

The Impact of Migration on the Development of Economy and Demography of Georgia in the Period of Globalization

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The impact of labour emigration on the demographic and economic development of Georgia against the background of general demographic and migration development was analysed. We consider the role of remittances from labour emigration in increasing the resources necessary for demographic growth and mitigating the demographic crisis in the country. The changes in the demographic behaviour of the Georgian citizens emigrating abroad are examined. It requires a special in-depth study. The approximate model of the demographic behaviour on labour emigration taking into account various studies was determined. Basing on this, the demographic losses are estimated. © 2023 Bull. Georg. Natl. Acad. Sci.

migration, emigration, Georgia, remittances

The acute socio-economic and political crisis developed in Georgia in the post-Soviet period, war conflicts had a sharp impact on internal and external migration processes. Unfortunately, the catastrophic reduction of resources necessary for demographic growth has established a tendency of population reduction. Emigration processes with unnatural intensity, including labor emigration, became an important contributing factor to this. These trends will be further exacerbated by the deepening global scale of emigration. Accelerating the development of the national economy and creating new jobs with a decent salary, which can be achieved primarily through the development of

the country's real sector, should play an important role in slowing down these trends [1-4].

It should be noted that at the modern stage of globalization, the rise of the world economy was hindered by the Covid-pandemic processes. In 2020, compared to the previous year, the global economy was cut by more than \$2.5 trillion, which is larger than the economies of Canada, Italy, and Russia taken separately. In the same period, naturally, the international migration flows were also drastically interrupted. However, in the post-pandemic period, both the intensification of migratory streams and the rise of the world economy are noticeable. In particular, in 2022, the

volume of the world's total GDP exceeded \$100 trillion for the first time (in 2000=\$33.85 trillion) (worldbank.org/indicator 08.08.2023).

The rise of the global economy was accompanied by the revitalization of migration: in 2022, the number of international migrants accounted for 281 million (in 2000 – 173 million – 2.8% of the population) (3.6% of the world population), of which 2/3 are labor migrants (World Migration Report, 2022). In addition, the total personal transfers in the world in 2022 amounted to \$758.95 billion (in 2000 – \$121.77 billion) 0.8% of the world's total GDP (data.worldbank.org/indicator 09.09.2023).

In addition, in 2020 (1993=100), the world population increased by 43%, and against this background, the population of Georgia decreased by almost ¼. In neighboring countries of Georgia, this rate was observed: increase in Azerbaijan (36%), Turkey (49%); decrease in the Russian Federation (3.3%) and Armenia (19.6%) (Gaang.: worldbank.org/indicator 09.08.2023).

Finally, the following global trends emerged: first, world personal (including remittances) money transfers have been growing systematically, including in the conditions of the Covid-pandemic, and second, the growth rate of world total remittances exceeds the growth rate of world total GDP.

General Analysis

During the Covid-pandemic period in Georgia: in 2020 (compared to the previous year), the volume of GDP decreased by \$1.63 billion; migration processes were interrupted; personal money transfers (including remittances) have increased. In the post-pandemic period, the growth rates of the Georgian economy are fixed in double digits. Against this background, migration has become more intensified in the country, especially labor migration (worldbank.org/indicator 08.08.2023) [2,3,5,6]. In this paper, we will focus on labor migration in the background of analyzing new developments and present the results of the survey.

Despite many difficulties of emigration, its impact on the economy of Georgia is manifold. Remittances from labor immigrants to their homeland have become an important source of poverty reduction in Georgia. Its impact on small business development is positive. The level of unemployment in Georgia has decreased and there have been positive structural changes in the supply-demand balance in the labor market. Harmonization of economic and migration policies envisages many serious transformations, promotion of repatriation of emigrants [7-13].

In the first years of the collapse of the USSR and the restoration of Georgia's independence from former USSR countries, including the breaking of old economic ties with Russia, the complex and contradictory process of forming market relations, the isolationist policy implemented by Russia, artificially inspired ethno-political conflicts, the severe situation of the civil war had a direct impact on the country's economy. Economic collapse, in turn created a deep demographic depression and powerful emigration waves. Added to this was the occupation of a significant part of the territory of Georgia carried out by Russia, the Russian-Georgian war, which aggravated the situation even more. The northern border was closed and the southern border with Turkey was completely opened. This had a special impact on the quality of socio-economic development of internal regions of Georgia, on the internal ethno-regional situation of the country and, in general, on external and internal migration processes, on the migration behavior of the population of mono- and poly-ethnic demoregions, which should be the subject of further research. However, unfortunately, statistical materials are insufficient for a complete analysis of the migration situation in Georgia.

It is true that the labor market of Georgia is losing highly mobile, high-quality labor force in the form of labor emigration, as well as opportunities for the production of additional domestic products in the country. This cannot be compensated by the

reduction of the number of unemployed in the internal regional markets and the correction of the asymmetric ratio between supply and demand to some extent. On the other hand, personal remittances, including emigrants' remittances, play special attention as it assists to facilitate to lighten the social situation (Table 1).

Remittances are an important source of income for emigrant families, which they spend mainly on consumer goods and thus contribute to the strengthening of the national currency. In general, personal money transfers play a certain role in the development of small businesses, in the economic growth of Georgia, and they are represented by a considerable share in the country's GDP (Table 2) [4, 13-18].

If we compare the countries of the South Caucasus, we can see that personal money transfers play an important role in the economy of Armenia, which cannot be said about Azerbaijan (Table 3).

At the contemporary stage, population emigration in Georgia is considered as one of the most acute social problems. The general crisis of the 1990s radically changed the territorial mobility of the country's population. In the conditions of economic stagnation, labor emigration has become one of the ways of maintaining the physical existence of the population of Georgia. At the same time, labor emigration has aggravated the already burdened social existence, which is primarily related to separation from family, relatives and homeland, inappropriate employment of professions and qualifications, extremely discriminatory wages, and often – unforeseen difficulties of illegal emigration.

As a result of population emigration, in 2022, compared to 1993, the population of Georgia and Armenia decreased by 24.5% and 20%, respectively, while the population of Azerbaijan and the world increased by 36% and 43%, respectively

Table 1. Personal remittances, received (current US\$) in Georgia

2000	2003	2012	2014	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
\$205.9 million	\$248.5 million	\$1.77 billion	\$1.99 billion	\$2.03 billion	\$1.29 billion	\$2.11 billion	\$2.64 billion	\$4.1 billion

Calculated: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/BX.TRF.PWKR.CD.DT?locations=GE> 09.08.2023.

Table 2. Personal remittances, received (% of GDP) in Georgia

2000	2003	2012	2014	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
6.7	6.2	10.7	11.3	11.6	12.9	13.3	14.2	16.7

Calculated.: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/BX.TRF.PWKR.DT.GD.ZS?locations=GE> 09.08.2023.

Table 3. Personal remittances, received (% of GDP) in Georgia, Azerbaijan, Armenia

	2000	2003	2012	2014	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Georgia	6.7	6.2	10.7	11.3	11.6	12.9	13.3	14.2	16.7
Azerbaijan	1.1	2.1	2.9	2.5	2.6	2.6	3.3	2.8	5.0
Armenia	9.5	12.0	18.0	17.9	11.9	11.2	10.5	11.2	10.4

Calculated.: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/BX.TRF.PWKR.DT.GD.ZS?locations=AM-AZ-GE> 09.08.2023.

Table 4. Migration in Georgia

	2003	2012	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Immigrant	48 338	69 063	88 152	96 864	89 996	74 008	179 778
Emigrant	74 714	90 584	98 935	105 107	74 264	99 974	125 269
Migration balance	- 26 376	-21 521	-10 783	-8 243	15 732	-25 966	54 509

<https://www.geostat.ge/ka/modules/categories/322/migratsia> 09.08.2023.

(Gang.: world bank. org/indicator 09.08.2023). At the same time, the demographic aging of the population of Georgia accelerated during the mentioned period, the ethno-demographic structure both as a whole and in separate regions changed significantly. Although the intensity of stationary emigration has slowed down in recent years.

Another issue – about the people leaving and entering Georgia and the migration balance (Table 4).

According to the factual data, the migration balance of Georgia is decreasing, which means that the number of people leaving the country and entering the country is also increasing. The migration balance is decreasing. Moreover, in the post-pandemic period twice (2020 and 2022), a positive migration balance was recorded, which means that along with the increase in the number of the (emigrant) population leaving the country, the number of the (immigrant) population entering the country increased. This issue requires careful regulation by the government.

In the migration flows of a normal character, youth always stood out with its characteristic mobility. In general, it is believed that about two thirds of migration flows are youth – up to the age of 30. This is the part of the population that receives education, starts or looks for a job, looks for its own place for its own career, creates a family. Students and youth is the main part of migration flows. The mechanical mobility of the population above the age group of 30-35 decreases sharply. People who already have their own careers, families, and their children are in school, are less likely to move from their places of residence. This is the most stable part of population by migration mobility. In the following migration flows, the specific share of the population of pre-retirement and retirement age increases slightly, which is due to the fact that the population of this category moves to live with their children both inside and outside the country.

Survey Results

In order to study the socio-demographic situation of students and youth in Georgia, we conducted a sociological survey, which covered various demographic problems. We paid special attention to studying the potential migration of students and youth. Accordingly, more than 200 respondents were asked the following questions: “Which family member has gone abroad,” “If he/she has gone, in which country,” “How many years has he been abroad,” “How is he treated in that country,” “What problems have been solved with the material help by relatives being abroad,” “Do you want to leave Georgia permanently or temporarily,” “If you want, to which country,” “If possible, indicate the reason for wanting to leave.”

From the materials obtained from the research it was revealed, that the socio-economic situation created in our country, scarcity of employment, uncertainty about their future pushes a part of students and youth to migrate abroad.

According to the interviewed respondents, the father (22%) goes abroad in most cases of their family members. Since the direction and intensity of potential migration depends to a certain extent on the family members of migrants who went to different countries and the diaspora established there, in our research we studied the distribution of the family members of the respondents by country, their demographic characteristics, the duration of their stay abroad and their adaptation conditions.

The research also confirmed that the family members of the respondents are mostly in the Russian Federation (Table 5). It is true that a deep economic crisis developed in Russia after the collapse of the USSR, but the complete destruction of the economy, as experienced by Georgia, did not happen there. Therefore, the difference in the remuneration of the labor force between Russia and Georgia increased, which was manifested by the increase in migration mobility and intensive labor emigration to Russia. Russia's share is especially large in the part that left relatively early.

Table 5. Distribution (%) of those who went to work (temporarily) by sex and age

	Russia	USA	Turkey	Greece	Germany	Other	Total (%)
Males							
15-29	50.00%	5.7.0%		33.3%	16.7%		100.0%
30-39	42.86%			28.57%	28.57%		100.0%
40 and over	100.0%			0.0%	0.0%		100.0%
Total	63.16%	1.0%		21.05%	15.79%		100.0%
Females							
15-29	29.41%	11.76%	5.88%	41.18%	11.76%		100.0%
30-39	66.67%	0.0%	6.67%	6.67%	20.00%		100.0%
40 and over	42.86%	9.52%	28.57%	0.0%	14.29%	4.76%	100.0%
Total	45.28%	7.55%	15.09%	15.09%	15.09%	1.89%	100.0%

It should be noted that there is age differentiation in the directions of migration flows. So, for example, most of the family members aged 40 and over left for Russia, while to Greece and Germany the younger population is gone. In addition, the goal of young people who went to the USA and Germany is to combine studies with employment.

Large contingent who went to work in Russia is due to relatively close historical ties, better knowledge of Russian than other foreign languages, existence of many relatives and friends, geographical proximity, cheap transportation and high demand for labor force in the Russian labor market. Russia's huge natural production potential will always create a wide range of demand for labor in local labor markets. It is conceivable that the Russian labor market will be a place of employment of Georgian labor resources in the form of labor emigration in the future.

Labor migration towards Europe and the USA is gradually becoming more intensive. The youth vigorously took up the study of English and German languages, our small "colonies" appeared abroad, and labor emigration gradually moved to the West. Employment abroad became more lucrative. At the same time one of the serious drawbacks of population emigration from Georgia is its illegality.

The size of migration flows to Greece is partially conditioned by the specificity of demand

on labor force in the labor market of this country: in the secondary labor market there is a great demand on maids on condition of rather high remuneration. Through our research it was also found that respondents' family members at the age of 15-29 who were abroad 41.2% were in Greece.

Germany is very attractive country for all kinds of Georgian migrants. It can be a businessman or a student who goes to study; or a fortune-seeker attracted by the prosperity of this country. The relatively large flow of those who went to Germany can be explained by the fact that many immigrants manage to move to other Schengen countries after staying in Germany for a certain period of time.

Thus, the main labor emigration country for Georgia's population still remains Russia, though the share of western countries gradually grows noticeably. It should be noted here that new destination countries of immigration (Portugal, Spain, England, Ireland, Italy, Australia, Poland, Belgium) emerged in recent years for Georgian labor migratory streams, though their share is so far low.

At present the share of female emigrants in the total migratory streams is noticeably high. The increase of females share in migratory processes is also conditioned by the fact that the demand particularly increased on female labor force (maids, nurses, cleaners and other low-skilled jobs in the service sphere), on the other hand Georgian women were forced to go abroad to make a living and

maintain their families living in Georgia. Unfortunately, some of them fell prey to traffickers. Our research doesn't provide information about this because the respondents don't possess such kind of information or they don't disclose such information about their family members' employment in the sex industry or sex-related services because public opinion on prostitution is very negative in our country.

As our research shows, emigration from Georgia is quite strong. The surveyed respondents indicated that 52.9% of their family members have been abroad for 5 or more years. The potential of return migration to Georgia is still weak, so we should not expect significant changes in the intensity of population emigration in the near future. This is caused by the shortage of decent paying jobs in Georgia, which will take time to overcome. In the respondents responses there are provided conditions in which their family members would return to Georgia but it is impossible to create such conditions in a short period of time. These conditions for their return are the following: highly paid employment, if their family members get prestigious jobs, when they have earned the amount of money to purchase homes, when they have saved the amount of money to start their own business, if life conditions and living standards will improve in Georgia and so on.

Respondents responses to the question how their family members adapted to the new labor conditions showed that the attitude towards 50.0% of their male family members is good, towards 31.3% – common, and 6.25% are treated badly. The attitude towards 48.0% of females is good and towards 52.0% – common.

The degree of adaptation of immigrants to their activities and living environment, the effectiveness of emigration, the socio-economic and legal status of immigrants significantly depends on the reasons for emigration, demographic, professional-qualified structure, ways and methods of emigration, its organizational forms, the length of stay abroad, the attitude towards them in the receiving countries.

The research shows that a contingent with a high level of education has gone abroad from Georgia. 73.7% of men and 66.7% of women had higher and incomplete higher education. Greater ability to contact and adapt to the foreign environment, as well as reducing the demand for specialists in the internal labor market of Georgia, leads to an increase in their territorial mobility and, in general, a high emigration potential.

There is a complete mismatch between the profession and employment in the host country. During the survey of the respondents family members, unfortunately, it was not possible to obtain information about which country the people with which educational status are predominantly. It should be assumed that a large number of those who had higher education went to work in distant foreign countries.

Thus, emigration of Georgian population is characterized by sharp selectivity. A contingent with higher educational potential leaves Georgia, which qualitatively worsens the labor resources of our country. On the other hand, subsequently, the human capital of the emigrants is not properly realized in the international labor market.

However, labor emigration has contributed to the segmentation of Western labor markets into primary and secondary markets. In these countries, labor immigration has allowed the local labor force to be redistributed and entrenched in primary labor markets with high wages and good working conditions. And the secondary market with harsh, harmful working conditions and, in general, non-prestigious jobs, therefore with low wages, was left to labor immigrants, especially illegal ones due to their high degree of exploitation and obvious discrimination in wages.

As mentioned above, most of the remittances of labor immigrants are used to meet the primary needs of the families remaining in Georgia. For example, 31.15% of respondents solved the problem of food and clothing with the material help

of relatives abroad, 24.59% – housing conditions; 18.03% did not solve any problem.

Thus, the importance of remittances of labor immigrants from abroad for Georgia is inestimable. Remittances supplement the budget of the remaining families to the subsistence minimum and even exceed it. At the same time, we should not forget that the labor emigrants satisfy their personal requirements as well.

It is a generally known fact that the presence of family members in emigration, the degree of their adaptation, has a significant impact on the emigration disposition of the family members remaining in the homeland. Through our research it was found that emigration potential of students and youth in Georgia is rather high and it coincides with the spectrum of actual migration directions.

Most of the interviewed men and women want to go abroad permanently or temporarily to the USA and Germany (Table 6).

The percentage distribution of the interviewed men according to the countries where they want to go permanently is as follows: USA (16.7%),

Greece (8.3%), Germany (33.3%), Turkey (8.3%), Russia (0.0%), other countries (33.3%); And women – Russia (22.2%), USA (29.8%), Germany (16.7%), other countries (22.2%). It should be noted here that the intensity of emigration decreased in the direction of Russia and increased in the direction of Western Europe and the USA.

It should be noted that the share of women who want to go to the USA permanently is quite high. In our opinion, this is due to the ample employment opportunities for women in this country, the specificity of employment and high wages. From the percentage of temporary travelers abroad, it can be seen that the main countries of immigration here are the USA and Germany.

The main reasons for the departure of potential immigrants from Georgia are also of economic nature. Through the survey it was also found that 35.3% of the interviewed men and 31.6% of the women want to go abroad permanently to improve their financial situation; Going to study was indicated by 29.4% of men and 20.0% of women (Table 7).

Table 6. Distribution of the surveyed by the countries where they want to go to (%)

	Country	Permanently		Temporarily	
		males	females	males	females
1	Russia	0	10.22	5.32	6.54
2	USA	16.67	38.89	29.79	23.53
3	Turkey	8.33	0	0	0.65
4	Greece	8.33	0	5.32	7.84
5	Germany	33.33	16.67	25.53	29.41
6	Other	33.33	22.26	34.04	32.03
	Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table 7. Distribution of the surveyed who wants to go abroad permanently or temporarily by the reasons of departure (%)

	Reason for departure	Permanently		Temporarily	
		males	females	Males	Females
1	Material conditions	35.29	31.58	26.13	8.24
2	Housing conditions	5.88	10.53	0.9	1.1
3	Political situation in the country	0	5.26	1.8	1.65
4	Education	29.41	21.05	29.73	41.76
5	Reunification with family members	0	0	0.9	3.3
6	To explore other countries	23.53	21.05	36.94	39.56
7	Other	5.88	10.53	3.6	4.4
	Total	100	100	100	100

Thus, both actual and potential emigration from Georgia is mainly of a forced nature, and this compulsion is related to the worsening of the severe socio-economic conditions in the country. If such a situation is maintained for a long time, the number of people who want to leave Georgia forever will increase.

This once again confirms the fact that the improvement of the economic situation in Georgia, the acceleration of development and implementation of a correct and complete socio-economic policy is an urgent task. At the same time, the migration policy strategy of Georgia should be defined, which should be based on the requirements of the development of the country and the better use of the labor potential of its population.

The impact of students and youth emigration on the demographic potential of Georgia should be considered from two sides. On the one hand, quite a large mass of students and youth is in the active fertile age, and the birth rate in this contingent during the emigration period is extremely low, which significantly worsens the population reproduction indicators of Georgia during the demographic crisis. On the other hand, immigrants'

remittances partially fill the resources needed for demographic growth and even play a positive role in this regard. In addition, the knowledge gained by the students and youth in the West and the values brought from the Western countries will play a big role in the future socio-economic and cultural development of Georgia.

Conclusion

Thus, the current situation requires the authorities to implement an appropriate migration policy. This should be done through a more extensive and comprehensive study of population emigration, the results of which will be the basis for the development of a migration policy strategy and a specific mechanism for regulation. The most important task is the legalization of labor emigration and preparation of both the legal framework and organizational conditions for this, the signing of an interstate agreement on labor emigration and thereby increasing the effectiveness of migration, thus regulating not only population migration, but also solving many acute social problems.

ეკონომიკა

მიგრაციის გავლენა საქართველოს დემოგრაფიულ-ეკონომიკურ განვითარებაზე გლობალიზაციის პერიოდში

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წინამდებარე ნაშრომში მოცემულია საერთო დემოგრაფიული და მიგრაციული განვითარების ფონზე გამოკვლეული შრომითი ემიგრაციის გავლენა საქართველოს დემოგრაფიულ და ეკონომიკურ განვითარებაზე. გათვალისწინებულ იქნა შრომითი ემიგრაციის გზავნილების როლი დემოგრაფიული ზრდისათვის აუცილებელი რესურსების მატებაში, დემოგრაფიული კრიზისის შერბილებაში. განხილულია, უცხოეთში შრომით ემიგრაციაში მყოფი საქართველოს მოქალაქეების დემოგრაფიული ქცევის ცვლილებები, რომელსაც ღრმა, საფუძვლიანი შესწავლა სჭირდება. სხვადასხვა კვლევის გათვალისწინებით დადგინდა დემოგრაფიული ქცევის მიახლოებითი მოდელი შრომითი ემიგრაციის შესახებ. აქედან გამომდინარე, შეფასდა დემოგრაფიული დანაკარგები.

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