ევროკავშირი
საქართველოსთვის

The European Union for Georgia

ENIGMMA 2 CASE STUDY: GEORGIAN DIASPORA IN GREECE, ITALY AND SPAIN

A Study on the Profile of Georgian Diaspora
and Migrant Communities in Three Target Countries

July 2019

ICMPD
International Centre for
Migration Policy Development

ENIGMMA
Putting the pieces together
to respond effectively to migration challenges

Acknowledgements

The contents of this Publication are the sole responsibility of ICMPD

Contents

List of Abbreviations

AIDA	Asylum Information Database
CRETE	Conference on Research on Economic Theory and Econometrics
EASO	European Asylum Support Office
EC	European Commission
EMN	European Migration Network
ENI	European Neighbourhood Instrument
ENIGMMA	Enhancing Georgia's Migration Management
ENIGMMA 2	Sustaining Migration Management in Georgia
ERGEM	Enhancing the Role of Georgian Migrants at Home
ES	Spain
EU	European Union
EUROSTAT	European Statistics
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
GCIE	General Council of Italians Abroad
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GE	Georgia
GEOSTAT	National Statistics Office of Georgia
GR	Greece
GSGA	General Secretariat for Greeks Abroad
ICMPD	International Centre for Migration Policy Development
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IO	International Organisation
IOM	International Organization for Migration
ISTAT	National Institute of Statistics of Italy
IT	Italy
KEM	Migrant Integration Centre in Athens, Greece
MB	Member States
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia
MIA	Ministry of Interior Affairs of Georgia
MPC	Migration Policy Centre
MRA	Ministry of Refugees and Accommodation of Georgia
NBG	National Bank of Georgia
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PP	Popular Party in Span
PSDA	Public Service Development Agency of the Ministry of Justice of Georgia
SCMI	Secretariat of the State Commission for Migration Issues
SGIE	Secretary General of Immigration and Emigration of Spain
UK	United Kingdom
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
USA	United States of America

Introduction

The "Sustaining Migration Management in Georgia" (ENIGMMA 2) project is funded by the EU-Georgia Financing Agreement, signed in May 2017 within the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) 2016 Technical Cooperation Facility II Programme. The project broadly builds on the results of previous activities of the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) in Georgia, including the recently implemented EU-funded "Enhancing Georgia's Migration Management" (ENIGMMA) project which supported the Government of Georgia in the implementation of migration-related areas of the Visa dialogue between the European Union and Georgia.

The ENIGMMA 2 project runs from September 2017 to November 2020. It is implemented by ICMPD and the State Commission on Migration Issues (SCMI) of Georgia in close cooperation with the EU MS experts.

The overall objective of the ENIGMMA 2 project is to contribute to the sustainable enhancement of the mobility and people-to-people contacts between the EU and Georgia. The action seeks to achieve the overall objective by addressing identified and possible migration-related risks of visa liberalisation regime in Georgia and the EU Member States, and supporting the Government of Georgia in the implementation as well as monitoring and evaluation of the impact of Migration Strategy and by implementing joint measures.

Component 2 of the project focuses on joint Georgia's and EU MS response measures to avoid and/or minimise the negative impact of visa liberalisation on the one hand; and on the other hand – to maximise possible positive effect of increased Georgian citizens mobility. While implementing these measures, the focus is directed inter alia to increased cooperation with the relevant institutions of the EU MS in order to develop legal channels for regularisation of Georgian migrants in irregular situation and promote legal migration. Further, the activities of this component are directed at protection of social and other rights of Georgian migrants living abroad, optimisation of existing legal information in destination countries and ensuring the identification of needs of Georgian diaspora and migrant communities in selected EU Member States. Implementation of all of these activities requires active involvement of the Department for Relations with Diaspora at MFA and the SCMI Secretariat. The needs analysis for this study was conducted in the three target EU Member States identified according to the volume and size of the Georgian diaspora: Greece, Italy and Spain. In order to collect information from the diaspora and migrant communities, the project team implemented assessment missions in the three countries and also established professional contacts with the representatives of the national authorities responsible for migration policy development. The delegation of missions consisted of representatives from the Department for Relations with Diaspora, SCMI Secretariat and ICMPD ENIGMMA 2 project team.

This report follows the following structure:

- **Section 1** provides an overview of national migration policies, legislative framework and institutional structure of the target EU MS;
- **Section 2** starts with migration outlook of Georgia and further describes the issues related to diaspora policy development and implementation in Georgia;
- **Section 3** is dedicated to the profile of Georgian diaspora and migrant communities in three destination EU MS mainly based on outcomes of the assessment missions to these countries;

- The analysis of needs of Georgian migrants in all three destination countries and subsequent conclusions and recommendations are provided in the **Section 4** of the report;
- Finally, the annexes cover the guidelines of the focus group discussion, as well as the templates of the interviews.

Research Methodology

This study draws on desk research and empirical data collected during the assessment missions in Greece, Italy and Spain carried out in March-June, 2018 by ICMPD ENIGMMA 2 project team, mainly by means of focus group discussions and interviews. Desk research was conducted on the first stage of implementation and included the review of academic literature, reports and statistical data on migration outlook of Georgia. As a result, three EU Member States that are host to large numbers of Georgian migrants were identified: Greece, Italy and Spain.

For the empirical data, semi-structured in-depth interviews were held with the Georgian diaspora members, representatives of diaspora organisations, Georgian diplomatic representations abroad, representatives of national state institutions responsible for migration policy formation in Greece, Italy and Spain and representatives of IO/NGOs and academic institutions. In addition, focus-group discussions with Georgian diaspora members, representatives of diaspora organisations and Georgian diplomatic representations abroad were organised during the assessment missions. Interviews with diaspora members and Georgian diplomatic representations were held in Georgian language. The interviews with other stakeholders were conducted in English. In addition, certain limitations should be mentioned, such as, the number of organisations interviewed per country varies, due to the fact that there are more organisations established and active in Athens compared to Madrid, where there are only few registered ones, therefore, it was not possible to interview an equal number of diaspora members. Hence, this also concludes that this report provides necessary directions for better understanding of Georgian diaspora profile.

The number of interviews conducted in the three target EU MS:

Target countries	Georgian diaspora members	Georgian diplomatic representations	Representatives of National State Institutions	Local IO/NGOs and academia representatives
Greece	10 interviews	2 interviews	2 interviews	4 interviews
Italy	8 interviews	2 interviews	2 interviews	2 interviews
Spain	4 interviews	2 interviews	2 interviews	1 interview

A similar methodology was used for data collection in all three countries and a common set of guidelines was developed throughout all the semi-structured interviews outlining the main questions to be posed and the data to be sought. The questions were aimed at: drawing the profile and identifying the needs of Georgian diaspora, the role of Georgian diaspora organisations (and their potential impact) in the three destination countries, links with Georgian state institutions and national authorities in destination countries and awareness and impact of visa-free travel between the EU and Georgia.

Three focus group discussions were organised as half-day events (one in each country), each with approximately ten Georgian diaspora organisation representatives and active diaspora members. In Spain, the participants came from Barcelona, Alicante, Valencia and Madrid; in Greece from Thessaloniki and Athens; and in Italy from Bari, Cagliari, Florence and Rome. The selection of the cities involved in the research activities was determined by the number of Georgian migrants residing there and number of officially registered diaspora organisations. The topics of discussion included

the collection and analysis of information on diaspora and migrant communities, the needs and challenges of these communities in the researched countries and the potential of the diaspora to act as information agents in terms of awareness raising on the issues related to visa-free movement, migration legislation and similar areas.

SECTION 1. Migration Frameworks in Destination Countries

This section provides an overview of the legal and practical aspects of migration management in three target countries. The analysis of existing policies in terms of migration, diaspora and integration legislation gives opportunity for better understanding the context of destination countries and supports placing the needs of Georgian diaspora and migrant communities in the right framework.

In the last several years Europe has experienced an increased influx of mixed migration flows reaching its peaks in 2015 and 2016 (estimated at 1.3 million and 1.2 million asylum applications respectively submitted in the EU MS). It also should be noted that, in the 1990s more than half of asylum seekers originated from Europe. In the modern day, asylum seekers to Europe mainly come from conflict zones in the Middle East, Asia and Africa[1].

The variation in composition and number of migrants has resulted in changes in migration legislation and policy discourse on both EU and EU MS levels, which consequently led to stricter regulation of immigration in some European Member States.

1.1. Greece

The Hellenic Republic has turned into a gateway for refugees into the European Union. According to the UNHCR, more than 1 million refugees arrived in Greece in 2015 – 2016, with the number of refugees at more than 60,000 in May 2018[2]. Interestingly enough, Greece was in general seen as a country of emigration, during the 19th and 20th centuries, mostly to the United States and only during the 1990s did it become a country of destination, receiving migrants from Eastern European countries after the collapse of the Soviet Union[3]. Whereas since 2015, Greece has been dealing with deeply challenging issues related to its border control, asylum applications, human rights provision for the migrants in the country as well as integration measures for the permanent residents inside the country.

Greece carries out national population censuses once every ten years. The national census conducted in 2001 recorded 762,000 foreigners and 914,000 in 2011 (foreigners accounted 8% of total population and 9% in 2001 and 2011 respectively). These numbers only reflect the officially registered foreigners, thus in reality the number should be higher.

---

[1] (Gehrke & Pluim, 2018)
[2] (UNHCR, 2018)
[3] (Migration Policy Institute, 2012)

Table 1. Number of Foreign Citizens in Greece by Top Countries and Regions of Origin, 2011[4]

Region/Country	Number of Foreign Born
EUROPE	663,095
Albania	480,851
Bulgaria	75,917
Romania	46,524
Georgia	27,407
Ukraine	17,008
United Kingdom	15,388
AFRICA	
Egypt	10,455
ASIA	56,587
Pakistan	34,178
India	11,333
Bangladesh	11,076

The largest share of foreign citizens residing in Greece (52.7%) has Albanian, followed by Bulgarian (8.3%), Romanian (5.1%), Pakistani (3.7%) and 3.0% Georgian citizenship. Greece is also the country that accommodates the largest share of Georgian migrants in the European Union.

The Greek immigration legislation dates to 1920s that was of a quite restrictive nature. With the great influx of Albanians in 1991, the Greek Government took harsher measures and only in the late 1990s had the Government started working on reforming its migration policy. There were several regularisation programmes carried out between 1997 and 2008 granting the temporary legal status to migrants[5]:

Third Regularisation Law 2910/2001 — **2001**

Fifth Regularisation Law 3536/2007 — **2007**

1997-8 — First and Second Regularisations 'White & Green Cards'

2005 — Fourth Regularisation Law 3386/2005

---
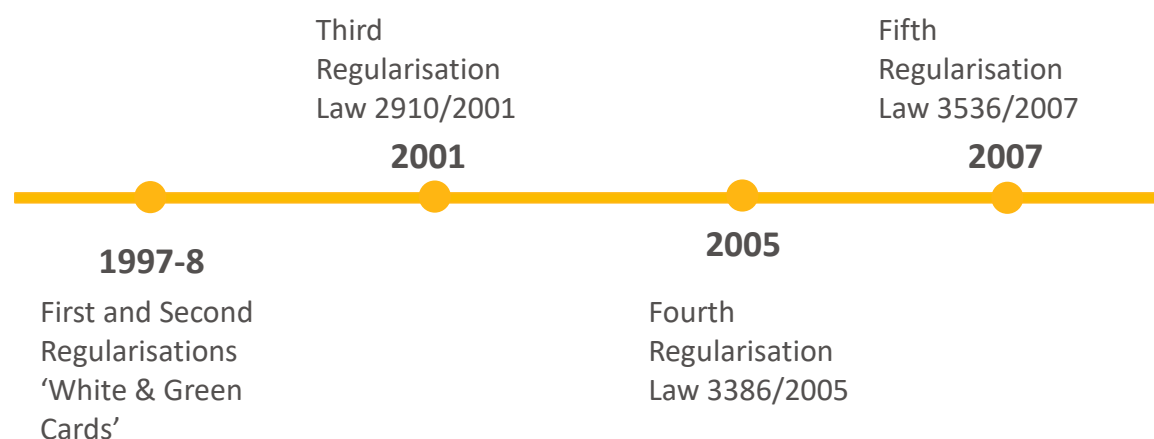
[4] (Hellenic Statistical Authority, 2011)
[5] (Council of Europe (Parliamentary Assembly), 2007)

As a result of regularisations, most of the migrants achieved some progress towards integration into Greek society at least prior to the 2008 economic crisis. The three major waves of regularisations have taken place in Greece from 1998 to 2005 that have established the 'White Card' (6 months of legal residency) and the 'Green Card' (1-2 years). In general the following characteristics of the regularisation programmes implemented in Greece until 2008 can be drawn: 1) **Restrictive principle** – issuance of very short-term permits with complicated procedures for the renewal; 2) **Social security** – imposing the payment of social security benefits by the immigrants, what clearly opposed the Labour Law of Greece stating the payment of social fees as a responsibility of an employer; 3) **High application fees** – that were uneven related to the costs of processing applications; 4) **Variety of statuses and permits** – leading to confusion and especially the short-term character of permits has led to the uncertainty regarding tracing of migrants legal residence in the country[6]. The complexities of the regularisations have led to legal uncertainty among migrants as well as the discrepancies of state institutions. This shows that the implementation of regularisation schemes with one accord does not benefit either parties, migrants or the State, thus the policy responses have to be enacted in their complexity considering the regulations of the national labour market and different legislative frameworks.

During the EU economic crisis of 2008, the unemployment rates in Greece started to increase rapidly creating difficulties for migrants in renewing their work permits. The process of work permit renewal required the proof of employment and contribution to the social security system. Consequently, the migrants with legal status have fallen in irregular situation and have returned to their home countries resulting in the decreased rate of registered foreigners from 610,800 in 2009 to 450,000 in 2014[7]. In 2015, around 885,000 migrants arrived via the Eastern Mediterranean route crossing from Turkey to the Greek islands seeking their way further into the European Union with thousands of lives lost in the attempt. Most of the migrants on this route in 2015 originated from Syria, followed by Afghanistan and Somalia. There were also high numbers of migrants from other sub-Saharan countries. Most of the migrants headed north, departing from Greece through its border with the Republic of North Macedonia. Syrians and Iraqis were the top two nationalities arriving to Greece in 2017 via the Eastern Mediterranean route[8].

When it comes to integration efforts in Greece, the Government has started introducing policies and strategies for newly arrived as well as long-term migrants in the course of recent mobility trends. The Greek Government encourages diaspora communities to join efforts and support their own migrant entities with integration efforts. According to the Vice-Mayor of Athens, as mentioned during the interview with ENIGMMA 2 project team on 28 March 2018, the importance of a strong and empowered diaspora would be to provide integration support to the newly arrived migrants. It should also be noted that the newly established Migrant Integration Centre (KEM) in Athens, the first of its kind in Greece, is a significant step towards managing integration. The centre provides migrants with social and legal support as well as language lessons and organises joint activities with other local and international organisations. High rates of unemployment following 2008 have also pushed Greek citizens to seek employment abroad, resulting in the emigration of educated and highly skilled

---

[6] (Baldwin-Edwards & Kraler, 2009)
[7] (OECD , 2015)
[8] (Frontex , 2018)

Greeks. Despite the weakening economy and the prospects of negative effects of out-migration from Greece, the Government has not put in place specific policies to regulate migration. However, there are several strong initiatives introduced by the Government[9]:

- **General Secretariat for Greeks Abroad (GSGA)** was founded in 1983 under the aegis of Ministry of Foreign Affairs with the mandate to coordinate, plan and implement policies concerning Greek diaspora. The GSGA maintains the database of Greek diaspora organisations and diaspora members around the world and analyses the diaspora needs;
- **Greece-Australia bilateral agreement** signed in 2014 – giving opportunity to Greek youth aged 18-30 to apply for one-year tourist visas that grant the right to work in the partner country;
- **The Hellenic Initiative** – a platform engaging high-profile diaspora attracting investments to address the improvement of Greek economy was established in 2012 by the General Secretariat for Greeks Abroad under the MFA. The initiative is linking Greek enterprises with export markets, conducts business plan competitions with funding for the start-ups, mentoring and support services;
- **Conference on Research on Economic Theory and Econometrics (CRETE)** – is an annual conference founded by Greek economists taking place on Greek islands. It brings together prominent Greek and foreign academics from different universities with academics in Greece.

With the changing profile of emigration, Greece needs to design policies directed at encouraging links and engaging their diaspora in development processes. As outlined in this study, some steps have already been taken by the Government and civil society to build relationships with the Greek diaspora abroad and harness the full potential of diaspora engagement.

The following state institutions are responsible for migration management in Greece:

Chart 1. Institutional Chart for Migration Policy in Greece[10]
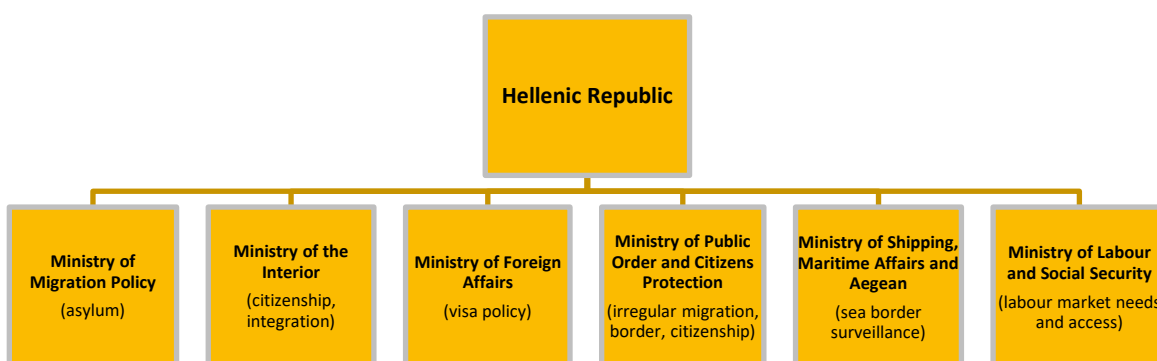
The structural and institutional framework of migration management in Greece is wide-ranging. The State institutions involved in asylum and migration policy include the Ministry of Migration Policy, the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Public Order and Citizens Protection as well as the Ministry of Labour among other state agencies.

1.2. Italy

Italy has been a country of emigration for decades and has started to become an immigration country between the 1970s and 1980s with main migration flows from South and Central America and Asia following by more diverse flows throughout subsequent decades from Eastern Europe and the African continent[11]. The table below highlights the main countries of origin of Italian citizens according to the 2016 data of Italy's National Institute of Statistics (ISTAT):

Table 2. Number of Foreign Citizens in Italy by Top Countries and Regions of Origin, December 2016[12]

Region/Country	Number of Foreign Born
EUROPE	2,603,053
Romania	1,168,552
Albania	448,407
Ukraine	234,354
AFRICA	1,047,742
Morocco	420,651
ASIA	1,023,851
China	281,972
AMERICAS	369,555
OCEANIA	2,112

According to the ISTAT, the majority of new arrivals to Italy in 2017 were from Romania, Albania, Morocco and China and from Nigeria, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Brazil and India.

Initially, the immigration policy of the country was restrictive following the security issues of the Schengen area, taking into account that Italy has an external EU border. At the same time, the need of foreign labour force was evident and the Italian Government established a system based on annual quotas allowing recruitment of foreign workers prior to their arrival to Italy and considering local labour market needs, in particular proving the unavailability of natives for the given job. This time-consuming and complicated policy resulted in employers recruiting workers who were already residing in Italy as irregular migrants, thus unintentionally encouraging illegal migration. Next step of the Italian Government towards regulating irregular migration flows was to adopt 'decrees on flows' in the 1990s to regularise a certain number of irregular immigrants every year.

---

[11] (Scotto, 2017)
[12] (ISTAT Annual Report , 2018)

Five large regularisations took place, which were executed in parallel to national and European immigration regulations[13]:

First
Regularisation
105,000 migrants
Law 943/86

Third
Regularisation
244,000 migrants
Law 486/95

Fifth
Regularisation
634,000 migrants
Law 189/02

1985   **1995**   **2002**

1990   **1998**

Second
Regularisation
217,000 migrants
Law 39/90

Fourth
Regularisation
217,000 migrants
Law 40/98
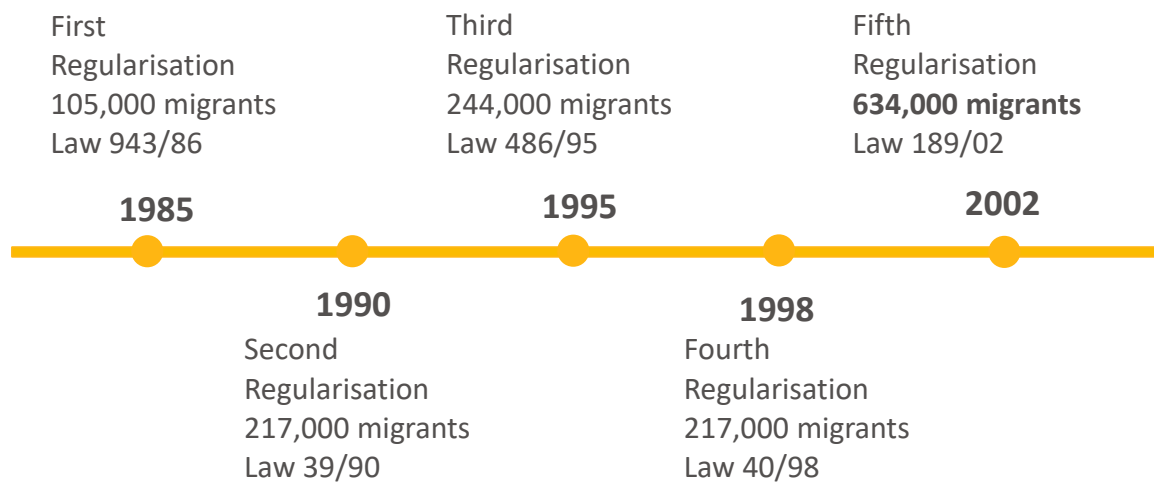
The most successful after four large regularisations was the fifth one, carried out in 2002 by the Italian Government (2001-2006) chaired by Silvio Berlusconi. This wave resulted in 702,000 applications and 634,728 residence permits issued.

The primary aim of adopting the large regularisations was to regularise the immigration to Italy and promote regular migration; however, following the last wave of regularisation in 2002, the irregular immigration rates to Italy started to rise. The reason for the rising irregular migration was explained as the 'pull factor' of previously implemented regularisations in addition to the enhanced migrant networks. Thereafter, more regularisations took place on a smaller scale and directed towards specific groups of workers already residing in Italy in the years 2006-2009 which shows that regularisations were still considered as useful policy measures by the Italian Government.[14] The changes in the types and dynamics in the migration flows over time have led to major policy shifts in Italy.

Due to its geographical location, Italy has been one of the major countries receiving high numbers of irregular migrants via the Mediterranean route in 2015-2016. In 2015, Italy has received 83,245 asylum requests and in 2016 the number of asylum seekers and migrants who landed on Italy's coasts (121,185 persons) has increased significantly compared to 2015[15].

---

[13] (Finotelli & Arango, 2011)
[14] (Finotelli & Arango, 2011)
[15] https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/2995521/7921609/3-16032017-BP-EN.pdf/e5fa98bb-5d9d-4297-9168-d07c67d1c9e1

To address these increases, the Italian Government adopted decree-law No 13/2017 on Immigration and Security. The Decree-Law on Immigration and Security[16], the so called "Salvini Decree", was also later endorsed in 2018 by the Italian Council of Ministers. The decree has sprung controversial sentiments in civil society and media opposing the measures to come into force. In particular, the decree introduced new regulations related to humanitarian protection status for migrants and access to reception centres for asylum seekers with the aim to balance humanitarian and national security concerns[17]. Prior to the adoption of the "Salvini Decree", acquiring "permesso di soggiorno" (the long term residence permit) was one of the most popular ways for Georgian migrants to find legal grounds of residence in Italy as revealed during the focus group discussion conducted in April 2018 in Rome by the ENIGMMA 2 project team. According to the Article 9(1-bis) of the Consolidated Act on Immigration (TUI), refugees and subsidiary protection beneficiaries residing in Italy for at least 5 years can obtain a long-term resident status if they have an income equal or higher than the minimum income guaranteed by the State. The starting point to count the period of stay for beneficiaries of international protection is the date of submission of the application for international protection[18]. Other third-country nationals that are not international protection beneficiaries have to provide the proof of accommodation and pass an Italian language test, thus the procedure was quite popular among Georgian migrants as mentioned by one of the heads of Georgian diaspora organisation during the interview with the project team.

The 'Salvini' decree also affects refugees and legal immigrants and everyone applying for Italian citizenship by means of extending the timeframe of processing applications for naturalisation from two to four years.

While immigration is on top of the Italian political agenda, emigration is less noticeable in the policy discourse. The latest important reforms concerning diaspora relations took place in year 1992, when descendants of Italian migrants became eligible to obtain citizenship, and in 2000 Italians abroad were granted the right to vote in referendums and general elections. However, the Italian Government tries to stay connected to the diaspora and engage them in the development processes of the home country. As mentioned during the interview by the representatives of the Italians Abroad Unit of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation periodical information events are organised abroad aiming at providing up-to-date information on the recent changes to Italian migration legislation to Italian citizens residing abroad. In addition, several activities have been initiated by the Ministry supporting the functioning of the network of Italian academic professionals working abroad by linking them with the universities in Italy for further professional undertakings; the activities of Dante Alighieri society that promotes Italian culture and language around the world are largely supported by the Ministry; in addition the networking event is organised by the Ministry every two years gathering the Italian researchers from around the world. Furthermore, in order to protect the rights and properly address the needs and challenges of the Italian diaspora abroad, the **General Council of Italians Abroad (GCIE)** was established in the 1990s under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The General Council is regulated by a Presidential Decree and carries out advisory activities

---

[16] (Government of Italy The Presidency of the Council of Ministers, 2018)

[17] (Scotto, 2017)

[18] (AIDA Asylum Information Database, 2017)

for the Government on matters of major interest for Italians abroad. The Council represents the first step in the process of developing active engagement in the political life of the country by Italian communities residing abroad, and facilitates their permanent connection to the home country. The President of the CGIE is the **Minister for Foreign Affairs**. In particular, the CGIE formulates an obligatory opinion on the Government's objectives with regard to the following areas: state financial support for Italian communities abroad; long-term programmes and financial arrangements in terms of educational policy, professional training and social and welfare protection; criteria for the allocation of funds to national associations, charitable organisations, professional training bodies, press and information bodies; radio and television programmes for the Italian communities abroad; guidelines for the reforming of the consular, education and social services[19].

Another essential instrument of Italian diaspora policy is the **Committees of Italians Abroad (Com.It.Es)** that are representative bodies for Italian communities elected directly by Italians residing abroad in every consular jurisdiction where there are over 3,000 Italian nationals. Wherever there are at least 3,000 Italian citizens, the Committees can be appointed by the diplomatic-consular authorities. The Article 1, Paragraph 2 of Law 286/2003 emphasises the close relationship of collaboration and cooperation that should exist between consular authorities and the Committees, also by the means of constant exchange of information. The direct function of the Committees is to study and research the needs of Italian diaspora in terms of their social, cultural and civil development. On the other hand, it is the responsibility of the General Council (GCIE) to advocate for the needs of Italians abroad to the respective State Institutions in Italy be it tax issues or cooperation for development[20].

The development and implementation of immigration law and the general management of the migration policy process is run by the Coordination and Monitoring Committee at the Presidency of **the Council of Ministers** supported by an inter-ministerial Technical Working Group at the **Ministry of Internal Affairs**, Central Direction Migration and Asylum Policy.

---

[19] https://www.esteri.it/mae/en/servizi/italiani-all-estero/organismirappresentativi/cgie.html
[20] https://www.esteri.it/mae/en/servizi/italiani-all-estero/organismirappresentativi/comites.html

There are three main state institutions responsible for migration management in Italy, as described in the chart below.

Chart 2. Institutional Chart for Migration Policy in Italy[21]

```
            ┌─────────────────────────────┐
            │ Coordination and Monitoring │
            │ Committee at the Presidency of│
            │  the Council of Ministers   │
            │ supported by an inter-ministerial│
            │ Technical Working Group at the│
            │  Ministry of Internal Affairs │
            └─────────────────────────────┘
        ┌──────────────┼──────────────┐
┌───────────────┐ ┌───────────────┐ ┌───────────────┐
│ Ministry of   │ │ Ministry of   │ │ Ministry of   │
│ Foreign Affairs│ │ the Interior  │ │ Labour and    │
│ and International│ │              │ │ Social Policy │
│ Cooperation   │ │ (prefecturas, │ │               │
│               │ │ immigration and│ │ (access to    │
│ (visa policy, │ │ asylum policy,│ │ labour market,│
│ Italians abroad,│ │ permits,     │ │ integration and│
│ relations with│ │ citizenship, │ │ social services)│
│ third countries│ │ border control,│ │              │
│ and international│ │ etc.)        │ │              │
│ organisations)│ │              │ │              │
└───────────────┘ └───────────────┘ └───────────────┘
```

In 2017, the demand of labour market affected natives and foreigners similarly, unlike the trend of the previous two years, for the first time the rate of growth of Italian employment was greater than that of foreign employment taken as a whole. The **Service sector** (community, social and personal services), **hospitality**, **agriculture** and **construction** are the main professional sectors where most of the foreigners (non-EU citizens) are employed as indicated in the 2018 Report of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of Italy[22]. In case of Georgia, as highlighted by the Georgian diaspora organisations during the interviews conducted by the ENIGMMA 2 project team, the service sector and, in particular, domestic work were named as the most popular areas of employment for Georgian migrants.

1.3. Spain

Immigration is also a recent phenomenon for Spain. Its transition to an immigration country took place between the 1980s and 1990s. The number of immigrants started to rise from 1.5 million immigrants registered in the country in 2000 to 6.5 million in 2009 and increasing numbers ever since[23]. The demographic profile of immigrants to Spain remains largely one of young adults that are active in the labour force. Spanish migration policy was largely based on the needs of the labour market, however just like in case of Italy, the mismatch between the channels of immigration and Government regulations put irregular migration at the cornerstone of the Spanish migration system. However, unlike other European Member States, no significant backlash took place in the Spanish society over the influx of mass irregular migration, even in times of economic crisis that hit the country throughout 2008-2014 and caused significant unemployment in the country and migrant

---

[21]https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/european_migration_network/reports/docs/emn-studies/asylum-migration/14._italy_factsheet_institutional_chart_en.pdf

[22] (The Ministry of Labour and Social Policies, 2018)

[23] (Arango, Exceptional in Europe? Spain's Experience with Immigration and Integration, March 2013)

labour force. The table below highlights the number of immigrants legally residing in Spain by countries of origin according to the Ministry of Labour, Migration and Social Security of Spain.

Table 3. Number of Residence Permits granted to foreigners by Top Countries and Regions of Origin, 2017[24]

Region/Country	Number of Foreign Born
EUROPE	100,717
Romania	52,666
Italy	28,429
United Kingdom	19,622
AFRICA	
Morocco	**83,893**
ASIA	
China	**22,058**
AMERICAS	**55, 897**
Colombia	21,731
Bolivia	17,624
Venezuela	16,542

The largest number of residence permits issued during 2017 was to the citizens of Morocco and Romania followed by Italy and the United Kingdom. In case of Moroccans, the majority of residence permits were issued on the basis of family reunification that marks 3.9% increase compared to 2016. The greatest relative increase can also be observed in the residence permits granted to the nationals of Venezuela, 25.3% (3,344 more authorisations).[25] According to the interviews conducted with the representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Spain by the ENIGMMA 2 project team in spring 2018, approximately 20,000 Georgians reside in Spain on regular and irregular basis. Thus, the number is based on estimates.

Together with the labour market demand, migration policy of Spain largely relies on the political culture and the democratic values of freedom and equality, thus condemning any undermining public statements with regards to the aforementioned values. Large groups of society promote support to immigration and sharply oppose any sentiments that could be perceived as xenophobic, racist or negative towards migrants. There is a common belief in the Spanish society that migrants are entitled to the same rights as other members of society, thus, being seen on the equal merits. While no backlash was caused in public and civil sector on national level, strong anti-immigrant sentiments have been raising on regional level and, in particular, in Catalonia. Concern for immigration has also
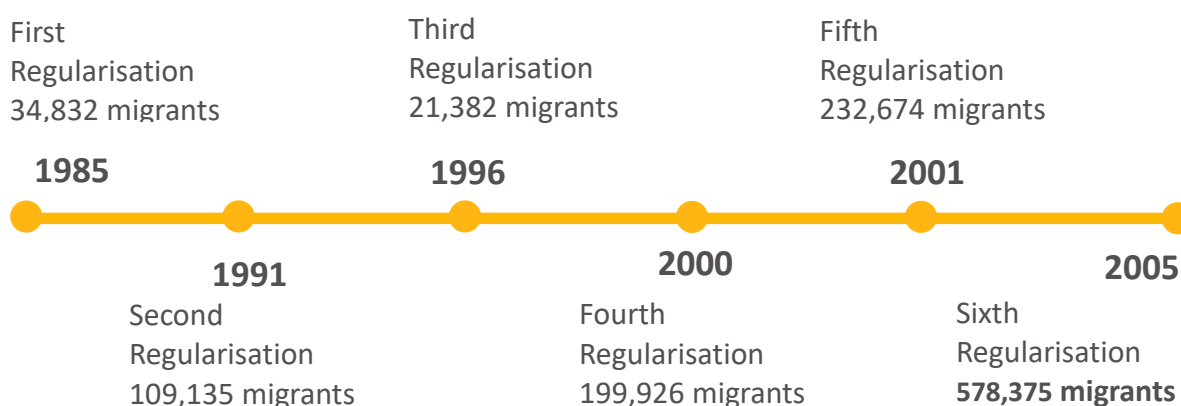
---

[24] (Ministry of Labour, Migration and Social Security of Spain, 2017)

[25]http://extranjeros.mitramiss.gob.es/es/Estadisticas/operaciones/flujos-autorizacion/2017/Residentes_PRFlujo2017.pdf

led to the success of the conservative Popular Party (PP) in the National Parliamentary elections in 2011. This development was triggered by increasing unemployment rates during the economic crisis as should have been expected. The construction sector was hardest hit by the crisis where about 36% of male migrants were employed[26]. These male migrants in manufacturing sector were more likely to remain unemployed rather than their female counterparts in the service and domestic sector.

The legal framework of Spanish migration policy is based on the Constitution, Worker's Statute, Organic Law 4/2000 of 11 January on Rights and Freedoms of Aliens in Spain, Law on Social Integration and Implementing Regulation of that Law approved by Royal Decree 2393/2004 and Royal Decree 240/2007 of 16 February 2007 on the entry, free movement and residence in Spain of Citizens of the Member States of the EU and of the other States that are a party to the Agreement on the European Economic Area. Asylum is governed by Law 12/2009 of 30 October 2009 governing the right of asylum and subsidiary protection. Rules on citizenship are set out in the Civil Code. The main goals of the legal texts concerning the immigration system, Organic Law 4/2000 and Implementing Regulation, are: 1) consolidating a model based on legal immigration and linkage to the current national labour market; 2) reinforcing the tools for the fight against irregular migration and illegal employment of workers in the hidden economy; 3) supporting circular mobility and voluntary return; 4) promoting the integration of immigrants already living in Spain; 5) protecting victims of gender-based violence and other vulnerable groups (victims of THB); 6) improving the treatment of unaccompanied minors and 7) clarifying and simplifying the procedures, making a better use of the resources available[27].

In terms of promoting integration of immigrants already residing in Spain and regularising migration, the Government has implemented six regularisations over the last decades as shown in the timeline below: [28]

First
Regularisation
34,832 migrants

Third
Regularisation
21,382 migrants

Fifth
Regularisation
232,674 migrants

1985   **1996**   **2001**

1991   **2000**   **2005**

Second
Regularisation
109,135 migrants

Fourth
Regularisation
199,926 migrants

Sixth
Regularisation
578,375 migrants

Spain has implemented more regularisation programmes than any other EU MS[29]. The regularisations have mainly targeted irregular workers but have in some cases extended to other migrant categories

---

[26] (Arango, Exceptional in Europe? Spain's Experience with Immigration and Integration, March 2013)
[27] (EC European Migration Network, 2017)
[28] (The Ministry of Labour, Migration and Social Security of Spain, 2018)
[29] (Council of Europe (Parliamentary Assembly), 2007)

such as relatives and family members, asylum seekers or specific nationalities (for instance, Ecuadorians in 2001)[30]. The most significant was the sixth regularisation that took place in 2005 that was a part of a larger programme to fight irregular employment in Spain. The process allowed only workers to apply and for the first time, in order to be legalised they had to register ("Padron" municipal registry) a work contract valid for at least six months. Legalisation would take place only when the worker had registered in the Social Security System and the first month's social fees had been paid. That is the reason why the regularisation of 2005 has been described as the "real" regularisation by the Spanish Government. As a result, the number of the legal immigrant population to Spain has increased, however, the residence permits issued after the regularisation were valid for one year and had to be renewed annually. In the following years, the effect of stability of regularisation was strengthened with the residence permits issued on the basis of family reunification.[31]

However, the Governments cannot rely on regularisations only when dealing with irregular migration without significant changes in the migration policy. The Spanish Government undertook a number of reforms related to migration management and introduced new regulation on legal recruitment that has resulted in general improvement of labour market control.

Before becoming a receiving country, Spain had long been a migrant-sending country for over a century as large numbers of Spanish citizens migrated to destinations in Latin America and to other European countries. This trend has continued during the recent emigration waves that are characterised by the movement of younger, highly skilled and well-educated Spaniards abroad. The Spanish diaspora is quite large given the fact of the high volume of remittances sent back to Spain[32]. The profile of recent emigrants from Spain has changed, thus, requiring the need of comprehensive diaspora strategy tailored to the changing characteristics and needs of the diaspora. The Spanish Government has shifted its focus from facilitating job placement of Spanish citizens abroad and moved to managing immigration thus establishing the General Directorate for Migration in 1985. Later, the Directorate was renamed to **the Secretary General of Immigration and Emigration (SGIE)** under the Ministry of Labour, Migration and Social Security keeping the function of managing immigration as well as focusing on diaspora engagement. The Government has also taken steps to secure portability of social security benefits for Spanish citizens abroad resulting in forming bilateral agreements with around twenty countries in Latin-America.[33]

The Spanish Government has long-established structures to engage with their diaspora, mainly through the **Councils** formed under the Ministry of Labour, Migration and Social Security and the diplomatic representations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation. These Councils are mainly consultative bodies that serve as communication channels and mediators between the diaspora and Spanish state institutions; giving the opportunity to the diaspora to voice their needs and challenges and encouraging state institutions to implement specific actions accordingly. It is also important to note that Spanish citizens abroad retain the right to vote in the national elections.

---

[30] (Finotelli & Arango, 2011)

[31] https://www.researchgate.net/publication/255708598_Regularisation_of_Unauthorised_Immigrants_in_Italy_and_Spain_Determinants_and_Effects

[32] (Arango, Spain: New Emigration Policies Needed for an Emerging Diaspora, 2016)

[33] https://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/spain-new-emigration-policies-needed-emerging-diaspora

In addition, diaspora organisations are effective tools in establishing ties with the Spanish diaspora and Government. The SGIE provides grants through the labour and social security attachés at Spanish Embassies and Consulates for the activities of aforementioned diaspora organisations. The activities of these organisations are focused at youth and their professional training with the aim to support their integration in destination countries and, at the same time, offers them counselling on return possibilities to Spain. A noteworthy diaspora organisation ALDEEU which is active in the United States of America links together Spanish university graduates living in the United States, building a strong network of professionals and support to the exchange of knowledge between the two countries.[34]

The annual diaspora forum was named as one of the successful methods of diaspora engagement by the representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Spain during the interview with the ENIGMMA 2 project team. The forum gathers hundreds of Spaniards residing around the globe; during the forum people have the opportunity to present their ideas and action plans to the Government that later reviews their ideas and provides financial assistance to the diaspora organisations and Councils with good project proposals; the forum is also a successful platform for networking and building partnerships within the diaspora as well as diaspora and the Government. The current diaspora policy of Spain mainly intends promotion of cultural ties and historical heritage.

There are four main state institutions responsible for migration management in Spain:

Chart 3. Institutional Chart for Migration Policy in Spain[35]
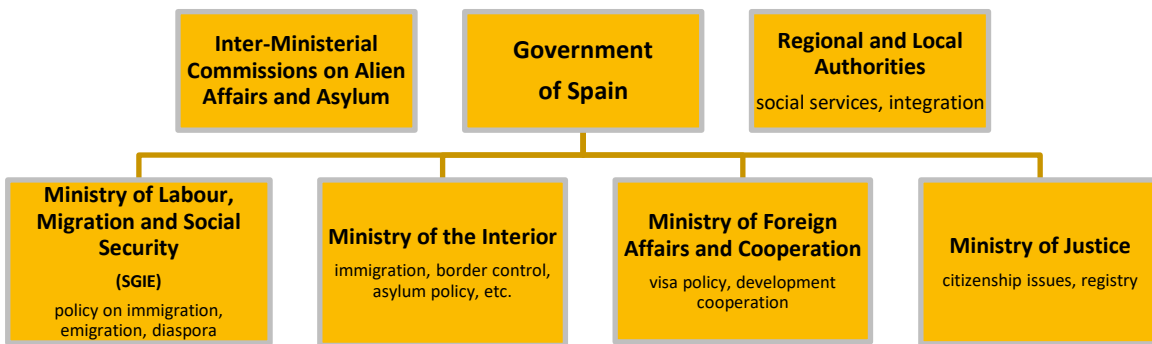
The Ministry of Labour, Migration and Social Security with its SGIE – General Secretariat for Immigration and Emigration and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation with its diplomatic representations abroad are the key state agencies defining Spanish migration and diaspora policy.

---

[34] https://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/spain-new-emigration-policies-needed-emerging-diaspora
[35] https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/european_migration_network/reports/docs/emn-studies/asylum-migration/25._spain_factsheet_insitutional_chart_2012__en.pdf

SECTION 2. Migration Framework in Georgia

This section is dedicated to the brief overview of legislative and institutional framework on migration in Georgia; it also provides an overview of migration flows. Further, this section focuses on diaspora relations regulation in Georgia and general overview of Georgian diaspora organisations.

2.1. Migration Outlook

Georgia has experienced several waves of emigration throughout its recent history linked with the dissolution of Soviet Union, Georgia's regaining of its national independence and severe economic crises during the 90s and later. According to the UN DESA statistics, there are approximately 1 million Georgians residing around the world mainly concentrated in Europe, United States and Central and Western Asia with the majority of Georgian migrants 55% being women.[36] As the reasons for leaving the country vary, it is undeniable that due to the economic situation in Georgia its citizens search for better opportunities for employment and well-being in other countries[37].

Table 4. Number of Georgian migrants in destination countries by gender, 2014[38]

Countries of destination	Both genders	Male	Female
Russia	19,195	13,640	5,555
Greece	14,048	2,386	11,662
Turkey	9,922	3,262	6,660
Italy	9,612	1,373	8,239
Germany	6,259	2,808	3,451
USA	5,021	2,457	2,564
Spain	3,597	1,724	1,873
France	3,293	1,896	1,397
Ukraine	3,283	2,619	664
Azerbaijan	1,802	1,091	711
Other	**11,590**	**6,483**	**5107**

Due to its historic past with the Soviet Union, the highest number of Georgians can be traced in Russia. Another major destination country for Georgian nationals is Greece, as seen from the above table followed by Turkey (seasonal migration), Italy, Germany, USA, Spain, France, Ukraine and Azerbaijan. As observed from the gender distribution numbers, there are more female migrants noticeable in majority of the EU Member States and Turkey. According to the above table, the main

---

[36] https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/data/estimates2/estimates17.asp
[37] (State Commission on Migration Issues of Georgia , 2017)
[38] (GEOSTAT, 2014)

non-EU countries of destination for Georgian nationals are Russia, Turkey and Azerbaijan (neighbouring countries) and USA.

The data from EUROSTAT given in the table below indicates that more than 77,000 Georgian nationals had valid residence permits on the territory of the EU in 2017.

Table 5. All valid residents permits in the top ten countries of destination (EU MS)[39]

All residents permits valid on December 31	2015	2016	2017	Family 2017	Labour 2017	Study 2017	Protection 2017
Total, EU	**71.268**	**74.845**	**77.879**	**27.128**	**18.075**	**4.831**	**2.994**
Greece	18.774	19.643	20.126	7.594	2.495	67	N/A
Italy	13.335	14.025	13.777	3.625	9.554	153	78
Germany	11.715	12.136	13.070	6.074	1.588	2.491	182
Spain	9.665	10.063	10.451	2.867	1.534	103	29
France	6.079	6.835	7.341	3.238	252	256	2.386
Poland	1.467	1.829	2.519	226	1.516	242	141
Austria	1.841	2.026	2.048	329	96	267	N/A
Belgium	1.697	1.637	1.553	530	56	33	71
United Kingdom	966	933	936	346	141	361	1
Czech Republic	858	951	874	260	147	190	21

The majority of residence permits were issued on the basis of family reasons in 2017; this was also the main reason for residence permits issued to Georgian citizens in Greece and Spain. Germany has issued most of the residence permits on the grounds of education purposes, whereas most of the permits issued by Italy were on the grounds of employment.

The remittance statistics provided by the National Bank of Georgia (NBG) cross-checks with the emigration data indicated above. The absolute majority of Georgian labour migrants reside in Russia, followed by the USA, Greece, Italy, Turkey and mainly other EU Member States.

Table 6. Remittances to Georgia by major sending countries, mln. USD[40]

Countries	2015	2016
All incoming remittances	1,079,952,119	1,151,236,167
Russia	432,687,902	394,499,000
USA	100,037,117	127,659,057
Greece	117,750,709	124,565,290
Italy	109,077,712	121,248,934
Turkey	68,945,457	87,067,874

---

[39] (EUROSTAT , March 6 2019)
[40] (State Commission on Migration Issues of Georgia, 2016)

Israel	32,878,737	60,732,702
Spain	26,771,932	30,876,353
Germany	26,661,893	29,853,266
Ukraine	20,850,230	20,808,138
United Kingdom	15,964,841	17,381,858
Azerbaijan	15,507,003	14,751,075
France	10,856,217	11,946,356
Kazakhstan	14,656,271	11,838,787
Iraq	9,986,462	11,480,419
Other	77,319,636	86,527,058
Remittances as % of GDP	10%	8%

In 2016, Russia, the USA, Greece and Italy were the top remittance-sending countries. It should be noted that despite the large volume of remittances received annually by Georgia, the country's economy is not over-dependent on remittances. According to GeoStat and the data of National Bank of Georgia, in 2016 GDP at current prices was 14,377.9 million USD. The total monetary value of remittances in the same year reached 1,151,236.167 USD, with remittances therefore constituting only 8% of GDP. On the other hand, the annual FDI inflow has surpassed remittances to Georgia by approximately 500 million USD ever since[41].

In Georgia, the migration management is organised on a central level. In 2010, the State Commission on Migration Issues (SCMI) was established by the Government of Georgia. The Commission is a coordinative body of all the State Institutions working on migration issues and aims to develop and implement a coherent migration policy of Georgia ensuring proper management.

In March 2017, a significant milestone was achieved in the EU-Georgia relations, when Georgian citizens were granted visa-free travel to the Schengen zone. Georgian citizens who are holders of biometric passports are exempt from visas while travelling to Schengen area for 90 days in a 180-day period. Based on the positive assessment of the implementation of the benchmarks of the Visa Liberalisation Action Plan in December 2015, the European Commission proposed to Council of the EU to transfer Georgia to the list of countries whose nationals are exempt from the visa requirement.[42] In addition, the suspension mechanism - a special set of measures intended to temporarily suspend the exemption from the visa requirement for nationals of a third country – was revised and adopted[43].

Remarkable rise in asylum applications of Georgian citizens in the Schengen area countries was recorded in the first several months following the adoption of visa-free movement, as well as at the end of 2018. According to the statistics published by the European Asylum Support Office (EASO), the total number of applications filed by Georgian citizens in 2017 increased by 35% compared to 2016.

---

[41] (State Commission on Migration Issues of Georgia , 2017)
[42] (EC Fourth progress report on Georgia's implementation of the action plan on visa, 2015)
[43] (Council Regulation (EC) No 539/2001 , 15 March 2001) Note: *listing the third countries whose nationals must be in possession of visas when crossing the external borders and those whose nationals are exempt from that requirement*.

The applications totalled 1,465 in December 2017 (more than third of those were filed in Germany), almost triple the number recorded in December 2016. The total number of applications in 2017 reached 11,569:

Graph 1. Data on asylum applications filed by Georgian citizens covering the period from January 2017 through January 2019[44]
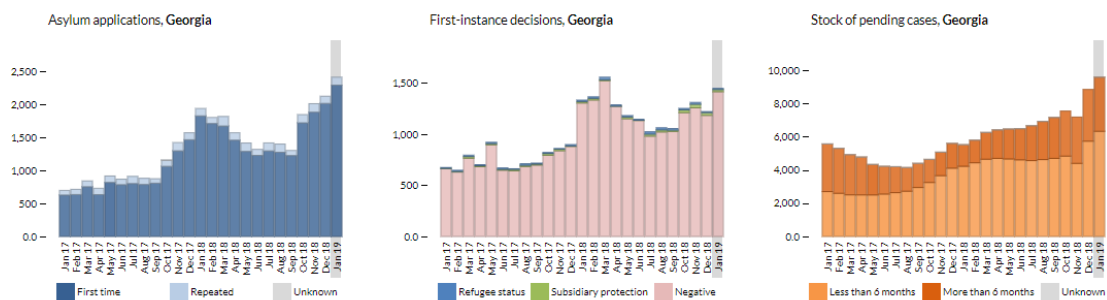
Source: EASO EPS, January 2017 – January 2019.

Starting from February 2018, the number of asylum applications is decreasing; however, another sharp rise was observed again from October 2018, reaching its peak in January 2019 with 2,412 applications[45]. The recognition rate of Georgian asylum applicants has been quite low, in 2018 only 194 citizens were granted a refugee status and 196 - a subsidiary protection status[46].

The trend shows that Georgian nationals have been applying for asylum in increasing numbers since the establishment of visa-free movement with the EU in March 2017. The figures are especially high in the beginning of 2018 with a slight decrease in the second half of 2018 and one more rise at the end of 2018 and beginning of 2019.

[44] (EASO, 2019)
[45] (EASO, 2019)
[46] (EASO, 2019)

2.2. Diaspora Policy

Diaspora plays an important role in the development processes of destination and home countries, both in economic aspects (attracting investments, tourism) and socio-cultural (transferring skills and promoting national values). According to the Law of Georgia on Compatriots Residing Abroad and Diaspora Organisations[47] the term "diaspora" covers the members of all Georgian migrant communities residing abroad.

The main state institution responsible for maintaining and strengthening relations with Georgians abroad, development and implementation of the state diaspora policy is **the Ministry of Foreign Affairs** of Georgia (MFA) and its **Department for Relations with Diaspora**. Considering the high numbers of Georgians abroad, the Georgian Government faced the need of strengthening connections with the diaspora. The **Consular Department** of MFA maintains links with the diaspora members via diplomatic representations in destination countries and often acts as a first contact point for Georgians abroad. Thus, coordination between the two departments of MFA plays an important role in identifying the needs of Georgian diaspora and respective response measures to be planned.

The mandate of the Diaspora Department entitles promoting Georgian culture and language abroad and strengthening Georgian identity and feeling of belonging among diaspora and migrant communities. As a result, the daily work of the Department is based on liaison with the representatives of Georgian diaspora organisations and active diaspora members, hearing out their concerns and addressing organisational needs of diaspora organisations with their limited capacities (financial and human). More specifically, the Department is developing and delivering books for Georgian Sunday schools abroad on a regular basis and is carrying out following programs related to diaspora engagement: Annual Forum of Georgian Diaspora; Georgian Diaspora Awards; "Be your country's Young Ambassador''; Summer camps for young compatriots; Initiatives related to grants for the Diaspora; Maintaining of the web-portal: www.gda.ge; Monthly bulletin on Diaspora Issues.

---

[47] (Law of Georgia on Compatriots Residing Abroad and DIaspora Organisations)

The database of the Diaspora Department counts approximately 300 registered Georgian diaspora organisations around the world:

Graph 2. The number of Georgian diaspora organisations, Sunday schools and creative groups abroad, 2016 (main destination countries)
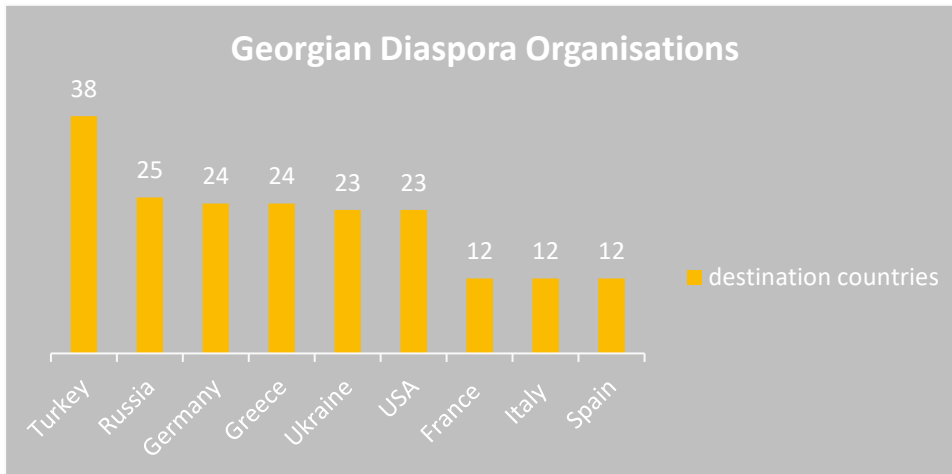
Source: MFA, 2019

As seen from the chart, the largest number of Georgian diaspora groups is registered in Turkey (38), Russia (25), Germany (24) and Greece (24). Next come Ukraine, USA, France, Italy and Spain followed by Israel, Belgium, Estonia, the Netherlands, Sweden and Switzerland each counting from five to ten Georgian diaspora groups. In most common cases, these are community or common-value based organisations that run on a voluntary basis aiming at preserving Georgian culture, language and identity among Georgian communities abroad and in some cases hosting societies. This directly relates to the newly adopted policy of the MFA in particular aimed at promoting Georgian culture and preserving identity of compatriots living abroad, strengthening their contacts with the homeland, and developing cooperation including in the area of promotion of Georgian culture, history and traditions[48].

In 2017, the Parliament of Georgia adopted changes to the National Constitution of Georgia that has underlined the importance of strengthening ties with Georgians residing abroad. The Constitution[49] declares: "Georgian Government takes responsibility to strengthen links with Georgians abroad and engage them for development of Georgia". Furthermore, the Constitutional changes in Article 36 no longer proclaim the acquisition of citizenship of another state as a ground for automatic suspension of the citizenship of Georgia. According to the new edition, the Organic Law on Citizenship[50] determines enfranchising Georgian citizenship to the citizens of other states and conditions of converging other states' citizenship for the Georgian citizenship.

[48] (Foreign Policy Strategy of the Government of Georgia, 2019-2022)
[49] (Legislative Herald of Georgia , 2017)
[50] Organic Law of Georgia on Georgian Citizenship,
https://matsne.gov.ge/en/document/view/2342552?publication=4

SECTION 3. Case Studies

This section presents the analysis and main findings of the interviews and focus group discussions carried out by the ENIGMMA 2 project team. The group of respondents is comprised of the representatives of Georgian diaspora organisations, active diaspora members, and Georgian and national state institution representatives in the three target countries - Greece, Italy and Spain.

3.1. Greece

Although over the period of recent years the number of irregular migrants from Georgia to Greece had decreased and more Georgians have obtained Greek citizenship and permanent residence permits, the country still remains as the second main destination for irregular migration for Georgian citizens. The majority of Georgian migrants are female and work in the domestic sector, with many not having access to health care and other social services due to lack of regular status and residence permit[51]. During the interviews conducted in Athens (March 2018) it was established that the number of families arriving to Greece after the establishment of visa-free travel between Georgian and EU, has increased significantly; with unfortunate results, when the families decide to violate the visa-free regime and stay in Greece with an irregular migration status.

The Georgian Embassy in Greece has taken significant steps in supporting Georgian migrants' biggest challenge of being in irregular situation and trying to regularise their status. For instance, the Embassy and the Ambassador continuously negotiate with the Greek Government the possibility to facilitate the process of obtaining residence permits for Georgian migrants. In addition, the Ambassador has been actively advocating for a circular migration scheme between Georgian and Greek Governments. By initiating these processes, the Georgian Embassy has opened another channel of constructive communication with the Government of Greece that will cover more issues related to diaspora, such as legal employment opportunities[52].

Overall, the biggest challenge that migrants face in Greece other than the irregular status is lack of information, on various issues, such as health and social welfare, education, labour rights, employment opportunities as well as reintegration, business or investment opportunities in Georgia, among others. Furthermore, the diaspora organisations do not have regular exchange on their activities or possible cooperation opportunities, especially when there are funding/project opportunities announced by international or national organisations and/or local NGOs. Access to such information is vital for some of the organisations to function properly, gain more knowledge and skills to further support newly arrived or vulnerable migrants in the destination country.

---

[51] (ICMPD (ERGEM Project) , 2014)
[52] (The Embassy of Georgia in the Hellenic Republic , 2018)

3.1.1. General composition of Georgian diaspora and migrant communities

Georgian citizens have had a long history of emigration to Greece. The first migration flows to Greece started in the early 1990s, where the majority of migrants from Georgia were of Greek origin, also known as "Pontic Greeks". Following the fall of the Soviet Union, Georgia found itself on the verge of high unemployment and poverty, thus, triggering the next wave of mass migration, during the late 1990s and early 2000s. At that time, 14-16% of all Georgian migrants emigrated to Greece[53]. Migration flows continue, however at a lower rate, regardless of the economic and socio-political improvements within both countries.

According to EUROSTAT 2018 data, there were 22,134 Georgians legally residing in Greece[54]. However, the Georgian Embassy estimates a much higher number or migrants residing without a proper residence permit, over 90,000 persons. Most of the migrants are female and employed in the domestic sector. Greece has been a popular country of destination for Georgian migrants for a number of reasons. The fact that female migrants are highly demanded in sectors such as household work, cleaning and babysitting, as well as caregiving services for the elderly, has encouraged many women to migrate to Greece in order to seek employment and provide for their families back home.

Younger generation of Georgian migrants, many of whom are second and third generations, does not participate in enough extracurricular activities, especially in Sunday Schools – the attendance rates are quite low and the migrant children do not receive adequate Georgian-language education. Third generation migrant children are born and raised in Greece and are not exposed to Georgian education - a concern that many heads of diaspora organisation have shared. The diaspora organisations provide a complex of lessons for Georgian language, dancing, singing and culture. Furthermore, youth and students find it difficult to associate themselves with Georgia after completing studies in Greece (asking questions such as "What can my country offer that would be better than here?"), thus, slowly diminishing their Georgian national identity. According to some of the prominent diaspora organisation leaders, it would be valuable to hold joint trainings and workshops on different topics involving groups of young professionals and as many Georgian students abroad as possible, to foster togetherness and avoid competition.

Overall, the profile of Georgian migrants in Greece has changed over the last few years. The first wave of Georgian migrants (1992 – 2002), during the severe poverty years in Georgia, moved to Greece more than 20 years ago. The majority of migrants in the 1990s went to Greece in order to work for a certain period of time, to save money with the purpose to go back to Georgia, without making long-term plans of residing in Greece; they were mostly female and middle-aged. The second wave of migrants (2000 – 2005), moved to Greece because they saw the economic benefits of long-term migration. The third wave is the most recent one with younger generation of Georgians, with a general wish to live in Europe.[55] The younger generation is highly educated what makes it extremely important for Georgian Government to keep ties with this youth.

---

[53] (Labadze & Tukhashvili, 2013)
[54] (EUROSTAT, 2018)
[55] http://legacy.iza.org/files/ENPIgeorgia.pdf

As it was discussed during the focus group, most of the Georgian migrants in Greece come from rural areas in Georgia where their main goal is to financially support their families back home. Over the last 5 to 10 years, Greece has seen more families arrive; still, the vast majority of migrants are female. Unfortunately, many of the irregular migrant women face labour exploitation; are not given adequate pay and work under hard conditions. It was also mentioned that Greece is chosen as a destination country mainly due to the already existing diaspora and personal networks and this is why migrating to Greece is easier compared to other countries. Furthermore, the two countries share the same religion creating an important connection for the migrants. Finally, obtaining legal status over time is achievable in Greece.

3.1.2. Main role of Georgian diaspora organisations (and their potential impact)

As a result of the interviews and focus group discussion, it was evident that the representatives of diaspora organisations agree that preserving and popularising the Georgian culture, supporting with integration and providing information, consultations, and providing overall support to Georgian migrants in the destination countries are some of the most important aspects. The diaspora organisations provide social support and networking, health care-related advice, as well as local legislation-related consultations and most importantly Sunday Schools for migrant children.

Furthermore, the diaspora organisation representatives understand the importance of a strong and united diaspora for better impact in destination countries. Thus, it was underlined that a Coordination Council should be established, where more enthusiasm, time and effort would contribute to a greater diaspora coalition. The functions of the Council would include planning and organisation of joint cultural events, small-scale projects and various activities. The organisation of intercultural events could also be beneficial with other diaspora members in the destination countries where the Georgian Embassy and/or Consular representation could provide support. The establishment of the Council would support bringing together the scattered Georgian diaspora organisations in Greece.

Another area where diaspora organisations could largely contribute is the provision of information to migrant communities. It was further suggested to appoint a certain person who could educate and guide newly arrived migrants in the destination countries, for example, one of the prominent diaspora organisations in Athens has a Greek lawyer present who provides free consultations and advice on all migrant-related issues.

In addition, the importance of inter-diaspora activities and programmes stands out, where diaspora organisations from various countries jointly plan and organise activities together, such as summer camps for children, student exchange meetings for youth, etc. Furthermore, modern technology can be utilised in order to provide migrants and diaspora organisation representatives with seminars, workshops or trainings – online (e.g. Webinars) on topics such as business start-ups, investment opportunities, project/proposal writing, obtaining grants, etc. Georgian diaspora organisations in Greece also organise information days where migration-related information is provided to migrants by the lawyers with expertise in local migration legislation.

In many cases, as mentioned by the diaspora members, migrants are not aware of their rights and are expecting more support from the local state authorities. Therefore, a workshop was held on

"How to Create My Own Business" (Economic and Juridical parts) by the well-known Georgian diaspora organisation in Athens in cooperation with the Greek consultants, where migrants were invited to participate. The workshop touched upon the topics of development of business plans and smart investments in addition to the remittances sent back home. It is equally important to provide legal consultation to the migrants. Another Georgian diaspora organisation provides free legal counselling including redirecting migrants to the relevant state authorities. The same organisation has advocated for over ten years for changing the law and making it possible for all underage migrant children, regardless of their status to attend school.

With regard to how exactly can Diaspora contribute and engage in various developments taking place in Georgia, the focus group discussion made several suggestions, namely: by implementing more programmes and projects by diaspora organisations, by holding information exchange meetings/trainings by Georgian migrants who have gained knowledge and experience abroad, by establishing exchange programmes for children or between migrants and diaspora organisations, by encouraging tourism and popularising Georgian and Greek culture where opportunities can be created for the Georgian population as well.

3.1.3. Links with state institutions in Georgia and in Greece

The Embassy of Georgia to the Hellenic Republic, in close cooperation with the Department for Relations with Diaspora of MFA, has been actively engaged to strengthen the cooperation on Governmental level. In 2018, the Embassy of Georgia has initiated signature of Memorandum of Understanding gathering representatives of 41 officially registered Georgian diaspora organisations in Greece to join efforts in popularising Georgian culture in Greece. The MoU also supports better cooperation between the diaspora organisations and Greek state institutions.

However, the importance of paying more attention from the side of the Georgian Government was underlined during the interviews and focus group discussion. For instance, the diaspora organisations would greatly benefit if the Government procured Georgian textbooks for Sunday schools, national dancing costumes (that are nearly impossible to purchase or sew abroad), as well as national musical instruments on a regular basis. In addition, opinions were expressed on co-funding activities for migrants, organising trainings for Sunday school teachers, as well as expansion of the diaspora database. The diaspora organisations would make more impact if given official status (including a change in the Compatriot Law). The establishment of a consultation group for dealing with issues related to the diaspora would support closer dialogue and frequent contact with the local consular representatives. Even though the Embassy is very proactive in Greece, the representatives of Georgian diaspora organisations and active migrants expressed the will of enhanced communication and cooperation.

When it comes to support from the Georgian Government and the kind of support that diaspora requires the following were identified: return and reintegration initiatives, investment and possible business opportunities in Georgia, information on how to receive various grants and projects that can be developed and/or implemented by diaspora organisations abroad and in Georgia. As suggested by one of the diaspora organisation representative, it would be beneficial for international organisations to organise actual workshops, seminars, and webinars, to achieve sustainable results (e.g. trainings on fundraising techniques and proposal writing for diaspora organisations). In terms of

cooperation with the Georgian state institutions, implementation of projects focused on sustainable results and provision of information was named as a priority, for instance:

- Trainings on Georgia's investment and business opportunities such as agricultural programmes that the Government offers to land owners, thus, would enable the migrants to come up with solutions for their future planning and bring them hope for the future;
- Organising cultural events – with participation of famous Georgian singers, dancers, musicians, etc.;
- Provision of information regarding the healthcare in Greece which is one of the biggest issue faced by the migrants in irregular situation;
- Provision of Georgian textbooks to the Sunday Schools;
- Active involvement of the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports of Georgia in arranging cultural events in Greece, support theatre, dance, poetic or other cultural groups;
- Support in transportation of the humanitarian aid from Greece to Georgia.

As mentioned by some of the diaspora organisation representatives, the Consular Section of the Georgian Embassy in Athens is understaffed and lacks resources to handle the issues of Georgian diaspora in Athens that is quite large. For instance, the consular registrations are quite low and the Government lacks information on the statistics, numbers, and employment records of Georgians residing in Greece. On the other hand, the response rate of the Embassy in case of emergencies and critical situations was assessed very positively by the diaspora organisation representatives. As all migrants agree, the most important support from the Georgian Government is attention and recognition of the diaspora.

From the destination country, in this case, the Greek Government, the diaspora organisation representatives expect to see lesser bureaucratic barriers in the process of obtaining grants (special grants or scholarships for diaspora organisations provided by the city or local Government agencies). Furthermore, the need for close cooperation between the Georgian and Greek Governments was expressed, with the possibility to involve NGOs and diaspora organisations in order to come up with strategies for dealing with problems that migrants face in the destination countries (in this case, Greece). In some cases, the local Government supports with reimbursement of communal fees and provision of venues free of charge once the joint events take place with the local administration. In addition, it was highlighted that the Greek NGOs have cooperated closely with the Georgian diaspora organisations while organising joint events, organising health-related information meetings including consultations.

3.1.4. Awareness and impact of the visa-free travel

Visa-free regime has enabled Georgian citizens to travel to the Schengen zone for short-term visits – 90 days in 180 day period. However, the visa-free travel has also enabled many to migrate to the country and stay with an irregular status (crossing the border legally and safely as compared to previous years, where many went through tough journeys via Turkey in order to reach Greece). According to the diaspora organisations, a significant increase can be seen in families moving from Georgia, entering Greece as tourists, and staying in Greece permanently without a regular status. Overstaying and abusing visa-free regime causes many issues for the families themselves, as they face numerous obstacles related to health care, education, housing, employment, integration, safety and more. However, the migrants are well informed about the rules of the visa-free travel and abuse

the regime intentionally. Thus, more information needs to be provided on the consequences of abusing visa-free regime and what to be expected when residing in Greece on irregular basis.

3.1.5. Needs and challenges of Georgian migrants in Greece

The Georgian diaspora organisation representatives and active diaspora members expressed their concern regarding various challenges faced by the Georgian migrants in Greece. The main needs and challenges identified during the interviews and focus group discussion:

a) Strengthening and supporting Sunday Schools
Providing Georgian Sunday Schools with textbooks on a regular basis was named as a priority by the diaspora representatives. Additionally, some of the Sunday Schools have requested the Georgian Government for accreditation so that the certificates the schools provide can be viable. Furthermore, Sunday School teachers require additional qualification trainings from the Georgian side – carried out in Georgia on regular basis.

b) Information provision on local legislation
The diaspora representatives expressed the need of information about the national migration laws and regulations, especially on acquiring regular status. Those migrants residing in Greece for over ten and fifteen years, sometimes do not know what measures to take in order to obtain a residence permit or what labour rights they have. Moreover, migrants also lack information on higher education opportunities for migrant children. The NGO Greek Forum of Migrants, with close cooperation and support from former Mayor of Athens advocated for many years to include a clause in the Greek legislation allowing all children to attend school, regardless of their social background or migration status[56], however this information needs to be further disseminated among migrant communities.

c) Access to healthcare and social security
Another challenge for Georgian migrants in Greece that was identified by the diaspora members was healthcare (including mental health). The diaspora members expressed their concern for the lack of healthcare accessibility for many vulnerable migrants, mostly women, with an irregular status who do not have state (or any other) health insurance. Furthermore, the diaspora organisation representatives underlined the importance of preventative measures in order to solve most of the health-related problems the migrants face as well as regular health checks. Questions were raised whether the Ministries of Health of both countries could arrange a bilateral negotiation to resolve some of the most urgent health issues among migrants (for instance, obligatory children's vaccination) or to set up special contracts/arrangements with specific hospitals where migrants can get treatment.

d) Return and reintegration
Some of the diaspora organisation representatives discussed the issue of return, reciting cases when a voluntarily returned migrant is unable to find their place in the society in Georgia, unable to find

---

[56] (AIDA Asylum Information Database , 2018)

employment and soon after decides to come back to Greece. Due to unfavourable return and reintegration measures in the country, many migrants come back to Greece.

e) Investment and business opportunities

Provision of information about investment and business opportunities in Georgia initiated by the Georgian Government (such as the agricultural initiatives that the Government offers the landowners) would support the idea and implementation of voluntary return.

3.2. Italy

According to the data provided by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy of Italy, by 1 January 2017, Italy was hosting approximately 5 million foreigners, equalling 8.3% of the total population[57]. When it comes to the labour market, the impact of foreign component in the labour market has grown significantly, due to the importance of foreign workers as well as the existence of employment opportunities. Most of the foreign workers, among them Georgian migrants, are employed in collective and personal services, as well as hotels, restaurants, agriculture and construction[58]. The above mentioned was also indicated during the interviews and focus group discussion - the diaspora from Georgia residing in Italy, being majorly female, are mostly employed in personal services such as domestic work whereas the male migrants are mainly employed in agriculture and construction sectors.

The queries to the Georgian Embassy in Italy have different character. As stated by the representatives of Georgian Consulate during the interviews, the majority of Georgian migrants that visit the Consulate mainly enquire on various procedures regarding passports, return documents, etc. It is also worth mentioning that the Georgian Consulate in Italy does not possess full information on Georgian migrants since most are reluctant to complete the consular registration. The hesitation towards consular registration was evident in all three target countries where the irregular status of Georgian migrants was named as the main reason, by the representatives of Georgian Consulates.

3.2.1. General composition of Georgian diaspora and migrant communities

Specific data on Georgian migrants in Italy is not widely available nor has it been a topic of research thus far. This is due to the fact that the number of Georgian migrants in Italy is not as high as in other destination countries (e.g. Russia, USA, Turkey, etc.). According to EUROSTAT there were approximately 15,289 Georgians residing in Italy in 2018.[59] Most of the migrants are located throughout the regions of Bari and Puglia, with a heavy majority being female as indicated by the national statistics office of Italy[60]. The data provided by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Italy during the interview carried out in April 2018 by the ENIGMMA 2 project team, suggests that the country records 13,400 Georgian migrants (with 83% women) that have obtained residence permits in the country.

Most of the migrants come from rural areas of Georgia[61], where they faced severe economic hardship and therefore saw migration as a solution to these problems. Most of the Georgian migrants in Italy have an irregular status as well as people who have arrived recently due to the Georgia-EU visa-free travel. According to the diaspora organisation representatives, over the period

---

[57] (EC Foreigners in the Italian Labour Market (Eighth Annual Report), 2018)

[58] (EC Foreigners in the Italian Labour Market (Eighth Annual Report), 2018)

[59] https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/asylum-and-managed-migration/data/database

[60] (TuttItalia Statistics , 2017)

[61] (State Commission on Migration Issues of Georgia , 2016-2020)

of previous years, mostly women migrated to Italy, because it was easier for women to find employment, however, due to the visa-free travel, more men have been arriving in recent years.

Georgians choose Italy as a destination country for a number of reasons, one of them being favourable migration conditions and another one being personal connections. The potential migrants usually have acquaintances that already are established in Italy and help the newcomers find employment, accommodation, etc. Most of migrant women are desperate to create better living conditions for their children left behind and therefore are unwilling to return to their families in Georgia anytime soon supporting their families from Italy. According to the representatives of diaspora organisations, it is fairly easy to live in Italy as a migrant, without a legal status because migrants are usually not forced out of the country.

Most of the women are employed in domestic sector, working as nannies or caretakers to the elderly or the disabled. Similar to the migrants in Greece, they face harsh working conditions; most of them work throughout the week without a break sometimes even working without a weekend. As for the men, they are usually employed at manual labour jobs, such as restaurants, agriculture and construction; although, many Georgian men arriving to Italy are involved in unlawful activities. According to the Consulate representatives, approximately half of Georgian migrants in Italy do have a regular status, due to the fact that in certain regions obtaining the residence permit is a little easier, also many migrants hire lawyers and ask the families they work for to help them – and get the residence permit. Fraudulent marriages are also another way of obtaining residence permits, since this is not strictly controlled by the Italian Government. There has been an increase in elderly Georgian ladies arriving to Italy for domestic work – as stated by the representatives of Georgian Consulate during the interviews.

Even though many migrants are employed in domestic sector, more and more young persons are learning the language and obtaining additional skills and start working elsewhere, in restaurants, salons and other places. Many men are employed also at restaurants, in deliveries, some are employed in villages in agricultural work. Regardless, jobs for men are extremely hard to come by whereas in southern Italy, in Bari, jobs for women are always available. As stated by the Georgian diaspora organisation representatives, previously most of the migrant women moving to Italy were 40-45 of age maximum, and nowadays there are migrants aged 65-70 year olds, but also youngsters in their 20s. The most challenging issue for the elderly migrant women is the language barrier and this is when some of the Georgian diaspora organisations decided to provide basic Italian language courses to make it easier to adapt to local environment.

3.2.2. Main role of Georgian diaspora organisations (and their potential impact)

In Italy, unlike the other two target countries, the diaspora is mainly scattered and no single joint initiative could be traced. To the question "What is the role of Georgian diaspora?" the majority of the diaspora organisation representatives participating in the focus group discussion answered that connecting diaspora members and supporting such a network of Georgian migrants, providing consultations, maintaining cultural and national identity as well as promoting Georgian culture in the destination country are the most important areas where the diaspora organisations can play the most important part.

The representatives of Georgian diaspora organisations expressed their interest to provide thorough consultations and advice to the migrants. It is important to mention that diaspora organisation representatives admitted to have little knowledge on the local legislation and expressed their wish to be further informed and educated in depth since they are approached by migrants on a regular basis seeking advice and consultations.

When it comes to Georgian diaspora supporting development efforts in their homeland, the migrants agree that diaspora can share the professional experience and knowledge they have received in the destination country with Georgia; they can support local cooperation on cities level and they can actively and positively promote Georgia and its culture abroad. It should also be noted that the diaspora actively participates in Governmental elections and has a significant electoral share.

According to the representatives of Georgian Consulate, the diaspora organisations in Italy lack unity and are not well organised. After the introduction of visa-free travel, the Consulate has observed cases of "rotational work", where family members rotate and work in families for 3 months at a time – without obtaining longer resident status and/or work permit. The representatives of Georgian Consulate also highlighted the importance of knowledge and skills that Georgian migrants gain in Italy, what would be beneficial for the overall development of Georgia in case of their return.

3.2.3 Links with state institutions in Georgia and in Italy

The representatives of diaspora organisations have positively evaluated the work of the Georgian Embassy and Consulate in Italy. The organisation heads are in constant contact with the Consulate – and they receive advice, support and general help. The Georgian diaspora organisations mostly require books and teaching materials from Georgia for maintaining Georgian Sunday Schools and Georgian language courses.

The representatives of diaspora organisations and active diaspora members have also agreed during the focus group discussion that they wish more involvement from the Georgian Government, as well as the private sector, in order to organise more joint cultural events (art exhibitions, literature evenings, concerts, theatre performances, etc.). When it comes to support from the Georgian government in details, the following areas were highlighted:

- Organisation of joint cultural activities;
- Supporting Sunday Schools with Georgian textbooks, national costumes and instruments;
- Provision of information regarding the healthcare in Italy;
- Improved reintegration programme in Georgia for voluntarily returning migrants;
- Provision of information regarding public services available in Georgia;
- Organisation of trainings and education programmes for Sunday School teachers;
- Provision of information to the diaspora organisations regarding the funding opportunities announced by the Georgian State Institutions;
- Engaging diaspora representatives while popularising tourism in Georgia;
- Frequent contact and dialogue with diaspora representatives;
- Provision of information regarding investment and business opportunities in Georgia.

It was also underlined by the representatives of diaspora organisations that frequent communication with the representatives of Georgian state institutions, especially the Department for Diaspora Relations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia, would be extremely important and it would limit the cases of miscommunication. It is worth noting that the Consulate representatives in Italy actively support the migrants, especially when dealing with border guards, hospitals, immigration agencies, penitentiary institutions and more. On the other hand, the Georgian Consulate or the Embassy do not provide the migrants with information on the local legislation, permit-related issues, employment and labour rights, etc. As it was mentioned during the focus group discussion, the migrants themselves obtain above mentioned information from their personal contacts and the diaspora organisations, and therefore, they are not guaranteed that this information is correct and/or up-to-date.

Regarding the links with the governmental institutions in Italy, the focus group participants agreed that there is a good integration scheme when migrants have access to free language courses, financial support with groceries and free urgent medical care upon arriving to Italy. The Italian Government, on the other hand, could include the migrants in the vocational and informal educational programmes. Furthermore, it would be greatly beneficial to have exchange programmes between universities or sports teams or other cultural groups and youth, between Georgia and Italy – this would enhance cooperation between the Government institutions and diaspora organisations, as stated by one of the Georgian diaspora organisation representative during the interview.

3.2.4. Awareness and impact of the visa-free travel

With the introduction of the visa-free travel with the EU in March 2017, some Georgian migrants have used this as an opportunity to migrate to EU Member States by abusing visa-free regime, including to Italy. As a result, the cases of overstaying are quite frequent. According to the representatives of diaspora organisations, more families have been arriving to Italy since the establishment of visa-free regime. It was also noted during the focus group discussion that the migrants are ill-informed about the consequences of abusing the visa-free regime.

3.2.5. Needs and challenges of Georgian migrants in Italy

The Georgian diaspora organisation representatives and active diaspora members expressed their concern regarding various challenges faced by the Georgian migrants in Italy. The main needs and challenges identified during the interviews and focus group discussion:

a) **Strengthening and supporting Sunday Schools**
Provision of Georgian textbooks, national costumes and instruments on a regular basis was recommended. Further, continuous training of the Sunday School teachers was mentioned.

b) **Information provision on local legislation**
There is a serious lack of information and access to information on all topics, especially labour rights while the cases of labour condition violations are frequent. Consultations on legal issues are highly demanded by the migrants in Italy, especially in Rome where there is no possibility of getting legal

support free of charge. The challenge comes to the procedures related to obtaining the residence permit (the so-called *"Permesso di Soggiorno")*.

In addition, the Georgian migrants lack information on national Italian legislation regarding the legalisation of driver's licenses.

c) Access to healthcare and social security
The issue related to healthcare was stated as the most pressing among Georgian migrant women, including mental health problems. According to the diaspora organisation representatives, it would be suitable to bring in a team of doctors and psychologists from Georgia periodically, to give migrants basic diagnostics.

The issue related to the pension fund needs to be paid more attention to as the migrants are unable to participate in the Georgian pension scheme after moving to another country.

d) Certification of diplomas
Another challenging area was defined as certification of Georgian higher education degrees in Italy and certifying informal and vocational education in place.

e) Strengthening of Consular services
The only Georgian diplomatic representation in Italy is based in Rome. Thus, the concern was expressed regarding the difficulty to cover the issues that migrants face all over the territory of Italy, especially in the region of Bari where there is the large concentration of Georgian migrants. In this case it would also be beneficial to improve the Consular consultations provided over the phone.

Overall, the main concerns in Italy for Georgian migrants include access to information, related to various subjects. Also as indicated by one of the diaspora organisation representatives: *"Our biggest problem is that the destination country offers us more than our homeland".*

3.3. Spain

Migration related issues in Spain have become more prominent since the 1990s. Most migrants come from countries such as Romania, Morocco, Ecuador and Colombia as well as the UK, Italy, Bulgaria, China and Bolivia[62]. Considering the recent mix migration inflows in Europe, Spain has not received that many migrants as Greece and Italy[63].

According to the interview carried out in June 2018 with the representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation of Spain, 11-12% of the current population of the country consist of migrants. According to EUROSTAT data, there were about 10,898 Georgian citizens residing in Spain in 2018[64]. Interestingly enough, the Spanish Government has practically no issues with integration of migrants, given that hate speech and hate crime rates are extremely low – as outlined by one of the academia representatives during the interview. At the same time, the country does face high unemployment rates, including unemployment among migrants. Most of the sectors where migrants are usually employed include construction, domestic work, agriculture, tourism and small businesses.

3.3.1. General composition of Georgian diaspora and migrant communities

As a result of the interviews and focus group discussion carried out in June-July 2018 in Spain by the ENIGMMA 2 project team, the following profile could be drawn: majority of the Georgian migrants in Spain are employed in domestic sector (cleaners, housekeepers, nannies, caregivers for the elderly, etc.); most of the migrants are female; and according to the interviewed diaspora members, a common observation seems to be that some male migrants from Georgia are involved in unlawful activities and generally do not contribute positively to the image of Georgian migrants in Spain.

Certainly, the profile of Georgian migrants in Spain has changed over the last decade. During the mid-to late 1990s, migrants from Georgia moving to Spain were highly educated, trying to escape the severe economic as well as socio-political situation in post-Soviet Georgia. However, nowadays, the majority of migrants have primary education, come from rural parts of Georgia, with a sole goal of finding employment and economic gain. The immigration of young Georgians to Spain is also evident.

As it was mentioned during the focus group, Spain is being chosen as a destination country mainly because of already existing personal networks.

3.3.2. Main role of Georgian diaspora organisations (and their potential impact)

Most of the Georgian diaspora organisations in Spain focus on Sunday Schools, as preservation of Georgian culture, language and identity are perceived as the most important areas where the diaspora organisations can contribute.

---

[62] (IOM , 2018)
[63] (Migration Policy Center , 2018)
[64] (EUROSTAT , March 6 2019)

Regarding the awareness on local migration related legislation, the heads of Georgian diaspora organisations are more knowledgeable than the rest of the migrants in Spain. The diaspora organisations provide regular consultations to the Georgian migrants and think that it is extremely important to act as a mediator. In addition, the focus group participants have identified the role of diaspora organisations as those who provide help and support to Georgian migrants in the destination country, including support with collecting documents in order to get the residence permit and redirecting the migrants to the relevant state authorities; providing support with translation and interpretation; health-related problems; helping to find employment and sometimes providing the migrants with temporary accommodation; organising fundraising campaigns for different causes; providing education and maintaining national identity, etc.

Furthermore, according to the interviewees, the responsibilities of diaspora organisations should focus more on arranging cultural events and activities promoting Georgian heritage in cooperation with Georgian and national state authorities.

3.3.3. Links with state institutions in Georgia and in Spain

The representatives of diaspora organisations and active diaspora members have agreed during the focus group discussion that they would wish more involvement from the Georgian Government, in order to organise more joint cultural events and exchange of information. When it comes to support from the Georgian Government the following areas were highlighted:

- Organisation of joint cultural activities (e.g. with participation of Georgian national dancing ensembles in Spain);
- Supporting Sunday Schools with Georgian textbooks, national costumes and instruments;
- Organisation of trainings and education programmes for Sunday School teachers;
- Introduction of more television programmes that feature success stories of Georgians abroad including in Spain; incorporating more web programmes, webinars, seminars, workshops online, or generally incorporating additional online resources for the migrants;
- Provision of information regarding the local migration related legislation;
- Involve more successful Georgians into the positive development of the country and its future;
- Improved reintegration programme in Georgia for voluntarily returning migrants;
- Provision of information regarding public services available in Georgia;
- Frequent contact, dialogue and cooperation with diaspora organisations and active diaspora representatives;
- Provision of information regarding funding opportunities in Spain (local NGOs/IOs);
- Affordable prices for getting Georgian passports in destination countries.

The diaspora representatives find it important to receive information on what programmes the MFA (or other state institutions) has to offer and how the Embassy can support the diaspora more. On the other hand, the interviewees agreed that the diaspora has a big role when it comes to Georgia's further development as a country and positively portrays the Georgian culture within the Spanish society. As stated during the interviews, the diaspora should maintain the Georgian identity, support

newly arrived migrants with integration into the destination country as well as create positive attitude and promote Georgian culture in the destination country.

Another important question was raised by one of the diaspora organisation representatives during the focus group discussion – "Why isn't there a database of migrants, including their qualifications and professions?" Many agreed that there is a need to link Georgian migrants from all over the world with each other. Many networking opportunities are missed due to the fact that diaspora are not well-connected.

Diaspora leaders also made several suggestions targeted at professional skills growth of young people in Georgia, as they have seen examples of in Spain. Professional education (such as vocational schools and institutes) should also be established all over Georgia, especially in rural areas, in order to provide the youth with skills and knowledge for agricultural-related work, or other vocational professions. There is an interesting children's camp in Spain "La Granja" where children are taught how to care for farm animals, get to know the nature, and more. Similar camp would be a success in Georgia as well, maybe to attract migrant children for a summer camp in rural parts of Georgia.

3.3.4. Awareness and impact of the visa-free travel

Some of the well-known and respected diaspora members acknowledge the importance and benefits of the visa-free regime. However, when there is a high demand for employment in Spain (such as domestic work, restaurant staff, cleaning services, etc.) it would have been better to have the right for temporary work for Georgian migrants instead of short-term visit opportunity which does not provide a right for work.

Following the establishment of visa-free travel, there has been an influx of Georgian migrants to Spain, some of them later staying without a regular status and applying for asylum or residence permit. It has also been observed by the diaspora representatives that the newcomers nowadays are families as opposed to individual persons migrating before the visa-free.

3.3.5. Needs and challenges of Georgian migrants in Spain

Similarly like during other assessment missions, interviews and focus group discussion in Spain included analysis of the main needs of the Georgian migrants in Spain:

a) **Strengthening and supporting Sunday Schools**
The diaspora organisation representatives need to be supplied with Sunday School materials; the textbooks on Georgian language, history and culture should be developed for migrant children specifically considering their basic knowledge of Georgian language. The premises for Sunday Schools should be provided by the local Government.

b) **Information provision on national legislation in Spain**
Consultations on legal issues are highly demanded by the migrants in Spain, and this is where the diaspora organisations could contribute greatly with the informational support from Georgian and Spanish authorities. Most of the migrants agree that one of the leading challenges is receiving the

legal status (residence permit) in Spain; therefore, potential migrants shall information on these challenges before their travel and thus make an informed migration decision.

In addition, similarly like in Italy, the Georgian migrants in Spain also lack information on national Spanish legislation and practice regarding the legalisation of driver's licenses.

c)   Access to healthcare and social security
Differently than in other two project countries, healthcare was not identified as an issue for migrants in Spain. However the issue of pension scheme was raised by the diaspora representatives.

d)   Strengthening of Consular services
The diaspora representatives would like to have more frequent communication with the Georgian Consulate and Embassy in Spain and in this case it would also be beneficial to improve the Consular consultations provided to the diaspora members. More cooperation would also be beneficial in organising joint cultural activities or small-scale projects.

e)   Lack of information on diaspora issues in the media
The Georgian diaspora members in Spain feel neglected by the media outlets that do not pay proper attention to the amount of valuable work that the diaspora organisations are doing in terms of preserving Georgian culture abroad. On contrary, "fake news" has appeared especially on social media regarding Georgian migrants. There have been numerous cases when falsified information being published in online news sources has negatively affected some of the migrant community members in Spain (and not only in Spain, in Greece and Italy interviewed diaspora members mentioned the same issue). One of the diaspora organisation representatives expressed their concern over the importance of fact-checking and monitoring fake news by the Georgian state authorities.

f)   Investment and business opportunities
Provision of information about investment and business opportunities in Georgia should be initiated by the Georgian Government.

In addition, the diaspora pays major emphasis to Georgian culture in Spain where it is important to hold cultural events with the involvement of local population, and introducing them to vibrant Georgian culture. Furthermore, the Georgian as well as the Spanish media outlets should broadcast more successful stories and useful activities implemented by the Georgians abroad.

SECTION 4. Summary and Recommendations

4.1. Summary of Main Needs and Challenges of Georgian diaspora in Greece, Italy and Spain

The strong feeling of belonging to Georgian identity and nation among Georgian diaspora and migrant communities was observed in all three countries. However, the role of Georgian diaspora organisations is not perceived by diaspora organisations only limited to promote Georgian culture and preserving Georgian identity among the younger generation of Georgians residing abroad; in many cases, the representatives of diaspora organisations have consultative function giving advice and support to the Georgian migrants on the inquiries regarding local legislation, residency and employment issues. The diaspora organisations design educational courses not only for children but for adults, the citizens of destination countries willing to study Georgian language. Moreover, the diaspora organisations act as mobilisers of humanitarian aid during the critical situations in Georgia (e.g. 2008 Russia-Georgia War; 2015 flooding in Tbilisi).

However, the diaspora organisations are in need of more support from the Georgian state institutions, especially when it comes to capacities of Sunday schools, provision of information on business opportunities in Georgia and reintegration measures available back home and communication with the diaspora and migrant communities.

Table 7. The main needs identified by diaspora representatives during ENIGMMA 2 project in-depth interviews and focus group discussions, March-June 2018

Area of support	Description of measures
Strengthening and supporting Sunday Schools	Provision of textbooks and re-training of teachers in Georgia or on-line on a regular basis; Recognition of Georgian primary education certificates.
Legal information provision	Enabling **diaspora to provide to other migrants**: - Information on migration related legislation in destination countries and migrants' rights (labour and other), as well as other important rules and regulations (driving licence procedure, etc.); - Information on visa-free regime, consequences of abuse; - Support in primary integration activities in destination country (language support, registration, access to social services, etc.). Support would include regular collection of above information and organisation of workshops and trainings for diaspora organisations leaders.
Access to healthcare	Negotiations with national authorities in destination countries on provision of basic health care services to migrants in irregular situation;

	Special focus on mental health – which sometimes is not covered even if migrants have insurance in the destination country; Organisation of medical doctors' missions from Georgia to destination countries for at least periodical medical and health support.
Access to social care	Negotiations on pension schemes to be transferrable between destination countries and Georgia; Information provision to Georgian diaspora on new Georgia's pension system and negotiations on potential access into the system on voluntarily basis.
Return and reintegration	Improved reintegration programmes and provision of pre-departure information to potential returnees on return opportunities.
Recognition of diplomas	The procedure of apostille needs to be simplified in Georgia; Possibility of informal education recognition.
Strengthening of Consular services	Lack of full territorial coverage of Consular services (e.g. Italy) and responsiveness of the Consular staff to the concerns of migrants; Possibility to broaden consultations by phone.
Investment and business opportunities in Georgia	Provision of information on relevant State initiatives would support the idea of return; Sharing with diaspora information business opportunities, labour market analysis, needs of private sector, etc. Organisation of missions, trainings, workshops for diaspora organisations and migrants on business climate in Georgia.
Publicity on the activities of diaspora organisations and success stories	More information in media outlets on the activities of diaspora organisations and active diaspora members; Promoting success stories of Georgians abroad; Continuation of diaspora achievements recognition programmes.

The Georgian diaspora organisations have established professional contacts with local authorities that often provide venues for the activities organised by the diaspora organisations free of charge, support in dissemination of information and provide guidance on the legal concerns.

Regarding cooperation with Georgian state institutions, the Georgian diaspora representatives expect more frequent and regular communication with the Georgian diplomatic representations abroad and the Department for Diaspora Relations of MFA. Information exchange and brief consultations would also be beneficial with the Public Services Development Agency in Georgia that offers many services on distance to the Georgian citizens residing abroad. The Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports of Georgia could cooperate more and coordinate the planned cultural events with the representatives of diaspora organisations, also organise joint events for the promotion of Georgian culture abroad. Facilitated by the state institutions, cooperation with private sector in Georgia, may foster return and investment back in Georgia by the diaspora representatives.

In addition, there is a lack of information on national migration related legislation in the destination countries and labour rights, thus the cases of labour mistreatment are frequent in all three destination countries. The diaspora organisations also act as mediators in such cases between the employers and employees, especially in the cases of employment in the domestic sector. According to the respondents, elderly Georgian migrants usually have difficulties studying local language in the destination countries, because of time constraints mostly, and face extreme hardship getting to know their rights and local migration legislation. Furthermore, the migrants lack information on the legislative changes in Georgia which are in particular relevant for them. For instance, one of the biggest concerns of Georgian migrants regarding permitting the dual citizenship has been tackled by the Georgian Government[65]. However, according to the heads of diaspora organisations, majority of migrants possessed no information regarding the aforementioned legislative amendments.

It was evident that the Georgian diaspora is in possession of information on the rules and procedures of EU-Georgia visa-free regime. However, the diaspora representatives lack information on the consequences of the abuse of the regime and suspension mechanism. Moreover, the representatives of diaspora organisations expressed willingness to act as information agents in communicating the rightful information regarding the visa-free movement to the newcomers and potential migrants.

---

[65] Organic Law of Georgia on Georgian Citizenship,
https://matsne.gov.ge/en/document/view/2342552?publication=4

4.2. Conclusions and Recommendations

The migration policy overview outlined in the Section 1 of this publication makes it evident that the situation differs in the three project target countries according to the national context, demographic, social and economic characteristics of Greece, Italy and Spain. However, several similar features and common pattern of legislative framework can be traced on a policy level as well.

All three project target countries became attractive countries of destination for international migrants between the 1980s and 1990s that was the time of severe economic hardship in Georgia, succeeding the dissolution of Soviet Union in 1991 and resulting in a major wave of emigration. Due to the high demand on the labour market, the immigration to the three destination countries was rising rapidly in numbers and the countries were soon faced with the influx of irregular migrants. This is when the European countries have started the implementation of regularisation programmes that have caused wide debate over its positive and negative effects, with some voices condemning the action to attract more irregular migrants rather than managing regular migration flows.

The nature of modern-day migration and variation in composition and quantities of migrants arriving to Europe has resulted in changes of migration policy course and application of firmer policy measures to regulate migration. However, the integration policies of the three target countries still make it possible for the migrants to become full-fledged members of the society. Georgian migrants choose Greece, Italy and Spain as destination countries due to number of reasons related to pull as well as push factors and historic ties as it is in case of Greece.

Recommendations

In each destination country there are number of active and resourceful Georgian diaspora organisations, as well as active diaspora members. Thus, the strengthened cooperation can bring effective results.

Below are the recommendations developed as a result of the given Case Study:

Improved cooperation and coordination:
- In all three project target countries the Georgian diaspora organisations are rather scattered, although some coordination and cooperation exists. It would be beneficial to use the example suggested by the diaspora organisation representatives and establish diaspora council (Coordination Council), that would consist of elected members from each diaspora organisation that is active in one or another country. This enhanced coordination between the representatives of diaspora organisations themselves in each country would enable quick exchange of latest information shared by the Embassy and MFA, or other state institutions, news on legislative changes in the destination country and in Georgia, etc. This would also make the coordination on side of consular units and MFA easier: they would only need to inform a chairman of the Council who would then inform other members of the Council, and subsequently all diaspora organisations would receive the information in a timely and structured manner. Such initiative could be proposed and implemented by the Department for Relations with Diaspora of MFA;

- Improvement of coordination and cooperation between the diaspora organisations, the Department for Relations with Diaspora (MFA) and Georgian diplomatic representations needs to be considered. All three agencies shall work in constant collaboration and cooperation: diaspora organisations submitting reports and ad-hoc updates to both institutions; and MFA departments providing diaspora organisations with, for instance, monthly updates on legislative changes (relevant for diaspora, migration, and return), existing or planned programmes implementation, changes in administration structure, as well as updates and summaries of activities from diaspora organisations themselves (for broader exchange between diasporas in different countries, lessons learned, etc.);
- Engagement of Georgian state institutions in diaspora relations cooperation. This could take place in a way of organising joint missions, regular update sessions with the heads of diaspora organisations or diaspora councils (Coordination Council) via Skype, if elected. The ordinary missions of the representatives of the mentioned institutions at the management level, might be always combined with visiting diaspora organisations or council – in this way, cooperation will also be cost-efficient;
- Cooperation between diaspora organisations and Georgian state institutions could be strengthened in terms of crisis management, mobilising humanitarian aid and campaigning;

Information provision:
- Empowering the diaspora organisations as information agents can bring many benefits with regard to information spreading. Active members of diaspora organisations could be trained and function as information agents on topics that are relevant for the Georgian migrants in the respective countries. These topics could include information on the legal labour framework in the destination country, awareness raising on visa-free regime, information on attaining residence permits, registering children at schools or social services registration, and other relevant integration questions, threats of THB, labour exploitation;
- Informing diaspora about legal residence and other legal provisions in the destination country. The ENIGMMA 2 project team has addressed one of the main needs of Georgian diaspora and migrant communities in the three destination countries and has developed Guidelines on Migration Legislation for Greece, Italy and Spain.[66] Georgian migrants can benefit from the Guidelines as they explain in understandable way the legal framework of the respective destination country. The Guidelines are available online in Georgian language. The practice of developing similar Guidelines targeted at other destination countries of Georgian migrants could be further taken up the Georgian Government;
- Visa-free regime is an issue that currently is very important for both Georgian Government and potential and actual travellers. It also became evident after the interviews and the focus group discussions that there is some abuse of the visa-free regime regarding overstaying in the destination countries. That means that information campaigns carried out by the Georgian Government should inform Georgians who are emigrating on the risks and circumstances of overstaying in EU MS. Information campaigns should also increasingly target parents and families as it was mentioned by diaspora members in each studied destination country that more and more families arrive and overstay in EU since the enactment of visa-free regime;

---

[66] Diaspora Engagement, Guidelines on Migration Legislation, http://www.enigmma.ge/diaspora-engagement/

Capacity of the Department for Relations with Diaspora of MFA:
- Structured and regular collection and analysis of data on Georgian migrants abroad needs to be enhanced. Department for Relations with Diaspora (MFA) could widely share the "Diaspora bulletin" which could be published on MFA and Embassy web-pages for instance. This would allow better exchange of information, design more efficient policies to protect Georgian migrant and diaspora communities abroad, and foster trust between the Georgian Government and its institutions, especially the Embassies and Consulates, and the diaspora organisations and its members;
- Collect, analyse and share information on business start-up procedures and conditions in Georgia with the diaspora organisations, such as initiatives on investment and business opportunities in Georgia launched by the Georgian Government (e.g. the agricultural initiatives that the Government offers the landowners). All of the aforementioned, would support the idea of voluntary return;

Capacity of the Consulates and Embassies:
- Diaspora members from all three countries mentioned that support to their Sunday Schools is needed. In this regard, in addition to the Department for Relations with Diaspora (MFA), the Embassies and Consulates in the respective countries could provide stronger support and cooperation to the diaspora organisations, e.g. inviting them to cultural events, organising joint activities, fundraisers and etc.;
- Joint conferences or get-togethers for diaspora organisations in each destination country could further foster the exchange. If the Embassies or Consulates take such activities under their umbrella, facilities could be offered free of charge by the local municipalities. Further, diaspora organisations would contribute with catering for workshops and small trainings and with Georgian national dances and songs for various cultural activities. Other diaspora groups could be invited as well as the local population. This would contribute to an increased positive exposure of the diaspora organisations as well as to integration measures and further cooperation ideas and networking opportunities for diaspora members;

Capacity of the Diaspora:
- Establish closer links with the state institutions on local level in the destination countries in order to improve the image of Georgians abroad and start acting as integration partners for new comers, advising on residence conditions, social services, as well actively working on prevention of irregular migration;
- Collect, analyse and share with migrant communities and active diaspora members information on business start-up procedures and conditions in destination countries, such as investment and business opportunities;
- Provide advice to diaspora members on capacity building possibilities (language courses, vocational training and etc.);
- Collect and share with the Department for Relations with Diaspora (MFA) information on existing capacities, qualifications and experience of diaspora members in order to broaden engagement possibilities;
- In general, act as information agents in terms of awareness raising on different issues (e.g. related to visa-free movement, migration legislation, fundraising for diaspora organisations and so on).

References

AIDA Asylum Information Database . (2018). *Greek Council for Refugees* . Retrieved from http://www.asylumineurope.org/reports/country/greece/reception-conditions/employment-and-education/access-education

AIDA Asylum Information Database. (2017). *Country Report: Italy.* file:///C:/Users/Talia/Downloads/aida_it_2018update%20(1).pdf: AIDA.

Arango, J. (2016, March). *Spain: New Emigration Policies Needed for an Emerging Diaspora*. Retrieved from Migration Policy Institute: https://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/spain-new-emigration-policies-needed-emerging-diaspora

Arango, J. (March 2013). Exceptional in Europe? Spain's Experience with Immigration and Integration. *Migration Policy Institute* , https://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/exceptional-europe-spains-experience-immigration-and-integration.

Baldwin-Edwards, M., & Kraler, A. (2009). *Regularisations in Europe; Study on practices in the area of regularisation of illegally staying third-country.* ICMPD, Vienna : http://research.icmpd.org/fileadmin/Research-Website/Project_material/REGINE/Regine_report_january_2009_en.pdf .

Cavounidis, J. (December 2015). *Migration Policy Institute.* https://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/changing-face-emigration-harnessing-potential-new-greek-diaspora: The Changing Face of Emigration: Harnessing the Potential of the New Greek Diaspora. Retrieved from https://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/changing-face-emigration-harnessing-potential-new-greek-diaspora

Council of Europe (Parliamentary Assembly). (2007). *Report on: Regularisation programmes for irregular migrants.* https://www.unhcr.org/4b9fac519.pdf. Retrieved from https://www.unhcr.org/4b9fac519.pdf

Council Regulation (EC) No 539/2001 . (15 March 2001). https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=celex%3A32001R0539.

EASO. (2019, March 5). *Latest asylum trends – March 2019*. Retrieved from https://www.easo.europa.eu/latest-asylum-trends

EC European Migration Network. (2011). *Greece Factsheet .* https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/european_migration_network/reports/docs/emn-studies/asylum-migration/11.greece_factsheet_institutional_chart_october2012_en.pdf.

EC European Migration Network. (2017). *ENM Country Factsheet - Spain 2017*. Retrieved from European Commission, Organisation of Asylum and Migration Policies: https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/26a_spain_country_factsheet_2017_en_0.pdf

EC Foreigners in the Italian Labour Market (Eighth Annual Report). (2018). *EUROPEAN WEB SITE ON INTEGRATION Migrant Integration Information and good practices*. Retrieved from https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/librarydoc/foreigners-in-the-italian-labour-market-eighth-annual-report

EC Fourth progress report on Georgia's implementation of the action plan on visa. (2015). *Report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council.* https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/e-library/documents/policies/international-affairs/general/docs/fourth_report_georgia_implementation_action_plan_visa_liberalisation_en.pdf.

EUROSTAT . (March 6 2019). *EUROSTAT Data, Asylulm and Managed Migration, Residence Permits.* https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/asylum-and-managed-migration/data/database.

EUROSTAT. (2018). Retrieved from https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/home?

Finotelli, C., & Arango, J. (2011). Regularisation of unauthorised immigrants in Italy and Spain: determinants and effects. *Documents d'Anàlisi Geogràfica 2011, vol. 57/3*, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/255708598_Regularisation_of_Unauthorised_Immigrants_in_Italy_and_Spain_Determinants_and_Effects.

Foreign Policy Strategy of the Government of Georgia . (2019-2022). *MInistry of Foreign Affairs .* http://mfa.gov.ge/getattachment/MainNav/ForeignPolicy/ForeignPolicyStrategy/2019-2022-clebis-saqartvelos-sagareo-politikis-strategia.pdf.aspx.

Frontex . (2018). *Migratory Routes*. Retrieved from Situation in 2018: https://frontex.europa.eu/along-eu-borders/migratory-routes/eastern-mediterranean-route/

Gehrke, L., & Pluim, M. (2018, 16 May). *The Era of Migration - the next 25 years*. Retrieved from ICMPD : https://www.icmpd.org/news-centre/news-detail/the-era-of-migration-the-next-25-years-by-lukas-gehrke-and-martijn-pluim/

GEOSTAT. (2014). *2014 General Population Census* . Retrieved from http://census.ge/en/results/census1/migrationout

Government of Italy The Presidency of the Council of Ministers. (2018). Comunicato stampa del Consiglio dei Ministri n. 20. *Governo Italiano*, http://www.governo.it/articolo/comunicato-stampa-del-consiglio-dei-ministri-n-20/10026.

Hellenic Statistical Authority. (2011). *Demographic Characteristics* . Retrieved from http://www.statistics.gr/en/statistics/-/publication/SAM03/-

ICMPD (ERGEM Project) . (2014). *Georgian Diaspora and Migrant Communities in Germany, Greece and Turkey.* https://www.icmpd.org/fileadmin/ICMPD-Website/ICMPD-Website_2011/ICMPD_General/News/Georgia_Study/Full_Version_web_en.pdf.

IOM . (2018). *IOM Country Profile - Spain*. Retrieved from https://www.iom.int/countries/spain

ISTAT. (2018). *Instituto Nazionale di Statistica* . Retrieved from Demography in Figures : http://demo.istat.it/str2016/index_e.html

ISTAT Annual Report . (2018). *Instituto Nazionale di Statistica* . Retrieved from ANNUAL REPORT 2018 - THE STATE OF THE NATION: https://www.istat.it/en/archivio/217955

Labadze, L., & Tukhashvili, M. (2013). *Costs and Benefits of Labour Mobility between the EU and the Eastern Partnership Partner Countries.* http://legacy.iza.org/files/ENPIgeorgia.pdf: Country Report on Georgia .

Law of Georgia on Georgian Citizenship 2018, https://matsne.gov.ge/en/document/view/2342552?publication=4

Law of Georgia on Compatriots Residing Abroad and Diaspora Organisations. (n.d.). http://migration.commission.ge/files/law_on_compatriots_eng.pdf.

Legislative Herald of Georgia . (2017). *Resolution of the Parliament of Georgia 742-lls.* https://matsne.gov.ge/en/document/view/3656689?publication=0.

Migration Policy Center . (2018). *Spain Factsheet* . Retrieved from http://www.migrationpolicycentre.eu/spain/

Migration Policy Institute. (2012, March 18). *Greece: Illegal Immigration in the Midst of Crisis*. Retrieved from https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/greece-illegal-immigration-midst-crisis/

Ministry of Labour, Migration and Social Security of Spain. (2017). *Report on Residence Permits Granted to Foreigners by Nationalities.* http://extranjeros.mitramiss.gob.es/es/Estadisticas/operaciones/flujos-autorizacion/2017/Residentes_PRFlujo2017.pdf.

OECD . (2015). *International Migration Outlook.* https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/social-issues-migration-health/international-migration-outlook-2015/preliminary-trends-in-international-migration-flows-to-oecd-countries-in-2014_migr_outlook-2015-table22-en.

Scotto, A. (2017, August 24). *Migration Policy Institute*. Retrieved from From Emigration to Asylum Destination, Italy Navigates Shifting Migration Tides: https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/emigration-asylum-destination-italy-navigates-shifting-migration-tides

State Commission on Migration Issues of Georgia . (2016-2020). *Migration Strategy of Georgia .* http://migration.commission.ge/files/migration_strategy_2016-2020.pdf.

State Commission on Migration Issues of Georgia . (2017). *Migration Profile* . http://migration.commission.ge/files/migration_profile_2017_eng__final_.pdf .

State Commission on Migration Issues of Georgia. (2016). *Brief Migration Profile on Remittances .* http://www.migration.commission.ge/files/eng.pdf : SCMI .

The Embassy of Georgia in the Hellenic Republic . (2018). *The Ambassador of Georgia meets with the Minister of Labour and Social Protection of Greece .* http://greece.mfa.gov.ge/default.aspx?sec_id=416&lang=1&NewsID=134279.

The Ministry of Labour and Social Policies. (2018). *Foreigners in the Italian Labour Market (Eighth Annual Report).* https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/librarydoc/foreigners-in-the-italian-labour-market-eighth-annual-report.

The Ministry of Labour, Migration and Social Security of Spain. (2018). *Datos y Publicaciones*. Retrieved from http://www.mitramiss.gob.es/es/index.htm

TuttItalia Statistics . (2017). *Demography Statistics* . Retrieved from https://www.tuttitalia.it/statistiche/cittadini-stranieri-2017/

UNHCR. (2018, June 22). Retrieved from Greece Country Profile : https://www.unhcr.org/greece.html

Annexes

I.   Focus Group Discussion Guideline
II.   Interview Questions for Diaspora Organisations
III.   Interview Questions for External Actors

Focus Group Discussions – ENIGMMA 2

Focus Group Discussion Guidelines

The purpose of the focus group is to gather information, to organise it and to bring forward elements for the analysis related to the strengthening of ties between Georgian migrants abroad, Georgian migrants/ Diaspora organisations and the Georgian state. The research strategy of the focus group aims at a collective reflection among the participants about issues that are of professional or personal concern to them. It is important for the organisers of the discussion to emphasise that the focus group is a group analysis where the participants are not merely study objects, but actively participate in the production of knowledge by bringing forward their practical experiences, attitudes and perceptions of real situations with which they have been confronted. The results of the focus group discussion will be used for both:

- Case studies on Georgian migrants destination countries: Greece, Italy and Spain;

- Information Days for the diaspora members in Greece, Italy and Spain.

Possible participants of the discussion:
- Representatives of Diaspora organisations in three destination countries (3 – 4 organisations), e.g. chairpersons; active representatives/ members;

- Georgian migrants – actively participating in diaspora organisations work and/ or migrants communities leaders;

- Representatives of Georgian state institutions participating in the assessment mission (MFA and SCMI Secretariat);

- Representatives of the Georgian consular services in the destination country;

- Representatives of the ENIGMMA 2 project team participating in the mission (ICMPD);

Discussion moderator:
- ICMPD representatives.

Introduction

The focus group discussion should start with a brief explanation of the research within the ENIGMMA 2 project and the objectives and rationale of the research, the purpose of the research group, what other research instruments are used and what the outcome of the research will be. It will also be important to emphasise that the participants of the focus group discussion have been chosen as experts due to their personal experiences and professional knowledge. An exposition of the method should be provided: the focus group is a group analysis where the participants are not merely study objects, but actively participate in the production of knowledge by bringing forward their practical experience of real situations with which they have been confronted.

The moderator should also emphasise that everything discussed is confidential – individual responses will not be published nor transmitted to third parties. The ENIGMMA 2 project team will have access to the discussion materials, but solely as part of the research. The discussion will only be used for

research purposes. But it is important to ask if the discussion may be recorded, insisting on the confidentiality, but also on the necessity of it to facilitate the analysis.

The project factsheet may be used for the project description, emphasising that the study is part of the wider project implemented by ICMPD in cooperation with the State Commission on Migration Issues of Georgia. The study involves qualitative research with diaspora organisations, migrants and other stakeholders in the three countries (Greece, Italy and Spain) as well as public authorities in respective countries. The study focuses on mapping the Georgian diaspora in the mentioned destination countries aiming at enhancing institutional knowledge in Georgia on Georgian migrants' situation and needs. The study will examine the main features of Georgian diaspora and migrants, support mechanisms for Georgian migrants in the destination country and country of origin, ties between Georgian diaspora/ migrants and Georgia, return possibilities, and remittances situation.

The aim of the focus group discussion is to collect the views and opportunities on further development of ties between Georgian migrants and Georgia, taking into account specific needs of both sides and practical/ technical/ financial/ social aspects of these ties. Further, the issue of possible cooperation between Georgian institutions and diaspora organisations with state institutions in the destination countries should be discussed.

The focus group discussion will take place within the assessment missions to Greece, Italy and Spain. The ICMPD ENIGMMA 2 team will have already collected some background information. In addition, other research instruments will have been piloted and in use. However, there will be still time to conduct additional interviews until the end of the research activities in case of need and according to the results of the focus group discussions.

The introduction of the project should be followed by the introduction of the participants of the focus group to each other.

The introduction should **not last longer than 15 minutes**. In order to facilitate this, the project implementation team can send a presentation of the research beforehand, so that this does not have to be repeated extensively during the meeting.

Guiding questions for the focus group discussion

General (relevant to all groups)

- Introductory information: What are the main activities of your association? How many members do you have? How do you do your networking and what challenges have you discovered in this regard?

- What are the main needs of Georgian migrants in Greece/Italy/Spain? How could they be supported by the Georgian state/ diaspora organisations or the local government?

- What kind of support have diaspora organisations already received from Georgian state institutions? What about other institutions such as the local government, NGOs, etc.?

- How well are you informed about local migration related legislation? Do you think migrants have access to local legislation? Do migrants receive legal counselling? (Note to moderator: Here you can introduce them to the Legal Guidelines)

- What is the main role of diaspora organisations: position of migrants, organisations, Georgian state institutions, other stakeholders (if involved); What services does the diaspora organisation provide? What is the profile of a typical diaspora member?

- What is the cooperation between Georgian diaspora organisations in the destination country?

- What support to diaspora organisations is needed from state institutions in Georgia in order to maintain ties between Georgians abroad and Georgia (view of different stakeholders)? How could this support be organised/ provided? What support could the diaspora organisations provide to the state institutions?

  o Is there any support needed from the local (Greek, Italian, Spanish) government?

- What is the most important and relevant information that Georgian state institutions could share with migrants?

- Is there a need for closer cooperation between diaspora institutions and Georgian state institutions/ public authorities in the destination countries? In what areas? What are the interests of migrants/ potential migrants in this regard?

- What strategies can be used for engaging the diaspora in Georgia's development?

Format of the focus group discussion

1. Size and composition of the focus group

The focus group discussion should be organised as a round table meeting where, depending on the number of participants, the separate working groups could be organised. Ideally, the working group should be mixed by including participants "from Georgia" (assessment mission participants from state institutions, consular officers) and participants "from abroad" (Diaspora organisations leaders, migrants). The ideal number of participants is 12 to 15 people.

2. Preparing and leading the focus group

The facilitator of the discussion should suggest the division to the working groups after the introductory part of the meeting. Two or more working groups should receive one or two inter-related questions from the above mentioned to discuss and all materials needed for their discussion (moderation cards, flip-chat paper, markers, etc.). After the discussion time, which should be sufficient enough to elaborate some suggestions and proposals for further cooperation, the working groups present their results. The results should be then broader discussed by all participants and concrete proposals for future actions formulated.

After the first discussion round is completed and the results are documented, the group should have a break, during which the project implementation team members could formulate and/ or adjust questions for the next discussion round and prepare it.

An organisation of the discussion in a way that the facilitator only supports/ moderates the discussion and assists in the results documentation will increase the ownership of the suggestions made by the counterparts for future cooperation.

3. Project implementation team: division of tasks

At least two members of the project implementation team are needed to give structure to the focus group. The first, the moderator, has the task of leading the focus group. She assures that the procedure and ethical code are respected: that all participants follow the method and that they understand it. The moderator pays attention to the interaction between the participants and the role and attitude of each participant, including forms of non-verbal communication. She moderates the interventions of the participants (tells them when to speak, when to stop). The second person, the typist, has to concentrate on the contents of the discussion. She is the memory of the group and has to assure that everything is written down and recorded. Additional team members are certainly welcome at the focus group. They can intervene in the second round of discussion as participants.

4. Research strategy and scope of the focus group

The purpose of the focus group is to gather information, to organise it and to bring forward elements for the analysis. The strength of this method is that it is based on reflexivity, which is stimulated in the participants, who thus participate in the analysis of the gathered information. The research strategy of the focus group aims at collective reflection among participants about issues that are of professional concern to them. The purpose of the focus group is to exploit the expert knowledge of participants and to confront their professional views, not to learn about the official position of their organisation or institution (which can be found in public documents). It is important for the moderator to emphasise that the focus group is a group analysis where the participants are not merely study objects, but actively participate in the production of knowledge by bringing forward their practical experience of real situations with which they have been confronted. The participants are not there to represent an official position of their organisation or to pass a message.

This strategy presupposes that the participants, though they will give a personal point of view, will still be influenced by their professional background.

Materials needed for a discussion and working groups

- A blackboard or writing board (with chalk or marker)
- Recorder
- Paper and pen for participants
- Name badges
- Snacks and drinks
- Flip-chart and markers
- Flip-chart paper
- Coloured moderation cards
- Additional room (or table and chairs in the same room) to separate the working groups for discussion

Approximate time period of the focus group discussion

Introduction of the focus group and introduction of participants	20 min.
Introduction to the first working group and division to the working group	45 min.
Presentation of working groups results, discussion and documentation of results	30 min.
Break	15 min.
Introduction to the second working group and division to the working group	45 min.
Presentation of working groups results, discussion and documentation of results	30 min.
Tour de Table – remarks	15 min.
Conclusion	15 min.
Total	3 h 30 min.

In a concluding phase, the facilitator should summarise the received information and also agree with all participants to share the draft report before using it for publication, if participants wish so.

Interview Questions for Diaspora Organisations ENIGMMA 2

The aim of this document is to provide a guide for interviewers engaging with <u>Georgian Diaspora organisations/ migrants associations</u> in the three destination countries (Greece, Italy, Spain), such as chairpersons, active members, founders, etc.

Introduction for participant

This interview is part of the research within the ENIGMMA 2 project on Georgian emigrants in Greece, Italy and Spain. The purpose of the interviews which will be conducted with Georgian Diaspora members and Georgian Diaspora organisations is to learn more about the opinions, attitudes, needs and wishes of these stakeholders in regard to diaspora.

The interviewee should understand that there is no right or wrong answer; the project implementation team is just interested in the participants experience and opinion. Anonymity is guaranteed. Individual answers will be used for general analysis. Personal data will not be published nor transmitted to third parties. ICMPD will have access to the interviews, but solely as part of the research. This interview will only be used for research purposes. It will take no more than 30-40 minutes to answer these questions.

Introduction for interviewer

The interviewer should start with brief information of the research on the Georgian Diaspora in Greece, Italy and Spain in simple language by explaining the objectives and rationale of the research, who else will be interviewed and what the outcome of the research will be.

<u>Note:</u> In the following, the interviewer should introduce each topic (indicated by a header) with a conversational question. This way it should be possible to solicit a narrative from the respondents. The issues indicate information that ideally should be covered – but it is not necessary to cover each and every detail. Sub-questions are those that can be used as follow-up, depending on the answer of the primary question. The respondent will usually cover some of these points during the interview without being probed, but you may need to probe the respondent for some of the details. It is good to formulate any probes equally in conversational terms and to avoid suggesting answers to the respondents. Not all respondents equally understand what is going on at a particular point of their trajectory.

Pre-interview information, to be filled in by the researcher

Interviewer should fill in this section before the interview.

Questionnaire number:

Location:

  □ Greece

  □ Italy

  □ Spain

Is the interviewee a representative of Georgian Diaspora organisation/migrants association?

- □ Church/Religious
- □ Sunday School
- □ Consolations
- □ Health
- □ Social
- □ Culture
- □ Other

1.1. What organisation do you work for?
- 1.1.1. How big is your organisation? How many members do you have?
- 1.1.2. How is your organisation registered (church, association, officially registered, etc.)?
- 1.1.3. Do you have locations elsewhere?
- 1.1.4. When was your organisation established (year)?
- 1.1.5. Where is your organisation located?
- 1.1.6. What is your position and tasks within the organisation?
- 1.1.7. To what extent do you deal with Georgian migrants in your position?
- 1.1.8. To what extent does your organisation deal with Georgian migrants?

1.2. Are you in contact/ cooperation with any other Georgian organisations abroad?
- 1.2.1. To what extent do you collaborate with each other?
- 1.2.2. Are you a member of a Diaspora organisations network or something similar?

1.3. What is the general profile of the Georgian diaspora/ Georgian migrants in this country?
- 1.3.1. How would you categorise the migrants that you work with?
- 1.3.2. Where do most of the migrants work (employment sectors)?
- 1.3.3. What is your assumption regarding the number of Georgian migrants in this country?
- 1.3.4. What is their status (regular, irregular, family migrants, etc.)?
- 1.3.5. Do you think there are more female or male migrants?
- 1.3.6. Are there any peaks in numbers?
- 1.3.7. Has their profile changed over time?

1.4. Why do you think Georgian migrants left Georgia?
- 1.4.1. Why do you think Georgian migrants chose to come to this country specifically (networks, family reasons, etc.)?
- 1.4.2. Do you think that migrants would want to return to Georgia? Why?
- 1.4.3. Do you collect information on migrants systematically?

1.5. What are the main issues/ challenges/ problems that migrants face?
- 1.5.1. How do you know of these problems (economic, social, legal, etc.)?
- 1.5.2. How do you support Georgian migrants?
- 1.5.3. What services does your organisation offer to migrants with problems?
- 1.5.4. Do you provide migrants with information on migration-related issues, e.g. legislation?
- 1.5.5. Do you think these challenges are different for particular types of migrants (e.g. female/ labour migrants)?

1.6.   What kind of support does your organisation receive from the Georgian government?
    1.6.1. What kind of support do you expect/ wish to get from the Georgian government?
    1.6.2. What kind of support do you receive from the local government?
    1.6.3. What kind of support do individual Georgian migrants receive from either the Georgian or the local (destination) government?

1.7.   Has your organisation experienced any difficulties/ challenges in the destination country (regarding registration, legal requirements, challenges in existing as an organisation or in providing services)?
    1.7.1. How well do you know the local legislation related to migration issues (procedures, rules, regulations, laws, rights, etc.)?
    1.7.2. Do migrants have access to legal information? What kind of legal counselling is provided?
    1.7.3. Are you aware of any regularisation initiatives in the country of destination?

1.8.   Do you cooperate with the Consulate/ Embassy or local authorities in the country?
    1.8.1. To what extent do you cooperate with the Consulate/ Embassy? What kind of cooperation is it? Are there any things that you cannot cooperate on?
    1.8.2. What kind of support would you want to receive from the Consulate/ Embassy?

1.9.   Do you as a diaspora organisation communicate with state institutions in Georgia (if yes, how do you communicate, how often, with whom, on what issues)?

1.10.   Can you suggest how communication and cooperation between Georgian organisations abroad and state institutions in Georgia could be improved?

1.11.   What assistance would you like to receive from Georgian institutions in order to implement your activities? If you receive assistance, how does it look like?
    1.11.1. Funding, trainings, information support (e.g. employment opportunities in Georgia, return conditions/ reintegration support, changes in education system, etc.)
    1.11.2. Books/ media/ material from Georgia

1.12.   Does your organisation have ties to Georgia?
    1.12.1. Does your organisation implement any activities in Georgia?
    1.12.2. Do you think the migrants gain knowledge/ skills in the destination country that would be useful in Georgia?

1.13.   Are you aware of the visa-free regime between Georgia and the EU which came into force in March 2017?
    1.13.1. Have you made use of the visa-free regime yet? (if yes, in what capacity? What did you use it for?)
    1.13.2. What is your opinion on the visa-free regime? Do you think it will be beneficial for Georgia? Do you think it will be beneficial for Georgian migrants?

DETAILS TO BE FILLED OUT BY INTERVIEWER		Example
Name of interviewee and organisation		Giorgi Gogsadze, Diaspora Organisation
Position of interviewee		Diaspora organisation chairman
Date [dd/mm/yyyy]	/ /	21 / 06 / 2019
Time start [~ hr:min]	:	14:00
Time finished [~ hr:min]		15:30
Place [Locality/Country]	/	MAD / ES
Researcher [Initials / Organisation initials]		MSA / ICMPD
Method to gather responses [taped, notes, other]		Taped and notes
Language of interview		EN/GE

Interview Questions for External Actors
ENIGMMA 2

The aim of this document is to provide a guide for interviewers engaging with <u>representatives of Georgian state institutions, consular offices, Embassies, international and non-governmental organisations, research institutes, local government representatives in the three destination countries working on migration issues</u> (Greece, Italy and Spain).

Introduction for participant

This interview is part of the research within the ENIGMMA 2 project on Georgian emigrants in Greece, Italy and Spain. The purpose of the interviews which will be conducted with representatives of Georgian state institutions, NGOs and International Organisations, representatives of Local State Institutions in the three target countries and Research Institutes is to learn more about the opinions, attitudes, needs and wishes of these stakeholders in regard to diaspora.

The interviewee should understand that there is no right or wrong answer; the project implementation team is just interested in the participants experience and opinion. Anonymity is guaranteed. Individual answers will be used for general analysis. Personal data will not be published nor transmitted to third parties. ICMPD will have access to the interviews, but solely as part of the research. This interview will only be used for research purposes. It will take no more than 20-30 minutes to answer these questions.

Introduction for interviewer

The interviewer should start with brief information of the research on the Georgian Diaspora in Greece, Italy and Spain in simple language by explaining the objectives and rationale of the research, who else will be interviewed and what the outcome of the research will be.

Note: In the following, the interviewer should introduce each topic (indicated by a header) with a conversational question. This way it should be possible to solicit a narrative from the respondents. The issues indicate information that ideally should be covered – but it is not necessary to cover each and every detail. Sub-questions are those that can be used as follow-up, depending on the answer of the primary question. The respondent will usually cover some of these points during the interview without being probed, but you may need to probe the respondent for some of the details. It is good to formulate any probes equally in conversational terms and to avoid suggesting answers to the respondents. Not all respondents equally understand what is going on at a particular point of their trajectory.

Pre-interview information, to be filled in by the researcher

Interviewer should fill in this section before the interview.

Questionnaire number:

Location:

Is the interviewee a <u>representative of:</u>

☐ Georgian State Institution
☐ Local State Institution
☐ Local Research Institute
☐ International Organisation
☐ NGO
☐ Other (please specify)
☐ Consulate/Embassy in the following country:
    ☐ Greece
    ☐ Italy
    ☐ Spain

1.14.   **What institution do you work for?**
    1.14.1. What is your position?
    1.14.2. What are your tasks, especially regarding Georgian migrants?
    1.14.3. To what extent do you deal with Georgian migrants in your position?

1.15.   **Are you in contact/ cooperation with any other institutions working with migrants?**
    1.15.1. To what extent do you collaborate with each other?
    1.15.2. Do you cooperate with local diaspora organisations?

1.16.   **What is the general profile of the Georgian diaspora/ Georgian migrants in this country according to your best knowledge?**
    1.16.1. How would you categorise the migrants that you work with?
    1.16.2. Where do most of the migrants work (employment sectors)?
    1.16.3. What is your assumption regarding the number of Georgian migrants in this country?
    1.16.4. What is their status (regular, irregular, family migrants, etc.)?
    1.16.5. Do you think there are more female or male migrants?
    1.16.6. Are there any peaks in numbers?
    1.16.7. Has their profile changed over time?

1.17.   **Why do you think Georgian migrants left Georgia?**
    1.17.1. Why do you think Georgian migrants chose to come to this country specifically (networks, family reasons, etc.)?
    1.17.2. Do you think that migrants would want to return to Georgia? Why?
    1.17.3. Do you collect information on migrants systematically?

1.18.   **What are the main issues/ challenges/ problems that migrants face?**
    1.18.1. How do you support Georgian migrants?
    1.18.2. What services does your organisation offer to migrants with problems?
    1.18.3. How well do you know the local legislation related to migration issues (procedures, rules, regulations, laws, rights, etc.)?
    1.18.4. Do you provide migrants with information on migration-related issues, legislation? Do migrants have access to information on legislation changes, etc.?

1.18.5. Do you think these challenges are different for particular types of migrants (e.g. female/labour migrants)?

1.19.   What kind of support do you provide to the Georgian diaspora?

1.20.   Do you cooperate with the Georgian Consulate/ Embassy in the country? If yes, how?

1.21.   For Consulates/ Embassies:

1.21.1. Do you cooperate with Georgian Diaspora Organisations? How?

1.21.2. Do you cooperate with local state Institutions working on migration issues?

1.21.3. What are the most frequent issues addressed to the Consulate by Georgian migrants?

1.21.4. Can you suggest how communication and cooperation between Georgian organisations abroad and state institutions in Georgia could be improved?

1.21.5. Do you know whether Georgian migrants are making use of the visa-free regime between Georgia and the EU? Do you know about their opinion on it?

1.22.   Do you think the migrants gain knowledge/ skills in the destination country that would be useful in Georgia?

1.22.1. Where do you think migrants who return could be employed in Georgia? Which sector would benefit most from employing returned migrants?

1.23.   Do you have information/ data on remittances sent from Georgians abroad back home?

1.23.1. How do you think the remittances could be best used?

DETAILS TO BE FILLED OUT BY INTERVIEWER		Example
Name of interviewee and organisation		Georgian Embassy in Italy
Position of interviewee		Consul General
Date [dd/mm/yyyy]	/ /	22 / 05 / 2019
Time start [~ hr:min]	:	12:00
Time finished [~ hr:min]		14:00
Place [Locality/Country]	/	ROM/IT
Researcher [Initials / Organisation initials]		KGO / ICMPD
Method to gather responses [taped, notes, other]		Taped and notes
Language of interview		EN/GE