

Illegal migrants from Georgia: labor market experiences and remittance behavior.

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Abstract

Actual economic and political situation in Georgia became a push factor for great masses of temporary labor migration. In spite that Georgian migrants have crossed the border observing due formal regulations of that time, their future activity and status, as a rule, do not meet the legal standards of the host country and do not correspond to the initially declared aims and duration of stay abroad. The majority of them does not want to stay abroad permanently and stays there to improve the financial situation of their families. Migrants from Georgia often neglect the regulations envisaged by the legislation of the host country associated with the employment restrictions. In particular, the above implies that a part of migrants recently staying abroad, due to various reasons, is involved in various kinds of illegal activity. This, in its turn, leads to their exploitation and violation of human rights, on the one hand, and their criminal behaviors, on the other. So Georgians working abroad are basically considered as illegal migrants in the countries of destination.

1. Introduction

Modern Georgia is quite a typical post-Soviet country that after independence has been seriously affected by external migration. The 2002 population level shows a drop of some 20 percent from the 1989 census, held while Georgia was still a republic of the Soviet Union. Part of this drop is due to a declining birthrate; but the most is due to emigration.

During of the Soviet period ethnic Georgians tended to remain in Georgia, more than 95% of them lived on the own territory and their migration being primarily within the republic, towards the capital Tbilisi. At the same time for example, Armenians, another Caucasian ethnics already in that time used to live in different Soviet republics and only 66.7% of Armenian lived in Armenia, country neighboring to Georgia.

Hence emigration is a new phenomenon for Georgia that appeared from the 1990s. There was some migration of Russians to Georgia; by 1989 they made up some

six percent of the republic's population of 5.4 million. Many of these ethnic Russians and their descendents have migrated to Russia since Georgia's independence. Analysts suggest that at least half of the people who have left Georgia in 1990s went to the Russian Federation, and that many of them may well have been ethnic Russians.

After the collapse of Soviet Union the citizens of independent Georgia, as all other citizens of former Soviet Union, had the chance to travel abroad without any of the artificial impediments of the past. During the first three years of the nineties Georgia was confronted with a number of dramatic civil wars, which brought large flows of internal displacements and inflicted social-economic hardship on the whole population of Georgia. Country was almost at a standstill and the whole economy was paralyzed due to a pinching lack of energy resources and a highly unstable political situation. Many Georgian citizens decided to leave their country to look for a better life elsewhere and emigrated in a great numbers. A considerable part of these emigrants, especially in the first half of 1990s belonged to ethnic minorities, which preferred to settle in the countries of their ancestors, such as Russia, Greece, Israel, Azerbaijan and Armenia. Ethnic migration constituted the biggest flow of emigrants from Georgia in that time and was partly developed as a result of incorrect nationalities policy of the Georgian government at the beginning of 1990s.

A deep economic collapse of Georgia that has not been properly exhausted during first years of transition, revealed later in economic dislocation with the phenomena of inflation, corruption, unemployment and poverty contributed to the deep social crisis in the country. Due to the prolonged social-economic crisis and lack of realistic prospects for improvement in the near future many Georgians continued to migrate abroad for temporary or even permanent settlement, which caused the persistent intensive emigration flows of Georgians during whole period after independence. In the period between two population censuses, 1989 and 2002, due to emigration Georgia has lost more than one million of citizens that consists a fifth of its population.

2. Theoretical considerations

In order to understand the peculiarity of migration situation in Georgia and its recent modification one must go far beyond presented statistics which, even if perfect, specify only one type of migration - i.e. foreign moves for long or permanent settlement. However, according to various evaluations, these long legal migrations are only the tip of a huge iceberg.

In recent years an ever-increasing number of Georgians have begun leaving their homes in search of better employment opportunities and of higher wages. The knowledge about this category of migrants, though increasing, is still very fragmentary in Georgia. The new phenomenon of labor migration has been discussed in almost all scientific publications of that time related to migration in Georgia.

Revaz Gachechiladze (1997) argues about negative and positive sides of the migration for Georgians: "...it is hard not to see the danger in mass emigration as well as Georgians belong to the category of people saying: East or West, Home Is Best...but a big amount of families of Georgia had survived on the money sent or brought by labor migrants in the period of economic crisis, (which is still continuing)". He describes also a feature of irregular migration flows as a process when Georgians "...leave the country with traveler's visa and stay there illegally for a job ...and they have jobs which levels of proficiency are too low".

Mirian Tukhashvili (1998) mentions that already in the Soviet time some male, Armenians by ethnicity, population compactly residing in South Georgia used to go for temporary labor migration to Russia. They were leaving Georgia each year at spring, were working in the contractual works in Russia for earnings (so called "shabashniki") and returning at autumn to own families. But from the 1990s the flows of labor migration from Georgia have been tremendously increased and this process has been expanded on the whole Georgia that by his opinion was caused by economic crisis in Georgia.

Tamaz Gugushvili (1998) has pointed out that labor migration "...has saved Georgia from starvation", but this is the process that serves a special attention of Georgian government from the point of view of protection of human rights of Georgian citizens abroad.

According to Guram Svanidze (1998) the intention to migrate is increasing in Georgia and the main reasons of external migration may be tracked to the unemployment and decreasing of the living standards in Georgia. His study on migration of ethnic minorities settled in Georgia has shown that the emigration background is strongest among Armenians, who are less inclined to migrate in Armenia, than for example Azeris – to Azerbaijan, though the Russian Federation is the main destination for migrants of all ethnic groups, including Georgians.

Whereas the literature on general characteristics of migration processes in Georgia has become substantial, very little research has been done on economical behaviors of labor migrants from Georgia. More specifically, very little systematic research, if any has been done on labor market experiences and remittance behavior of Georgian labor migrants. In this respect should be mentioned researches that have been done by the Georgian Mission of International Organization of Migration.

The first research titled “*Hardship Abroad or Hunger at Home: A Study of Irregular Migration from Georgia*” (2001) expresses the current view of international actors and human right protection organizations in Georgia on the status of Georgian migrants abroad. This research was specified on trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants and content of interview (N=270) was more focused on related issues, as organization of trip abroad, journey arrangements, provision of travel documents, job placement and role of cross-border trafficking networks, deception, coercion and violence and etc. and less- on employment experience of Georgian migrants abroad.

The second study “Labor migration from Georgia” (IOM- Georgia, 2003) is based on the special migration survey of 600 households having at least one member for labor abroad. Its main findings are based on the secondary source or information received not from migrants themselves (being for the moment of interview abroad), but from their family members that by my opinion declines a reliability of survey information as well as family members often are not aware of details concerning migrants’ experience abroad.

The novel inside of my paper is first of all to bring together the whole experience of Georgian citizens from foreign labor markets in order to try to evaluate and understand, what is for them employment abroad: good luck or heavy fate?

The second contribution of this paper is that I will try to examine and discuss the gender differences in patterns of economic behavior among Georgian labor migrants in the countries of destination.

In the research of migration return migration is perhaps the least studied and quantified area of concern to migration. Though there is a paucity of good data on return migration, it is believed to be increasing globally¹. Some studies have suggested viewing return migration as a central part of an ongoing migration process. It is no longer seen as a “closure” of migration cycle, but rather as one of multiple steps of continued movement².

Temporary moves abroad, the majority of which are caused by economic reasons, should be investigated because they are much more numerous, of a much bigger variety, include diverse groups of population, and react quicker to various socio-economic and political changes. Subsequently, their influence on the overall socio-economic development of the country is no less significant. Besides, in light of the decreasing possibilities permanent settled immigration to most developed countries, these temporary moves abroad, or as called by some scientists "incomplete migration" (Okolski,1997), are replacing traditional migrational forms and will most likely be the dominant form of migration in Georgia, at least in the near future.

3. Data

My paper is based on the special purpose migration survey that has been conducted by Georgian Centre of Population Research in 2003 by the support of Foundation for Migration, Population and Environment. The desired sample size of survey was 1000 respondents, Georgian citizens, who had left for abroad during the period 1991-2002 with intention to work there and have returned to Georgia for the moment of interview.

It should be mentioned that there are no reliable estimations to the current size of irregular labor migration from Georgia as well as does not exist enough knowledge about demographic and socio-economic profile of temporary migrants. So the construction of

¹ Lucas, Robert E.B. (2004) “International Migration Regimes and Economic Development”, forthcoming study, <http://www.egdi.gov.ge/migration.htm>, retrieved September 1, 2004

² King (2000)

the sample's design represented a serious problem of our study. Realize this in advance we opted for a combination of research methods for constructing of the sample of former migrants.

For our sample twelve administrative regions of the country were combined into three survey strata, Tbilisi (capital of Georgia), Other-urban area (periphery cities) and Rural area. The separate sampling was performed in each survey strata. In the constructing of sample areas by urban and rural settlements an equal representation of East and West parts of Georgia has been taken into account. Grouping of the settlements by East and West has been done taking into account their geographical location. We identified Tbilisi that is located in the West Georgia as a separate survey strata, because the previous studies on migration have proved distinction of Georgian capital-city from any other region by high intensity of temporary labor migration that initially started in Tbilisi.

Constructing the list of our potential respondents, former migrants, we have referred initially to the database of the longitudinal representative Household Survey, which is conducting by State Department for Statistics of Georgia from the late 1996. Questionnaire of this survey composed information about absent family members with the identification of reason for leaving of household (as working abroad, study and etc.). In this way we have randomly chosen households where at list one member has left Georgia in 1997-2002 with the purpose of labor activity abroad. We have accepted the similar sample size for our three survey strata and have chosen in this way 120 households in each. We realized in advance that in processing of the next stage of sampling we will meet with the returnees being abroad also in the same period, 1997-2002, and our desired sample size was 1000 respondents.

At the next stage the interviewers have visited the households according to the chosen addresses for conducting an interview with former migrant. Of course, not in all cases interviewers were lucky to meet with potential respondents as well as these persons might be still abroad or might leave family by any reason including next migration. But the purpose of this visit was not only the conducting of interview. Visit of chosen households included a definite fieldwork's activity for achievement of desire sample size. Interviewers were requesting to ask respondents or their family members to refer several

people in their neighboring who were abroad for labor in 1991-2002 and were now back in Georgia. The number of persons, who interviewers had to find additionally, fluctuated from one to three per each household's address and depended on the certain conditions, in the first instance whether an interview with returned migrant has been conducted on definite address or not.

This method of finding of respondents, based on the main criteria of questioning the labor migrants-returnees, represents a complex of different sampling procedures. It starts from random systematic selection of households and fixing of household's address as a starting point for the next stage of sampling. Then other respondents are searching with the help of already chosen respondents or their households' members with the basic criteria that our potential respondents should be migrants-returnees and they should live in the same sample cluster. The last procedure of selection involves a so called "snow-ball referral method" that is used often in such kind of studies where respondents cannot be clear identified and found. Traditionally not-formal relations among close neighbors in Georgia makes this searching method quite convenient and acceptable.

Using this method 1056 persons were contacted, out of whom 960 agreed for interview, among them 320- living in Tbilisi, 317- in the other Georgian cities and 323- in the rural area.

Based on that approach we are confident that the numbers of returned migrants interviewed have formed a sufficient basis for drawing the relevant conclusions that actually reflect the reality and potentials of irregular migration flows from Georgia.

4. Findings

4.1. Profile of irregular migrants

The data presented in table 1 provide a descriptive overview of profile of illegal migrants from Georgia by two categories of respondents: migrants, who have been for work at the territory of the former Soviet Union (now *New Independent States*, NIS), so called "*near abroad*" and those, who have been for labor migration in all other countries, so called "*far abroad*", which consisted in our case Western European countries, Israel, USA, Turkey and Greece.

Table1. Profile of the total sample of returned migrants, percentages (n=960) and a comparison between the profile of migrants who have been for labor at the NIS - territory (n=320) and those who have been far abroad (n=640)

| Period of migration | Total sample | NIS-territory | Far abroad |
|----------------------------|--------------|---------------|------------|
| SEX | | | |
| Male | 50.7 | 70.3 | 40.6 |
| Female | 49.3 | 29.7 | 59.4 |
| AGE | | | |
| Under 20 | 0.2 | 0.0 | 0.2 |
| 20-29 | 25.4 | 11.8 | 32.4 |
| 30-39 | 34.5 | 40.1 | 31.6 |
| 40-49 | 24.4 | 33.0 | 20.0 |
| 50-59 | 11.4 | 11.3 | 11.4 |
| 60-69 | 3.9 | 3.3 | 4.1 |
| 70 and more | 0.3 | 0.5 | 0.2 |
| MARITAL STATUS | | | |
| Never married | 27.1 | 19.8 | 30.9 |
| Married | 60.8 | 70.8 | 55.7 |
| Widowed | 4.7 | 5.2 | 4.4 |
| Divorced | 7.4 | 4.2 | 9.0 |
| CHILDREN | | | |
| Yes | 57.9 | 64.6 | 54.5 |
| No | 42.1 | 35.4 | 45.5 |
| EDUCATION | | | |
| Secondary general or below | 14.8 | 17.5 | 13.4 |
| Secondary professional | 24.2 | 26.4 | 23.1 |
| High incomplete | 6.3 | 4.2 | 7.3 |
| High complete | 54.7 | 51.9 | 56.2 |
| ECONOMIC STATUS | | | |
| High | 9.3 | 6.1 | 10.9 |
| Average | 67.4 | 66.0 | 68.1 |
| Low | 23.3 | 27.8 | 20.9 |

The data reveal that roughly equal numbers of Georgian men and women were for work temporary abroad. At the same time women prevail among irregular migrants to the *far abroad* and men - among migrants to NIS. In analyzing of presented data it should be taken in mind that available data do not allow us to accept the received proportion between labor migration *near* and *far* abroad and between men and women for characteristic of labor migration processes in Georgia in general, as well as we have interviewed former migrants.

Specialists conclude (Salt and Clarke, 2004) that in general data on irregular labor migration everywhere are particularly poor and border- apprehensions data do not offer any real indication of irregular labor migration. However our study has shown that Georgian women may be viewed as independent social actors. That is, when women cross international borders to take a job in the global market, they are making decisions, taking actions and redefining their family and labor roles (e.g. Raijan et. al 2003; Handagneu-Sotelo 1992, 1994, 2001; Salazar Parrenas 2000, 2001). These studies suggests that feminization of transnational migration has been prompted by rising global demand for labor in specific female-type domestic jobs and occupations. In the conditions of massive unemployment in Georgia being long time in the economic crisis this global demand for female-specific job acts as a significant incentive for migration of Georgian women implying not less responsibility and obligations for their children than men.

Concerning the number of Georgian labor migrants abroad, it is difficult to estimate it exactly, but by my opinion it is in the frame of 300 thousands or around 8% of total Georgian population. These migrants are characterized as well-educated, mobile, entering and leaving category of Georgian population and present the potential flows of irregular labor force from Georgia to Russia and other post-Soviet States, to Western European countries and USA.

Almost all experts' estimations in Georgia agree that number of Georgian citizens working in Russia is significantly higher than in Western European countries and USA and males prevails among them. There are several reasons for the relatively small flows of recorded migrants from CIS-countries to elsewhere in Europe: language (iron isolation); poor information on opportunities abroad; absence of recruitment companies; and a lack of social networks in host countries (Ivaniuk, 2003) and since the end of 1990s, the trend has been for a re-orientation of labor migration inflows to Russia from regular to irregular forms.

Most emigration studies reveal that emigrants are young and the results in table 1 confirm this finding. Age seems to be a highly migration-selective factor for Georgian migrants despite country of destination: overall the majority of migrants (84.3 %) are in the best age from the point of view of labor efficiency - between 20 and 50 years. The

age composition of the migrants fairly young among migrants to far abroad, those at age 20-29 make up to a third of the total. The average age of migrants consists 39.8 year for respondents who have been for labor at the NIS - territory and 36.7 - for those migrants who have been for labor far abroad.

Whereas demographic characteristics of labor migrants from Georgia are typical for any kind of migration, their social characteristics are not. Most of the labor migrants that we have interviewed were married people (60.8%) with children. According to our findings only 15% of former migrants have less than secondary level of education, over 55% of the labor migrants have university degree and almost 25% more- a college degree. The migrants-women are likely to be even more educated than men.

The element of education can play a prominent role as the theory of adverse selection has made abundantly clear. However, the empirical literature on migration is ambiguous about the importance and strength of selection effects. Borjas (1987, 1991) comes up with strong selection effects, suggesting that primarily the lower skilled migrants are the ones who leave their country and enter the US, whereas Chiquiar and Hanson (2002) find ambiguous effects or effects that contradict Borjas' findings.

Our study clearly shows that labor migrants from Georgia have an extremely high level of education. Educational level of Georgian labor migrants is almost twice higher than those of Georgian population in general. In most cases labor migration does not require such high education and can therefore be characterized as a certain type of "temporary brain waste". Nevertheless, this "brain waste" frequently increases, sometimes significantly, a family's income and can be characterized as typical behavior of a population during a crisis situation.

4.2 Employment abroad: good luck or heavy fate?

Hardly without any exception Georgian citizens go abroad to find a job. This was a prime motivation of migration for well over total sample of persons interviewed.

Georgian migrants going abroad for work usually do not rely on employment mediation, but rely instead on their own not-formal contacts and networks abroad such as friends, relatives and family members. Two-third of our respondents found a job abroad with a help of acquaintances settled there earlier, 21% found it by themselves and only less than 10% of Georgian migrants found a job threw intermediate firm in Georgia or

abroad. In the absence of official mechanisms for legal organization of labor migration of in Georgia these networks replace them.

Social network ties can be an important driving force in triggering emigration. It has been stressed in the literature that network ties across countries are extremely important as they lower the costs of adjustment for potential migrants (see e.g. Massey *et al.*, 1998, Curran and Rivero-Fuentes, 2003). Emigrants often use their relatives in searching for a house and a job in the country of destination and barriers imposed by a foreign language can to some extent be circumvented by using the family network as contacts outside the network are sometimes minimal.

In absence of any bilateral agreements between Georgia and recipient countries the possibilities for organized, legal migration for the purpose of work are rather poor in Georgia, and may remain such for a long time. At the same time the flows of irregular labor migrants from Georgia increase by years. This is the process that does not comprise only Georgians, but involves also the labor markets of recipient countries. It seems that foreign employers are much more interested in a cheap, illegal labor force, in order to avoid both, paying taxes and taking any responsibility in case of any accident.

Georgians reach the foreign country by short-time tourist visas and then overstay visa (our respondents were abroad in average around two years) neglecting the regulations envisaged by the legislation of the host country associated with the duration of stay as well as employment's restrictions.

According to our survey, most of the Georgian migrants abroad (73%) did not hold an official contract with their employer. In a very few cases (2%) the contract was drawn up, but formally on the other person. So two thirds of Georgian migrants worked abroad illegally.

Illegal status of Georgian migrants abroad makes enough preconditions for pressure from the different administrative bodies. According to our survey 14% of former migrants whilst were abroad on the more or less regular base were paying some money (except taxes) to representatives of the local administrations or police. These facts were mainly pronounced by the migrants returned from Russia and other CIS-countries, who also told us that law enforcing bodies and criminals oppress many of illegal migrants in these countries.

Majority of former migrants declared during the interview that they were discriminated by employers in the matters of work compensation. Every tenth respondent mentioned that when he has been working abroad he had at least one or two cases, when he did not receive the compensation for performed work or received less amount of money than was promised.

For the purpose of this paper the key question in the survey was: "Approximately how more did the employer pay to the local citizens for the same kind of job?" Table 2 sheds some light on this topic.

Table 2. The proportional distribution of respondents by comparison between their earnings and salary of local citizens for the same kind of work (in percentage)

| Local citizen was paid for similar work: | Total | NIS-territory | Far abroad | Men | Women |
|--|-------|---------------|------------|------|-------|
| The same amount I was paid | 39.9 | 90.0 | 14.0 | 51.1 | 28.3 |
| 1,5 time more, than me | 17.3 | 4.7 | 23.8 | 12.7 | 22.0 |
| 2 times more | 22.1 | 3.3 | 31.9 | 17.8 | 26.6 |
| 3 times more | 14.2 | 0.9 | 21.1 | 14.3 | 14.1 |
| 4 times or even more | 6.5 | 0.9 | 9.3 | 4.1 | 8.9 |

Evidently there are clear differences between two groups of labor migrants: those who have been in Western European countries and USA and those, who returned from Russia and other CIS-countries: respondents of the first group are much more discriminated by employers in the matters of compensation for work. It is worth noting that women are almost twice more likely to be discriminated in the compensation of work than men. These results confirmed our theoretical expectations from arguments advanced in the general literature on international immigration that immigrant women are more economically disadvantage than immigrant men. Gap in the earnings of Georgian immigrants and local citizens appeared to be the highest in USA: fifths of female respondents had salary in 4 times less and 35% of males earned 3 times less than local citizens for the same kind of work.

The next question that was raised in the questionnaire was related to the size of the average monthly income abroad as it is believed that a high salary abroad is a major push motive of people to migrate.

It seems that North America is the most attractive country for Georgian migrants due to the highest level of earnings there. According to our survey Georgian migrants in

USA earned in average 1410,4 US\$ per month. Even compare with Germany (736 USD\$) it is almost twice more and significantly higher than in Greece (582,1 US\$) and Turkey (457,6 US\$). The monthly earnings in Russia and other countries of NIS-territory are around 607 US\$ per month. It is true that the costs of living also differ by countries, but advantages of some destinations for Georgian labor migrants are obvious.

Consider the gender differences in the earnings we have received the results different from those derived from general literature on international labor migration that immigrant men earn more than women. One may be noted that by our survey more or less significant gender disparities in incomes has been found only for migrants being for work at the NIS- territory: 662 US\$ for men and 471US\$- for women. A number of reasons could be put forward of these stylized fact, for instance gender-distinctive employment structure causes gaps in the salaries among men and women. Data in table below clearly show that male migrants from Georgia in Russia are engaged mainly in own business activity or perform constructional works that usually profit more than service occupations. The second argument could be also that a main motivation for many women to go temporary to Russia or other NIS-territory is an accompanying of their husbands (that is much more difficult to implement in case of other countries). In this case woman does not act as an independent social actor and consequently had fewer possibilities for work abroad.

Data presented in table 3 sheds more light on the spectrum of employment of Georgian labor migrants abroad.

Table 3. Proportional distribution of migrants by sphere of employment (in percentage)

| Sectors | Total | NIS-territory | Far abroad | Men | Women |
|-----------------------------------|-------|---------------|------------|------|-------|
| Agricultural works | 6.6 | 1.4 | 9.2 | 6.6 | 6.5 |
| Building/construction works | 19.6 | 28.3 | 15.1 | 37.7 | 1.0 |
| Babysitter of housekeeper | 25.0 | 1.9 | 37.0 | 0.9 | 49.8 |
| Auxiliary staff in service sector | 16.2 | 11.8 | 18.5 | 12.0 | 20.5 |
| Trade or small business | 18.9 | 44.8 | 5.6 | 25.9 | 11.7 |
| Work at the factory | 4.5 | 2.8 | 5.4 | 6.0 | 2.9 |
| Other work | 8.2 | 8.5 | 8.0 | 10.1 | 6.2 |
| Did not have a work | 1.0 | 0.5 | 1.2 | 0.6 | 1.3 |

Among the returned migrants that have been worked in Russia or other countries of NIS-territory prevails a business activity that comprises also a trade. For sure it is supported by social networks of Georgians in this sector that have been established already before the dissolution of Soviet Union. A potential factor that may explain this conformity of emigration preferences is having relatives abroad or knowing of former migrants. Furthermore networks play a crucial role in actual migration decisions. Because of the system the professional education that was similar on the whole post-Soviet territory and knowledge of Russian language migrants from Georgia can easier satisfy labor market of Russia and manage to get a more qualified work there than that of far abroad. The recent labor migration flows from Georgia to these countries are connected with the employment of migrants on building or works. The employment of Georgians in Western European countries and USA are mainly connected with the domestic works and auxiliary activities. The share of people employed far abroad as domestic workers, which includes those specializing on childcare consists 37% of total number of migrants and this sphere is prevailing among all others. The peculiarities of labor markets near and far abroad actually create the gender differences in labor migration flows from Georgia. While to the NIS- territories go for labor migration mainly men (share of men among former migrant in Russia exceeds 70%), Georgian women are keener to migrate far abroad (up to 60% of respondents). In general, feminization of transnational migration in the world in the recent period has been prompted by rising global demands for labor in specific female-type domestic jobs and occupations.

On the background of general prevalence of migrants on the domestic jobs in all countries far abroad with exception of Turkey, there are also significant number of migrants from Georgia who worked as an auxiliary staff in the service sector in Germany (33%) and Israel (27%). In Greece and Turkey many Georgian migrants (17% and 22%) worked at the building works. At the same time, the dominant sector of employment of Georgians in Greece, after domestic works, is an agricultural sector in which were employed a fifth of those being in Greece. In spite that trade and business are the dominant spheres of labor activity of Georgians at the NIS-territory, this sector seems to be attractive also for those who were in Turkey and Israel (25% and 13% accordingly).

Our study found that there are some people (up to 7% in Greece and Israel) who while being abroad were employed there at the factories.

The majority (65%) of Georgian migrants abroad had a stable job, 31% more were managing from time to time to find a job for period more than 1 month. In spite of fact that migrants are mainly involved in the less-qualified work, the employment abroad require a knowledge of foreign language; a fifth of migrants declared during the interview that were refused by employer due to the insufficient knowledge of language.

As it was mentioned before, one of the most striking features of the labor migration from Georgia is a high level of education and professional qualification of irregular migrants. The work that labor migrants perform abroad actually does not require such type of employee. During our survey only a quarter of respondents mentioned that their labor activity abroad corresponded to their professional qualification.

It should be mentioned that going abroad for work requires from person a necessity to be well informed in the foreign labor market's situation, to possess foreign language's skills and to be flexible in terms of territorial mobility. The well-educated stratum of Georgian society is the social community that meets all these requirements. These people have a high ability to establish contacts in foreign country and adapt the new environments. But on the other hand, only unrealized potentials of this category of population in own country push Georgians to go abroad for seeking a job that mainly does not correspond their previous labor activity in homeland. At the same time, despite of high level of education Georgians are often not adequately qualified to work in particular field in foreign country. Besides illegal status of labor migrants abroad as well as restricted range of available working places create particular requirements of employers at the non-prestige and badly-paid professions. As it was mentioned before, irregular labor migration of Georgian citizens can be characterized as a certain type of "temporary brain waste", as a typical behavior of a population during a crisis situation. Nevertheless, for many Georgians employment abroad, even unskilled, will continue to be the best possibility to earn money for years to come and therefore an illegal labor migration will most probably dominate in the migration flows from Georgia in future also. So, it is expected that all these perspectives will lead to a further depreciation of Georgian human capita in the long run.

4.3 Remittances of Georgian migrants

Our survey has confirmed that the most important motivation of Georgian citizens, who migrate, is related to the socio-economic conditions in Georgia and the need to secure a sufficient income by working abroad. Many people in Georgia nowadays find it hard to secure a sufficient income at the homeland and resort to migration to earn additional money. According to our findings a half of former migrants decided to migrate because that were not able to ensure the daily demands of own family, 35,2% more were motivated to migrate by the wish of earning of additional income.

Economic migrants as a rule support their families and regularly send some money home. Remittances or money, that migrant earn working abroad and then send back to their countries of origin, are among the most visible impacts of the migration phenomenon for migrants-sending countries. Donor countries as a result of export of labor receive a significant amount of hard currency that plays a significant role for countries being in crisis situation.

According to our survey, majority of Georgian migrants (72%) while being abroad were sending money to their families in Georgia. The average amount of remittances varies according to the different countries. The biggest remittances Georgian migrants were sending from USA (298 US\$ per month in average), then is coming Turkey (194 US\$) and Germany (178 US\$). The average size of remittances of Georgian migrants being on CIS-territory consisted 176 US\$.

Table 4. Proportional distribution of Georgian migrants by monthly size of remittances to own families (in percentage)

| Sum in US\$ | Total | NIS-territory | Far abroad | Men | Women |
|--------------|-------|---------------|------------|------|-------|
| Up to 100 | 25.0 | 29.2 | 22.9 | 26.6 | 23.5 |
| 100-200 | 23.1 | 21.2 | 24.1 | 22.8 | 23.5 |
| 200-300 | 10.0 | 9.4 | 10.2 | 11.1 | 8.8 |
| 300-400 | 4.3 | 3.3 | 4.9 | 3.8 | 4.9 |
| 400-500 | 3.7 | 3.3 | 3.9 | 3.2 | 4.2 |
| 500 and more | 3.4 | 1.9 | 4.1 | 3.5 | 3.3 |

It is clear that the amounts of remittances are related to the incomes of migrants abroad. Except of Turkey, countries where Georgian migrants enjoy higher salaries are in the list of countries where migrants extended greater financial support to the household

members. At the same time, the living costs in the countries of destination also play a significant role in the migrants' remittances. Turkey is exactly such a case where, in spite of comparably low salaries, living costs are less and Georgian migrants manage to help more significantly to family's members.

The average amount of remittances according to our survey composed 176 US\$ per month for total sample of migrants, who were sending money to their families in Georgia. This is a sum that may provide families in Georgia with the bare subsistence only. But these remittances allow many families in Georgia to survive on the background of massive unemployment and lowest level of local incomes in the country.

In the scientific literature on migration the issues of gender differences in migrants' remittances are under a wide discussion. Actually, our study did not show any significant differences in remittances between male and female migrants among Georgians. The average amount of remittances composed by our study 178.2 US\$ for women and 190.2 US\$ for men. Under the assumption that living costs abroad are similar for men and women, the existing gender difference in remittances might be attributed to the minor (with an exception of Russia) gap in earnings between men and women. In generally, while Georgian men send back to the households about 23% of their earnings abroad, women - 26%.

Aside the systematic supporting of families in Georgia, labor migrants try to make some saving in the period of migration. Our study revealed many cases when migrants did not send money to families in Georgia because preferred to save them and bring to Georgia when go back. According to our survey, 63% of interviewed managed to make savings while being abroad.

Evaluating the impact of migration on the economical position of families of labor migrants we have asked to former migrants, at what extent the economic position of their families has been improved thanks to their migration. According to our finding, 65% of former migrants have improved an economic position of their family and the half of them has managed to improve it a lot.

It seems that in many present cases, migration becomes the main activity and the main source of income for a significant portion of the Georgian population. Taking into consideration that up to 7-8% of households in Georgia currently have at least one

member being abroad for migration, it is obvious that economic inputs of labor migration extremely significant and they cannot be neglected in the analysis of social and economic situation of Georgia.

5. Discussion

The decision of migrate is formed by person under the influence of specific external circumstances; by the individuals, migration is perceived as a best solution to the existing problems. The migration literature agrees on several key factors that motivate individual decisions to move: human capital investments, socioeconomic status, familiar considerations, social networks and local opportunities in place of origin relative to opportunities abroad (Massey, 1999; Massey et al., 1993). The classical theories on migration usually imply migrants as social actors involved in the global process of integration into recipient society. Presented paper considers the case of return migrants as category of people appeared in the crisis situation in own country and were not able to find any other solution except of illegal employment abroad. Return migrants are an interesting touchstone as their experience may lend support to expectations about the net gains of migration. One may argue that their experience abroad may affect their willingness to move abroad again. Scholarly researches on other countries point out that return migrants are different compared to their fellow countrymen who have never made a move abroad. Return migrants are more likely to have renewed emigration intentions.

In our study we were asking for respondents to provide us with information about the family members that are going to leave Georgia in the nearest six months (including themselves). Results showed that a fifth of former migrants plan to go abroad again in the nearest 6 months; 10% more mentioned during the interview that other family members plan to go abroad and around 3 % - that whole family is leaving Georgia in the nearest six months.

Thus, in whole more than a third of interviewed mentioned that in the nearest six month at least one member of their family is leaving Georgia. It should be mentioned that according to the migration surveys, based on the universal sample of Georgian

households, the share of those families where at least one person is going abroad in the nearest six months in generally does not exceed 4%.

Thus, according to our findings, a previous migration experience is a significant factor for future migration, positively correlating with the incentive to migrate not former migrants only but also their family members. Families that have at least one former migrant are more likely to be involved in migratory processes again; the presence of the "experienced" migrant is a factor influencing on migration decision taken by Georgians households and positively increases the chances for other household members to migrate. So, migratory experience cumulated *via* trips made by various household members, may be considered not only as a consequence of migration, but also as an important determinant of potential labor migration from Georgia.

Indeed, an increasing number of Georgian households are becoming heavily dependent on the flows of migrants' remittances for economic survival. But on the other hand, a job that is performed by Georgian migrants abroad mainly does not correspond to their level of education and previous labor activity in homeland. Only unrealized potentials of Georgians in own country push people to go abroad for temporary labor migration. Our survey confirmed that economic considerations are dominant among irregular migrants from Georgia. Only comparable big profits along with very poor employment opportunities in Georgia force people to continue migrating. Respondents were asked during the interview where would they prefer to live permanently, in Georgia or abroad, if suppose that economic situation in Georgia is better. The absolute majority (up to 90%) of respondents indicated Georgia.

Georgia is undergoing a process of serious transition. In such conditions temporary labor migration of the population became one of the active forms of socialization, adaptation and survival. The general understanding in society is that due to the present social-economic situation in the country in the nearest future many Georgians will be still keen to go abroad for work, labor migration will continue to be the best possibility to earn money for years to come and therefore an irregular labor migration will most probably dominate in the future migration flows also. So, it is expected that all these perspectives will lead to a further depreciation of Georgian human capita in the long run.

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