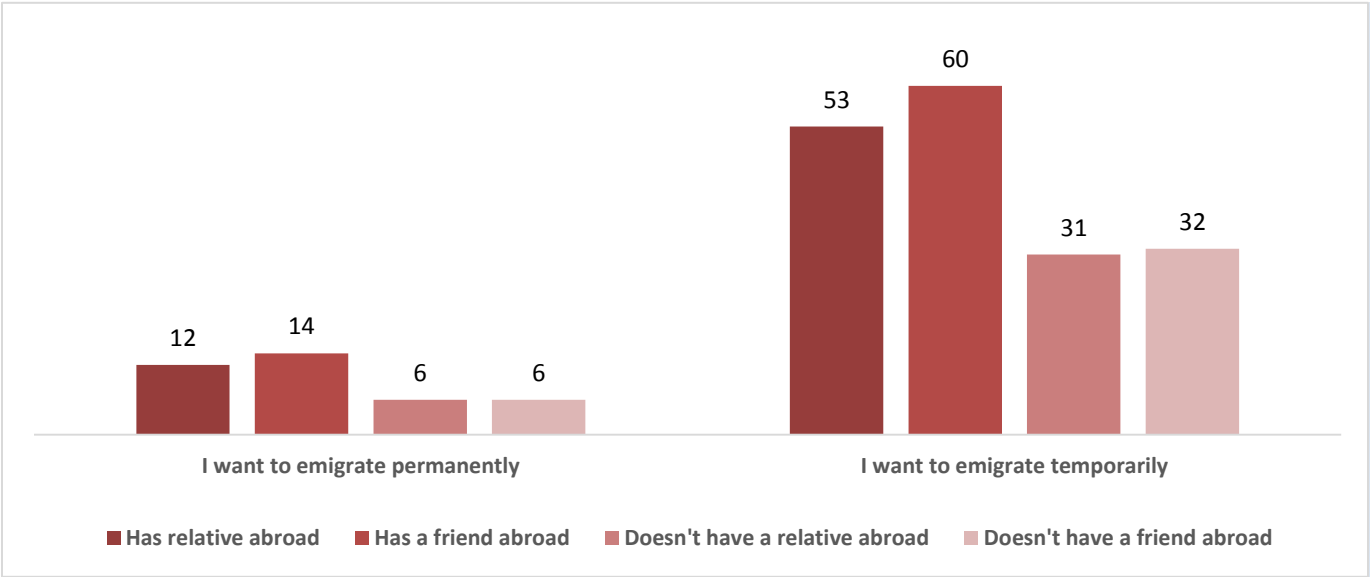


Table #1: Relation between desire to emigrate and social connections abroad (%)



## Main Reasons for Migration

The results of the CRRC's research, which were discussed above, illustrate migration trends and directions in the country. In order to have a more focused perspective, the results of focus group meetings in four municipalities of Georgia are analyzed below. The group interviews in Lagodekhi, Tsalenjikha, Tetrtskaro and Chokhatauri municipalities revealed the main reasons for migration, main challenges and problems abroad and the types of impact of migration on the migrants and their families.

The most frequent and strongest motive for migration is a tough economic situation: high level of unemployment and low salaries. The research shows that the main sources of income in the target municipalities are pensions and social assistance, which is not sufficient. Thus community members have to migrate and work abroad.

We left to earn some money, to send it home and buy something in order to somehow overcome the poverty that we live in now.

[Returned migrant, Lagodekhi Municipality]

Main reasons for Migration are:

- Unemployment
- Low salaries
- Self-development purposes

The bank loans make the economic situation of the returned and potential migrants even worse. According to the respondents, many people use the services of online loans, but afterwards they are not able to pay it back. Thus the only way for them to cover the loan is to work abroad and send money to the family.

These offers for online loans which come as small text messages daily are horrible. People take more and more loans, and then they cannot pay it and have to migrate, work and collect some money.

[Returned migrant, Tsalenjikha Municipality].

Unemployment makes the beneficiaries feel unnoticed/unfulfilled. They think that they are not able to reveal and use the abilities that they have. Another serious issue is that the school graduates have no opportunity for further development. As the participants of FGD put it, the youth have no chances for employment, self-realization and success. The only alternative for them is labor migration.

Everybody who did not manage to continue studies at the university went to Turkey for working purposes.

[Returned migrant, Tsalenjikha Municipality].

While the returned migrants stressed the significance of economic difficulties, the younger members of potential migrants' FGD talked about the importance of receiving education abroad. There are two reasons for this, firstly the FGD are interested in gaining high quality education

and secondly, they believe that the employment chances are higher when one holds an international diploma.

The above written motives can be grouped into two main directions: a. financial difficulties and b. self-development. These two groups have different specificities. For instance, the representatives of the first group, have to be offered activities which will be directly linked to their employment or increase their income in the future. As for the second group, they have to be offered activities which will lead to their self-development and which will serve as a challenge in their lives.

## Types of migration and countries of destination

Since critical economic factors are determining emigration from Georgia, the type of emigration is mostly labor emigration. The main destination countries are: Turkey, Greece, Russia, Italy, Spain, Cyprus and Israel.

The main type of migration is labor migration

Concerning the forms of migration, both forms are widespread among the respondents – seasonal labor migration, as well as permanent migration. The destinations for seasonal migration are mostly Abkhazia and Turkey, while with long term purposes, respondents are emigrating either to European countries or Russia.

Seasonal labor migration is quite widespread in Chokhatauri and Tsalenjikha municipalities. The destination country is mostly Turkey, since it is geographically closer and seasonal jobs at tea and nuts plantations are available there. Besides Turkey, residents from Tsalenjikha municipality also got to Abkhazia for seasonal jobs. As mentioned, they are highly paid there, which determines their motivation to seasonal emigration.

### Types of work:

- Caregiver/nurse;
- Tailor
- Tea picking;
- Nuts picking;
- Construction;

The research participants indicated that labor migrants living in foreign countries are willing to do any type of work that is easily accessible and available for them.

We do any kind of physical work including caregiver, nurse, carpet washer, tailor, tea/fruit/nuts picker and etc.

[Returned migrant, Tsalenjikha municipality]

## Migration – is it legal or illegal?

The results from the focus group discussions indicate that border crossing is mostly legal, however, living and working abroad is illegal. In other cases people have a living permission, but work illegally and finally, in certain cases both living and working are related to illegal procedures, meaning that migrants are living and working in a foreign country without a permission.

When Georgian citizens move to Turkey for seasonal work, they have a legal living permission for a specific period of time. However, they do not have a working permission therefore, they work illegally. The respondents indicated that this is related to a risk since they can be deported from a country if local policemen check the documents.

We were warned not to speak loudly because someone could guess that we were Georgians working illegally.

[Returned migrant, Chokhatauri municipality]

Higher risks are met in other countries by Georgian labor migrants, since they could be checked even in the streets and deported to Georgia.

Whenever I noticed a police car, I was deadly scared ... If I was asked to present the documents, what could I do?

[Returned migrant, Chokhatauri municipality]

Respondents indicated that in some cases, migrants are aware of the outcomes of illegal migration, but the risks are not taken seriously and it is not an obstacle to emigrate.

What could they do to us? The biggest risk could be deportation.

[Returned migrant, Chokhatauri municipality]

While middle-aged returned and potential migrants of FGDs were focusing on illegal ways of living and working abroad, for the potential migrants from the younger generation it was absolutely unacceptable and they considered only legal ways of migration.

Such different perspectives are determined by the fact that for some people, emigration from Georgia is an opportunity while for some, it is a necessity. The young generation wants to emigrate for self-development, personal progress and for gaining experience. It is an opportunity for gaining experience and success in the future, while for middle aged people migration is the only way to provide their families with money. Therefore, despite having all the information about the risks involved in illegal migration, people who consider migration the only solution would consider illegal migration for living and working purposes.

For such kinds of groups it is still acceptable to go and live abroad illegally even if they have complete information about the risks of illegal migration.

## **The Role of non-formal Connections**

The importance of personal ties in the processes of migration in Georgia is stressed by various researches<sup>17</sup>. The municipalities of Lagodekhi, Tetrtskaro, Chokhatauri and Tsalenjikha are no exceptions here. The FGDs illustrate that having relatives or acquaintances abroad is very important for the migrants. Usually gaining the information about going abroad, as well as

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<sup>17</sup>[Tamar Zurabishvili, Migration networks of labor migrants from Tianeti  
Caucasus Research Resource Center, 2015 Caucasus Barometer](#)

preparing the documentation and finding a job there is done with the help of non-formal, personal connections.

Friends and relatives, who have already been abroad, are main sources of information for those who want to emigrate. Generally, potential migrants prefer to gain information from personal connections rather than from official sources such as the municipality or the NGO sector. However, there are differences between the age groups. Those youngsters who are willing to go abroad for studying purposes are well informed about the legal procedures, needed documentation and living conditions in the country of destination. On the contrary, middle and older aged respondents have less information and mostly rely on personal connections.

The following sources were named as the main channels for information:

- Internet;
- Television;
- Consultation of lecturers;
- Consultation of relative residing abroad;
- Consultation of friends who have been abroad with a similar project.

To sum up, the sources for information are limited especially for the middle aged and older respondents. They do not know whom to address for consultation. This is why most of them choose personal connections for gaining information. None of the respondents have addressed local municipalities or NGO representatives working in the field of migration. Meanwhile there is an information board in the Community Center<sup>18</sup> in Tsalenjikha, and there is a staff member at Tsalenjikha municipality who is responsible for information dissemination about NGOs which work in the field of migration and are located in the neighboring municipalities.

Personal connections are important while collecting the visa documents. Those who are willing to go abroad usually do not have enough information about how to prepare visa documentation, thus they use the services of a so called 'mediator', who assists them.

My son-in-law prepared the documents with the help of an acquaintance. It's a fact that there are some possibilities [to prepare documents and leave]. He pretended to go on a business trip. They prepared documents for him. He went to the consul and got a one-month visa. This is how he left.

[Potential Migrant, Lagodekhi Municipality].

The above mentioned mediator is paid to help a person to go abroad. The amount of payment is defined by the type of service – only preparation of documents, or also finding an apartment and a job in the country of destination. But there never is a guarantee that this will work.

My son wants to go to Israel. He found a woman who will help him receive a visa for one year. She will organize the journey, accommodation and a job for him and will receive 4500 USD for this. This is just a verbal agreement. Nobody knows if this works.

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<sup>18</sup>Additional information about Community Centers can be found here <http://www.centri.gov.ge/>

[Active Citizens, Tetrtskaro Municipality].

Having connections in the country of destination is important, too, because it is believed that social and emotional support is of great significance, especially on the initial stage.

Those who do not have acquaintances and relatives or have nobody to rely on cannot risk to go.

[Active Citizens, Tetrtskaro Municipality]

The networks are created while being in migration too:

You know? There is a cycle – you work for somebody, if he likes you, he will recommend you to his friends, and they will recommend to theirs and that's how it goes.

[Returned migrants, Tetrtskaro Municipality]

## **Main Difficulties for Labor Migrants**

Returned migrants discuss the difficulties that they have to face while being in labor migration. The difficulties mainly are related to the fact that the migrants have to live and work illegally and thus have no rights in the country of residence.

Due to the fact that Georgian migrants have no legal rights for being employed in foreign countries they are in an unfavorable position. The respondents report that often they had to work over hours, receive less or no salary at all. The illegal labor migrants have no possibility to protect themselves against such exploitations.

When you work illegally, you might be cheated; you might not be paid... But you can say or do nothing about this.

[Returned migrant, Tetrtskaro Municipality]

The respondents say that as citizens of Georgia they did not feel safe in a foreign country.

Our rights were limited.

We had no freedom of speech; we had no freedom at all.

[Returned migrants, Chokhatauri Municipality]

Except for legal issues, the difficulties concerned the working conditions, too. According to the respondents, they had to do tough physical work. Some of the beneficiaries even mentioned that they developed health problems. The initial stage of migration is especially tough.

The first year was the hardest. I could not find a job for three months. As soon as I started to work, the worst nightmare began for me. I had reasonable living conditions, but the job was horrible. Other people were in tough conditions, too. One can expect anything from people in such conditions. This is when you start thinking about your home country and wonder – Why on earth have I left?

[Returned migrant, Lagodekhi Municipality]

Language is another barrier for the migrants. However, they say that they learned the language in a couple of months.

It was during a quarrel with my boss when I first managed to express myself in Greek. My boss looked at me in a way that I thought everything was over and he would fire me. But he smiled and told me, you seem to have learnt Greek. Since then we became friends [laughs].

#### **Main Difficulties for Labor Migrants**

- Having no rights
- Tough Working Conditions
- Language Difficulties
- Nostalgia

[Returned migrant, Lagodekhi Municipality]

The main motive for migration for the focus group participants are financial difficulties. The labor migrants hope to accumulate some financial capital while being abroad. But the group interviews illustrate that though migrants are in better economic conditions abroad, they are not able to make proper savings.

The money I would bring [from abroad] was enough only for a couple of days.

[Returned migrant, Chokhatauri Municipality]

Besides the difficulties described above, nostalgia for family and friends is very strong for the labor migrants.

I had normal living and working conditions, but the hardest part was that I was distanced from my family and relatives. My best friend got married and I could not attend the wedding... My kids were very young when I left...

[Returned migrant, Chokhatauri Municipality]

This is a torture, – in the first place psychological and then also physical. Do you know how it feels like to leave your kids behind?

[Returned migrant, Chokhatauri Municipality]

Nostalgia is the hardest for those who are in labor migration for an infinite period of time and do not know when they are coming back.

### **Positive Sides of Migration**

Participants of the focus groups discussed positive sides of migration such as economic benefits for the families, getting familiar with a new culture and learning a new language. Furthermore, living abroad gives them an opportunity to evaluate their own life from different perspectives.

Respondents indicated that despite of the difficult working conditions, working abroad is a way of income. As mentioned above, though the emigrants might not be able to make sufficient savings, the monthly income is higher abroad.

You can earn 500 Gel in 5 days, which is impossible here.

[Returned migrant, Chokhatauri municipality]

For many families in Georgia, remittances from abroad are the main sources of income.

Besides economic benefits, respondents claim that while being abroad they learn new languages, get familiar with a new culture and in case of return, they share their experiences with others.

During the migration, I've gained huge experience, which is so important for living here. After my return, I re-considered my life...

[Returned migrant, Tsalenjikha municipality]

The respondents focused on the skills and practical knowledge that they gained during their time in migration:

For example, I learned five different types of businesses there that don't exist here.

**Positive sides of emigration:**

- Economic benefits
- Learning new languages
- Gaining new skills
- Evaluation of one's own self and position in life

[Returned migrant, Lagodekhi municipality]

It is also important to note that living and working abroad brings financial stability for many people, which plays a crucial role in their self-esteem. As noted during the FGD, for many emigrants stable financial conditions and a structured daily routine gave their lives a meaning

I had a good salary, I felt like a human being. Unfortunately, it was abroad, not here.

[Returned migrant, Lagodekhi municipality]

Finally, as claimed by the respondents, while being abroad they re-evaluated their role and position in their own country.

One can exactly determine one's place here while being abroad.

I am very satisfied with the experience of having been abroad because I found myself and that's what matters in the end...

[Returned migrant, Lagodekhi municipality].

## The reasons to return and the process of re-integration

The reasons to return to Georgia are quite diverse and include expiration of documents, deportation and unbearable physical working conditions.

### **The main reasons to return:**

- Deportation
- Expiration of documents
- Hard working conditions

Cases of deportation were quite common among the members of the FGD. Quite often the illegal immigrants are discovered and deported to Georgia. In case of the seasonal migrants to Turkey, they are allowed to stay in Turkey without a visa for 90 days. Thus in order not to break the law, they return to Georgia after three months.

Unbearable working conditions abroad are another reason to return. Some of the respondents stated that they “couldn’t stand working in such harsh working conditions anymore”. As mentioned before there were cases of health damage due to tough working conditions, too.

Some respondents stated that after returning to Georgia they found it difficult to adapt to Georgian society. Daily work structured their lives abroad.

[After returning back] I stayed at home; I couldn’t go out for three months after returning to Georgia. I was stressed. It’s too hard to face Georgian reality after living abroad for so long. If my life was structured here, it would be amazing to live in Georgia. While being abroad, I was more engaged, I planned everything in advance. But here, everyone knows the details of your personal life except you.

[Returned migrant, Lagodekhi municipality]

Personally, I found it too difficult to return, it took me half a year or more to adapt again. I was begging someone to take me abroad again. I came back here in 2014 and now I want to leave again.

[Returned migrant, Tsalenjikha municipality]

However, some of the respondents indicated that their lives remained the same or changed insignificantly after returning. Thus, despite the knowledge and experience that they have gained, their living standards and their economic situations have not improved.

I go for seasonal jobs, but when I return everything is the same as before going – I wake up in the morning and do not know what to do. I do not have a job, there is no activity... So, of course, I start thinking about going back.

[Returned migrant, Tsalenjikha municipality]

Emigration could not improve the living standards of the respondents



When I came back to Georgia, I continued my ordinary life. I am still unemployed and my life is exactly the same as it used to be before emigration.

[Returned migrant, Chokhatauri municipality]

According to the representatives of the local municipalities, education plays a significant role in the process of eliminating the flow of labor migration and in the re-adaptation of returned migrants. The respondents stress the importance of both civic and vocational education. Vocational education courses are considered as a key to finding a job. According to FGD participants, if vocational education was supported more, people would acquire skills which are more demanded on the job market. This will create more opportunities for employment and the more people are employed the less people will think of going to emigration.

### **Programs for returned migrants and related difficulties**

It should be noted that Georgia has a number of programs aimed at providing assistance to returned migrants and their reintegration into society (see pages 11-12). However, the results of FGD show that, on the one hand, the returned migrants have only vague ideas about these programs and on the other hand they do not trust them and think there is no sense in applying.

I did not even try to apply, I do not trust them. I do not think it will work. I do not have hope.

[Returned migrant, the municipality of Tsalenjikha]

There is a staff member for information dissemination about the existent programs for returned migrants at Tsalenjikha municipality. However, the municipality personnel claim that the level of appeal is very low. Low initiative from the society is named as a reason for this.

At the same time, the FGD participants think that these programs are not for them, they will not help them, etc. Such thoughts are encouraged by the fact that some of the returned migrants tried to apply for the small grant programs but have never succeeded.

I tried once. They requested my documents, I wrote everything they asked for. They told me I would win the tender later... But there were thousands like me, I had no chance to win, I paid for everything but it did not work.

[Returned migrant, the municipality of Tsalenjikha]

Yes, I filled in an application for a 5000 GEL grant, but here is no sense, they make you fill in the application but at the end they give you nothing.

[Returned migrant the municipality of Tsalenjikha]

It is worth noting that after one unsuccessful attempt the respondents give up. They do consider improving their skills (e.g. the project on writing skills) and then applying for the second time.

Though the application requirements are quite simple, it still is a challenge for most of the returned migrants. For example, in the municipality of Tsalenjikha returned migrants have the

possibility to apply for a small business activity offered by the “Abkhazia” Foundation<sup>19</sup>. According to the representative of the organization, potential beneficiaries have to present a filled out application form and a border-crossing document..The only condition is that the person has not returned more than one year ago. The applicant's knowledge and experience of project implementation is assessed as well.

Despite the simplicity of the requirements, the FGD results show that it is very hard for the population to accomplish them. For example, the border crossing document costs 20 GEL, as it is indicated on the Georgian Interior Ministry's Service Agency's website. According to the FGD participants, this price is not affordable for most of their community members.

Another problem that hinders the population from using the services provided by the nongovernmental organizations is improperly distributed information. "Abkhazia" Foundation operates in the following municipalities: Chkhorotsku, Zugdidi and Senaki. A Foundation representative said that they always find it difficult to disseminate information. As a rule, they address the municipalities in order to mobilize people, but municipalities are not sufficient. As it was mentioned during the interviews with the municipality representatives, they have the information about the activities of the “Abkhazia” Foundation, and if a person approaches them they know whom to redirect them to. However, as noted above, the appeal from the community members is very low.

Accordingly, as the case study of Tsalenjikha municipality shows, it is possible for the region to have programs for the returned migrants, a municipality may have information about it and try to spread it, but for the local population, this information may be still less accessible.

## Emigrate or not to Emigrate?

The majority of the returned migrants note that the choice between going abroad and staying in Georgia is a very tough one. Whatever decision they make, they have to live in difficult conditions. While being in labor migration they have a more or less stable income, but experience harsh working conditions and have to live separated from their families. On the other hand, in case they stay in Georgia they have to deal with an unbearable economic situation.

The citation below belongs to one of the focus group participants, which clearly shows the tragedy of their lives:

We became beggars, and [migrants], became our slaves.

[Returned migrant, Tsalenjikha Municipality]

The labor migrants have to sacrifice themselves for the sake of their family members and live in constant stress and nostalgia. Their family members depend upon their money transfers. While being abroad, they constantly think about coming back to Georgia, but when returned, they regret their decision.

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<sup>19</sup> <http://www.chca.org.ge/index.php/en/our-programs-english/livelihoods-and-economic-development>

One day I felt such strong nostalgia that I bought a ticket and came back. It was December 29, I remember it well...But when I came back I realized that I made a bad decision.

[Returned migrant, Chokhatauri Municipality]

Despite the fact that their working conditions were tough abroad, they still think to go back to overcome the financial problems here.

Everybody lives in poverty here. Sometimes people do not have enough money for bread. This affects our psychological condition.

[Returned migrant, Tsalenjikha Municipality]

The focus group participants do not feel that they are fulfilled, which leads to the fact that they are not satisfied with their lives. They are happy about their families and friends, however in economic terms their live satisfaction level is low. Thus they have to make a decision whether to work illegally abroad or to live in Georgia in tough economic conditions. As the results illustrate, none is a solution for them.

## Awareness about Visa Liberalization Process

One of the research aims was to reveal whether the respondents are aware of the visa liberalization process. According to the research results, the knowledge of the FGD members varies. While some of the beneficiaries have comprehensive information, others just have vague ideas about what is implied in visa liberalization.

It is worth mentioning that those who are more informed believe that visa liberalization will not give the possibility to travel freely. Those who lack information fear that soon after visa liberalization, high numbers of people will flee from Georgia.

It has to be stressed that the focus group participants do not have high expectations of visa liberalization. They think that mostly people with higher income will be able to travel for leisure. But for people like them, nothing will change.

I do not expect anything from visa liberalization. This is for those people who live in better economic conditions and want to see for instance the tower of Pisa, or Milan, or some other place.

[Returned migrant, Tetrtskaro Municipality]

Besides, according to the respondents, as long as they do not have a working permission, nothing will change for them due to the fact that they cannot afford traveling for leisure. It is worth mentioning that 49% of the focus group participants either do not have an income or receive only pension. At the same time, 38% of those who are employed receive less than 300 Gel per month. Thus it is quite logical that this part of society does not expect any changes with visa liberalization. On the other hand, they believe that this process will generally be beneficial for the Georgian society in terms of cultural development.

Population has little or no information about the outcomes of visa liberalization.

More people will extend their perspective/point of view. They will see that people do not throw litter in the streets in Europe and will improve their behavior; they will be more demanding with the government, too. Their worldview will be changed.

[Returned migrant, Tetrtskaro Municipality]

Though most of the focus group participants have information about visa liberalization, all of them are willing to know more details. Their knowledge is now bound to the information which is spread by television and this usually is not considered enough.

The results of the focus group meetings coincide with the results of the Caucasus Barometer, conducted in 2015 by the CRRRC<sup>20</sup>. Therefore we can say that the attitudes revealed above can be generalized on the country level. There are a couple of questions that measure the level of

*"I do not expect anything from visa liberalization. This is for those people who have better economic conditions"*

awareness and attitudes towards visa liberalization in the country. The majority of the population lacks information about the visa liberalization process or has no particular attitude towards it. Those who are more or less informed have both correct and incorrect information. To be more precise 27.5% of the population does not know what visa liberalization is and 27% does not know if this

process is going to be good for the population. 31.6% of the population believes that this process will have a positive impact on Georgian community.

Some of the respondents who have heard of visa liberalization believe that it implies simplified processes for traveling abroad for Georgians, others think that it means that foreigners will not need visa to come to Georgia, and some believe that Georgians will not need visa for traveling in Europe. This means that people have correct as well as incorrect information. The level of awareness differs among rural and urban population. Residents of rural areas are less informed compared to the urban residents and they are more skeptical about the positive outcomes of visa liberalization.

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<sup>20</sup>[Online Data Analysis](#), Caucasus Research Resource Center, 2015

## Conclusions and Recommendations

1. **Migration management is mostly centralized in Georgia.** The role of the local municipalities in the migration management is not defined. They do not participate in the work of the Migration Commission. However, it is worth mentioning that their involvement in the processes of collecting statistical data on the local level, reintegration of returned migrants and spreading the information about legal migration is crucial. Furthermore, the competences of the representatives of local municipalities are critical and need to be strengthened. The roles of the municipalities have to be defined (collecting data, spreading information) and translated into a local strategy, action plan, etc. The local staff members need to be retrained to increase their qualification and the quality of their service for the focus group.
2. **The motives of migration are defined by several reasons which are somewhat related to the age.** For the middle aged people income and employment are crucial, while for the youth self-development and better life opportunities are motivating reasons for migration. Thus it is recommended to strengthen the local economic situation by creating working places, and provide employment as well as cultural and social programs for young graduates.
3. **Informal networks for receiving information about emigration and applying for visa with the help of a mediator are still common practices in the targeted municipalities.** This practice should be modified and people have to be encouraged to use more formal ways. In order to achieve this they have to be provided with information about legal ways of labor migration and about state programs such as the Circular Migration Scheme<sup>21</sup>.
4. It is also worth mentioning that **money transfers from abroad are not invested and they usually are used for everyday necessities.** Thus, after having returned back to the hometown, the migrants' economic situation has not been improved. It is recommended that the stakeholders (State institutions, NGOs, banks) encourage the people to invest money and to develop businesses.
5. **Most of the programs which aim at the reintegration of returned migrants are not accessible for the local population.** This is due to the lack of information and trust. Thus it is recommended to raise awareness of the existing grant programs in their regions. In order to increase their trust in such programs, the process should be transparent. The selected projects could be presented to the applicants to serve as success examples. Besides, the selection criteria should be overviewed and modified to fit the different categories of returned migrants. Furthermore, some of the returned migrants do not meet the requirements as they lack skills and competences such as project management, developing business ideas, application writing skills, etc. The qualification of the local people has to be increased on topics such as: Project management, small business management, budgeting, etc.
6. In order to support the reintegration process of the returned migrants, funds were allocated from the state budget in 2015. With the support of the Ministry of Internally Displaced

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<sup>21</sup>Information about circular migration scheme:

[http://www.migration.commission.ge/index.php?article\\_id=103&clang=1](http://www.migration.commission.ge/index.php?article_id=103&clang=1)

Persons from the Occupied Territories, Accommodation and Refugees of Georgia, several local NGOs implemented projects supporting the reintegration of returned migrants, in various regions of Georgia (including the targeted regions of the research). **A firm cooperation between the actors, such as project implementing NGOs, local municipalities and returned migrants, is crucial for the successful accomplishment of the projects and for overcoming the problem.** According to the research results, respondents are not well informed about the existing projects, besides they do not trust such projects and thus are less interested. All this results in a low rate of addressees to such programs. Thus it is recommended to strengthen the ties and support the dialogue between the above mentioned actors.

7. **Unemployment is identified as the main reason for migration.** In order to overcome this problem and make the beneficiaries more compatible for the job market, it is crucial to increase the knowledge and the competences of the beneficiaries. Thus the educational activities on the local level have to be strongly supported. Educational services have to be of a high quality, practical and oriented towards local job market needs.
8. According to the research results, which are supported by other research conducted in Georgia (CRRC, 2015) **the respondents, despite their status, have divergent information about visa liberalization and its possible consequences.** To be more precise, the respondents have both correct and incorrect information. In order to spread correct information to the broader society, collaboration between different actors such as municipalities, NGOs, media, community centers, both on local and national level, has to be developed.

## Appendix

### *Appendix #1: Focus group interview guide for returned migrants*

#### **Creating profile of returned emigrants**

1. Create participants' profile (age, sex, education, number of years of being in emigration and work experience there, employment)
2. Participants are asked to create profile of an emigrant - what are the main characteristics of a random emigrant: age, sex, education, profession, work experience..

#### **General Assessment**

1. How would you describe migration processes in Georgia?
2. When did you first left to emigration? What was the reason of your departure (they have to enumerate main reasons)? Which country did you go to? Was your emigration legal or illegal?
3. What where you doing at the country of destination? Where you satisfied with what you were doing there? For those who worked: how much was your compensation? Was it enough? Did you send money to Georgia? What were your work/living conditions? What was the hardest while being in emigration? Did you know other Georgians? Did you have contact with them? What are the main problems, Georgian people face in other countries? What challenges do they face to integrate in other country? What have you achieved as a result of migration?
4. When did you come back in Georgia? Why did you decide to come back?
5. How did you continue to live in Georgia? What were the difficulties after returning? Was it easy to re-integrate? What is your occupation right now? Have you found a job? Does your job correspond to your qualification?
6. Do you think people should go to emigration?
7. What influence does migration have on development of country? Positive-what kind, negative-what kind?
8. What is the role of diaspora? Did you take part in any event organized by diaspora?

### **Evaluation of programs for returned emigrants**

9. Do you possess any information, whether there are programs for returned emigrants?
10. Have you taken part in any of them? If no, why not?
11. For those, who have taken part in programs for returned emigrants: how would you evaluate it? Did it help to re-integrate?
12. For those who have not taken part: would you like to participate in similar programs?  
(If the group doesn't have information, we will provide information about existing programs, which are organized by MOF and IOM).
13. Do you think these programs are relevant to your needs?
14. After returning in Georgia, have you thought about returning back to emigration? Have you done anything to return? Why did you wanted to return back to emigration?
15. What must be done to prevent returned emigrants from going back to emigration? What is the role of government? Of society?
16. How is it possible to involve returned migrants in the development of community?
17. How would you evaluate part of the self-government in integration of returned emigrants?

### **Information about visa liberalization**

18. What are the expectations and reality about emigration?
19. What should be done for people to have realistic information about emigration?
20. Do you think that the population is well informed about the visa liberalization?
21. What are your expectations about visa-liberalization?

### **Self-realization and life satisfaction**

22. How would you assess your satisfaction with your life? Family? Work? Career? Friends?
23. Do you think that you are self-realized?

### **Recommendations**

24. What would be your recommendations regarding migration management to state, non-governmental and civic organizations?



## *Appendix #2: Organization capacity assessment tool*

### Capacity assessment questionnaire of state and non-governmental organizations

1. Assessment of organization structure (unit, department)
2. Assessment of policy documents ( strategies, action plan)
3. Assessment of implemented activities
4. Assessment of available resources
5. Assessment of cooperation with other organizations

<b>The name of the organization:</b>			
<b>The head of the organization:</b>			
<b>The mission and function of the organization:</b>			
<b>Statements</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Not Applicable</b>
<b>1. The Structural Assessment</b>			
The organization has a department /unit, which works on migration issues			
The organization has employees, working on migration issues			
<b>2. The rate of political documents</b>			
The organization has a policy on migration issues			
The organization has a strategy on migration issues			
The organization has an action plan for migration component			
The organization's budget includes budget line for migration activities			
Migration issues are reflected in the organizational reports			
The organization has procedures, regulations, which concern migration issues			
The public documents developed by the organization are available for public use			
<b>3. Assessment of Implemented activities</b>			
The organization has implemented projects about migration during the last two years			
The implemented projects support the state strategy on migration			
The implemented projects fully respond to the needs of the community			
<b>4. Assessment of available resources</b>			
The employees of the organization are aware of the organization's strategies on migration issues			
The employees of the organization know about the state policy of the migration (strategies, action plan and etc.)			
The employees of the organization fully understand their role and responsibility in overcoming the problems of migration			
The organization managers analyze the achieved results and the challenges on migration issues on permanent basis			

The organization has enough financial resources to work on migration issues			
The organization has enough staff members working on migration issues			
The organization employees need additional trainings about the migration issues			
The organization has enough resources (Information booklets, posters, etc.) for spreading information about migration issues			
<b>5. The rate of cooperation</b>			
The organization staff has information about other stakeholders working in the field of migration			
The organization actively cooperates with other governmental and non-governmental organizations on migration issues			
The employees of the organization several times attended the meetings/congresses/conferences or a similar events on migration issues during the last two years			
The organization has held a public meeting with the population to discuss the migration issues			

### ***Appendix #3: The List of Documents***

- ✓ Migration Profile, 2015 (State Commission on Migration Issues) ([State Commission on Migration Issues](#))
- ✓ [State of Migration in Georgia](#), 2015, ENIGMA project ICPMD
- ✓ [Law](#) about the local government
- ✓ [Migration Strategy 2013-2015](#)
- ✓ [Migration Strategy 2016-2020](#)
- ✓ [Action Plan of the Migration Strategy 2016-2018](#)

*Appendix #4: The list of Conducted Interviews*

N	Location	Status	Interview/FGD
1	Chokhatauri Municipality	Returned Migrants	Focus Group Meeting
2		Potential Migants	Focus Group Meeting
3		Active Citizens	Focus Group Meeting
4		The Gamgebeli (Head) of Chokhatauri Municipality	Interview
5		Representative of local municipality in village Chokhatauri (Rtsmunebuli)	Interview
6	Tsalenjikha Municipality	Returned Migrants	Focus Group Meeting
7		Potential Migants	Focus Group Meeting
8		The director of Jvari Community Education Center	Interview
9		Representative of Tsalenjikha municipality, department of social affairs.	Interview
10		Chief specialist of Jvari Rtsmunebuli Office	Interview
11	Lagodekhi Municipality	Returned Migrants	Focus Group Meeting
12		Potential Migants	Focus Group Meeting
13		Active Citizens	Focus Group Meeting
14		Representative of Lagodekhi municipality, department of refugee affairs.	Interview
15		Representative of local municipality in village Leliani (Rtsmunebuli)	Interview
16	Tetritskaro Municipality	Returned Migrants	Focus Group Meeting
17		Potential Migants	Focus Group Meeting
18		Active Citizens	Focus Group Meeting
19		Representative of Tetritskaro municipality, department of social affairs.	Interview
20		Representative of local municipality in village Koda (Rtsmunebuli)	Interview
21	Zugdidi	Foundation "Apkhazeti" CHCA	Interview
22	Tbilisi	State Commission on Migration issues	Interview
23		Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Accommodation and refugees of Georgia	Interview
24		Georgian Young Lawyers' Association	Interview
25		Migration Center	Interview
26		ICMPD	Interview
27		International Organization for Migration	Interview