

**IVANE JAVAKHISHVILI TBILISI STATE UNIVERSITY  
CENTER FOR MIGRATION STUDIES**

## **SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROBLEMS OF RETURN MIGRATION IN GEORGIA**

**MIRIAN TUKHASHVILI, Professor; scientific supervisor of the  
researchers' group and author of the text of the work.**

**Co-authors Associate Professors: MZIA SHELIA, GIVI  
TAKTAKISHVILI, TAMAZ ZUBIASHVILI, NATIA  
CHELIDZE.**



  
Publishing House **“UNIVERSAL”**  
Tbilisi 2012

**The book discusses the issues of migrants return and their reintegration against a background of the world's financial and economic crisis, peculiarities of formation and functioning of the Georgian labour market. The concrete ways of economic reintegration and incentives for return migration expansion are determined.**

**The book is designed for governmental and non-governmental structures, international organizations, scientific workers interested in the management of return migration. It is also designed for students and readers interested in territorial mobility of population.**

**Editor:** Associate Professor **TAMAZ ZUBIASHVILI**

**Reviewers:** Professor **Yuri Ananiashvili**  
Associate Professor **Charita Jashi**

The book is written on the basis of the research “Research on Returned Migrants” carried out by the staff of the Center for Migration Studies, Tbilisi State University. The research was supported by the European Union and the Danish Refugee Council.

Publishing House “**UNIVERSAL**”

---

19, I. Chavchavadze Ave., 0179, Tbilisi, Georgia ☎: 2 22 36 09, 5(99) 17 22 30  
E-mail: [universal@internet.ge](mailto:universal@internet.ge)

ISBN 978-9941-17-609-8

## Content

Introduction .....	5
1. Georgia's external migration problems .....	8
2. Return Migration and Methodology for Its Study .....	15
3. Demographic structure and characteristics.....	18
4. Distribution of Returnees by Countries .....	22
5. Education Level and Qualification .....	26
6. Reasons for Emigration .....	29
7. Organization for Emigration.....	31
8. Returnees Health Conditions .....	34
9. Adaptation to Foreign Environment and Employment.....	37
10. Returnees Incomes Abroad and Remittances....	40
11. Labour Migrants Links with Their Home Country.....	43
12. The Reasons for Return and Process for Return.....	45
13. Socio-Economic Reintegration Process .....	49
14. Returnees in Business.....	53

<b>15. Ways of Returning to the Home Country for Our Compatriots Living Abroad .....</b>	<b>58</b>
<b>Conclusion .....</b>	<b>67</b>
<b>References .....</b>	<b>81</b>

## **Introduction**

Population migration represents one of the most important problems by its significance and socio-economic consequences. At present, there are more than 200 million migrants in the world. Their number grows steadily. In spite of global economic crisis, intensity of migration is still high. Many countries seek ways to regulate this process.

Due to the breakup of the Soviet Union and all-embracing profound crisis (economic, political, cultural, social) which spread throughout the post-Soviet space, sudden and high intensive migration reached unprecedented scales. In Georgia, in the period of economic collapse a part of population found the way of physical survival in migration. In the conditions of liberalization of population territorial movement between countries, migration became an important way out for physical survival of our country's population. In 1989-2002, between censuses period one million emigrants left Georgia permanently. The first time a part of them temporarily went to other countries to make a living and this temporary migration mostly turned into permanent migration. At present the intensity of labour emigration is still high. During the post-Soviet period, the intensity and structure of migratory streams underwent changes, but general reasons all the time were economic ones.

Emigration always attracted attention of our society and caused particular concern because of its scale and consequences. There was always an urgent necessity for regulation of migration processes. Everybody was very conscious of this but it was impossible to achieve any

positive and real result in the post-Soviet period when the state was disordered. That time it was difficult to identify a real picture of labour emigration. At the beginning of this century, through international research grants it became possible to study permanent, labour and forced migration. Academic institutions, non-governmental organizations, master's and doctoral students got involved in the research of this process. At present, there is not only a clear understanding of the basic parameters of migration, but also important researches that gradually deepen and contain more questions related to migration.

Information about emigration was mainly obtained through anamnestic method, so called “substitute respondents” method and was polled personally emigrants as well as their family members and close relatives who were very well informed on the emigrants labour activity and their lives. The research also included returned migrants.<sup>1</sup>

Naturally, migrants return took place in the 1990s and this process is going at present, but its intensity doesn't correspond to those scales, which can provide state demographic and migratory security. Migrants receiving countries as well as our country are interested in the increase of research scales of migration. The necessity of its increase is conditioned by the fact that at present in the world, inter alia, in the receiving developed countries, due to the global economic crisis the situation worsened in the labour markets. The level of unemployment among local population has sharply increased. The authorities of the member countries of the European Union within the

---

<sup>1</sup> Chelidze N. Labour Emigration from Post-Soviet Georgia. Tbilisi. 2006

framework of human rights (inter alia, migrants' rights) protection seek to encourage migrants, particularly those migrants who entered their countries in unorganized way and illegally, to return to their home countries and they are willing to earmark funds for their departure. On the other hand, the authorities of migrants sending countries, the society in general, wants their compatriots to return to Georgia. The campaign for "compatriots return to their home countries" is taking place in the whole world. It has almost turned into the worldwide movement. Recipient and sending countries held several business meetings where they formulated a concrete strategy to form a basis for realization of declared level to the operational level. Political elite of most sending countries are principally ready to support their compatriots in returning to their home countries. The legislative authority tries to revise legal norms in such direction that will accelerate return process. Nongovernmental and international structures seek the ways and means for the promotion of this process. However, as practice shows, influence on migration is not so simple, because it is an objective process and it has so strong stimulants that require epochal upheavals. At the same time we cannot overlook the fact that the movement for compatriots return sometimes comes into conflict with the conception of globalization. It depends, how it responds to the country's, in our case, Georgia's national security conception, its main goals and tenets.

We must seek the way out to balance receiving and sending countries interests in case of repatriation. This is the situation when both sides must be interested in the realization of the compatriots return programs. This is the

main goal of this research. It is necessary to assess that real and political situation which forms migratory disposition in our diaspora. Of course the support for compatriots return must become a part of the official ideology and a strategy of foreign policy. On the other hand, it is necessary to devise proposals for the support of expatriates and their participation in it on all levels (society, communities, diverse groups, concrete organizations).

### **Georgia's External Migration Problems**

Political and socio-economic cataclysms of the post-Soviet period are adequately reflected in the development of migration processes in Georgia. Georgia was no exception because the same processes naturally developed in the same way in other post-Soviet countries. As is known, in the period between two population censuses in 1989 and 2002, one million migrants permanently left Georgia and they settled abroad; 64.1% of the migrants moved to the Russian Federation; 16.2% - Greece; 5.6% - West Europe; 3.9% moved to the US and Canada, 1.7% - Israel. Out of them Georgians made up 29.5%. In the same period the number of Russians decreased by 3.4 times, Jews – 6.5 times, Greeks – 6 times, Armenians – 1.6 times.<sup>2</sup>

As it is proved by us and many researches conducted by our supervision, the main reason for population emigration from Georgia is an economic situation. In the post-Soviet period, during the economic collapse, the

---

<sup>2</sup> “Migration” 1(2007), “Universali”, Tbilisi, pp. 5-15.



demand for labour force declined precipitously and unemployment developed. In 1990-1995 the gross domestic product declined 4 times. In the conditions of hyperinflation the living standards dropped sharply and it made up 45.2% of the minimum subsistence level.

Imbalance in demand and supply and cheapness of manpower forced a significant part of population to seek the way out in permanent emigration abroad and temporary employment there.

In 1993, when strict pasportization and the registration system of citizens' territorial movement still existed, by our direct participation were specially processed 10 thousand migrants so called "removable cards." It found that for that period the share of Georgians in the external net migration was very small – 8.4%. Then because of the departure of a part of territorially mobile other nationalities from Georgia the share of non-autochtone population gradually decreased and consequently the share of Georgians increased. Particularly, labour emigration was going with great intensity. A part of labour emigrants, particularly non-Georgian population managed to settle permanently in foreign countries (the Russian Federation, Greece, Israel and other countries). Labour emigration changed emigrants' ethnic structure and it is the same as the ethnic structure of Georgia's population. Moreover, the share of Georgians in emigration streams reached its maximum.

Going abroad for making a living and family members' maintenance in home countries through remittances has become the main form of the mobility of Georgia's population, and Georgia turned into the country of high migration intensity. In spite of this, we think that

some experts' assumption about the number of labour emigrants is overestimated, when they assert that their number accounted for 800-1000 thousand. The complete study of different regions and urban micro-districts of Georgia showed that the share of labour emigrants in the total population is not more than 8-10% that is equal to 350-400 thousand labour emigrants. Much less number is given in the 2002 population census data and by the competent experts. It's quite different when we count the number of those who send money. They may exceed the number of labour emigrants, because money is sent to Georgia by former our compatriots who are settled in foreign countries permanently.<sup>3</sup>

Proceeding from the above said we can discuss not only pure labour emigrants who go abroad only for work, but, generally, also the representatives of our diaspora who have already obtained citizenship of foreign countries and have close relations with their native countries and send money to their relatives. Though, the statistics of population censuses and other statistical registration don't include them.

In order to have a correct understanding of specificity of labour emigration, we must devote attention and analyze the peculiarities of the development of the labour market in Georgia. Unfortunately, the Georgian labour market has not been studied, from any standpoint, even at a conceptual level. There is no conception of its development even for close perspective; its sides of peculiarities can be found only in the works of individual authors (Ts. Antadze, M. Tsartsidze, N. Latsabidze, M.

---

<sup>3</sup> More concrete details regarding remittances are discussed below.

Tukhashvili, L. Barnabe, M. Kvirkvaia and others).

The first essential feature that has been formed in the labour market and which to date is its distinctive characteristic, is an extreme imbalance between demand and supply of labour force. Even in those conditions when a significant part of labour force is abroad in the international market. According to the official data, unemployment in Georgia by 2009 reached 16.5%. According to the official data, 53.4% of the economically active population is employed in agriculture of Georgia and produces only 16.9%<sup>4</sup> of the gross domestic product; 18.4% of the GDP is produced in industry, power engineering, gas and water supply. This indicates an extreme asymmetric sectoral and branch structure of employment in Georgia. And the personnel were formed for decades and are formed at present with starkly different spectrum. In this situation, in the case of sufficient job places there still would be imbalance between demand and supply of labour force. On the one hand, we have structural imbalance and on the other hand – qualitative discrepancy. Despite the reforms made in educational sphere, there are many flaws in the market function of educational service that is reflected in the balance of demand and supply of labour force in the labour market. It is obvious that a redundant number of specialists are turned out. In the post-Soviet period the number of students increased 1.5 times, and there was not such demand on them from economy. From the materials<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>4</sup> Migration -3(2009) “Universali,” Tbilisi. p.19

<sup>5</sup> Employers demand on labour force in Georgia. International Organization of Migration. Tbilisi, 2007 and 2008. Regional Research of Labour market in Ajara. IOM, 2009.

of the research conducted on the employers demand for labour force it became clear that a number of professions (journalists, economists, financiers, lawyers, doctors and others) are produced in a big quantity. On the other hand, there is a wide spectrum of professions, demand on which is not satisfied and they are not trained in Georgia.<sup>6</sup>

The most important problem for the Georgian labour market is ineffective employment that determines low cost of labour force. For example, in 2008 the average salary of employees in Georgia was 535 lari (320 US dollars). At that, there is a big differentiation in salary. A large part of employees don't receive subsistence minimum necessary for their families. A half of population lives below the poverty line (2003). Georgia significantly lags behind other labour emigrants donor countries by incomes. For example, according to the various researches, one labour migrant received on average 2185 lari in a month, while in 2008 in Georgia the average monthly income of one household was no more than 537 lari. We must also take into account the fact that a large share of labour emigrants left Georgia rather a long time ago and their disposition towards return migration is made on the basis of the previous, outdated information, when the incomes in Georgia with comparison to the current ones were much less.

Unemployed population is a different issue. They cannot find any kind of jobs here in Georgia. The Georgian labour market for them is a hopeless environment. According to the 2008 data, the number of unemployed accounted for 315.8 thousand people. At

---

<sup>6</sup> Migration-3, "Universali," Tbilisi. 2009. p.19.

that, the number of those who are not employed for a long time is rather big.

Ineffective employment particularly prevails in the agrarian sector of economy. In the conditions of incomplete employment the share of manual labour is increased as compared with the Soviet period. Natural economy has started to develop. The huge mass of rural population doesn't properly participate in the labour market and satisfies its requirements by the employment in household.

The indivisible characteristic of the Georgian labour market is secondary employment. It was found by the researches that it serves the completion of the subsistence minimum of the families, though it doesn't frequently achieve its goal.

Rather large scale of informal employment is characteristic of the Georgian labour markets that creates not only uncontrolled situation in the labour market but also it causes the problems of taxation. It is distinguished by extreme inefficiency and low cost of labour force. Naturally, the disposition of the employed towards emigration is rather high.

Migratory situation is bolstered by the large differentiation of conjuncture that is created in the regional labour market. From the standpoint of employment, particularly a dismal situation is in the mono-branch mining regions (for example, industrial regions of Tkibuli and Chiatura), where due to the collapse of mining industry the most job-places were destroyed, that caused high intensity migration of the local labour force both abroad and within the country. In rural areas all the able-bodied members of the household who possess 0.5 ha plot of land, according to the official statistics, are not included on the list of the

employed. Thus the level of unemployment in the rural regions of Georgia is “statistically” low. The income received by way of selling agricultural production in Georgia in 2008 amounted just to 30 million lari.<sup>7</sup>

Thus, a marked regional differentiation of the functioning of labour market and regional differences of the labour market conjuncture generate preconditions of emigration, which is already being realized.

We must also take into consideration one situation. The reduction of the natural growth of labour resources in Georgia has already started and it will continue to decrease in the future. The main reason for this is the sharp fall of fertility in the 1990s. Annually almost a halved contingent<sup>8</sup> will enter the working age that will last for more than 10 years, and a large contingent of those who were born after World War II will leave the working age. This will reduce the number of labour resources and economically active population; this will have an impact on the conjuncture of labour market to some extent, but it will not change the level of employment essentially.

In the end we can conclude that in the post-Soviet period despite the fact that the level of difference of living standards between Georgia and recipient countries has been reduced, Georgian economy cannot create the level of such employment that will reduce intensity of emigration and sharply decrease the number of emigrated people. Therefore, high intensity of return migration is unlikely. Gradually, though slowly, preconditions for the return of a part of compatriots to the home country are

---

<sup>7</sup> Presumably, this figure is low, because statistical data here must be incomplete.

<sup>8</sup> Demographic Yearbook of Georgia, 2008. Tbilisi, 2009 p.42

being created, and the society, authorities of receiving and sending countries, international and local organizations must be ready to make their contribution to this process.

### **Return Migration and Methodology for Its Study**

In studying return migration we must take into account the fact that not long ago before the 1990s low territorial mobility characterized Georgia's population. This particularly applies to ethnic Georgians. Thus a significant Diaspora of Georgian community was only in Russia and Turkey. Return migration problem never was so acute before and traditional experience in this regard is little.

On the other hand current emigration processes which are of high intensity lead to obvious depopulation and poses treat to possible economic depression, the government faces the necessity of taking measures to regulate migratory processes that require the growth of the state role in the regulation or return migration.

One of the significant problems complicating the study of return migration is the flaw of official statistics in registration of population's territorial mobility. The information obtained from the border checking points is less reliable and it's difficult to determine the real indicators. However sometimes it fulfills the controlling and correcting function.

All the persons who move more or less for a lengthy period of time are obliged to notify the local registration organs of their movement. But they don't see any necessity for this because registration at a new place doesn't give them any substantial profit. Moreover, when it deals with international labour emigration where a big

share is of illegal character. Therefore, statistical structures frequently release unduly diminished and obviously unbelievable figures. In the most researches of labour migration, particularly when it deals with Georgia, researchers use the method of so called “substitute respondents.” The information is obtained through personal interviews with emigrants’ relatives. Though, there is another method that enables to obtain information through a direct interview with departed or returned migrants. It should be also noted that returnees represent a specific category of labour emigrants group and entirely the assessment of labour emigration according to their interviews contains some peculiarities.

The research on returned migrants which is our main task must be carried out by way of direct interviews with returned migrants or with those migrants who are abroad for work. In this case it’s possible to get most reliable results, but interview with emigrants who are dispersed abroad is related to the large financial expenses and organizational difficulties. In our case because of great financial restraints and short research period of time it was impossible to send interviewers abroad for a full-scale survey. Only in one foreign country, in Holland, namely in Groningen, by way of “in-depth interview” we managed to survey in detail a small group of 20 emigrants who had left Georgia and work there. In Georgia by the same way of “in-depth interview” we obtained information from 100 returned emigrants. We deem that we could get more accurate information if we had a larger number of the interviewed. But for the concrete task which was set before us, the number of the polled is sufficient to determine the basic indicators, and moreover,



the interviews were conducted by scientific workers experienced in field researches.

The questionnaire sheet was composed on the basis of the questionnaires of our early surveys and combinations of foreign research methods for studying returned migrants. That enabled us to compare the materials of our present and previous researches, and also to add a number of specific questions concerning the returned migrants. The questionnaire included 128 questions with their answers; most of the questions were closed-ended ones. There are open-ended questions that give extremely rich materials to an experienced interviewer for full and better comprehension of return and reintegration process.

The questions which are systematically structured in the questionnaire reflect the situation of respondents before emigration, in emigration and the following reintegration process. The separate analogous questionnaire that was composed for the survey of emigrants in the Netherlands included more questions on potential migration.

It was rather difficult to find returnees and match them structurally to the goals of research that can't be done frequently. We used so called "snowballing method," which is rather common and represents an effective method.

It should be noted that respondents turned out rather prepared for such survey. However, there were many cases when they, from various points of view, tried to decline to answer the questions correctly, particularly it was felt when the questions pertained to their incomes. However, when the anonymity was ensured, in our

opinion, the complete openness was reached, first of all, among the population residing in Holland. G. Taktakishvili's credibility, a member of our researchers group, who is our compatriot and currently a citizen of Holland, fulfilled a great role in this matter.

Due to the concrete task, the survey contained the migrants returned from the countries of European Union. They represent quite a significant share in the migrants' entire stream. However in case of possibility, methodically it would be expedient to study the entire stream of returnees and against the background of this to discuss the EU countries, which is the matter of further researches.

We had detailed discussions about the problems of return process and economic reintegration with experienced political, state and scientific figures (15 persons): V. Papava, M. Jibuti, M. Kakulia, M. Gegeshidze, N. Aslamazishvili, P. Beltadze, N. Nikoladze, Ts. Antadze, R. Sulamanidze, L. Siradze, I. Molodikova; the process of research and preliminary results were discussed twice at the seminar of the Association of Young Lawyers.

## **Demographic Structure and Characteristics**

Political processes (wars, ethnic conflicts) taking place in Georgia in the 1990s had a significant impact on demographic development of Georgia's population. Fertility rates declined precipitously. In particular, according to the official statistics, the total fertility rate declined from 2.1 (1989) to 1.4 (2009). On the other hand,

as we have noted, intensive migration reduced the absolute number of population. In the period of the last censuses (1989-2002) the size of population shrank by one million.

It is notable that in the XX century, the absolute reduction of Georgia's population occurred in 1913-1917 (by 263 thousand people) and in 1941-1950 years (by 196 thousand people), but that was not on a massive scale as it was at the end of the century. It is significant that the reduction tendency of the population absolute number is going on to date. By 2009 in the estimation of some experts, Georgia's population is just 3 797 thousand people.<sup>9</sup>

Intensive emigration of population accelerated population aging in Georgia, because relatively a young contingent left Georgia.

At the same time, population labour emigration partially turned into permanent emigration and the age structure of already aged population became even more deformed. In 1989-2009 the share of population 60 years of age and older increased from 14.4% to 18.2%. The deformed age structure, in its turn, had a negative influence on population's marriageable structure and fertility.

Through multiple researches it was found that among migrants, particularly among labour migrants, the majority are people of working age, middle-aged people. Thus, according to our research, this age group is presented among returned migrants (Table 1).

---

<sup>9</sup> Demographic Yearbook of Georgia, 2008. G. Tsuladze, N. Maghlaperidze, A. Vadachkoria. Tbilisi., 2008, p.17.

Table 1

**Distribution of returned migrants by age (%)**

Age	Under 30	31-50	51-59	60-64	65+	Total
The share of different age contingent among returned migrants (%)	35	49	11	3	2	100

Women prevail in contemporary migratory processes in the world. According to our previous researches the share of women among labour migrants reached 40%.<sup>10</sup> At that, all our researches clearly show that parting from their home country and relatives is sensitive experience more for women than for men. Because of this, the potential for their return back is much higher than for men. Sure enough, women represent the majority (55%) of the returned migrants who were selected randomly.

The majority of labour emigrants who left Georgia are married. Accordingly, the majority of returned migrants is also married (Table 2). Most of them are families with four members.

---

<sup>10</sup> Labour Migration from Georgia. IOM 2003. p.42.

Table 2

**Distribution of returned migrants by marital status  
(%)**

Marital status	Married	Unmarried	Divorced	Widowed	Total
Share among the returnees (%)	52,0	34,0	10,0	4,0	100

The number of labour emigrants' children is not large. Namely, the research showed that 55% of the returned migrants had not children before departure from Georgia, 17% had one child, and every fifth person – two children. Only 5% of the returned migrants had 3 and more children.

Georgia is a country of reduced reproduction, where weak demographic behaviour is a characteristic of its population. Because the majority of migrants are illegal, reduced reproduction is more common to this contingent than to the population who remained in Georgia.

Through the previous researches it was found that large streams of migrants from Georgia to Europe flow towards Greece, Germany and Russia. These are the countries where, like Georgia, depopulation processes have developed. The demographic situation existing there doesn't motivate our compatriots towards fertility growth. For example, in 2007 the total fertility rate in Greece and in Germany is nearly the same (1.3) as in Georgia. Following from this, it can be said that the demographic behaviour existing in the recipient countries couldn't definitely improve the demographic behaviour of migrants who had

left our country. It was also found by our research on the returned migrants. Namely, the marital structure of 92.2% of the respondents was not changed. Among them, the marital status of 97% of unmarried respondents is the same as it was before their departure from Georgia. 82% of the married returned migrants declared that their marital status had not been changed since their return to Georgia. 81% of the respondents with one child had not more baby since their return to Georgia. Only 19% had a second baby. This clearly proves that labour migration has a negative influence on Georgia's population reproduction.

### **Distribution of Returnees by Countries**

We think that distribution of returnees by major emigration countries reflects their number in those states. After the collapse of the USSR in the period of the drastic fall of living standards in Georgia a large mass of labour emigrants went the neighbouring countries – Russia and Turkey. Then migratory streams gradually increased towards to the European countries and the US. A large mass of emigrants who arrived in Russia, particularly non-ethnic Georgians, so called “Russian-speaking” population integrated soon with permanent population. This increased the share of Georgians in the number of emigrants in Russia. In 2002 through our research it was found that the share of migratory stream towards Russia made up 39% in the total number of labour emigrants.<sup>11</sup> According to other researches this figure was 52%,<sup>12</sup> 41.4%,<sup>13</sup> 42.8%.<sup>14</sup> The main stream

---

<sup>11</sup> Labour Migration from Georgia. IOM. 2003. p.24

<sup>12</sup> Chelidze N. Labour Emigration from Post-Soviet Georgia. Tbilisi. 2006. p.56.

from the capital of Georgia was towards Europe and the US. And the share of migrants towards Russia was only 15%.<sup>15</sup>

It can be said decisively that in recent years the fierce ethnofobia in Russia which developed into Georgianofobia<sup>16</sup> by the government's incitement, the Russian-Georgian war of 2008 and the severe tension of the political situation between these countries had a great influence on the potential migration towards Russia, and reduced it.

As for Turkey, labour emigration towards it is not large. The reason is that Turkish labour market is saturated and the cost of labour force is low there. The introduction of non-visa regime with Turkey increased the share of this country in the entire stream of labour emigrants. Still the Turkish labour market didn't turn out attractive to Georgian citizens.

As time goes by, the spectrum of labour emigration from Georgia to the European Union countries gets wider. Originally two countries dominated: Germany and Greece that was conditioned by the specificity of demand on manpower on the secondary markets of these countries. Then the number of labour immigrants increased in the countries of Northern and Southern Europe, among them a significant number was also from Georgia, though up to the present time Germany and Greece in the EU remain

---

<sup>13</sup> Takidze A. Labour Resources of the Autonomous Republic of Ajara. Tbilisi 2006. p. 63

<sup>14</sup> Tukhashvili M. Toria M. Labour Emigration of Forcibly Displaced Persons from Abkhazia. Migration 3, Tbilisi, 2009, p. 91

<sup>15</sup> Labour Migration from Georgia. IOM. 2003. p.14

<sup>16</sup> In detail see Tukhashvili M. The End of Migratory Expansion and Russia's "New Migration Policy," Tbilisi, 2009.

the main countries of labour emigration from Georgia.

The movement of interviewed migrants from one immigration country to another is not intensive. A part of temporary labour emigrants who were originally in Turkey moved to the EU countries (Table 3).

Distribution of the returnees according to the countries basically reflects their distribution in the countries. From this it is also clear that a high concentration of Georgian labour emigrants is in Greece, Cyprus and Germany. Among the returned females 64.2% is from Germany and Greece. Females are not majority among the returnees except for these two countries.

It can be assumed, that despite the recent financial crisis in the EU, the number of labour emigrants from Georgia didn't decrease significantly. Even against the general backdrop of unemployment, Georgian emigrants turned out to be capable of adaptation to new, crisis situation; moreover when at present a number of segments there in the secondary labour markets are rather reduced. Even though the European Union countries take measures to restrict illegal migration, massive deportation of Georgian migrants is not anticipated. This, certainly, doesn't mean that the governments of the European Union and Georgia must not increase their efforts to return migrants back to Georgia, to reduce irrational streams, to maximally foster the return of migrants, to carry out socio-economic and cultural reintegration program for returnees.



Table 3

**Distribution of the returnees by immigration countries  
(%)**

First immigration country		Main immigration country			
Country	%	Country	%	Female	Male
Greece	22,0	Greece	26,5	61,7	33,3
Germany	29,0	Germany	26,3	66,7	33,3
England	8,0	England	11,8	45,4	54,6
Italy	4,0	Italy	4,9	40,0	60,0
Spain	5,0	Spain	4,9	20,0	80,0
Portugal	2,0	Portugal	2,0	50,0	5,0
France	5,0	France	6,9	42,9	57,1
Israel	1,0	Israel	0,0	0,0	0,0
US	2,0	US	0,0	0,0	0,0
Russia	1,0	Russia	0,0	0,0	0,0
Czech Republic	5,0	Czech Republic	3,9	25,0	75,0
Holland	2,0	Holland	1,8	100,0	0,0
Poland	3,0	Poland	3,9	50,0	50,0
Cuprys	4,0	Cuprys	5,9	33,3	66,7
Turkey	7,0	Turkey	0,0	0,0	0,0
-	-	Norway	1,0	100,0	0,0
-	-	Switzerland	1,8	100,0	0,0
		Sweden	1,0	100,0	0,0
Total	100	Total	100		

Finally, it's clear from all the researches that population migration from Georgia to the European Union countries, which is generally conditioned by economic motives, in spite of current crisis, is steady and becomes more diversified within the countries as well as in their inner regions. It is determined by the conjuncture existing at the labour markets, migration legislation of the countries and a series of other factors, which will be discussed further.

On the other hand, it is necessary to consider the

labour emigration perspectives of Georgia's population as a whole. Demographic depression in Russia, future demand on labour force and the success of Georgian emigrants in business make us think that after settling political situation the effective employment of Georgia's population must be maintained in the Russian labour market that is in the interests of the both countries. At that, in such situation it is possible to strike a balance and form correct proportions between the EU, US and the CIS countries in the matter of distribution of Georgian labour migrants.

### **Education Level and Qualification**

It is apparent from many researches that Georgian emigrants have the highest educational attainment. First of all this pertains to those who are emigrated to the European Union countries and the US. Economic collapse in the 1990s in Georgia destroyed qualified branches and the share of the unemployed with higher education is much higher than the share of those with higher education in the total number of population. On the other hand, the migrants going abroad, especially towards the EU countries and the US more or less could speak European languages: English, German, French. Otherwise their mobility and selling of their labour force at the international market could be difficult. Thus, selection occurred in labour emigrants from the very beginning and the contingent which departed for the EU and the US mostly had a high potential of education. However, the share of higher education in the contingent of those who

emigrated from Georgia to Greece was only a third.<sup>17</sup> It should also be noted that according to all researches more than a half of persons who emigrated from Tbilisi had a higher educational level. It is natural that educational level of returnees in Tbilisi is high. Still we must assume that the indicator of formal education in the contingent of returnees is higher than labour emigrants in general. According to other researches 79% of the returnees in Tbilisi had higher and incomplete higher education.<sup>18</sup>

In the researched contingent four returned migrants out of five had higher education. (Table 4). It is notable that there is not a big gender difference in the indicators of education.

Table 4

**Returnees Educational Level**

<b>Level of education</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>
General secondary	5,9	7,1	4,3
Secondary vocational	5,9	5,4	6,5
Specialized secondary	5,9	7,1	4,3
Higher	82,4	80,4	84,8
Total	100	100	100

The contingent interviewed in the Netherlands had also a high potential of education. 85% of them had higher education, and the rest – specialized secondary education (10%) and secondary vocational education.

<sup>17</sup> Labour Migration from Georgia. IOM. 2003. p.38

<sup>18</sup> Chelidze N. Labour Emigration from Post-Soviet Georgia. Tbilisi. 2006. p.83.

Among the returnees 23.3% are engineers, 16.3% – teachers, 15.5% – economists, 11.6% – artists, 6.2% - lawyers, 5.4% - doctors, 15.2% nurses. In the Netherlands 40% of interviewed Georgians have pedagogical education, 15% are artists, 5% - engineers, 5% - lawyers, 5% - doctors. These are primarily the professions which have the lowest average salaries in Georgia. Among the respondents who are abroad, 15% is unemployed, and the rest, against the backdrop of foreign countries, have more or less decent jobs. For example, 62.5% of the pedagogues are employed in the sphere of education, all of the artists are employed and all of them legally.

Thus, the returned contingent of labour migrants represents the contingent having a rather high labour potential, however the use of their human capital in recipient countries was not realized and employment takes place primarily in the secondary labour market where labour conditions are unfavorable and incomes are low. Only 4.7% was employed by their professions, at that, in low-ranking jobs. And the major part of this contingent performed completely unsuitable works (Table 5). The teachers were employed as caregivers (of the old and sick people), nannies, cleaners, in the low-skilled jobs of the service sphere. The engineers were employed in constructions and various enterprises as auxiliary workers. The economists were also employed in low-skilled jobs but with a wider spectrum. They underwent professional degradation.

Table 5

**Distribution of returnees by professions having in home country and by employment abroad (%)**

Types of activities abroad	No profession	Teacher	Doctor	Nurse	Lawyer	Artist	Economist	Engineer	Driver	Artisan	High-skilled	Other	Total
Maid	0,0	23,8	28,6	14,3	12,5	6,7	10,0	-	-	25,0	-	-	10,9
Nanny	25,0	23,8	14,3	14,3	-	20,0	5,0	6,7	-	-	-	-	11,6
Cleaner	-	9,5	14,3	28,6	-	-	10,0	6,7	-	25,0	-	-	8,5
Auxiliary worker	7,1	4,8	14,3	-	25,0	13,3	10	23,3	-	-	100	-	14,7
Construction	-	-	-	-	25,0	6,7	10	40,0	-	-	-	-	13,2
Waiter/waitress	-	4,8	-	-	-	13,3	5,0	3,3	-	-	-	-	4,7
Seller	-	9,5	-	-	-	6,7	5,0	-	-	-	-	-	4,7
Driver	-	-	-	-	-	-	5,0	3,3	100	-	-	-	2,3
Agricultural farm	25,0	-	-	-	12,5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,6
Service sphere (hotel, restaurant, salon, nightclub)	25,0	19,0	14,3	14,3	-	26,7	10,0	10,0	-	-	-	-	14,0
Nurse	-	-	-	14,3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0,8
Doctor	-	-	14,3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0,8
Engaged in hid/her profession	-	4,8	-	14,3	-	6,7	10,0	-	-	-	-	-	4,7
Leader (manager) of small section/team	-	-	-	-	12,5	16,7	5,0	3,3	-	25,0	-	-	3,1
Interpreter	-	-	-	-	-	-	5,0	-	-	-	-	-	-
Businessman	-	-	-	-	12,5	-	10,0	3,3	-	-	-	-	-
Tailor/dressmaker	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	25,0	-	-	-
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	-	100

### Reasons for Emigration

It's universally known that the goal of labour emigration is improvement of economic situation. Though along with economic reasons there are other reasons. On the whole labour emigration is conditioned by economic motives. In the 1990s the capacity of the labour market in Georgia decreased precipitously and unemployment and extremely ineffective employment gained wide scales.

According to the 2002 research 11% of the respondents indicated that the danger of physical survival forced them to go abroad and find a way out there, 50% of them directly indicated the motive of material conditions improvement, 12% was interested in living and working in the social environment of foreign countries. Political reason was indicated by only 2.4%.

Currently, we have the analogous structure of motives obtained through our survey.

On the whole, the motive for going abroad is an escape from poverty and improvement of the families' economic sustainability.

Rather a significant share (10.7%) is with the study abroad, particularly among females. Though, going abroad for study is frequently combined with work as well. For a certain part of the returnees (8.6% of answers) the motive for going abroad was a desire of temporary living in the environment of foreign country. It should be noted that such contingent was even bigger in the 1900s (12%)<sup>19</sup>. It appears that during the last two decades the structure of reasons and motives for labour emigration changes slowly, though the main determining reason is economic. At that, there are no gender differences.

It is also notable, that the most part of respondents (58.8%) didn't hesitate to make decision to go abroad, 30% hesitated sometimes, and only 10% hesitated frequently. This also indicates that the motive for emigration is strong and the decision on going abroad is mostly firm.

---

<sup>19</sup> Labour Migration from Georgia. IOM. 2003. p.21

Table 6

**Main Reasons for Emigration Abroad (%)**

<b>Reasons</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>
Unemployment	13,1	14,0	12,0
Search for better job place	12,3	12,5	12,0
Hope of more income	27,5	27,2	27,8
To provide family with subsistence minimum	19,7	19,1	20,4
Invitation for work abroad	1,6	1,5	1,9
Study	10,7	13,2	7,4
Reunification with family members	2,0	1,5	2,8
Advice from friends living abroad	3,7	1,5	1,9
Health worsening	0,8	0,7	0,9
Desire to live temporarily in the environment of foreign country	8,6	8,8	8,3
Total	100	100	100

**Organization for Emigration**

The permission for going abroad and the expenses for travel hold the main place in the organization of emigration. 41.5% of the respondents noted that they raised the sum from their own and family savings (Table 7), the loans hold also a significant place. The same results were obtained from the migrants surveyed in Holland.

It is notable that, in spite of illegal character of labour emigration, departure abroad is mainly occurs in legal form, though departure abroad corresponds to the real goal of migration less. A third of the returned

migrants went abroad on a tourist visa, 21.6% was invited by their family members or friends; 17.0% - on a student visa. 5.9% had exchange study programs. Only 5.1% had labour contracts.

It is very sobering that 15.7% of the returnees went abroad illegally, by chance. According to other surveys the same share went abroad from Tbilisi (13%)<sup>20</sup>. Through the analysis of the materials of recent years it was found that the share of this category of migrants is reduced, though it is still a serious problem for the governments of sending and receiving countries.

The main transport for labour emigration is a plane (72.5%) and a bus (26.5%). Persons going to Greece mainly use a bus.

Table 7

**Distribution of the respondents answers by money sources for departure abroad (%)**

Source	Total	Among them	
		Females	Males
Own savings	10,2	6,0	15,7
Family savings	30,5	32,8	27,5
Selling of flat	6,0	6,0	0,0
Selling of jewelry	10,2	9,0	11,8
Loans	44,1	43,3	45,1
Other	3,0	3,0	0,0
Total	100	100	100

On the question given in the questionnaire “What kinds of difficulties did you face going abroad?” According to the respondents’ answers 41.2% of them did

<sup>20</sup> Labour Migration from Georgia. IOM. 2003. p.23



not get into any difficulties, nearly a third (30.7%) had difficulties in obtaining a visa, 14.9% of them in their home country and 7% of them in the receiving countries had petty administrative obstacles. Only 6% of the surveyed persons encountered serious obstacles in the receiving countries.

Most of the persons of the group surveyed in Holland have gone through a difficult way, at that, in receiving the status of refugees and the right to further temporary residence in the country, many of them have spent 3-5 years in the refugees' camp where they officially could work only for 3 months. In the hope of better future they had to live in the abysmal conditions. After having gone through such abysmal conditions they wait for significant results from the economic standpoint and it is not easy that they will give up the achieved status.

From the surveyed returnees two out of three emigrants (64.7%) went to the foreign country alone, 11.9% - with their spouses. The same share is with those who emigrated with friends, all the rest went with their sisters (brothers) (2%), with parents (2.9%) and other relatives and acquaintances.

Most of them (52.9%) traveled alone, every fourth person traveled with one fellow-traveler, every tenth person – with two fellow-travelers. Only 7% of the returnees indicated that they had to travel with big groups (over 10 fellow-travelers).

It is notable that immigrants who are settled and already adapted abroad try to invite their family members, relatives and friends from Georgia for work there. A half of the emigrated managed to do this. 20% of the surveyed who was already settled abroad was able to bring their close

relatives (spouse, parent, children, sisters and brothers) there. Relatives, friends and acquaintances were brought there by 29% of the settled emigrants. Our other surveys obviously suggest that potential emigration activity had been observed in the families of labour emigrants.<sup>21</sup>

Finally it was found that through the assistance and advice of surveyed people the same number of immigrants was brought to foreign countries, i.e. on average, one person who is settled abroad brings one person from Georgia and in this way they promote the growth of our Diaspora abroad. The research showed that every other labour emigrant tries to bring another person abroad from Georgia.

Only 17.6% of the immigrants were not met by anyone on arrival in the foreign countries. 43.1% was met by Georgian friends and acquaintances, 22.6% - by family members, 10.8% - foreign friends and acquaintances.

It should be noted that on arrival in the foreign countries 5.9% was met by local employers or mediators from employment agencies. They helped new arrivals in placing them in jobs (48.8%), housing (18%), providing them with necessary documentations (13.3%) and so on.

### **Returnees Health Conditions**

92% of the returned migrants consider that before going abroad they were in good health. Only 8% considers that they were not in good health, and most of them were females.

As for the period spent abroad, only 59% of the

---

<sup>21</sup> Labour Migration from Georgia. IOM. 2003. p.56

respondents consider that they enjoyed good health there. 17% of them consider that they were not completely healthy, and 8% was in poor health. 17% of surveyed persons noted that their health conditions worsened during their living period in the foreign countries.

More than a half of the respondents (57%) indicated that during their sickness abroad they could not apply for medical assistance, first of all, because of its expensiveness (87%). A part of the respondents (27%) applied self-treatment. They turned to the doctor mainly in case of toothache. A half of the respondents had never applied for medical service during their living period in foreign countries. Only one third managed to turn to a doctor in case of necessity.

The intense work routine had influence on the respondents' health conditions and it caused their nervous irritation.

It is interesting to quote one returnee as saying: "I worked as a caregiver for the old person in Greece. I had never holidays or days-off. I was to perform immediately all duties and their request. Frequently I had to come out from the bathroom without drying when I was in the middle of having a bath. They were not interested if I could or not to take care of them right then." Here is the other story:

"I worked as a maid in the family in Greece. My working day lasted at least 17 hours. During the five year period I could not sleep normally. Any time they could ring the bell and call for me. After returning back to my home country night after night I woke up out of habit and got up very frightened, thought that I was called for again. When I realized that I was at my home, in my country and

nobody was waking me, I felt that I was the happiest human. After return during three months I had treatment for nervous irritation.”

After returning from abroad 44% of the respondents indicated that their health conditions worsened. Unfortunately a half of the respondents cannot afford to receive proper treatment. Every fifth person noted that they don't turn to the doctor, because they have less confidence in their professionalism and consider that the quality of medical service is rather low.

Those persons who considered themselves healthy before departure, every third person out of them noted that their health worsened during their stay abroad.

The countries analysis showed that the respondents who returned from Greece (63%) most of all they complained about their health worsening.

Finally it appears that the population who participated in labour emigration had been perfectly healthy. Frequently due to the strenuous and menial work routine, unhealthy social environment and detrimental conditions (dampness) their health conditions worsened in the foreign countries. More than two fifths who returned to Georgia suffer from an illness. Especially they complain about nervous irritation.

It is necessary to create special programs in support of the returnees' health rehabilitation, which will provide for specific psycho-physiological conditions of returned migrants.

## **Adaptation to Foreign Environment and Employment**

Our compatriots living abroad have relations first of all with friends and acquaintances arrived from Georgia (70.2%), and with friends and acquaintance which are natives from immigration countries (12.1%). Frequency of their meeting with them is high. 30.4% of them meet them every day, 46.1% - at least once a week. From the returned contingent only two persons turned out not to have any relations with friends and acquaintances in the foreign country, except for situation at work. The meetings were mainly of friendly nature. The meetings of working nature were indicated only by 11.5%.

It is natural that the emigrants encounter many life and labour difficulties in the foreign environment that exacerbate their adaptation to the local conditions (Table 8).

Table 8

### **Distribution of returned migrants by the answers to the question: “What difficulties did you encounter in the immigration country?” (%)**

<b>Emerg ed difficulties</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>
Expensiveness of housing	8,2	9,1	7,3
I had difficulty in contacting with local population	13,0	13,2	12,7
Often I felt slighted	14,3	14,0	14,5
Could not adapt myself to the local climate	5,6	8,3	2,7
Had not a regular job	15,6	11,6	20,0
Had rather less salary	21,6	21,5	21,8

compared with local population			
Could not afford to take care of my health	6,5	5,8	7,3
Frequently there were petty administrative misunderstandings	5,6	3,3	8,2
I was bothered by criminals	1,3	1,7	0,9
I had problems with the mediator of employment/ travel	1,7	1,7	0,0
I had not any kind of difficulties	7,4	9,9	4,5
Total	100	100	100

Out of the indicated difficulties the most important one is making of a contact with local population, which is closely related to the feeling of humiliation. In surveying the respondents there was a sense that it had effect on their moral conditions.

Certainly, employment conditions, labour intensity and especially discriminative labour remuneration were one of the main reasons of the existing discomfort.

Through the analysis of the employees' distribution by branches it was found that the returnees mainly are employed in the service sphere. 60.6% of males were employed in material production where construction is dominated: every third male was employed in construction (Spain, Greece, Zech Republic, England).

Maids, nannies and cleaners prevailed in Germany and Greece. Four returnees were engaged in business in Italy, Czech Republic, Poland and Cyprus. Other specific things have not been observed in the structure of employment.

Before arriving in the foreign country 11.8% had already found a job. In this regard females (16.1%) turned out more careful. 46.1% of migrants found a job upon arrival in the foreign country. Over one third (35.3%) took three months to find a job. 6.9% was unemployed for a long time. Mostly it was possible to find a job through relatives and friends assistance (71.6%), 9.8% found a job on their own, only a small share (3.9%) was employed by the local employment agencies. It should be noted that in the countries and cities with a large concentration of Georgian labour migrants there are functioning employment agencies where our compatriots are employed and they are engaged in immigrants' employment.

The agreement on employment in most cases is of verbal nature (58% of the respondents). This is quite natural and follows from the illegal character of the Georgian labour emigration.

The agreement with an employer is made on the length of the labour contract (40%), on the duration of the working day (76%), amount of the salaries (85%), non-working days (43%), labour remuneration for extra working days (29%), paid leaves (13%), free food (14%), free housing (14%), giving a holiday (2%).

The immigrants worked, as a rule, for more than 8 hours. More than a third of the immigrants worked for more than 10 hours.

Thus, the research on the returnees attests once again that due to the unorganized emigration labour migrants encounter many serious problems in foreign countries during the adaptation to the local living and labour environment. They are employed under obviously

discriminative conditions. That is especially reflected in the significant differences between salaries compared with local labour force.

### **Returnees Incomes Abroad and Remittances**

The main goal of labour emigrants is to increase family budget through remittances sent to their home countries. Several important investigations were conducted on this issue.<sup>22</sup> Remittances are almost one of the main issues in all the themes of carried out investigations regarding labour emigration. The world economic crisis exerted an insignificant influence on the volume of remittances, which declined slightly. For example, in 2009 the volume of remittances in developing countries was 293 billion US dollars compared with 308 billion in 2008 (the decline is 4.9%), but despite this, their importance in the economies of these countries will not decline.

Through the researches it was found that for 2008 the volume of remittances, if we will take into account only those remittances which were sent through official channels, exceeded one billion US dollars that is 7.6% of the GDP of Georgia, and if we add the remittances sent through unofficial way to that amount, than it reaches

---

<sup>22</sup> Chelidze N. labour Emigration from Post-Soviet Georgia. Tbilisi. 2006. pp. 103-116

Migration 1. Tbilisi, 2007, pp. 82-95. Labour Migration from Georgia. IOM. 2003. p.57-64. Kakulia M. Labour Migrants Remittances in Georgia: Volume, Structure, Socio-Economic effect. Georgia's Economic Tendencies. 2007. October. Pp. 51-60. Aslamazisvili N. Datashvili V. Labour Migration and Remittances in Georgia: Advantages and Disadvantages. Jr. Social Economics. 2009. №2.



10.6% of the GDP.

The volume of the remittances sent through official and unofficial ways made up 57% of the export of Georgia and 14.6% of the household consumption.<sup>23</sup>

Despite their growing importance it's always difficult to determine the real volume of remittances and the materials provided in a number of works are not completely eliminated. In this case, determination of the values through sociological researches is of great importance, especially when this deals with the use of remittances by households. It's apparent from our researches that the average size of remittances grows along with the total volume of remittances and it is of steady nature.

The survey of returned migrants showed that their average monthly income abroad was 874 euro. In Germany it was 544 euro, in Greece – 669 euro. According to the survey conducted in 2002 the average monthly income of Georgians in Germany was 627 dollars, in Greece – 709 dollars.

According to this survey, the average monthly size of remittances is 290 euro. One returnee sent monthly 33% of his/her income; exactly one third of the income, according to the earlier surveys the size of remittances is only 20.9% of the incomes, i.e. one fifth of the incomes.<sup>24</sup> A great share of remittances is sent from Greece. The share of remittances from this country made up 44%. The reason is that in Greece there is a high share of those who work as maids, nurses or cleaners and they take advantage

---

<sup>23</sup> Jr. Social Economics, 2009, №2. pp. 42-43

<sup>24</sup> Labour Migration from Georgia. IOM. 2003. p.50

of free housing and food that reduce necessary living expenses.

The growth of average size of remittances can be explained not only by increase of incomes, but also by increase of prices of necessary consumption goods and growth of the real subsistence minimum in Georgia.

In differentiating the frequency of money sending, we have the following picture: 38% of the polled respondents sent money every month, 22% - once in two-three months, 14% sent money with different frequency.

The share of official channels grows more and more in sending of money.<sup>25</sup> Currently the possibilities of money transfers through mobile phones are in the process of study.<sup>26</sup> Introduction of money transfers through mobile phones will make them more flexible and increase their frequency.

The structure of remittances' spending is of particular importance for this research. According to the researches conducted in Georgia and also by world practice, a great share of remittances is spent for satisfaction of family members with food and other necessary requirements in the homeland. A half of our respondents (50.4%) noted that transferred money was used to this end, 16% of them made savings, 10.7% paid off the loan, 9.9% used this money for children's education, 9.2% built a flat.

If we don't take savings into account, only 4.5% of the respondents used money mainly for business goals

---

<sup>25</sup> Migration 1. Tbilisi, p. 94

<sup>26</sup> Research on the Possibilities of the International Money Transfers through Mobile Phones in Georgia. Tbilisi, 2009

(start of business, purchase of microbus, lorries, technological equipments and appliances), that is a low rate. But if we take savings into account, a fifth of the respondents can (or could) participate in business more or less. Many of them tried to start a business, but because of various reasons (we'll discuss them below) they didn't manage to develop their proposed project.

It's an interesting fact that the size of remittances sent to Georgia by the emigrants surveyed in the Netherlands is almost the same as it was of the returnees. 95% of the migrants polled in Holland noted that they help their relatives in Georgia, but it should be noted that rather a great share of this help is an intensive sending of used furniture, clothes, consumer technologies. They cannot send more money, because 95% of the emigrants live in expensive rented flats and they actively try to improve their local living conditions. 60% of the polled noted that their financial conditions had improved. Only 20% considers that their financial conditions worsened after emigration. They had not a job in the moment of their survey but hoped to find lucrative jobs. The remittances sent by our compatriots from Holland to their relatives in Georgia are mainly used for food and other necessities of living minimum.

### **Labour Migrants Links with Their Home Country**

Labour emigrants living abroad have intensive links with their home country. In earlier times, going abroad and living in foreign environment, experience of being far from their homeland, relatives and friends was a great tragedy, because factually individuals' complete separation from

their own environment and an isolating state policy, or the factual absence of communication means impeded emigrants adaptation and life in foreign environment. Liberalization of territorial movement, development of transport and other communication means (international calls by mobile phones, computers, receiving the main TV channel broadcasts from home countries, growth of our diasporas in foreign countries and relations with them) facilitated living in foreign environment. Soon it will be possible to realize money transfers to home countries through mobile phones, liberalization of interstate labour links and so on.

Sure enough, the survey showed that a third of returnees (33.3%) during their stay abroad everyday spoke on the phone to their family members living in the home country; 44.1% of them could speak every week, all the rest spoke to their relatives spontaneously, when it was necessary.

We calculated the average length of the returnees stay abroad and it was 4.1 years. 57% of the respondents was not able to arrive in Georgia, 15% of them arrived once, 5% - twice, 6% - three times; only 15% managed to arrive every year. As it appears from our research, an illegal nature of migration hampers their frequent arrival in the home country to see their families and relatives. For comparison, the group of our compatriots who was surveyed in the Netherlands could visit their home country more frequently. Only 5% of them during their stay in emigration didn't manage to arrive in the home country. Others could visit their families and relatives in Georgia more or less (at least once in a year), 5% had to stay in their home country more often because of their business

relations.

Finally, we can conclude, that the returnees as well as migrants living abroad have intensive phone communications and financial relations with their families and home country. An Illegal nature of migration is a hindering factor for migrants' arrival in the home country that frequently is the reason for their strong nostalgia and return.

### **The Reasons for Return and Process for Return**

The goal of the Georgian state and the European Union is to reduce high intensity of population labour emigration from Georgia, to give emigration an organized nature and make it more effective. New migratory streams flow from our country to the markets of the EU countries. They replace there migrants returning to the home country and it represents homogeneous circulation. Our objective is to analyze the reasons and motives of the labour emigrants who returned to the home country in order to facilitate the process of return, normalization, reintegration in the native environment, minimization of socio-economic and moral losses resulted from migration, full use of the migrants experience gained abroad.

Realization of every concrete act of return has its concrete reason (or several reasons). It implies that the emigrants partially solved their problems, they managed to survive their families physically and for these reasons they made the decision to return to the home country. The survey of the returnees identified the reasons of their return.

Among the reasons a fourth share is with nostalgia for

the home country (Table 9). In our opinion, above-noted

Table 9

Distribution of the respondents' responses according to  
the reasons of return to the home country (%)

Reason	Total	Female	Male
Unemployment	6,8	5,3	8,7
Completion of study, visa expiration	9,7	13,2	5,4
Nostalgia for home country and its traditions	25,7	25,4	26,1
Unfavorable socio-cultural environment in the foreign country	8,7	7,9	9,8
Family problems in Georgia	19,9	20,7	19,6
Family problems in the immigration country	2,9	2,6	3,3
Desire for starting a business in the home country	8,3	4,4	13,0
Worsening of health	6,3	7,0	5,4
Because of illegality it was unbearable (impossible) to stay abroad	5,3	4,4	13,0
Received necessary sum of money for return	1,9	3,5	0,0
I made the saving which enables me to live in my own country	1,5	1,8	1,1
I reached the pension age	1,0	1,8	0,0
Marriage in Georgia	1,0	1,8	0,0
Completion of the employment program	0,5	0,9	0,0
Offer of employment in the home country	0,5	0,0	1,1
Total	100	100	100

frequent communication with families by way of intensive phone contacts, as well as receiving Georgian TV channels in the foreign countries are not sufficient for

prolongation of stay abroad. The strong experience of nostalgia forces our compatriots, in the case of other positive factors too, to return to their home country. This conditions the return of every our fifth compatriot to the home country in order to overcome everyday life difficulties together with their family members and to end factual separation with families. This reason is more sharply outlined on the question – “What forced you to return to you home country?” Out of the answers, 34.9% of the respondents noted that they returned to the home country because their families insisted on their return. Responding this question they openly admitted that it was difficult to be abroad illegally and this also was one of the reasons to return to the home country.

Through our research it found that every forth returnee had desire to stay abroad again as a migrant, also every fifth hesitated frequently, but most of them (56.9%) didn't wish to stay abroad any longer.

Following from the research, it can be said decisively, that all the components of the attitude toward return to the home country are the same for females and males. But at the same time, there is a little indication, that females are sensitive to family requirements that males.

After summarizing and assessing all the pluses and minuses of stay abroad and also due to the many life problems after arrival in the home country, returnees have desire to go abroad again. 39.2% of the returnees expressed this desire decisively, 36.5% hesitated, only a third of them (36.3%) expressed a firm negative attitude toward re-emigration. Among the returnees, most of the potential emigrants (61.5%) give preference to their former immigration country, 26.2% has not decided yet in

which country they are going to work again. A part of them has changed an immigration country and they have indicated new countries: Italy, Spain, France, US. None of them have planned to go to Russia or other CIS countries for work. A third of potential migrants (33.9%) have decided to go abroad within one year, more than half of them (58.5%) have not come up with the departure time.

There is every reason, that a part of returnees will depart abroad for work again and this is expressed in their responses (Table 10).

Table 10

**Distribution of the responses of potential emigrants according to the reasons of departure from the home country anew (%)**

Reasons	Total	Female	Male
I didn't find a job in my home country	26,6	23,8	29,5
I couldn't adapt to the local legal environment	7,3	7,9	6,6
I cannot adapt to the permanent political tension	6,5	9,5	3,3
I have not any future in my home country	16,1	11,1	21,3
This is required by family necessities	31,5	33,3	29,5
I am already well-adapted to life in other country	10,5	14,3	6,6
I want to give education to my children	1,0	0,0	1,6
I wish to continue study abroad	1,0	0,0	1,6

The structure of the reasons for labour emigration is essentially the same that was during their first departure from the native country, but at the same time there are



some elements of alienation from the local environment and adaptation to the foreign environment. This is expressed in increased negative attitude towards the local legal environment and in the painful perception of permanent tense political situation. The reason for the first departure – “I wanted to live temporarily in a foreign environment,” underwent a certain “modernization;” Among those who wish to go abroad a second time, this is formulated in the following way: “I am already well adapted to the living conditions in the foreign country.”

Thus, a significant part of returnees have problems again related to employment, financial provision of families, instable social environment. They consider resolving these problems by way of going abroad again. Our goal is to present the picture of this problem more sharply in the following paragraphs.

### **Socio-Economic Reintegration Process**

As we noted, the desire of the returned migrants for emigration again was motivated by the local social environment and insufficient possibilities of socio-economic reintegration. First of all this is their unemployment. 46.1% of the respondents noted that they were unemployed, that is rather a bad indicator. The indicator of unemployment level is also rather low (28.4%).

Of the employed returnees 27.5% is hired, 16.7% is self-employed. The branch structure of their employment is the following: 25.4% is employed in trade, 10% - in education, 11.9% - in consumer service, 10.2% - in financial and banking system, 8.5% - in construction and

so on.

It should be noted that a working day for 30% of the employed exceeds 8 hours that is set by the legislation. 11.3% of the employed works more than 10 hours a day.

Who are not employed, 85.3% out of them intensively seeks a job and they qualify as economically active population, 14.7% doesn't seek a job for various reasons.

For employment job seekers turn to their friends and acquaintances (51.7%), directly organizations (27.1%), employment agencies (20.7%), they ((26%) have difficulties in finding a job relevant to their qualification, 27.7% cannot find any kind of job. Many of them found a job, but the level of labour remuneration is less than subsistence minimum of their families and the employment there loses sense in this case.

Unfortunately, there is a very small share of those respondents who consider that their financial conditions, compared with those they had abroad, improved substantially (2.9%), or, generally improved (6.9%). 72.5% of the returnees consider that their financial conditions, compared with those they had abroad, worsened significantly. This is one of the important circumstances for their emigrational disposition. This doesn't mean that returnees' employment in foreign countries was aimless. During a certain period they provided their families with subsistence minimum. Many of them improved their living conditions. 26.5% of them built a house or bought a flat, 22.6% refurbished and made it comfortable; one of them even bought a cottage. Through the research it was found that returned migrants factually don't face the problem of homelessness. A part

of them (22.5%) brought a car from abroad, 2.9% - other vehicles (lorry, microbus) and so on. A third of them had not brought anything from abroad.

Generally, most of the returnees (52.9%) consider that their current living standards worsened as compared with those living standards they had abroad, 5.9% indicated that their living standards worsened to a great degree; 27.5% of the returnees consider that nothing important changed in their living conditions; only 13.7% noted improvement of their living conditions.

Therefore, 30.4% of the returnees are not satisfied with their return to the home country, 37.3% expressed their satisfaction with return, and a third of them are partially satisfied with their return.

After return, former migrants encounter many different problems in their home country (Table 11).

Objectively, existing unemployment in the Georgian labour market, unstable employment and low-cost labour force are perceived by the returnees as the most important socio-economic problem. This was indicated by 61.6% of the respondents. As we have discussed above, the Georgian labour market is an important factor for the growth of population's emigration and emigrational potential. Logically at the same time it is a factor of return process. Positive impact on it, strengthening of active policy of employment is directly related to the return migration and returnees' economic and social adaptation, reintegration objectives.

Table 11

**Distribution of the returnees by the answers to the question – “Most of all what problems did you encounter after return?” (%)**

Problems	Total	Female	Male
Unemployment	23, 1	28,7	15,9
Unstable employment	12,2	9,2	15,9
Low income	26,3	25,3	27,5
Shortcomings in the health care system	4,5	5,7	2,9
Increase of taxes	10,9	11,5	10,1
I have difficulties in getting involved in public life again	5,1	3,4	7,2
I cannot adapt myself to the local life style	8,3	8,0	8,7
I couldn't manage to invest my savings in business	5,8	6,9	4,3
Citizens aggressiveness	0,6	-	1,4
Existing hardship in the country	0,6	-	1,4
I have not any kind of problem	2,6	1,1	4,3
Total	100	100	100

We must pay attention to the fact that among the problems existing in the home country for returnees, unemployment is more acute problem for women; they also experience shortcomings in the health care system more than men. Men have difficulties in getting involved in public life anew.

A part of the returnees (5.8%) didn't manage to invest their savings in business, and this circumstance is to be assessed separately. It should be noted that a big share of the returnees had some savings for investment in business, to say, in a shareholding capacity, but they didn't manage to do this because of different

administrative, organizational and business environment shortcomings. We'll discuss this in more detail in the following paragraph.

### **Returnees in Business**

In interviewing the returnees we tried maximally to identify a picture of participation of the former emigrants in the sphere of business. For this goal we used the questionnaire and their personal discussions. At that, as we have noted above, we had talks with famous experts on the economic reintegration issues of returnees. Through the research it was found that after return many of them created a basis for steady income, but because of various circumstances they didn't manage to realize their proposed plans to the end.

As the research showed, after return 27.5% of former emigrants started a business; among them 67.9% are males and 32.1% - females. The spectrum of their business activity is wide. A great share (39.3%) is with trade enterprises. Then – consumer service (15.8%), health care system (5.8%) and so on. The savings made abroad are the main source of business financing for most of them (Table 12).

Table 12

Distribution of the respondents by the main source of  
business financing (%)

Source	Total	Female	Male
Savings made abroad	58,1	60,0	57,1
Bank credit	9,7	0,0	14,3

Relatives help	9,7	10,0	14,3
A small portions of the above-listed sources	12,9	10,0	14,3
Borrowed funds from the friends made abroad	3,2	10,0	0,0
Non-governmental organization	3,2	10,0	0,0
Voluntary return program. WTO	3,2	10,0	0,0
Total	100	100	100

The research confirmed that the returnees who are involved in business basically used the savings made abroad in realizing their projects. A small part of them used bank credits or was helped by relatives. Whereas the labour migrants departed from Georgia don't receive high incomes abroad, a part of them made some savings for starting a business in the home country.

We consider that the formation of such organizational structure, which would make accumulation of returnees' savings and their investment in business, is of principal importance. Generally, only formal improvement of the business environment is not sufficient. The reality shows a much more contradictory picture. In realizing their business-project they encounter a range of problems that gives the following picture (Table 13):

(Table 13)

Answers of the involvees in business to the question:  
 “What problems did you encounter in realizing your business (project)?”

Kind of problem	Total	Female	Male
Administrative-bureaucratic	17,9	25,0	14,8
Inexperience	7,7	8,3	7,4
Tough competition	15,4	8,3	18,5

Monopoly	28,2	33,3	25,9
Insufficient financial resources	17,9	8,3	22,2
didn't express their problems decisively	12,8	16,7	11,1
Total	100	100	100

Although the government and legislative structures make every effort to promote the development of business in Georgia, through this research it was found rather negative attitude because of the problems of administrative and bureaucratic nature. Despite the fact that a part of the surveyed had started in business a several years ago and some problems were rectified, the answer to the question given in the questionnaire must be more reflective of the present situation.

The most important thing is that the problem of monopoly is expressed as the most acute one in business activity. Strong firms make good use of immature labour economics of Georgia, create monopolistic situation and through different methods they oppress small-scale entrepreneurs. The state anti-monopolistic function is very weak. The returnees categorically demand that the government take anti-monopolistic measures. They are well cognizant of tough monopolistic competition abroad. In our case, our migrants, working in Groningen, indicate this factor along with other circumstances as one of the hindering factors for the return to the home country.

It should be noted that 7.7% of those who are employed in business encountered certain problems because of their inexperience. Our labour economics is in the process of formation. Old experience and knowledge are being depreciated rapidly. Therefore, the whole economically active population as well as a significant part of entrepreneurs experience knowledge deficit in new

economic and legal relations. For many of them it became a serious hindering circumstance. Thus, it is necessary to form a flexible system of business-education, to promote the activity of consultation establishments and consulting firms, to stimulate formation of current and potential businessmen, to enrich foreign experience. Hence the promotion and propagation of knowledge about business must be considered as a contributing stimulus to our compatriots return from abroad.

The respondents who are involved in business they are engaged entirely in petty business. 71.4% of them have employed up to 5 persons in their enterprises, 14.3% - 6-10 persons, 14.3% - 11-20 persons.

A small share of surveyed businessmen (14.3%) was helped by various organizations in the realization of their project. This was granting of favourable credits, facilitation of the procedure for starting a business.

Only 21,4% of the businessmen could realize their project without any kind of help, more than a half of them (53.6%) was helped by their family members, the same share of them was helped by local friends. Some of them (7.1%) received help from the emigrated friends abroad.

The whole contingent was given a question: “What must be done for our compatriots return from abroad and for the realization of business here in case of having sufficient capital?” The ranking of the answers is the following: (Table 14).



(Table 14)

Distribution of the answers to the question: “What must be done for our compatriots working abroad to realize their own business in their home country?” (%)

Conditions for realization of business	Total	Female	Male
Granting of favourable cheap credit	21,7	21,8	21,6
Facilitation of the procedure for starting business	8,0	8,2	7,8
Taxation benefits	16,3	16,3	16,4
Customs benefits	6,1	6,1	6,0
Free competitive environment	17,5	16,3	19,0
Acceptable legal environment	8,0	7,5	8,6
Political stability	22,4	23,8	20,7
Total	100	100	100

In the answers of the returnees, political stability is the main problem for the return of our compatriots from abroad and their involvement in business here. They consider that current unstable political situation in Georgia is an important hindering circumstance for our compatriots return and realization of business.

Rather a high share (17.5%) of responses was with the necessity of free competitive environment for starting a business. It's natural that there are demands for tax and customs benefit for starting a small business.

The survey of the entire contingent of the returnees found that the absolute majority of them had a desire for starting a business, but more than a half of them (58.8%) had not sufficient capital for this, 11.8% lacked sufficient education, administrative and bureaucratic obstacles were

hindering factors for 8.8%, the same share indicated an uncompetitive environment. A small share (2.9%) indicated corruption.

Thus, from the answers to this question it is clear also that going abroad for work always doesn't enable to make savings for starting any business activities. However, a part of returnees manage to realize their business after overcoming many problems. Under conditions of difficulties, which are characteristic of great reformatations, many our compatriots living abroad cannot timely return to their home country and awaiting a favourable situation that after return there will be steady basis and guarantees for normal work and life.

### **Ways of Returning to the Home Country for Our Compatriots Living Abroad**

The main objective of our research was to find those main ways which will return a part of our compatriots to the home country. On the other hand we aimed to start possibly serious discussions on the noted problems, scientific research and to involve wide layers of civil society in them.

The research showed that the reasons and motives for migration are so strong, that the governments of both migrants receiving and sending countries as well as the wide public will take a lot of time and effort to normalize the intensity of labour migration streams. The comparative analysis of the economic levels of receiving and sending countries and a great difference in the incomes of employees in these countries give grounds for drawing such a conclusion. It should also be noted that receiving countries are really in need of cheap labour force in

separate segments of their labour markets. As the famous Polish specialist in migration studies – Marek Okolsky observes, the governments of western countries advocate increase of the scales of production where mainly immigrants, inter alia, illegal immigrants labour is used. Formally they create such impressions as if they reduce not only new streams of immigrants, but also those who are immigrated a long time ago. <sup>27</sup>Thus, new restrictions frequently contribute to the selection of immigrants more than to the reduction of their total number. It is a fact, that despite the rather profound economic crisis, mass return of Georgian labour emigrants to Georgia is not observed. Georgian immigrants through different methods manage to maintain themselves in the foreign countries and through different ways they manage to legalize their employment. For example, the surveyed contingent of them in Holland is almost totally employed legally. Hence only administrative restrictions don't yield results.

On the other hand, an absolute majority of our compatriots living in the foreign countries genuinely wish to return to their home country. But it is clear, on some conditions, after settling certain living problems.

The opinion of the surveyed returnees about the conditions of our compatriots return from abroad is the following: (Table 15)

---

<sup>27</sup> Окольский М. Наступающие цивилизации, уходящие цивилизации на закате века. В кн: Мир в зеркале международной миграции. Москва, Макс-пресс, 2003, с.193.

Table 15

Main conditions which can return our compatriots to the home country from abroad (%)

Conditions of return	Total	Female	Male
If finds any kind of job	2,5	2,7	2,1
If finds a high-income job	32,8	33,6	31,9
If finds a job with the same income which he/she has abroad	14,7	14,5	14,9
If makes savings for purchasing a flat here	7,4	9,1	5,3
If finds a prestigious job	6,9	6,4	7,4
If makes savings for starting a business here	25,5	22,7	28,7
Able-bodied migrants will not return voluntarily	4,9	4,5	5,3

It was confirmed once again, that the main reasons for labour emigration are the same in the case of return migration. First of all, this is a high-income job. Even though the average salary grows in Georgia and the difference with the western countries is decreasing, the gap between labour enumerations is still high. The problem can be solved more or less if our compatriots make the savings which enable them to start their business after coming back to Georgia. In fact, any kind of business already allows improvement of living conditions so much that working abroad has a less advantage. Notwithstanding great obstacles, tension and a lot of stress, businessmen of any level have resolved the family problem of living at the subsistence level and are forced less to go abroad for low-skilled jobs. Thus, the structures interested in the promotion of return migration, must contribute to the organization of their business.

In surveying, the interviewers had detail discussions and provided explanations for the returnees about the efforts of the governments of the EU countries,

international organizations and the desire of our government, to find a real way for the promotion of our compatriots return from abroad. The respondents were given the question: “The EU countries seek to promote labour migrants return to the home country. In your opinion, what is the effective way for its realization?” The answers to this question were the following: (Table 16):

First of all we must note, that none of the returnees gave a positive answer that financing of labour migrants return to the home country is of great importance. The respondents consider that such financial support is not bad but it is less likely to make a decision about the return to the home country because of this. However, it would be a great help to them who have decided to return to the home country because of various reasons. In returnees’ common opinion, much more financial support is necessary for the influence on return.

The surveyed respondents consider such kind of support from the local government as the assistance for placing in jobs as well as for starting a small business (26.6%). 13.3% of them consider that it is necessary to stimulate the local business (small and big) with the purpose of placement in jobs.

Table 16

Returnees’ opinions on the contributing ways for the labour migrants return to the home country from the EU countries (%)

Contributing measures	Total	Female	Male
<b>Closed-ended answers</b>			
It is sufficient to stimulate local business	13,3	12,6	14,1

for returnees primary employment			
It is sufficient if the local authority financially supports the returnees in placing in a job or starting a business	26,6	27,2	14,1
It is sufficient to finance return process fully	0,0	0,0	0,0
Above-listed help is good but it is not enough for making a decision to return back	22,3	21,4	23,5
<b>Responses offered on respondents initiative</b>			
Political stability in the country, and its promotion	6,9	8,7	4,7
Facilitation of visa regime with the EU countries	1,6	1,9	1,2
Heightening of citizens self-consciousness	0,5	1,0	0,0
Organized legal departure of migrants with the purpose of their employment	2,1	2,9	1,2
Creation of legislative basis for legal employment abroad, formation of mutual interstate agreement	1,6	1,0	2,4
Creation of high-income job places in Georgia by the government	10,1	13,6	5,9
The government must provide long-term cheap credits for small business	8,0	4,9	11,8
Unemployment benefit must be moral	2,1	0,0	4,7
The state must ban the realization of falsified production	1,1	1,0	1,2
Existence of strong trade unions is necessary in Georgia	1,1	1,0	0,0
Don't know	0,5	1,0	0,0
Total	100	100	100

22.3% of the surveyed respondents are skeptical of the return programs of the EU countries, because they know the small amount of these means. They consider, that it is impossible to start any kind of business with several thousands of euros.

A part of the surveyed answered on the open-ended question: “other way.” We consider it necessary to make our comments on these answers.

10.1% of them consider that the government must create high-income job places for returnees’ employment. Maybe this purports that the government must act with the targeted programs of the EU countries for contribution to the returnees’ employment. Otherwise it’s difficult to give a clear preference to the returnees in those countries with a high level of unemployment and poverty.

More realistic are the answers concerning the assignment of long-term cheap credits for small business development. The foreign structures which are interested in migrants return, can also campaign in this. However, in this case, it must be aimed namely at the contribution to the return process.

Some returnees consider that more legalization of labour emigration, giving an organized form to it, considerably can regulate labour emigration. The discussions with the returnees, experts as well as with the migrants living abroad formed the opinion that liberalization of migration and relatively free allowance of migrants into the EU markets will not increase the number of labour emigrants. On the contrary, there can be an effective balancing; many emigrants think that it will be difficult to reintegrate in the home country and then to move to the EU countries again. The opinion regarding the process of so called circular migration is acceptable, when there is a fast circular movement of migrants, their departure and return are intensive and the number of emigrants doesn’t grow.

It’s difficult to discuss decisively about the

consequences of migration liberalization and this requires separate studies considering the specificity of all countries.

The respondents in their answers named the necessity for unemployees' social protection as a contributing factor of the return. Many emigrants are reluctant to return to the home country because of the fear of unemployment. If an unemployment benefit is high, it can also contribute to the return process.

We cannot overlook the respondents' opinion on the necessity of approximation of the education system to the European systems. It will reduce the number of those persons who go abroad to get a European education and then at the same time they turn into labour migrants. Our education reform and process of the qualitative perfection (Bologna process) of education has been started but a big success in this regard is still far. It takes time, however the offered proposal is completely acceptable and it is one of the ways for normalization of emigration intensity.

Some returnees consider that western countries contribution to the formation of strong trade unions in Georgia is necessary. They deem that the existence of such trade unions will settle a lot of social injustice and contribute to the creation of such conditions that will facilitate the return to the home country and social protection of labour force in the labour market.

In interviewing the Georgian emigrants living in Holland the most painful issue was the discussion about the return to the home country. It was found that all the emigrants have a desire to return to the home country, but many factors which we have discussed prevent them from making such a decision. 45% of them are really going to



return to the home country, 35% of them are not going to return, and the rest of them (20%) have not decided or thought yet about the concrete return.

Who are going to return to the home country, 78% of them are at 31-50 years of age. Among those who are above age 50 (20% of the whole contingent) only every fifth person is planning to return to the home country, and the rest four persons are not going to return or they hesitate.

Only a half of the surveyed women are going to return to the home country, of males – a third. We must also note that none of the respondents indicated the approximate dates of the return to the home country.

Through the research it was found that 60% of the respondents made an immediate decision on returning home on their own. 25% of them made a decision under the influence of their families. They actively seek to find a job in the home country. 40% of the surveyed abroad considers that they won't be able to find a proper job, and 15% thinks that the level of income is not sufficient for families' minimum subsistence level.

70% of the respondents surveyed in Groningen answered that they will make a decision on the return, if in Georgia they receive the same amount of income, which they have in Holland. 55% will return home in the case they make the savings that enable them to start a business in Georgia. Along with the starting capital for opening a business in the home country, they consider that necessary conditions must be tax benefits (55%) and political stability (45%), also the existence of competitive environment.

It's apparently clear that our compatriots attach the

great importance to political stability more than the returned migrants in realization of business projects.

It is notable that 20% of the surveyed abroad consider that corruption and raids are one of the main hindering factors for business development.

The legislation of the Netherlands provides for not only forced and voluntary return of the illegal migrants to their home country, but also those migrants living legally. Recently particular attention is devoted to the incentives for emigrants' voluntary return to the home country; various international organizations as well as Dutch organizations are involved in this process. Mostly, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) plays an intermediary role in migrants' voluntary return and offers them who wish to return from the Netherlands to get involved in the program called REAN ("Return and Emigration of Aliens from the Netherlands") and to use the tenets of reintegration (HRT – Return and Reintegration Regulation). In some cases the individual intermediation through the IOM is related to the possible concrete assistance. Here occurs active cooperation with such organizations as Cordaid and Central Mission Commissariat.

At the request of the government of the Netherlands, the International Organization for Migration assists those migrants who wish to go from the Netherlands. The International Organization for Migration provides additional assistance to migrants in returning back and helps them in overcoming the reintegration process successfully in their home country. This additional assistance is called as the Return and Reintegration Regulation and includes a financial support contribution

of € 1,750 per adult return migrant and € 875 per minor return migrant accompanying an adult. A part of this financial contribution can be used for transporting additional baggage (the guideline amount for this is €500).

It's interesting that as a result of activities of the above-noted organizations annually on average 20-25 thousand people return from the Netherlands to their home countries. In this regard there is very interesting statistics on the return of Georgian emigrants to the home country. In 2005-2009 according to the data of the IOM-Nederland 125 emigrants returned from the Netherlands to Georgia. By separate years this indicator is the following: in 2005 – 30 persons, 2006 – 42 persons, 2007 – 19 persons, 2008 – 20 persons and 6 persons returned during the 10 months of 2009, i.e. in the noted period on average 21 persons returned from the Netherlands to Georgia. But through our research it was found that the assigned sum is not the basis for making a decision about the return. The growth of the return migration potential is not a one-time act and it needs much more incentive.

## **Conclusion**

The movement for compatriots return gained a universal character. It is related to the both migrants receiving and sending countries political, socio-economic, demographic and migratory security. The problem got aggravated due to the current global economic crisis that extremely complicated situation in the international market. The governments of the EU countries make every effort to contribute to the return process of immigrants,

particularly illegal ones from these countries to their home countries within the limits defined by respect for human rights. Taking emigration peculiarities of separate countries into consideration is rather of great importance for enhancing effectiveness of this process. This, in turn, requires a special research.

The research on the returned migrants was carried out within the realm of the project “Acceleration of the migrants return process to Georgia.” The research aimed to identify regularities and peculiarities of the migrants return process and labour emigration from Georgia in general, and on this basis to provide well-grounded opinions for the contribution to the return process.

For the given research we used materials of the State Department for Statistics of Georgia, households’ registration materials (1998-2008), data of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the State Border Guard Department of Georgia, information of the Georgian National Bank on the remittances, existing information of the researches conducted on migration issues in Georgia, a great share of the questionnaires (5000) was processed at different times by the authors. The basic information was obtained through the personal interview with 100 returned migrants and through the profound survey of 20 compatriots working abroad (Holland). The questionnaire contained 128 questions with up to 600 possible answers. In selecting the respondents we used the so called “snowballing method.”

The used questionnaire sheet contains three interrelated phases of migration: a) migrants living conditions before the departure abroad; b) migrants living and working experience abroad; c) migrants living and

reintegration conditions after return. The third section of the questionnaire which was used abroad contains the interpretation of the intention of return migration with the identification of real conditions for return.

It was confirmed once again that political and socio-economic cataclysms of the post-Soviet period were reflected adequately in migratory processes in Georgia, particularly in the intensity of emigration. In the recent period between the censuses (1989-2002) more than one million migrants moved permanently from Georgia to the foreign countries. Among them 64.1% of the noted contingent moved to the Russian Federation, 16.2% - to Greece, 5.6% - to the countries of western Europe, 1.7% - to the US and Canada.

In the noted period, during the economic collapse (the gross domestic product declined 4 times) the demand on labour force in the Georgian labour market decreased catastrophically and employment developed on unprecedented scales. The imbalance in demand and supply and cheapness of labour force in the country compelled a significant part of the rest of population to go abroad for temporary employment. According to the present data which are based on the basic research of the separate micro-regions of Georgia, it was found that at least 350-400 thousand people had gone abroad for work, and the number of those who moved abroad permanently and maintain close relationships with their country, along with labour migrants exceeded 800 thousand people. This is the contingent which supports their relatives financially and materially in the home country and has intensive relations with Georgia.

Since Georgian forming and immature labour

market has a great influence on emigration processes, it's possible to outline peculiarities of its functioning:

- The extreme imbalance between demand and supply is the characteristic of the Georgian labour market;
- The level of unemployment in the country is stably high and according to the official data it is 16.6%; and according to the separate surveys it exceeds 25%;
- Extremely asymmetrical sectoral-branch structure of employment is being formed in Georgia;
- A great disproportion formed in the educational service market. Extremely excessive number of specialists is produced. On the other hand there is an acute shortage in the supply in some segments of the labour market;
- An important characteristic of the Georgian labour market is extremely ineffective employment with the low price of labour force, which is below the minimum family subsistence level;
- So called secondary employment and mostly – informal employment is the characteristic of the Georgian labour market that creates significant economic and social problems.
- Georgian labour market is characterized by sharply expressed differentiation between employment and unemployment levels. Mono-functional towns suffered economic collapse in the years of crisis and population moved to other regions of Georgia or abroad for physical survival.

Through the detail analysis of the Georgian labour market it was found, that despite the economic revival process, Georgia's economy cannot create that level of employment and the price of labour force in the labour market that would sharply reduce the intensity of emigration. Thus, population mass return will not incur so far. However remigration potential is growing gradually. In case of visa liberalization with EU countries it is presumable that migratory processes of circular nature will develop, recipient and sending countries and the public must be ready for the gradual development and contribution to the compatriot return process.

84% of the surveyed migrants are under the age of 50. The share of women is 55%. This is analogous with the results of many surveys on labour emigration from Tbilisi. Most of the returnees are married. The share of the unmarried is high (34%).

It was found that demographic behavior of the surveyed contingent worsened abroad, negative influence of labour emigration on the reproduction of Georgia's population is apparent.

It was confirmed once again that the most attractive countries for Georgian migrants are: Greece (26.5% of the returnees), Germany (26.7%), England (11.8%), France (6.9%), Cyprus (5.9%), Italy (4.9%) and Spain (4.9%). On the other hand, this survey also confirmed that population migration of Georgia to the EU countries which is of economic character, despite the current crisis, is steady and becoming diversified by countries and its regions.

The educational potential of the returned contingent is rather higher like the general labour emigration streams of Georgia. Among the returnees 82.4% had higher

education (engineers 23.3%, teachers 15.5%, economists 11.6%). This is a group with rather high labour potential, however, the use of human capital in receiving countries is not realized and was employed primarily in the secondary labour markets, where labour conditions are unfavorable and remuneration is low.

The research of the reasons for departing abroad confirmed once again that labour emigration is conditioned by economic reasons, catastrophic reduction of the capacity of Georgian labour market, due to the high level of unemployment and wide ineffective employment. 50% of the respondents directly indicated the motive for improvement of material conditions, 12% wanted to live and work in western countries social environment, political reason was named by 24%, a significant share (10.7%) is with them who went for study and work. For the citizens of the country, which was in the situation of collapse, labour emigration became a way out for escaping their families' poverty.

Despite the illegal character of labour emigration, the respondents went abroad mainly legally. The official form of departure corresponded less to the genuine goal of migration. A third of the returned migrants had obtained a tourist visa, 22% was invited by family members or friends, 5.9% had a student visa, 5.1% had a labour contract. It is a very sobering fact, that 15.7% of the returnees had been gone abroad illegally, by chance. Most of the persons of the group surveyed in Holland had gone through a difficult way. In receiving the status of refugees and the right to further temporary residence in the country many of them spent 3-5 years in the refugees' camp. The respondents had been gone abroad individually (64.7%),



in group with their family members (16.8%). On some occasions larger groups (10 and more co-passengers) departed abroad (7%).

It was found that the migrants, who are settled abroad, seek to attract their family members, relatives and friends for work there. A half of them, gone abroad, manage to do this. Through the research it was found that on average one migrant who lives abroad manages to attract another one emigrant. Increased potential emigration intensity is observed in the emigrants' families.

The returnees and those who were surveyed abroad had rather intensive communication (by phone or via the internet) with their families. A third of them had everyday communications with their relatives living here. The average length of the returnees stay abroad was 4.1 years. Because of illegality of migration (sometimes due to the expensiveness of travel) 57% of the surveyed didn't manage to arrive in Georgia during their stay abroad.

The research of the reasons for returning home found that a fourth of the reasons is nostalgia for the home country, family problems in Georgia were also important (20%), a part of them (9%) noted that it was unbearable for them to stay in the foreign social and cultural environment; the main goal of the return for 8.3% of the surveyed contingent was a desire for starting a business in Georgia, 6.3% was forced to return to the home country because their health condition had worsened. 17% of the returnees noted that their health condition had worsened tangibly abroad. It was found that every fourth returnee had a desire to stay abroad as a migrant, but most of them (57%) didn't wish to stay in the foreign country.

It was found that the returnees have a desire to go abroad again. This was noted decisively by 39% of the respondents, 36% of them expressed their firm negative attitude to repeat emigration abroad. Most of the former migrants give preference to their former immigration countries. A third of potential migrants have decided to go abroad within one year. The reason for emigration is the same that was during their first departure from the native country. There are some elements of alienation from the local environment and adaptation to the foreign environment.

The desire of the returned migrants for emigration again was motivated by the local social environment and insufficient possibilities of socio-economic reintegration. 46.1% of the respondents noted that they were unemployed. Among the employed 24.5% was engaged in trade, 11.9% - in consumer service, 10% - in education system, 10.2% - in financial and banking system, 8.5% - in construction. The returned unemployed migrants noted that for employment they turned to their friends and acquaintances (51.7%), directly - to the organizations (27.1%), employment agencies (20.7%), but they still have difficulties in finding the job relevant to their qualification, and which would provide their families with subsistence minimum. Only 9.8% of the respondents consider that their financial conditions, compared with those they had abroad, improved substantially after returning to the home country. The surveyed respondents expressed their concern about unemployment and unstable employment (35.3%), low income (26.3%); a part of them (5.8%) didn't manage to invest their savings in business; 5.1% of them have difficulties in getting involved in

public life, 8.3% cannot adapt themselves to the local life and so on.

In the foreign environment the emigrants encountered many living and labour difficulties, that complicated their adaptation process. They complain about extremely discriminative remuneration (22%) abroad compared with local employees, 14% of them feel slighted, 15.6% noted absence of regular job, 13% indicated difficulties in having contacts with local population, only 7.4% didn't encounter any kind of difficulties.

The returnees mainly were employed abroad in the consumer sphere. Nannies, maids and cleaners prevailed in Germany and Greece; males prevailed in the sector of material production (60.6%), every third migrant was engaged in construction. The gender difference in the spheres of employment is conditioned by the demands in the labour market there. Despite this, our research materials were arranged for the analysis by gender aspect. The research results definitely showed gender equilibrium in labour emigration that represents a problem in emigration of some countries and creates additional difficulties.

As a rule, labour emigrants worked more than 8 hours during a day. Among them, more than a third of the returnees worked more than 10 hours a day. Their employment occurred obviously in discriminative conditions.

Through many researches it was found that remittances are of great importance for Georgia. In 2008 they exceeded one billion US dollars. Despite the crisis, this amount has not declined. Official and unofficial

remittances reach 10.6% of the GDP, which is 57% of Georgia's export and 14.6% of the households' consumption.

The research of the returnees showed that their monthly income abroad was 874 euro; 290 euro out of the noted amount was sent to Georgia that is one third of the income. This ratio is higher than that one which we received through our earlier researches (20.9%); the reason for this can be explained not only by the growth of migrants' incomes abroad, but also by the noticeable growth of the real subsistence minimum in Georgia. A great share (50.4%) of the sent remittances is used for the satisfaction of family members with food and other necessary requirements, 10.7% paid off the loan, 16% made savings. Rather small share (4.5%) was used for opening a business. The size of remittances sent to Georgia by the emigrants surveyed in the Netherlands is almost the same as it was of the returnees.

The research showed that after returning to the home country, 27.5% of the former emigrants sought to start a business. Among them 67 were men, 32.1% - women. The branch spectrum in business activity is wide; 54.1% is with trade enterprises and consumer service. The savings (58.1%) made abroad are the main source of business financing for most of them; relatives help was noted by 9.7% and bank credit – by 9.7%.

The respondents who were involved in business encountered serious difficulties in realizing their projects. They expressed their negative attitude toward the existence of administrative and bureaucratic barriers (17.9%). Most of all they indicated the existence of severe monopoly and restrictions of free competition (28.2%)

that impedes operation of new small enterprises. They demand that the government take anti-monopolistic measures. The respondents surveyed in Holland are also well cognizant of strong monopolistic situation in Georgia. The noted factor is a serious hindering circumstance for the return to the home country. 7.7% of those who are involved in business emphatically noted their inexperience in the sphere of business activity and they expressed desire for the improvement of their professional skills in this regard, especially in the market – economic relations and business law. This must be taken into account during the formation of education system for the youth.

The research showed that the reasons and motives for migration are steady. Normalization of the intensity of labour migration streams will take rather a lot of time and effort. The comparative analysis of the economic levels of receiving and sending countries and great differences in the incomes of employees in these countries give grounds for drawing such a conclusion. On the other hand receiving countries are really in need of cheap labour force in separate segments of their labour markets.

In the opinion of the returned respondents, our compatriots will voluntarily return to the home country from abroad, if they find a high-income, prestigious job (54.4%) or make savings for starting a business here (25.2%). Thus, the structures who are interested in the contribution to the return migration, must promote the development of business in Georgia.

As for the attempts of the EU countries to contribute to the voluntary return of immigrants, the returnees as well as our compatriots living abroad consider that readmission

measures used up to date are good, but not so much that they will return immigrants to the home country. The support of the local governmental and nongovernmental structures in business organization and lucrative employment for returnees is also of great importance. It is necessary to develop the system that will give local entrepreneurs the incentive for returnees' preferential employment, but this needs its legal basis in order to avoid discriminative situation in the use of labour force and new stimuli for leaving the home country. Gradual overcoming of bureaucratic barriers, raids, monopoly in business activity represents a special objective in Georgia. As for the difference in labour remuneration between the EU countries and Georgia, it should even out over time.

In the process of the research the returned respondents and migrants living abroad, surveyed experts and researchers offered a series of proposals which will promote the process of compatriots return to the home country and help the local and international structures who are interested in this problem. Namely it is necessary:

- to create timely and clear system of informational provision that will contribute to the return process of migrants to the home country, will be maximally accessible to all our compatriots including even those who are in illegal situation. One of the effective ways for its realization we must consider the assistance for compatriots association in the dissemination of information, also, creation of electronic informational journal which will include all the necessary normative and agitational materials in a popular form;
- to make arrangements between the governments

of the EU countries and Georgia for creation new job places here with the investments of the EU countries where mostly the returnees with readmission agreements from the EU countries will be employed. This will reduce irrational export of labour force from Georgia;

- to create a union of governmental, private enterprises and nongovernmental organizations in the form of special structure which will realize the accumulation and targeted use of the sums of returned migrants savings and the investments received from the EU countries with the goal of employment;
- to encourage the business projects of those returnees, who use savings made abroad, by granting them cheap loans;
- to develop the encouragement system for those businessmen who will contribute to the employment of returnees from the EU countries and the effective use of their savings;
- to contribute to the formation of competitive environment; especially there is necessity of pursuing an effective anti-monopolistic policy;
- to perfect the Georgian labour code; to strengthen the rights of employees and eliminate obvious discriminative approach to the employees from the normative acts. This will reduce the number of those who seek legitimate employment abroad;
- to propagate extensively compatriots return as an important event in mass media; to encourage the best programs;
- to organize the system of juridical consultation and

assistance in opening a business;

- to create the psycho-physiological rehabilitation centers for the provision of returnees health care, or to operate special programs in the health care establishments;
- to enhance returnees qualification considering their experience gained abroad, with the goal of getting and strengthening necessary knowledge in the sphere of business and law;
- to proceed the intergovernmental talks regarding the legalization on free movement of Georgian labour emigrants for the EU countries; to encourage so called circular migration and normalize the number of emigrants;
- free movement of those businessmen for the EU countries, who have invested significant investments in business there.
- to give systematic character to the scientific researches on the return process



## REFERENCES (In Georgian)

- Aslamazishvili N. Datiashvili V. Labour Migration and Remittances in Georgia: Advantages and Disadvantages. Jour. Social Economics. №2, 2009
- Kakulia M. Labour Migrants Remittances in Georgia: Volume, Structure, Socio-Economic Effect. Economic Tendencies of Georgia. 2007. October. Pp. 51-60.
- Migration 1, “Universali” Tbilisi, 2007
- Migration 2, “Universali” Tbilisi, 2008
- Migration 3, “Universali” Tbilisi, 2009
- Employers Demand on Labour Force in Georgia. WTO. Tbilisi, 2007 and 2008.
- Demographic Yearbook of Georgia 2008. G. Tsuladze, N. Maglaperidze, A. Vadachkoria. Tbilisi, 2008
- Research on the Possibilities of International Money Transfers by Mobile Phone in Georgia. Tbilisi, 2009
- Takidze A. Labour Resources in the Autonomous Republic of Ajara. Tbilisi 2006.
- Tukhashvili M. Toria M. Labour Emigration of Forcibly Displaced Persons from Abkhazia. Migration 3, Tbilisi, 2009
- Tukhashvili M. The End of Migratory Expansion and Russia’s “New Migration Policy,” Tbilisi, 2009.
- Regional Research on the Labour Market in Ajara. WTO, 2009
- Chelidze N. Labour Emigration from Post-Soviet Georgia. Tbilisi. 2006.
- Labour Migration from Georgia. IOM. 2003
- [http://www.osce.org/publications/oy/2009/01/35901\\_1225\\_en.pdf](http://www.osce.org/publications/oy/2009/01/35901_1225_en.pdf). Minasyan Anna, Poghosyan Alina, Gevorgyan Lilit, Chobanyan Haykanush RETURN MIGRATION TO

## REFERENCES (In English)

- ARMENIA IN 2002-2008: A STUDY. – Yerevan, Asoghik, 2008 – 64 pp  
[http://www.ch.iom.int/fileadmin/media/pdf/ Return Migration:Policies and Practices in Europe](http://www.ch.iom.int/fileadmin/media/pdf/ReturnMigration:Policies%20and%20Practices%20in%20Europe.pdf). January 2004, IOM
- <http://www.caritas-europa.org/> ИНТЕГРАЦИЯ ПРОЦЕСС, КАСАЮЩИЙСЯ ВСЕХ. Лоббирующий документ. Интеграция мигрантов и беженцев. Март, 2004
- СОВМЕСТНОЙ ДЕКЛАРАЦИИ  
[http://www.iza.org/conference\\_files/SUMS2006/mestres\\_j2653.pdf](http://www.iza.org/conference_files/SUMS2006/mestres_j2653.pdf). Jerome Adda, Christian Dustmann and Josep Mestres. A Dynamic Model of Return Migration. March, 2006
- <http://www.Klinthäll>, Martin. Immigraton, Integration and Return Migration  
[http://www.mirem.eu/?set\\_language=en](http://www.mirem.eu/?set_language=en). Return Migration to the Maghreb
- Black, Richard and Khalid Koser, eds. *The End of the Refugee Cycle? Refugee Repatriation & Reconstruction*. Refugee and forced migration studies 4. Oxford. (1999)
- Blitz, Brad K. Refugee returns, civic differentiation, and minority rights in Croatia 1991-2004. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, vol. 18, No. 3, (2005). pp. 362-386.
- Borjas, George and Bernt Bratsberg. Who Leaves? The outmigration of the foreign-born. *Review of Economics and Statistics*, vol. 78, No. 1 (February), (1996),pp. 165-176.
- Bovenkerk, Frank. *The Sociology of Return Migration: A Bibliographical Essay*. Publications of the research group

for European migration problems. Martinus Nijhoff, the Hague. (1994).

De Coulon, Augustin and François-Charles Wolff. Immigrants at Retirement: Stay/Return or 'Vaet-Vient'?. *CEP Discussion Paper* No. 691 (May). London: Center for Economic Performance, London School of Economics. (2005).

Dustmann, Christian. An Economic Analysis of Return Migration. London: University College London, and CEPR, London, (1995).

Dustmann, Christian . Return migration. The European experience. *Economic Policy*, no. 22 (April), (1996c) pp. 215-250.

Dustmann, Christian. Return Migration and the Optimal migration Duration. London: University College London, and CEPR, London,(1997).

Dustmann, Christian. Return migration, wage differentials and the optimal migration duration. *IZA, Discussion Paper*, No. 264. (2001).

Galor, Oded and Oded Stark. The probability of return migration, migrants' work effort, and migrants' performance. *Journal of Development Economics*, vol. 35, No. 2, pp. 399-405. Amsterdam, Netherlands. (1991).

Ghosh, Bimal, ed. *Return Migration: Journey of Hope or Despair?* Geneva: International Organization for Migration and United Nations. (2000).

Ghosh, Bimal . The Promise and Pitfalls of Return Migration. In *International Migration, Development and Integration: Towards a Comprehensive Approach*. Kristof Tamas and Malin(1999).Hansson, eds. Stockholm: Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Kibreab, Gaim. Citizenship Rights and Repatriation of Refugees. *International Migration Review*, vol. 37, No. 1, (2003) pp. 24-73.

King, Russell, Anthony M. Warnes, and Allan M. Williams. International retirement migration in Europe. *International Journal of Population Geography*, vol 4, No. 2 (June), (1998). pp. 91-111. Chichester, England.

Klinthäll, Martin. Retirement Return Migration from Sweden. *International Migration*, vol. 44, No. 2, (2006). pp. 153-180.

Klinthäll, Martin. Immigraton, Integration and Return Migration

Labour Migration from Georgia. IOM. 2003

Poulain, Michel and Nicolas Perrin. The demographic characteristics of immigrant populations in Belgium. In *The Demographic Characteristics of Immigrant Populations*. Haug, Werner, Paul Compton, and Youssef Courbage, eds. Council of Europe Publishing, Strasbourg, (2002). pp. 57-129.

Защита прав всех трудящихся-мигрантов как инструмент повышения эффективности процесса развития. ООН. 3 юль, 2006

Исследование феномена трудовой миграции в Россию. Молдова, 2007

Окольский М. Наступающие цивилизации, уходящие цивилизации на закате века. В кн: Мир в зеркале международной миграции. Москва, Макс-пресс, 2003



Publishing House “UNIVERSAL”

---

TBILISI, 0179, I. CHAVCHAVADZE AVE. 19, ☎: 2 22 36 09, 5(99) 17 22 30

E-mail: [universal@internet.ge](mailto:universal@internet.ge)