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Integration of Migrants from Georgia in Countries of Temporary Residence and upon Return to Georgia: What Difficulties do Georgian Migrants Face in the Process of Adaptation to a New Social Environment

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Creating an Observatory of Migration East of Europe

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CARIM-East – Creating an Observatory East of Europe

This project which is co-financed by the European Union is the first migration observatory focused on the Eastern Neighbourhood of the European Union and covers all countries of the Eastern Partnership initiative (Belarus, Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan) and Russian Federation.

The project's two main themes are:

- (1) migration from the region to the European Union (EU) focusing in particular on countries of emigration and transit on the EU's eastern border; and
- (2) intraregional migration in the post-Soviet space.

The project started on 1 April 2011 as a joint initiative of the European University Institute (EUI), Florence, Italy (the lead institution), and the Centre of Migration Research (CMR) at the University of Warsaw, Poland (the partner institution).

CARIM researchers undertake comprehensive and policy-oriented analyses of very diverse aspects of human mobility and related labour market developments east of the EU and discuss their likely impacts on the fast evolving socio-economic fabric of the six Eastern Partners and Russia, as well as that of the European Union.

In particular, CARIM-East:

- builds a broad network of national experts from the region representing all principal disciplines focused on human migration, labour mobility and national development issues (e.g. demography, law, economics, sociology, political science).
- develops a comprehensive database to monitor migration stocks and flows in the region, relevant legislative developments and national policy initiatives;
- undertakes, jointly with researchers from the region, systematic and *ad hoc* studies of emerging migration issues at regional and national levels.
- provides opportunities for scholars from the region to participate in workshops organized by the EUI and CMR, including academic exchange opportunities for PhD candidates;
- provides forums for national and international experts to interact with policymakers and other stakeholders in the countries concerned.

Results of the above activities are made available for public consultation through the website of the project: <http://www.carim-east.eu/>

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Executive Summary

In our research we investigated the problems the migrants from Georgia face in the countries of their temporary or permanent residence and tried to verify principal factors promoting migrants' integration in destination countries and upon their return home.

The research is based on author's analysis of the information drawn from existing scholarly publications on the topic concerned, as well as on the results of interviews held by the author and statistical analysis of primary databases of several migration studies held in Georgia with author's participation.

The data of the research show that Georgian migrants do not practice applying to intermediary firms or employment agencies to find a job abroad. Relatives, friends and acquaintances or migrants' social contacts are important agents of their integration abroad instead. Due to their illegal status during migration, often long-term, Georgian nationals are deprived of the opportunity to visit their families back home, which, undoubtedly, makes their life abroad harder and negatively affects the process of their integration into a new social environment.

The data available indicate that the character of working activities of Georgian migrants abroad does not depend on their educational level, neither on their professional occupation in their home country. The absolute majority of them, including people with higher education diplomas, are employed as skilled or unskilled workers. Because of their illegal status, the most of Georgian migrants have no official labour agreement with the employer and many are subject to discrimination in respect of workday duration and payment for work. Nonetheless, upon their return, migrants face the same problems which previously made them emigrate: absence of appropriate jobs and low payments. Therefore, many of the returning migrants are planning to go abroad in search of temporary employment again.

The surveys show that efforts to reintegrate migrants from Georgia, which have abundantly been paid for by European institutions for a considerable number of years, yield virtually no result and Georgian society's awareness of available migration opportunities is so drastically low that it, undoubtedly, appeals for necessary correction of existing in this field strategies.

It is quite likely that temporary employment abroad will remain the most efficient way for Georgian citizens to improve their families' material well-being. It is also obvious that irregular migration will dominate the migrant flows from Georgia in short-term perspective. The government of Georgia, therefore, should not ignore this problem and should develop mechanisms for managing labour migration processes. These mechanisms must be adequate to the current situation of the country which has not yet overcome the difficulties of transition period and not to long-term perspectives of our doubtlessly bright future.

Introduction

Outward migration is a phenomenon new to Georgia, whose titular ethnic population has always been living on its territory (over 95%). Migration first appeared in early 1990s and manifested itself in large scale flows of migrants, primarily ethnic minorities, which sought to leave Georgia set aflame by armed conflicts and suffering serious economic and political difficulties in the process of becoming an independent state for their historical homeland. Due to the prolonged nature of this economic and political crisis also the representatives of titular nationality soon joined these flows. First, these were so called 'elites,' but then wider strata of Georgian population who went abroad in search of better living conditions. These years Russia became the principal desired destination for Georgian population due to shared border, visa-free (before 2000) movement of people and easy cultural and language integration of migrants on the territory which for 70 years had been the common state.

Since late 1990s a new migration model has formed in Georgia – temporary labour migration, oriented both to Russia and to the West. People used to and still go abroad to earn money and to support their families in Georgia because of the lack of jobs in the country. As some people in Georgia claim, '...migration has become a part of our everyday life... and everybody knows someone who has left to work abroad' (CRRC, 2007, p. 40). According to experts, since mid 1990s temporary labour migration became a 'nationalwide strategy' for Georgian households (CRRC, 2007, p.10).

According to the results of the latest available representative survey on migration, the number of family members absent from their household because of temporary labour migration is estimated as high as 140,000, with other 138,000 people being the former migrants who returned to Georgia. Thus, 7-8% of the current Georgian population experienced certain impact of outward migration and are either migrants staying temporarily abroad for labor there, or were migrants, but then returned home (CRRC/ISET, 2010, p. 9).

According to the research held (National Statistics Office of Georgia, 2006; CRRC/ISET, 2010), migrants from Georgia who emigrated to work abroad stay there for 2-3 years in average and then come back home. Thus, Georgian citizens in the process of migration face the problem of integration both in the countries of temporary residence and in their home country upon their return.

These are exactly the problems of integration and reintegration which became the principal focus of the research the results of which are delivered in the present paper. In this paper we tried to define the principal factors promoting migrants' integration in destination countries and upon their return to home country in terms of their adaptation to a new social environment, uses of their professional skills and education at local labour markets, family relations, etc.

Theoretical Background and Research Methodology

It is well-known that decision to emigrate is taken by a person under the influence of certain circumstances. The available scholarly literature defines several principal factors stimulating people to decide in favor of migration, such as human capital investment, improvement of socio-economic status, family circumstances and migrants' social network alleviating adaptation in destination countries. In such a context classical migration theories view migrants as social actors participating in a global integration process into the community of the host country (Massey, 1990).

Integration of a migrant is viewed as a social process manifesting itself in four principal forms: (1) acculturation or socialization, (2) successful adaptation in educational, professional and legal structures of the host country, (3) close social interaction with other community members, and (4) migrant's self-identification as a community member (Bosswick and Heckmann, 2006, p. 3).

The present research is focused on a principal characteristic form of current migration processes in Georgia – temporary labour migration from the country, which is primarily irregular in nature. The process of integration into local communities can not, therefore, be considered in its classical understanding because the period of migrants' stay in destination countries and absence from the country of permanent residence is comparatively short-term. Despite having no opportunity and desire to stay abroad permanently and short period of absence from home, Georgian migrants, nevertheless, have to undergo the process of certain social integration both in Georgia and abroad. Otherwise, they could not adapt to living and working conditions in a 'new' place of residence. These are exactly these processes that form the subject of our scholarly interest and the research goal for the present paper. We should once again stress that Georgian migrants can not integrate into local communities abroad in classical understanding of this process, since they later return home after a short period of absence. As is shown below, their return in most cases is not triggered by their illegal status, which otherwise is a serious impediment to their successful integration in destination countries. In our opinion in most cases integration abroad simply was not their goal. It was only needed for successful realization of the migration goal proper: to earn money and return home, to their families. There is, of course, also another category of migrants from Georgia, those who leave for good or, at least, for long, and who link their future life and career with living abroad. For this category integration is a successful finish to their migration process in its classical sense. Yet, as has already been noted, in this paper we consider integration process in relation to currently prevailing type of Georgian migration – temporary labour migration – leaving aside inconsiderable in number migration pattern of another type.

In our paper we will try to define principal factors promoting certain, though temporary, integration of migrants in destination countries and upon their return home; analyze if there is essential interrelation between educational level and professional experience of migrants and the specifics of their work in receiving countries, as well as between working experience and professional qualification acquired abroad and the process of successful reintegration of migrants into Georgian society back home; study the problems faced by migrants upon their return home and verify the factors conditioning success or failure of their adaptation to a novel social environment.

The process of integration of Georgian migrants, be it in the country of their temporary residence or upon their return invariably following their migration movements, is here viewed within the context of a community of people, who had found themselves in a critical situation in their own country and who identified no better solution to their problems as temporary irregular migration abroad. Undoubtedly even in this case the principal factors influencing decision to emigrate described above are of principal importance. Yet the contribution of particular factors to decision making process is conditioned by specific socio-economic conditions of a sending country and impressions of migrants returning home received during their (first) migration can become a test experience for them on the one hand and an important factor stimulating decisions in favor of migration taken by other community members, on the other.

The research is based on author's analysis of the information drawn from existing scholarly publications on the topic concerned, as well as on the results of statistical analysis of primary databases of several migration studies held in Georgia with author's participation: in 2005 for World Bank project 'Enhancing Gains from International Migration in Europe and Central Asia'; in 2009 within the project financed by Volkswagen Foundation 'Out-migration from Armenia and Georgia: ArGeMi, 2008-2010'; and in 2012 within the project 'Migration and Skills' by European Training Foundation. Access to these databases was kindly granted to the author by the above mentioned institutions for carrying out the present research.

Integration of Georgian Migrants in Destination Countries

- **The role of migrants' social networks during migration and integration abroad**

The citizens of Georgia go abroad mainly for temporary employment purposes: absence of work and low payments in Georgia provided the principal migration motivation for 83% of respondents among returning migrants in 2012. As the research shows, migrants mainly leave the country with short-term tourist visas and then stay to work abroad (Badurashvili, 2005).

The data of surveys held indicate that among Georgian migrants there is no widespread practice of applying to intermediary firms or employment agencies to find job abroad. One should also mention that opportunities for legal employment of Georgian citizens abroad are seriously limited by the absence of related interstate agreements and the absence up to the present of a state mechanism for the organization of legal outward migration (EC, 2012).

To find a job Georgian migrants mainly recourse to assistance from friends, relatives and family members who left earlier. Such practice of employment abroad is firmly rooted among Georgian migrants: three of every four respondents out of the returning migrants in 2005 and 70% of respondents in 2012 indicated that to find a job abroad they had employed their relatives and personal acquaintances with their compatriots resident abroad. In the absence of official mechanisms of circular labour migration in Georgia, Georgian migrants employ personal contacts and networking instead of formal employment institutions and, one can legitimately claim, promote the flows of irregular migration from Georgia. Therefore, the presence of relatives or friends in a country is often a decisive factor in choosing the preferred destination. This, in turn, leads to the concentration of Georgian migrants in particular destinations, which are not necessarily optimal in terms of available job opportunities, income level and local immigration policies. This is especially true in respect of the certain countries of the European Union such as Greece and Italy, which lately become the major destinations for the migrants from Georgia. Thus, according to the Migration survey of 2012 half of the respondents among the returning migrants indicated the presence of their acquaintances as the principal motivation to choose Greece as the first destination country. International sources of migration information also support the claim that the number of Georgian labour migrants in Greece is growing: it demonstrated tenfold increase in the last ten years and reached 26 thousand people in 2009 (EC, 2012, p. 5).

Relatives, friends and acquaintances or their social networks in a receiving country are thus an important intermediary for Georgian migrants in the process of their integration abroad. Interviews held for this research project with women returned from Italy confirmed this fact. Respondents recalled that upon their arrival to Italy they for some time lived with their acquaintances, very often in Italian families, where their compatriots were taking care after disabled and elderly people. They assisted them in their household work in return for food and accommodation, learned Italian and adapted themselves to a new country awaiting a job in other Italian families with the help of references from their friends' employers.

Female respondents also indicated that every Italian city with high concentration of migrants has family inns, where for relatively low pay rooms can be let for common living; in every such room 4-5 Georgian women may be living, who had not known each other before, but who are now in equal circumstances: they have just come from Georgia, they are learning language, without knowledge of which they can not find employment with a family, they are waiting to get a job, they support each other borrowing money from their friends and making it easier for each other to adapt to a new country.

This anticipation of a job can last for long, especially in the circumstances of the protracted economic crisis in Europe. According to the survey of 2012, average jobless period among the respondents was 5 to 6 months, with only 4% indicating that being unemployed they received some kind of social support. Migrants from Georgia thus do face problems with finding employment and

were it not for the help from their compatriots they would not be able to sustain these tough periods of their migration. In the survey of 2009 40% of respondents mentioned that if they had any problems abroad they used to seek help from their Georgian compatriots: 56% indicated that they became their friends during migration; 19% of returned migrants and more than a half of returned from Moscow answered that while abroad they had been living with their friends and relatives (Badurashvili, 2011, p. 100). Thus, compatriots from Georgia assist newly arrived migrants not only in job search, but also provide support in strained situations. On the one hand, it helps newly arrived migrants to adapt to a foreign country and makes their life abroad easier, on the other – it slows down the process of their integration into a local social environment, which is unthinkable without contacts with locals. In the long run such a situation promotes migrants' social exclusion and alienation.

Adaptation to a new social environment is not always an easy process for migrants. Because of their illegal status Georgian migrants are deprived of opportunity to visit their families during their migration period which is often prolonged. While abroad, they try to save money on everything, transferring money to their families left at home, and work overtime, seeking additional sources of income. This is especially true of Georgian women-migrants, who try to compensate their absence from home and children by as large remittances as possible. One of the studies notes that Georgian women working abroad deny themselves their everyday needs, work without days off, restrict their personal expenses, work overtime and on holidays and so on, which leads to serious psychological breakdowns and health problems (Zurabishvili, 2010, p.78). According to the survey of 2003, less than 20% frequented bars or other places of entertainment abroad; more than a half of the respondents, trying to save money, were spending their free time at their friends' place and 26% were so tired of work that preferred to stay home. Only one fourth of the respondents replied that they liked the way of life and traditions of local communities, with more than a half stating that they did not like those whatsoever (Badurashvili, 2004, p.26).

- **Georgian migrants abroad and their families at home**

A characteristic feature of Georgian migration is that only one of the spouses goes to temporarily work abroad, sending money home, and leaves the other to look after children and/or family members. According to the data of 2005 survey, 85% of returning migrants stayed abroad alone, without any other family members. Such a situation undoubtedly creates problems for both migrants, suffering nostalgia for their relatives, and their family members left in Georgia. It is not a secret that migration of one of the parents creates serious impediments to children's socialization, since they are left to the care of one of the parents or other family members in case parents are divorced. Special gender survey held in Georgia in 2002 makes a conclusion that temporary labour migration is one of the factors contributing to lessened family influence over children's socialization, growing number of crimes, homelessness and beggary among children and teenagers, which have recently been noted in Georgia (USAID, 2003, p.39).

Thus migrants, who left their families and children because of economic hardship in Georgia and intend to better support them from abroad, leaving their country, face up the problems created by the very fact of their departure. This, no doubt, makes their life abroad harder and negatively affects the process of their integration into a new social environment. In a situation when the most of Georgian migrants stay abroad illegally upon expiry of short-term tourist visas, they are challenged by the choice: to come back home because of the problems occurred thereby closing the way back because of transgressing visa regime, or remain abroad and continue to support their families at home, who very often have no alternative source of income? The solution is rarely optimal and well-timed, since most migrants having paid a considerable sum to organize their trip abroad and often having borrowed this money, and sometimes loans at interest, are compelled to stay working abroad for the period needed to pay their debts in Georgia. It is very often that they can not come home even in case of the deaths of their closest relatives.

The data available indicate that Georgian migrants mostly come back home because of certain personal circumstances. According to the latest migration survey, 36.5% of the respondents mentioned

that they had come back on the insistence of their spouse or parents, 12% - because of psychological problems and longing for their family and relatives, 14.2% - because of employment problems abroad, 14% - because of problems with legalization; 6% were deported; less than 1% indicated that they came back because they had earned enough money to do so.

Thus, migration of Georgian citizens does not necessarily lead to considerable improvement of material well-being of their families. However, we are going to consider these issues in more detail below, in the section on the problems of migrants' reintegration upon their return.

Labour Activities of Georgian Migrants Abroad

Now we consider the issues related to the labour activities of Georgian migrants abroad, since it has already been mentioned that Georgian migrants go abroad to earn money. It is not surprising, therefore, that in every migration survey the problem of finding a job was indicated by the returning migrants as the most essential and more urgent for them even than legalization in the country of residence.

As is well-known, migrants from the countries of the former USSR are characterized by high educational level (Mansoor and Quillin, 2007). Majority of migration surveys confirm this fact: the level of education of temporary labour migrants from Georgia is higher than that of the Georgian population taken as a whole (EC, 2012, p. 11). According to 2012 survey around 60% of Georgian migrants have diplomas of higher and secondary vocational education. Yet, as real practice shows, jobs available to migrants abroad do not at all require such a high educational level. That is why temporary labour migration from Georgia is viewed by experts if not as a 'brain drain' (since most of the Georgian migrants eventually return home), then at least as a 'brain waste,' which is true because migrants often suffer professional disqualification in the process of working abroad (EC, 2012).

The results of various studies show that Georgian migrants work abroad mainly in the sectors of domestic services, construction and trade. The sectors of migrants' activity depend on the host country, with their specifics being different for men and women. According to 2012 survey, Georgian women in the countries of the European Union are employed mainly in household services and taking care after disabled, whereas men work in construction and industry. These latter, including seasonal agricultural work, are principal activity sectors for male migrants from Georgia also in the countries outside the EU, including Russia. What concerns women, in these countries they are employed principally in petty trade and services, including both domestic and public.

In this respect one should note that the specifics of labour activities of Georgian migrants do not depend either on their education, or on the character of their professional activities in Georgia. The latest migration survey held in 2012 indicated that 95% of Georgian migrants are employed abroad as skilled and unskilled workers. This is true also of people with university diplomas: 40% of them during their temporary migration were employed as skilled and about half of them as unskilled manual workers. According to the survey of 2005, half of top-echelon professionals were engaged abroad in petty retail trade, with 25% of them as unskilled workers. Occupation of many migrants, therefore, does not correspond to the level of their education: that was mentioned by half of the respondents in 2012. The higher the level of education of a migrant, the greater mismatch between educational level and actual occupation abroad: whereas two thirds of respondents with higher education or secondary vocational training mentioned that their work abroad did not correspond to the level of their education, two thirds of the people without professional training claimed contrary: that their work abroad completely corresponded to their educational level. These answers one again confirm the fact that work offered to Georgian migrants abroad mainly does not require any professional training or specialized working skills. The survey of 2012 showed that professional training or attending educational courses in case of Georgian migrants is more of an exception than an established practice: such experience was mentioned by less than 10% of respondents and in most cases these were language courses.

At the same time the surveys prove that educational level to a certain extent is important to successful migration, since better educated migrants earn more and, therefore, are able to send more money to their families. This testifies to the fact that education helps migrants to better adapt to a new social environment and increases their chances to succeed. The migrants returned to Georgia also share this opinion: 57% of respondents in the survey of 2012 agreed that the higher educational level, the easier it is for a migrant to find a better job.

The length of migrant's stay abroad is also an important factor of successful migration. The data of the above mentioned survey indicate that average monthly income of labour migrants staying abroad over one year is 1.7 higher than that of those who stayed abroad less than 6 months (688 and 404 Euros respectively).

It not a secret that the majority of Georgian migrants work abroad illegally: according to 2012 survey only 13.7% of the respondents were employed abroad according to an official labour contract. Without such contracts Georgian migrants often become subjects to discrimination in respect of payments for work. During the survey of 2003, 10% of returning migrants indicated that during migration they experienced situation when they got lesser remuneration than had been previously agreed, or did not get it at all. This survey also showed that employers usually pay migrants less than locals. Thus, only 14% of migrants returned from non-CIS states indicated in the interview that they received the same remuneration as locals while working abroad; 23.8% received 1.5 less, 31.9% two times and 30% three times less than locals. Particularly discriminated are female migrants (Badurashvili, 2004, p.18). Work day duration for migrants also exceeds normative: according to the survey of 2012 Georgian migrants work 58 hours a week at average. In some countries, for example Turkey, workweek duration is 65 hours at average

Such a situation can primarily be accounted for migrants' illegal status which forces them to agree to any working conditions. In the survey of 2012 less than 5% replied that during migration they could get an official work permit and only 20% - residence permit during their stay abroad.

Reintegration of Returning Migrants

- **Access to and the role of available aid programs to returning migrants in Georgia**

It is universally accepted that certain training of potential migrants before their migration abroad and duly informing them of the country of their temporary residence increases their chances for successful integration into a new social environment. The latest migration survey held in Georgia in 2012 showed that information awareness of existing migration aid programs is extremely low: 92% of migrants answered that they had not heard of any migration aid or consultation programs prior to their departure abroad. Those who replied otherwise mentioned that they heard of private companies and persons making business out of organizing departures abroad.

In this respect one should note that international organizations and agencies provide Georgia with substantial assistance in the process of its successful integration into the policies of the European Neighborhood. This assistance has been particularly active since 2009, when Georgia, the European Commission and 16 EU member-states launched Mobility Partnership. In 2011 the European Commission endowed Georgia with three million Euros to implement the project for the support of returning migrants and execution of readmission agreement between the European Union and Georgia ('Targeted Initiative on supporting of Georgian returning migrants and implementation of EU-Georgia readmission agreement'). One of the components of this project is ensuring decent return and reintegration of migrants in Georgia through so called 'mobility center' established at the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons, Accommodation and Refugees, which currently carries out the tasks of reintegration of returning migrants, and nine Job Counseling and Placement Centers, located around the country. Two of the latter were established within the above mentioned project, whereas the other have up to recently been financed by the International Organization for Migration. According to the

latest information, since 13 May 2011 (when the Mobility Center was officially inaugurated) 936 of returning migrants have been registered in its electronic database. Of these, 629 received consultation from the center's staff, 169 migrants were redirected to regional employment centers, 316 were registered for professional training/retraining, 163 attended the courses for starting business and 40 received grants for small business development. These results are efficient continuation of initiatives by the office of the International Organization for Migration which since 2003 has been carrying out the program for reintegration of voluntarily returning from the EU migrants in Georgia. This program includes free of charge travel home, professional training/retraining, supporting small business initiatives, free medical service and temporary accommodation for the returnees from certain countries. Up to now 1748 individuals have received reintegration assistance under this program, with 100 of them having found a job and 620 having started or expanded their own businesses. At the same time, the above mentioned survey revealed that in spite of considerable donor assistance, briefly outlined above, Georgian labour migrants do not practice the use of advantages of returning home with the help of officially established aid programs: less than 2% of returned migrants mentioned they heard of such programs when they were planning their return, but did not managed to make use of them; 28% stated that they needed no help in their return and the remaining 62% indicated three basic reasons for not applying to these programs: 1) these schemes were not offering the type of jobs they would like to take upon their return, 2) registering and application procedure seemed to complicated for them and 3) access to the programs was hampered by existing in this field corruption.

Thus, Georgian citizens in the process of their labour migration or returning home receive virtually no help from the state and are poorly informed of the programs carried out by international organizations in this field. Georgian migrants are left to themselves both during migration and upon their return; they can only count on themselves and their relatives and friends.

Why such a situation evolves with international programs being carried out in the background is a question asking for a special study. Is it that these programs are not widely scoped enough to influence migration behavior of the broad strata of Georgian society involved into the processes of illegal labour migration and promote decent reintegration of the tens of thousand of Georgian migrants abroad? Or due to their flaws these programs are only of use to certain migrant categories, for example the people under the high deportation risks? It seems that access to necessary information and trust to measures executed is also a sort of a problem for many in Georgia, since the surveys show that very few people are informed of existing migrant aid programs and opportunities.

The surveys show that having returned to their home country migrants face the same problems that some time before had made them emigrate: absence of vacant jobs and low wages in Georgia. In our opinion difficulties in the process of integration into the local labour market provide the key problem to returning migrants. Unfortunately, despite certain positive trends in economic development, mass unemployment and low wages are still the principal social problems for the majority of population which stimulate their temporary migration abroad.

International experience in this sphere shows that the best way to cope with unemployment and low income for the countries with economic climates similar to that of Georgia is to efficiently employ migrants' monetary resources to promote development in the countries of origin and entrepreneurial initiative among the migrants returned to their home country and members of their families.

Migrants' money savings and their role in returning migrants' reintegration

Available surveys testify that both migrants' money remittances from abroad and their savings brought home are mostly spent for everyday consumption of their families in Georgia. According to the survey of 2012 for 97% of the respondents that is exactly the principal use of money remittances, 1% indicated that they used money to buy real estate and 0.7% to pay for children's education. At the same time, there are studies which support the idea that money remittances make the level of material well-being of migrants' families considerably higher, especially in urban settlements: they enable

households to spend more money for buying cloths, domestic electronics and furnishings, medical treatment and higher education (Gerber and Torosyan, 2011). As to migrants' savings, the survey of 2012 claims that two thirds of them managed to make some during migration. Upon their return home, however, only 3% of the respondents were able to start their own business using this money, 5.6% bought real estate, but in most cases money brought home were spent for everyday family needs. It should not be of a surprise, since two thirds of migrants could not find jobs upon their return; around 80% of unemployed returnees were searching for a job, but could not find any. Among those who did find a job more than a half got employment with a recommendation from friends and acquaintances, a practice still widely popular in Georgia, 8.4% returned to their former work and only ¼ of migrants found jobs on their own.

Migration survey of 2005 showed that most of the returned migrants refrain from any entrepreneurial initiatives: only 18% mentioned that they were planning to start their own business in Georgia. The principal cause of unwillingness to start own business was identified by 6 out of 10 respondents as insufficient money resources; among other causes high cost of new business initiatives and absence of ideas as to the sector of business activity were named (CRRC, 2007, p. 49).

The survey held by the Center for Migration Studies of Tbilisi University provides interesting information on the attempts at entrepreneurial activities by returning migrants. According to this study, 27.5% of returning migrants attempted to start their own business upon their return. Their money saved abroad were the principal funding source (57%) with additional investments from bank loans and relatives (Tukhashvili et al., 2012, p. 53). Yet not for all of the respondents their business projects were successful, because newbie businessmen faced a number of serious problems. The most respondents (25.9%) named monopolization of practically all economy sectors in Georgia as the principal problem; 18.5% indicated tough competition and 14.8% administrative and bureaucratic impediments to development of small business (Ibid, p.55). Extremely interesting also seem to be the answers to the question: 'what, in your opinion, can be done to assist Georgian migrants working abroad in realization of their business ideas at home?' The replies received indicated three important factors: access to low-interest loans, political stability and free market competition.

Thus, we may conclude that currently money remittances from abroad are not employed for business development in Georgia, which means that migration does not exercise positive sustainable effect on socio-economic condition of migrants' families in Georgia and, therefore, long-term effect over society in the country of origin. Money remittances, without doubt, help to lower poverty level among Georgian households, yet they have but a short-run effect and do not promote sustainable social development of the country. This is caused principally by the absence of adequate state efforts to ensure efficient use of migrants' remittances for development goals and insufficiently active policy aimed at successful reintegration of returning migrants at local labour markets. This in turn creates prerequisites for the formation of new migrant flows at the expense of both potential new migrants and returning migrants who have found no place at local labour markets.

- **Difficulties in adaptation of returning migrants at home country**

Every third returning migrant out of the questioned in 2012 mentioned that within next six months he/she might go to work abroad again. This is not surprising since migrants, having come home in hopes of changes for the better, find themselves in a situation analogous to that prior to their departure: absence of work and low income, as well as new problems of adaptation at home and reintegration into local social environment.

The surveys show that particular difficulties in adaptation at home country are faced up by women returning after prolonged period of stay in the countries of the European Union. Having left the country with traditional gender stereotypes and in a critical situation having assumed the role of a 'family breadwinner,' abroad they felt themselves much more independent and not only financially. Having got accustomed to the comfort and the way of life abroad and then returned home they discover that not much had changed both in the country and social stereotypes of their family

members. Yet, they do not want to live as they used to and prefer to find themselves abroad once again, to earn money dearly but assuming complete responsibility for their decisions.

Women from Georgian provinces characteristic for their poor infrastructure experience particular hardship related to the differences between local social and cultural conditions and those they got accustomed to abroad. According to the results of a migration survey, 37.5% of migrants returned to Georgia would like to go abroad once again (People's Harmonious Development Society and TASO Foundation, 2010, p. 47). It happens quite often that the members of migrant's family, having lost money income from abroad, are also interested in repeated migration. In the survey mentioned above one female respondent narrated bitterly that after she had submitted documents to the embassy of Greece and was waiting for the reply, her family members were more afraid than her that she might be refused a visa because they were eagerly awaiting her departure and resumed money remittances from abroad. Migrants also realize that having spent so long far from their families they can not expect former close relations with them (Ibid., p. 40). One respondent mentioned the following: '...Years spent abroad make people indifferent. I feel it happens also to me, I am becoming emotionless. This is indifference to your family, your country; you have only one responsibility – send money home, to Georgia' (Ibid.).

The key factor in successful adaptation of returning migrants, in our opinion, is their integration into local labour markets. However, as surveys show, temporary labour migration to the West, in the long run, does not exercise considerable positive impact over employment status of Georgian citizens: those who had been unemployed prior to their migration, still have no jobs upon their return (CRRC, 2007, p.49, p.67).

According to the survey of 2005, 6 out of 10 migrants unemployed before migration were still unemployed when they returned. In most cases professional status of Georgian migrants during migration suffers considerable decrease. The survey's data indicate that only 22% of those who before migration had held managerial positions or had been qualified workers of senior or medium rank, were able to get similar position upon their return. The rest had to take up jobs of lower professional status; every third migrant from this group was unemployed upon return.

According to experts, there, unfortunately, is not enough data to understand the sources of the problem: '...it is difficult to say whether the Georgian labour market is not in the position to integrate the returnees and to make use of the skills and knowledge the migrant acquired abroad, or whether the migrant is not willing to enter the Georgian labour market due to specific expectations related to wages and working conditions.' (EC, 2012, p.13).

Surveys indicate that many migrants see no prospects in employing their knowledge and skills acquired abroad upon their return. In the survey of 2005 only 10% of the respondents mentioned that they had better opportunities on the labour market than they had had before migration; 45% of returning migrants stated that their job opportunities remained the same. The survey of 2012 informs us that among the returning to Georgia migrants there are less of those who think that their labour experience abroad help them in finding better job opportunities in Georgia than those thinking their migration was useless in this respect: 42% versus 58%. The same survey also showed that Georgian migrants are employed in jobs not corresponding to their educational level not only abroad, but also upon their return. On the whole, so called 'secondary labour market' employment is the principal feature of the situation with employment in Georgia (USAID and IOM, 2010, p.5). As one can see, it concerns returning migrants to the same extent as all the others. According to the survey of 2012, among the returning migrants with higher education only 30.8% are employed in accordance with their qualification, half of the returning migrants with higher education is employed as skilled and 16.7% as unskilled workers. It is not surprising that 5 out of 10 respondents think that their professional skills are higher than those needed for the job they are currently employed in; the share of people holding this opinion is higher among respondents with higher education and secondary vocational training.

- **Impact of migration on migrants' families: Future migration intentions of returning migrants**

Despite the above mentioned, labour migration of Georgian citizens does exercise some positive impact upon economic situation of the society, since it undoubtedly leads to higher level of household prosperity in Georgia. The latest surveys confirm that income level of the households with migrants is higher than that of households without them and the level of income of returning migrants themselves is higher than of those without migration experience (EC, 2012, p.12). According to experts, migrants' remittances not only help households to overcome poverty, but also promote greater social equality by lessening the disparity in household income level (Ibid., p. 16). Migration surveys of 2005 and 2009 indicated that 40% and 45% respectively of returning migrants think their families were better off at the moment than before migration. According to the data of 2009 survey money income of the households with returning migrants is at average 15% higher than that of households without migrants. An interesting fact is that these households' income is higher due to both labour activities of family members and selling of agricultural products.

Thus, one can legitimately assume that Georgian migration exercises positive impact over social development, even if not long term because of on the whole inefficient employment of money flows from abroad. Yet it can undoubtedly be considered medium term, because the use of money flows is not limited by household needs only. In the survey of 2012 about 70% of returning migrants stated that they employ their experience received abroad in their everyday activities in respect of labour discipline and organization – the properties they acquired in the process of their labour migration abroad. One should not forget also that every third migrant mentioned that he/she managed to improve the level of his/her professional qualification acquiring new skills and learning a foreign language.

One should stress that despite all the difficulties Georgian migrants face up during their migration, the majority of returning migrants, as all the survey indicate, on the whole positively assessed their temporary labour migration: only 8% of the respondents in the survey of 2009 mentioned that they were not satisfied with their migration and approximately the same figure was shown in 2012. It should not be surprising, therefore, that many of them would like to go to work abroad again.

According to one of the surveys, every third returning migrant is unhappy with his return. This unhappiness is mainly caused by low income and absence of work in Georgia. 10% of the respondents complain about growing in Georgia taxes and 15% suffer problems in adapting to local conditions and new social environment (Tukhashvili et al., 2012, p. 52). It seems that returning migrants do not particularly stick to old acquaintances and try to accustom to a new lifestyle: in the survey of 2005 two thirds of the respondents mentioned that they keep in touch with other returnees, but only 5% mentioned these contacts were of particular importance in their adaptation upon their return to Georgia; 40% stated that these contacts were not especially important and 15% stressed that they kept in touch with old acquaintances only because they were planning to go abroad again.

Surveys held in other countries testify that people having certain migration experience are characterized also by high migration intentions. The survey of 2003 showed that every fifth of the returning migrants was planning to go to work abroad again within following 6 months; 10% of the respondents indicated that somebody of their family was planning to go abroad and about 3% were planning to go abroad with all their families (Badurashvili, 2004, p.28). The results of the latest migration surveys show even higher migration intentions among returning migrants in Georgia. Thus in 2009 28% of the respondents mentioned they were planning to go abroad within a year and every third was planning to depart within next 6 months among the respondents in 2012.

Thus the households with members who have experienced some kind of labour migration are at higher risks of repeated migration. One can, therefore, claim that '...household migration experience accumulated through trips abroad of various family members is not only an outcome of migration processes, but also an important determinant in formation of new flows of potential labour migration from Georgia' (Ibid.). In our opinion, therefore, one can legitimately treat migrants'

return to their home country not as the end of a migration cycle, but rather as one of the multiple segments of continuous migration movements of people (King, 2000). Each of these segments has its particular features and creates particular challenges to its participants in their integration to a new social environment.

Policy recommendations for the promotion of successful migrants' integration

Georgia, unfortunately, still suffers from the hardships of transition period. In such circumstances temporary labour migration remains one of the active forms of socialization and economic adaptation of individuals and entire families. It seems likely that in short-term perspective temporary employment abroad will remain the most efficient way to increase material well-being of Georgian families. It is evident also that irregular migration will dominate the flows of international migrants from Georgia.

The Government of Georgia should not ignore this problem and should undertake efficient measures to legalize and support labour migration from Georgia. As of now in Georgia there are no even the basics for an efficient mechanism to administer migration processes. To support circular migration the Georgian Government should assume the leading role in creating migration aid services which should promote collection and distribution of information on legal migration opportunities. This may include creation of support centers to collect information on migration programs and opportunities in destination countries and to deliver it to broader social circles, look for the ways of target professional orientation of potential migrants and taking elementary language courses, etc.

At the same time, donor and international organizations should carry out more fundamental research into the situation with employment in Georgia to understand the dilemma of the local labour market, expressed on the one hand in massive offer of highly qualified but little needed labour force and by serious deficit of specialists on the other. This research is needed since explanations by sectoral mismatch seem to be a simplification of unemployment problems. The result of this research should enable us to understand why reintegration efforts, so solidly financed by European institutions for so many years, yield virtually no result and awareness of the Georgian society of available migration opportunities is so low that it undoubtedly appeals for necessary correction of existing strategies.

To support legal migration from Georgia gradual expansion of liberal visa regime and other measures within the framework of Mobility Partnership should necessarily be enhanced. Inter-country agreements and agreements for social provision should be so arranged as to promote sustainable return of labour migrants.

Currently Georgia is still lacking an official document defining principal strategy of national migration policy. 'Georgian Migration Strategy' – a document, which according to press reports has already been developed by the former Georgian Government, should be made available for wide public debate, discussion by independent experts and non-governmental organizations dealing with the problems of migrants' integration so that the needs and problems of labour migrants and the ways to satisfactory deal with them were also adequately reflected in this document. The same concerns the need to precisely formulate the Governments stand in respect of the future national migration policy adequate to the current Georgian situation and not to long-term perspectives of country's doubtlessly better future.

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