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# **The main reasons for migration of young educated people from Georgia**

Master's Thesis  
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## Abstract

The purpose of the study is to propound and explain the fact that young and educated people from Georgia have many barriers and difficulties to find a decent job in their own country and on the other hand, have many attractive and advantageous possibilities abroad. This study aims to provide detailed information on current existing policy and migration situation in Georgia, presents and provides us a look at the opinions of young Georgians people who graduate from European universities. In an attempt to identify the specific reasons behind their choices, we came up with objective and important questions like these: What are the main reasons that influence decisions of university educated young Georgians who graduated abroad to remain abroad or to came back home in Georgia? What opportunities and benefits could these young people see in their country compared to the countries where they studied? What difficulties may young educated people face when they stay abroad or return home? How future government policies could help alleviate and eradicate these difficulties? How these graduates perceive benefits compared to disadvantages when staying abroad or returning back to their country?

The paper concludes with some suggestions on policy implications and future studies.

## **Statutory Declaration**

Hereby I declare that this thesis is my own work and effort and that it has not been submitted anywhere for any award. Where other sources of information have been used, they have been acknowledged.

Signature: Mariam Zangurashvili

Date: September 7, 2020

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As John Stuart Mill (1848) suggested, "It is in vain to say, that all mouths which the increase of mankind calls into existence, bring with them hands. The new mouths require as much food as the old ones, and the hands do not produce as much...." This image seems to apply in many current evaluations of European immigration. In the face of substantial levels of unemployment, immigrants seem to imply lower social welfare and increasing social tensions (Zimmermann, K., F., 1995)

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# 1 Introduction

Humans have been moving across the globe for thousands of years in search of better pastures or safety from enemies. While some aristocrats and cities encouraged or discouraged this, it was only in the era of organized mass migration that governments took a direct interest. (Geiger and Pecoud, 2011). Migration began with our origin as the human species and continues today. Each chapter of world history features distinct types of migration (Fisher, 2013).

Traditionally, the question of migration has been compartmentalised on the basis of discipline and stages or characteristics of the migration phenomenon. What is clearer today is that the interconnections weaving the fabric of international migration require a holistic and interdisciplinary approach, the last quarter of the twentieth century was often referred to as the „era of migration” (Jolly, Brettell and Hollifield, 2000).

International mobility has become easier since the 1980s because of political reform, cheaper transport and a communications revolution that has opened up access to information, ideas and networks hitherto the prerogative of the few. As before, people migrate to work, study, and rejoin their families or to find a safe place to start a new life, but now we also see new reasons for moving, for retirement sunnier climes, commuting across borders to work, the temporary migration of young working holidaymakers and migration within what was once but it is no longer the same country. In the new global and European map of migration, the old dichotomies of migration analysis – forced versus voluntary, temporary versus permanent, legal versus illegal – blurs as the motivations for migration and the forms it takes have become much more diverse (King, 2002).

Migration is a topic of great and enduring interest because almost every country is involved in this process as a source, transit or destination country, or indeed all three simultaneously. Economic globalization and modern transportation technologies have greatly enhanced the mobility of people across national boundaries. In many countries, migration has been adopted as a strategy to compete for the most talented, skilful and resourceful and to ameliorate the effects of aging populations and labor shortage. It is estimated that about 200 million people live outside their countries of birth (Castles and Miller 2009).

Transnational migration is fuelled in the present context by conditions brought about by process of globalization. Where migration is a response to globalization, globalization accelerates migration. (Anderson, 2002).

The integration of the world economy has required the mobility of people across national boundaries as „Global nomads” (Jordan and Duvell 2003). According to Anderson (2002), one of the new world disorders created by globalization is mass migration. Migration has become integral to the creation and maintenance of a globally flexible workforce.

Global capital seeks cheap labor, whether by moving production to where it is in plentiful supply, or by drawing temporary workers to the wealthy countries, through legal or irregular channels. International financial regimes (IMF), World Bank and trade agreements (WTO) impose a framework on the „developing” countries that result in „massive pauperization” the erosion of education, social and welfare provisions, the end of training and enterprise. Ironically, it also globalism, with its demand for free market and unfettered conditions of trade, which is eroding the distinction all over the world between the economic and the political realm, the economic migrants are also the political refugee (Sivandandan, 2000).

The latest available estimates indicate that there were roughly 164 million migrant workers around the world in 2017, accounting for nearly two thirds (64%) of the (then) 258 million global stock of international migrants. When compared with the global population of international migrants of working age – regarded as 15 years of age or older (234 million) – migrant workers account for 70 per cent (World Migration report, 2020)

Migration management has been a central issue in political and academic debates on the global and European levels over the last decade, focusing on the supply of and demand for economic migrants, especially highly-skilled workers. It has been predicted that the demographic changes for the first half of the 21st century will result in the proportion of EU citizens of working age decreasing from 67.2% in 2004 to 56.7% in 2050 and immigration is seen as one way of addressing these changes (Research on Migration, A policy Review, 2016).

Another aspect to consider is the so-called ‘brain- drain’ and, as again recently highlighted in the Commission’s Communication on a „Global Approach to Migration”, an equitable immigration policy which incorporates return and/or circular migration might appear to be needed. Similarly, the effect that the admission of third country nationals in one Member State might have on other Member States and their markets should be considered (EU Migration context, 2007).

## 2 Problem Statement

The sociopolitical transition period in Georgia after declaring its independence from the Soviet Union in the Spring of 1991 was particularly complicated because of the territorial conflicts and armed civil confrontation in the beginning of the 1990s. (Baindurashvili and Nadareishvili, 2015). The damaging and detrimental effects and influences from being part of the Soviet Union and the civil war that followed it disrupted and traumatically changed the daily social and economic life of the country. Resulting decades long unemployment today is still one of the biggest socioeconomic problems in Georgia, which is corroborated by different researches that were conducted in the country. According to the latest official statistics, despite the fact that the level of unemployment did decrease a little over the years, nonetheless, it's still high at 12,8%. (Citaladze and Kinkladze, 2015)

According to the publication of the Government of Georgia Migration Commission 2019 Migration Profile Summary Indicates, in the last four years, the migration of the Georgian population to the EU member states has increased by 13.2% from 2015 to 2018. The same study showed that the data for those who want to migrate is significantly increased by all parameters.

From the 2000s until today, the main emigration factors in the country became the high level of unemployment in Georgia and the need and attempts to improve bad economic situation as a consequence of the poverty in families. These factors and occurrences caused a significant decrease in population, accelerated negative demographic changes by increasing the number of the elderly and diminishing the number of young people in the country by making the people of the most employable and active reproductive ages to migrate from the country. According to the 2014 population census, among the people who left the country by that year, 85% is within 20-50 age range, whereas the share of this age group in the whole Georgian population is only 43%. This most certainly has a harmful effect on the political, social-demographic and economic development of the country. New impulse and impetus was provided for the migration process in Georgia by the adoption of visa-free travel regime in the countries of the European Union from April of 2017 (Sulaberidze, 2018).

It also must be noted that the main reason for unemployment in Georgia is the incompatibility of the demand and supply of qualifications in the labor market. One of the studies conducted on this matter found that there is a large number of well educated people and a low demand for such well educated workers in Georgia. Due to the compartmentalized and practical training required structure of the Georgian economy, the number of jobs that require higher education is relatively

small. In particular, a large part of the necessary certification for competency requirements comes from the agricultural and service sectors and in these areas the demand for higher education is quite low (Analysis of the state employment policy in Georgia, 2017). And therefore, making the education received at the University relevant and useful for in the labor market is a major challenge for all young people. Many of them face unemployment for months and years before finding their first job after completing their formal education (37,2 thousand students a year). The transition period may be normal, but slow or complicated involvement in the labor market can have a long-term impact on a person's future career and financial status. So, these are the major and noticeable challenges for the labor market in Georgia: high unemployment rate among high school and university graduates and an imbalance between the employment sector demand and a labor force supply. The highest unemployment rate among the working age population of Georgia is among young people (According to National Statistical Bureau from unemployment rate of the age 15 to 39, is 31.9% in 2018). Naturally, the young men and women who have completed formal education are actively seeking jobs for their qualifications to achieve financial success and independence, but they find themselves in a competitive labor market where due to the scarcity of jobs and their lack of experience, it is rather difficult to get into the labor market ("National Youth Survey in Georgia", Tbilisi, 2014)

It also has to be stated that the labor migration is not always a voluntary and conscious decision to improve one's own economic condition. Young people are leaving their country also because of the lack of jobs in the country. Regulating the formation and functioning of the labor market is one of the most important priorities of any country's economic policy. The process of labor market formation is taking place in parallel with the radical transformation of the socioeconomic system of Georgian society which is of contradictory nature. The youth are actively involved in migration processes, which is an opportunity to improve life for themselves and their families, achieve educational goals and strengthen professional skills. They also have motivation to accept the challenges of socioeconomic processes abroad and to try to implement and initiate them in Georgia after their return. Given all this, it can be said that the study of problems related to effective employment is very important and quite relevant and therefore, in this study, I am exploring and discussing the question:

*What are the reasons/factors that influence decisions of young university educated people who graduated abroad to stay abroad or to come back home to Georgia?*

## 3 Theoretical Part

### 3.1 Historical overview

To understand policy today it is necessary to step back and remind ourselves how we came to be here. Many countries have experienced migration for centuries, immigrants, refugees and sojourners, as one social historian writes, have been continually present (Holmes, 1988). The origins of our plurality lie in conquest, flight from persecution, slavery, trade and even in the Middle Ages in the search for employment. While cities had a long pre-war, historical experience of migration, however, for other part of the world it has been more recent development. Nevertheless, no one who has read a social history of immigration will doubt the pervasive if immeasurable influence that people from abroad have had from centuries on all aspects of European life, including employment, literature, entertainment and the culture, attitudes and identities of their fellow residents. (Spencer, 2011).

Meanwhile, ethnicity has been acquiring a greater salience in Europe and worldwide: questions of identity, culture, religion and group difference keep rising to the top of the agenda. It is necessary to gain an understanding of why this is happening today, how this processes lead to social action, what forms of action they lead to and what the meaning of this action is. The formulation of those identities takes place through social interaction within a context of structural – cultural emergent properties (Archer, 1995; Carter and Sealey, 2001)

Although migration has been a common phenomenon behavior, a sociobiological explanation would hardly be fruitful groups of individuals had the good fortune to end up in areas richly by nature, others less fortunate wound up fleeing destitution disasters and thus sought to share the happier material condition (Bohning, 1979; Rystad, 1983)

One of the driving forces of migration is the desire to receive higher remuneration. Remuneration is a price paid for human skills that varies across countries. But people prefer to go to countries where the price of skills is high. Consider the skills market where prices are regulated by demand and supply, but in different countries we have different equilibrium prices. Now suppose that the equilibrium price in the country of origin is low, which is why high-skilled people prefer to go to a country where the price of their skills is higher. Consequently, in the country of origin there is a shortage of skills (supply of high skills decreases), which is higher for people with lower skills. The productivity of low-skilled individuals is therefore low, which results in economic growth. Consequently, it is deplorable for the country when highly skilled citizens leave it (Jolly, 2004).

In addition to high-skilled population migration, it is also important to emigrate students who are leaving the country to raise their skills. On the one hand, it is a positive thing for a developing country that its citizens are given the opportunity to share the technology of developed countries with the knowledge they can introduce and share in their own countries. But on the other hand, is this all? Unfortunately, in most cases the answer is no. Although statistics on migration are scarce, in practice we can say that most graduates from overseas seldom return in developing countries, which is due to skills differences and the ability to use these skills. In many cases, developing economies devote less resources to research and development, which in turn is highly prioritized in highly developed countries, allowing high-skilled individuals to use their skills effectively (Jolly, 2004).

Generally speaking, the growing trend in unemployment of young people is small but still rising. The corresponding research has shown that this indicator will slightly increase in 2018. In the near future, increase in the unemployment rate of young people is expected to be 0.2%, while in developed countries, this figure remains unchanged; meaning that the growth is expected in developing countries.

### 3.2 Understanding of Theory of Migration

Ever since the dawn of the age of mass migration, well over a century ago, scholars have endeavored to prove general explanations for the phenomenon of human migration, more or less abstracted from its specific occurrence. Economics, sociology and geography have been the most propitious disciplinary grounds, but by no means the only ones. The end of results of such efforts have been models, analytical frameworks, conceptual approaches, empirical generalizations, simple notions, and only seldom real theories. A number of these explanations were not originally conceived to explain migration, but rather born to explain other facets of human behavior and then imported and adapted for the explanation of migration. Efforts at theory building have not been cumulative; the relatively short history of theorizing about migration takes the form of a string of separate, generally unconnected theories, models or frameworks, rather than a cumulative sequence of contributions that build upon previous blocks. If the success of such efforts had to be measured by their ability to erect a general theory of migration, it could be easily concluded that none has been successful. Indeed, there is no such thing as a general theory of migration. Migration is too diverse and multifaceted to be explained by a single theory, efforts at theory building should be rather evaluated by their potential to guide research and provide cogent hypotheses to be tested

against empirical evidence and by their contribution to a better understanding of specific facets, dimensions and processes of migration. (Arango, 1985).

### 3.3 Understanding of dynamics of Migration

Migration policy can be posited on unspoken assumptions about the reason why people move, choose to come to another country, or their behavior after arrival. Migration theory provides a lens through which we can interpret more accurately what is happening and help to explain why, as so often the case, policies do not achieve their stated objectives (Massey, 1993; Brettel and Hollifield, 200; Castles and Miller, 2009).

#### **Decision to migrate**

From the new economics of migration theorists (Sratk and Bloom, 1985) for instance, we see that the decision to migrate may not be that of an individual but part of a collective strategy of a family or household to enhance its economic security; a strategy in which risk may be spread by other members remaining to work in the local labor market. Considering migration, however, are not necessarily in a position to make rational choices. Neoclassical economics originally envisaged individuals weighing the costs and benefits, moving from areas with high population density, low living standards or political repression to areas in which they could maximize their economic opportunities and political freedom. Entry channels label them as labor migrants, asylum seekers, students or defendants, masking the overlapping reasons why people have left their homes and their experiences on arrival. Some of those who anticipate temporary residence will change their intentions as job opportunities or relationships lead them to stay (whether or not with permission) (Sratk and Bloom, 1985).

#### **Structural causes**

Neither „voluntary” nor „forced” migration can in fact adequately be explained at the level of individual or household decision-making, but instead required an understanding of the structural conditions in sending and destination countries that set the context in which those decision are made. In sending countries, conflict may be a trigger to move but poverty, insecurity, lack of the rule of law, environmental degradation, youthful populations and income differential between the developing and developed world can be underlying structural factors (Malmberg, 2003, OECD, 2009)

It can hinder development through loss of highly skilled people („brain drain”) but can also make a vital contribution through acquisition of skills, trading and investment connections. In destination countries, a key insight, initially from dual-labor market theory (Piore, 1979), is that demand for migrant labor is a structural feature of advanced industrial economies in which there is permanent demand for workers willing to accept poor conditions, low wages and lack of security.

A structural analysis of supply and demand in individual source and destination countries does not, however, give us the full picture. World systems or globalization theory (Sassen, 1988; Castells, 1989) has shown that migration is grounded in the operation of the global market economy – shaped in part by foreign investment in developing countries and the disruption that ensues – and that extent and direction of global migration flows can reflect the consequent cultural, communications and transport links between the industrialized and developing world.

The backdrop to the migration phenomenon has been a panorama of far-reaching changes which have been taking place throughout the world towards the end of the twentieth century; the end of the Cold War, the consolidation of the European Union, the implementation of neoliberal economic model. In Europe, the liberal model seriously undermined the welfare state at a high social cost which impacted most on the vulnerable members of society, many of whom are migrants and ethnic minorities. Structural adjustment caused considerable economic and social dislocation worldwide, which has contributed to an enhancement of international migration.

What is new is that the nation-state in crisis perceives itself as besieged from the outside by the globalisation of the economy and from inside by the challenge of ethnic and territorial minorities to its assumed homogeneity. The state is no longer capable of convincing its population or of imposing on it the national project and its uniformity, while the populations concerned are not ready to accept it. The institution of the state appears to have been weakened in many parts of the world. The nation-state proves unable to formulate a national project which meets or appears to meet the needs of the whole population, in the name of progress and living standard improvements (Donzelot, 1996). The social project in its communist, socialist, or social-democratic forms is largely perceived to have failed. Institutions such as the school, the church, the trades unions and the political parties cannot fulfil their integration role as they used to (Wieviorka, 1996). The most serious consequences of this situation are the exclusionary processes resulting from it. The end of the post-war social democratic consensus bound up with the new hegemony of neoliberalism has involved the questioning of the viability of key institutions which promote social cohesion and cushion people in emergencies, such as Welfare State. This has led to a re-examination of the notion of social rights (Marshall, 1950; Lister, 1990; O'Connor, 1993; Walby, 1994).



There are many conflicting pieces of evidence and no strong agreement in the literature on the role of several reason plays in migration. This part of the thesis aims to hepls hypotheses generated from current literature regarding to main theory development and broader prospects of migration causes, Is migration structural causes or individual choice. Among the varios tipos of literature there is assumption that the main migration flows is now structural – macro factors, but the same literature we have seen micro-factors such as education, religion, marital status and personal attitude to migration also have a key role to make the final decision to migrate, that is an individual's choice.

### 3.4 Neoclassical Economics – Macro level

pprobably the oldest and best-known theory of international migration was developed originally to explain labor migration in the process of economic development (Lewis, 1954; Ranis and Fei, 1961; Harris and Todaro, 1970; Todaro, 1976). According to this theory and its extensions, international migration, like its internal counterpart, is caused by geographic differences in the supply of and demand for labor. Countries with a large endowment of labor relative to capital have a low equilibrium market wage, while countries with a limited endowment of labor relative to capital are characterized by a high market wage, as depicted graphically by the familiar interaction of labor supply and demand curves. The resulting differential in wages causes workers from the low-wage country to move to the high-wage country. As a result of this movement, the supply of labor decreases and wages rise in the capital-poor country, while the supply of labor increases and wages fall in the capital-rich country, leading, at equilibrium, to an international wage differential that reflects only the costs of international movement, pecuniary and psychic.

Mirroring the flow of workers from labor-abundant to labor-scarce countries is a flow of investment capital from capital-rich to capital-poor countries. The relative scarcity of capital in poor countries yields a rate of return that is high by international standards, thereby attracting investment. The movement of capital also includes human capital, with highly skilled workers moving from capital-rich to capital-poor countries in order to reap high returns on their skills in a human capital-scarce environment, leading to a parallel movement of managers, technicians, and other skilled workers. The international flow of labor, therefore, must be kept conceptually distinct from the associated international flow of human capital. Even in the most aggregated macro-level models, the heterogeneity of inmigrants along skill lines must be clearly recognized.

The simple and compelling explanation of international migration offered by neoclassical macroeconomics has strongly shaped public thinking and has provided the intellectual basis for much immigration policy. The perspective contains several implicit propositions and assumptions: The international migration of rates between countries, the elimination of wage differentials will end the movement of labor, and migration will not occur in the absence of such differentials. International flows of human capital-that is, highly skilled workers- respond to differences in the rate of return to human capital, which may be different from the overall wage rate, yielding a distinct pattern of migration that may be opposite that of unskilled workers. Labor markets are the primary mechanisms by which international flows of labor are induced; other kinds of markets do not have important effects on international migration. The way for governments to control migration flows is to regulate or influence labor markets in sending and/or receiving countries.

### 3.5 Neoclassical Economics – Micro level

Corresponding to the macroeconomic model is a microeconomic model of individual choice (Sjaastad, 1962; Todaro, 1969, 1976, 1989; Todaro and Maruszko, 1987). In this scheme, individual rational actors decide to migrate because a cost-benefit calculation leads them to expect a positive net return, usually monetary, from movement. International migration is conceptualized as a form of investment in human capital. People choose to move to where they can be most productive, given their skills; but before they can capture the higher wages associated with greater labor productivity they must undertake certain investments, which include the material costs of traveling, the costs of maintenance while moving and looking for work, the effort involved in learning a new language and culture, the difficulty experienced in adapting to a new labor market, and the psychological costs of cutting old ties and forging new ones.

Potential migrants estimate the costs and benefits of moving to alternative international locations and migrate to where the expected discounted net returns are greatest over some time horizon (Borjas, 1990). Net returns in each future period are estimated by taking the observed earnings corresponding to the individual's skills in the destination country and multiplying these by the probability of obtaining a job there (and for illegal migrants the likelihood of being able to avoid deportation) to obtain "expected destination earnings." These expected earnings are then subtracted from those expected in the community of origin (observed earnings there multiplied by the

probability of employment) From this integrated difference the estimated costs are subtracted to yield the expected net return to migration.

In theory, a potential migrant goes to where the expected net returns to migration are greatest, leading to several important conclusions that differ slightly from the earlier macroeconomic formulations: International movement stems from international differentials in both earnings and employment rates, its product determines expected earnings (the prior model, in contrast, assumed full employment), Individual human capital characteristics that increase the likely rate of remuneration or the probability of employment in the destination relative to the sending country (e.g., education, experience, training, language skills) will increase the likelihood of international movement, other things being equal, individual characteristics, social conditions, or technologies that lower migration costs increase the net returns to migration and, hence, raise the probability of international movement, because individuals within the same country can display very different proclivities to migrate. Aggregate migration flows between countries are simple sums of individual moves undertaken on the basis of individual cost-benefit calculations. International movement does not occur in the absence of differences in earnings and/or employment rates between countries. Migration occurs until expected earnings (the product of earnings and employment rates) have been equalized internationally (net of the costs of movement), and movement does not stop until this product has been equalized. The size of the differential in expected returns determines the size of the international flow of migrants between countries. Migration decisions stem from disequilibria or discontinuities between labor markets; other markets do not directly influence the decision to migrate. If conditions in receiving countries are psychologically attractive to prospective migrants, migration costs may be negative. In this case, a negative earnings differential may be necessary to halt migration between countries.

### 3.6 Theory of push and pull factors

Globalization, economic crises, political instability, conflicts, civil wars, ethnic cleanings, social inequality, the development of market economy, gender discrimination, the wider processes of transformation, especially this last ten years, made a solid soil for huge wave of migration in the world, and for its mutated form – trafficking in human beings. Globalization has changed the way many people see the world. As people become more aware of living standards and lifestyles in other parts of the world, for example through television or the stories (and sometimes wealth) of returning expatriates, their understanding of their “relative” poverty has increased and their

expectations have changed. This motivates people to migrate to secure greater income. There is also evidence that young people in particular consider migration because they want to escape the drudgery of subsistence living and see ‘‘the bright lights of the big city’. Contemporary international migration is both a manifestation and a consequence of globalization, and while many migrate safely, others find themselves subjected to trafficking abuses and other forms of exploitation. The forces of economic globalization described above foster strong push factors in migrant’s countries of origin, such as economic dislocation and increased absolute and/or relative poverty rates. These hardships motivate millions of persons to seek economic opportunities abroad in order to maintain or regain their economic positions. In addition, high levels of economic and political instability and the experience of economic crises provide an incentive for families to reduce their overall economic risk by diversifying their sources of earnings across multiple countries. At the same time, destination countries exhibit important pull factors, such as significantly higher wages and a demand for migrant workers to perform low-wage (or otherwise undesirable) jobs. This is true in both developed countries and relatively wealthier developing nations, many of which serve as major countries of origin and destination for migration. In addition, the demand for migrant workers is often exacerbated by demographic changes, as declining birth rates in developed countries lead to shrinking populations with a growing ratio of elderly to working-age people. In the countries of origin those factors are called push factors, and in the countries of destination pull factors. In both types of countries we speak for the same factors, but the social conditions in the one group of countries are favorable, and in the other one are not. They are connected through the economic, political and war relations of the countries of origin and destination. At the same time the root causes of migration - both licit and illicit - lay in the unstable political, social, and economic conditions in countries of origin. Other causes include rapid growth of the population, high unemployment, abject poverty, internal conflicts resulting in civil disorder and widespread violence, unstable or oppressive political regimes, and grave violations of human rights.

The push factors are a result of the society’s changes in the countries of origin. They are economic, social, political, cultural factors, factors connected with militarization and war conflicts. Their framework includes the disintegration and falling apart of the multicultural countries, religious and ethnic conflicts, natural disasters, economic situations, uncontrolled increasing of the population, wide differences between the economic possibilities of the countries and the number of its inhabitants. The pull factors, as we earlier mentioned, are antipode (a positive one) of the push factors. They include lack of workers, good social measures, positive economic situation,

democratic system, political and social stability, historic connections between the countries, common language.

Finally, to complete the picture it is necessary to underline that some facilitating factors exist, such as globalization of labour and markets, the modernization of travel systems associated to the reduced costs of travelling, the boost in international migrations, the spread of new technologies are all elements that can help us understand the reasons why, in the last decades, human trafficking has become such a serious issue that, as a virulent disease, is infecting every country of the world.

### 3.7 Migration networks

Few things, if any, are as characteristic of the contemporary way of looking into migration as the central attention accorded to migration networks, a notion that has a long tradition, going back to Thomas and Znaniecki. What is new is the central role that the notion plays in the investigation and the explanation of migration. The notion is so well known that it does not require much elaboration. Migration networks can be defined as sets of interpersonal relations that link migrants or returned migrants with relatives, friends or fellow countrymen at home. They convey information, provide financial assistance, facilitate employment and accommodation, and give support in various forms. In so doing, they reduce the costs and uncertainty of migration and therefore facilitate it (Massey, 1998). The importance of social networks for migration can hardly be overstated. It can be safely said that networks rank among the most important explanatory factors of migration. Many migrants move because others with whom they are connected migrated before. Migration networks have a multiplier effect, which is implicit in the formerly fashionable expression ‘chain migration’. Moreover, the capital role that networks have usually played in migration flows is greatly enhanced nowadays in a world in which circulation is widely restricted. On the one hand, family reunion accounts for a substantial part of immigration flows in many countries. On the other, the importance of social networks is bound to increase as entry into receiving countries becomes more difficult, on account of their capacity to reduce the costs and risks of moving, including uncertainty.

In addition, networks are the main mechanism that makes migration a self-perpetuating phenomenon. Indeed, networks are cumulative in nature. They tend to grow ever larger and denser, as every move constitutes a resource for those who stay back, and facilitate further moves, which in turn widen the networks and the probability of their further expansion. The development of social networks may explain the continuation of migration independently from the causes that led

to the initial movement. In fact, social networks may often be the foremost predictors of future flows. Because of this, migration networks may contribute to the explanation of differential migration.

Last but not least, networks constitute an intermediate, relational level that stands between the micro level of individual decision-making and the macro level of structural determinants (Faist 1997), thus contributing to bridge a gap that is one of the major limitations in migration thinking. Yet, all this notwithstanding, theorising about migration networks has not gone beyond the stage of a conceptual framework (Arango, 2000).

### 3.8 Education as a drive for migration

The literature here suggests that education is not often a primary driver of migration, either as a push or pull factor, except in the cases of young people going to universities abroad, and sometimes to get into better, more distant, schools than their local ones. Where there has been a deliberate decision to study is the only circumstance noted here in which education is the primary driver of migration. Education is usually viewed as a secondary driver, or one among many socio-economic factors that contribute to a better life. The primary drivers of all kinds of internal and international migration are security concerns, livelihoods opportunities, and economic incentives ( Browne, 2017).

One of the only common points of agreement is that across low-income contexts, higher educated people are more likely to migrate, due to a combination of higher financial resources, greater aspirations, and lack of appropriate employment in their home environment. Literature and experts are very consistent on this. What is less clear from the literature is whether the aspiration to migrate shapes education itself, for example through young people's choices to learn languages which facilitate migration (Schiller , 2010).

Highly educated migrants are more likely to go abroad for work, because more legal options are open to them, but they are also very likely to enrol in further education once abroad, partly because their qualifications are not recognised, and partly because the opportunity cost of university is lower for them than for lower educated migrants (Banerjee and Verma, 2009).

Over all types of migration, the vast majority of migrants are working-age economic migrants, who do not cite education as a key factor. Educational issues mostly affect young people and those with children. The literature suggests that youth aged between about 15 to 25 are the group who most strongly consider migrating for education, in line with their primary concerns of getting good

qualifications leading to a good job. Schooling represents a route out of poverty and a chance to improve their and their family's economic situation. (Hagen-Zanker and Mallett, 2016).

Nonetheless, education is not usually the primary reason why young people move, Economic considerations play a secondary role. Areas with higher wages and better social services are more attractive as they potentially offer more opportunities. When deciding whether to stay, return home, or move on, when they do have options, their decision-making process may be partly similar to that of economic migrants: they compare their welfare in their place of displacement with their likely welfare in the place they could move to, including back home. Among safe destinations, they choose the place where they believe they will maximise their welfare, based on economic considerations as well as on a host of other factors, including social, cultural, and political. Men and women also tend to consider different factors in making their decision: women may give more weight to health and education, while men may be more concerned about employment (Devictor, 2016 - World Bank Report).

The primary drivers of all kinds of internal and international migration are security concerns, livelihoods opportunities, and economic incentives. There are many conflicting pieces of evidence and no strong agreement in the literature on the role that education plays in migration. One of the only common points of agreement is that across low-income contexts, higher educated people are more likely to migrate, due to a combination of higher financial resources, greater aspirations, and lack of appropriate employment in their home environment. This study tries to answer the main question of the study what role does education play when it comes to migration. During the interview, the subquestions were used as a tool to allow participants to express their opinion about foreign education and its role in their decision making.

### 3.9 Brain drain from developing countries

Brain drain is the migration of skilled human resources for trade, education, etc. ( World Bank, 2004). Trained health professionals are needed in every part of the world. However, better standards of living and quality of life, higher salaries, access to advanced technology and more stable political conditions in the developed countries attract talent from less developed areas. The majority of migration is from developing to developed countries. This is of growing concern worldwide because of its impact on the health systems in developing countries. These countries have invested in the education and training of young health professionals. This translates into a loss of considerable resources when these people migrate, with the direct benefit accruing to the

recipient states who have not forked out the cost of educating them. The intellectuals of any country are some of the most expensive resources because of their training in terms of material cost and time, and most importantly, because of lost opportunity (United Nations Population Division, 2002). Young, well-educated, healthy individuals are most likely to migrate, especially in pursuit of higher education and economic improvement (Awases and Royston, 2003).

The distinction between ‘push’ and ‘pull’ factors has been recognized (Bach, 2005). Continuing disparities in working conditions between richer and poorer countries offer a greater ‘pull’ towards the more developed countries. The role of governments and recruitment agencies in systematically encouraging the migration of health professionals increases the pull (Bach, 2005). Migrant professionals are faced with a combination of economic, social and psychological factors, and family choices (Connel, 2004), and reflect the ‘push–pull’ nature of the choices underpinning these ‘journeys of hope’. De-motivating working conditions, coupled with low salaries, are set against the likelihood of prosperity for themselves and their families, work in well-equipped work environment and the opportunity for professional development (Narasimhan, Brown H, 2004).

Researchers from developing countries cite other reasons for not returning after training which include: lack of research funding, poor facilities, limited career structures, poor intellectual stimulation, threats of violence and lack of good education for children in their home country (Adamas, 2005). Incentives for migrants to return to developing countries have been insufficient to override the limitations at home—both real and perceived—and the attraction of opportunities found abroad. Many of these countries have made significant investments in infrastructure and education but have not achieved the scientific development, technological and innovative capability either to retain or to recover the human capital that they have generated. Is there a solution to this problem? This raises the question of whether one can justify losing human capital or whether one should make the additional investment in science and technology and bring about the innovations that will stop the loss and convert it into wealth generation (Dodari and Laporte, 2007).

### 3.10 Main Emigration trends of Georgia

To understand episodes such as this, it needs to make an overview of trends and economic impact of international educational migration. Economic outlook and recent economic indicators of Georgia demonstrate the importance of socioeconomic factors in shaping human capital. They emphasize the need for the Georgian government to consider them when designing policies,



particularly, educational policy. Unemployment level is not dramatically high in Georgia, however, the majority of employed people are self-employed and their incomes are quite small. This factor is the main cause of labor and educational migration. In recent years, the share of young people in labor and educational migration has been significantly increased in the country.

Georgia has a large supply of highly educated workers, at 31 percent, the percentage of workers with tertiary education is high, not only for middle-income countries like Georgia, but also for high-income European countries. Only 9 percent of workers have less than secondary education, implying that the bulk of workforce have secondary education. Highly educated workers are concentrated in urban areas with every second worker having a higher education diploma, Even in rural areas, one worker in six has a tertiary education (Rurkowsky, 2013)

Unemployment and low-productivity employment are the primary causes of poverty in Georgia. While university educated workers represent a large part of Georgia's workforce, productive job opportunities are few. A skills mismatch in Georgia not only contributes to unemployment, but also forces highly educated workers to take less skilled jobs. However, over- education coincides with a skills gap: many employers find it difficult to recruit workers with the required skills. To reduce poverty, Georgia needs to foster the development of a modern, high value-added sector of the economy that will provide job opportunities for skilled workers, while simultaneously improving the quality of education and making the education system more responsive to labor market demands (Rurkowsky, 2013).

The youth unemployment rate is 36 percent, more than twice as high as for prime-age workers, and young workers (15-29) account for 40 percent of all unemployed (34 percent in urban areas and 54 percent in rural areas, 2018). These figures indicate that entry into the labor market is difficult. High youth unemployment in Georgia predominantly reflects decreased labor demand (although, as we will show later, a skills mismatch also contributes to youth unemployment). New labor market entrants (as opposed to incumbents) suffer from the lack of job creation in the country. Poor employment prospects for young people contribute to poverty, create frustration and give rise to social tensions. Hence high youth unemployment poses not only an economic and social, but also a significant political problem (Rutkowsky, 2013). There are recent statistics from the country but data is the same.

Most of the unemployed have either a secondary or a higher education qualification. This might reflect the fact that even highly educated workers do not have skills needed on the labour market in Georgia. Most of the jobs available do not require higher education, and highly educated

workers who have less skilled jobs earn lower salaries than workers who are specialised for a particular job (World Bank, 2013).

Many of the unemployed are highly educated. Over 50 percent of all unemployed have a secondary school diploma, and as many as 40 percent have a higher education degree. In urban areas, the proportion of unemployed with higher education is still higher, accounting for 46 percent of all unemployed. In contrast to most EU countries, where unemployment is heavily concentrated among less educated workers, those with less than secondary education represent a minority among the unemployed in Georgia. High unemployment among workers with tertiary education reflects relative scarcity of jobs requiring tertiary education in Georgia. This phenomenon is known as overeducation. High unemployment among highly educated workers carries considerable individual and social cost, implying a loss of human capital investment. The skills of these workers are not utilized, and they tend to erode during unemployment. Skill erosion is a serious problem in Georgia as unemployment tends to be of long duration, and skills deteriorate the longer a worker is unemployed. Unemployment duration is particularly long for highly educated workers. The incidence of long-term unemployment among workers with tertiary education exceeds 70 percent. In contrast, the share of long-term unemployed among workers with vocational education is 62 percent, and the duration of unemployment among workers with primary education is even less. In most European countries the pattern is reverse: more educated workers spend less time searching for jobs than the less educated. The Georgian pattern clearly points to limited demand for highly educated labor (Rurkowsky, 2013).

In a small country like Georgia, international organizations have small offices, local NGOs have even smaller one, private sector is small with a relatively low salaries and only the public sector is capable of offering jobs to the swaths of graduates who enter the job market each year. The dream of every graduate in Georgia is to find a job in the public sector, as the public sector has an unnecessarily high number of employees with unnecessarily high salaries. Job security and high salaries attract both skilled and unskilled labor, raising the number of applicants.

Unemployed graduates talk about the opportunities related to getting information about job openings. Except for the above mentioned job websites graduates (the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences) noted CSO Georgia regularly posts information about interesting workshops, trainings and job openings. They note that Facebook groups created for special purposes are also a significant means of sharing and getting information. Unemployed students say that there are student groups regularly posting information about courses for upgrading skills, workshops, trainings, internships programs and employment opportunities. In a completely uncontrolled

Georgian job market, a degree from a foreign country may seem like an advantage. Unfortunately, it is impossible to prove that the successful candidate didn't perform as well as you, so you must accept your defeat and the nepotism that surrounds you. A complete lack of structure and accountability on the part of employers characterizes the Georgian labor market.

Employed and unemployed graduates talk about the importance of social capital, noting that people around them present a significant source of information – the broader the social capital is the more chances young people have to find employment. However, young people emphasize the difference between providing references and nepotism and explain that, the former is given based on already available information about skills and knowledge of a potential candidate (Labor market research in Georgia, Motivation and employment Strategies of the Youth, 2018).

More than one million people born in Georgia or 25% of its recent population (World Bank, 2011) live outside of the country. When the Soviet Union collapsed, the creation of new international borders changed the situation radically and many people belonging to minorities or suffering from economic hardship felt trapped inside the new independent countries and were eager to emigrate (Philipov and Dorbits, 2003). Furthermore, as crossing the international borders of the former Soviet Union without special permission was illegal, new opportunities for emigration towards Western countries or Israel emerged.

Thus, as a typical post-Soviet country Georgia has been seriously affected by out-migration after its proclaimed independence in 1991. The last 2002 population census in Georgia registered a drop of some 20% of the number of population registered in the 1989 census (Badurashvili, 2011). Part of this drop is due to the decline of fertility, but the main reason is emigration. Georgia has the second highest net migration rate after Kazakhstan in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) (Mansoor and Quillin, 2007).

A sharp increase in out-migration from Georgia occurred in the 1990s. The migration out-flow became even greater after 1991 and remained at the high level during the whole period of 1992-1996. Later in the 1990s, international migration flows from Georgia somehow stabilized with the negative net migration not exceeding 30,000 persons per year. Since 2004, a reverse trend in net migration is observed in Georgia, with some fluctuations in subsequent years and positive balance (34,200) between in- and out- migrants' flows for the last available period - 2010.

Some researchers (CRRC, 2007, p. 7) have classified Georgia's external migration as occurring in three waves:

1. Collapse and conflict – corresponding to period of 1990-1995
2. Economic struggle – 1996 to 2004
3. Hope and economic rebuilding – after 2004

The probability of migrating to the European countries is influenced by various factors, some of these depends on the individual choice – such as better living condition, better opportunities, new social networks which would help with problems of settling and adjustment etc. (World Migration report 2019). But studies of indicators of labor market for youth, trends and policy directions focuses on market instability and structural issues. Young persons report relative ease adapting to life in Germany and the US. This in part may be due to their more urban background, as well as the opportunity to be part of formal programs and the greater sociability of youth (World migration report 2019). IOM 2013 observes that those who use irregular channels to go abroad also tend to avoid official institutions – whether Georgian or host country – when in need. Instead, they turn to relatives and friends for help (World migration report 2019). Accordingly, showing this chapter could help to understand general causes of migration among young people from Georgia (Migration profile of Georgia 2017).

### 3.11 Migration and Skills Formation

Skills mismatch is considered one of the causes of unemployment in the Georgian labour market. Taking this into consideration, one of the positive effects of migration is that emigrants are able to acquire and develop skills in demand in their country of origin. In Georgia, there is a long-standing debate over whether emigration has substantially drained Georgia of skilled people. In light of the high unemployment rate in Georgia, wasting brain (also due to de-qualification) would be the consequence, if the young people do not emigrate. Looking at brain drain and brain waste as alternatives from this perspective, (temporary) brain drain might be the better solution. The European Training Foundation (ETF) carried out a survey of returned migrants in 2011/2012 which showed that the key reason for emigration for people with all levels of education was a better quality of life – be it in terms of higher pay or finding employment. The survey was conducted among migrants in European countries and the number of respondents was 2500 (Migration and skills in Georgia, 2017).

Table 1. Reason for emigration by level of education.

| Reason                        | High education | Intermediate education | Low education |
|-------------------------------|----------------|------------------------|---------------|
| To improve standard of living | 42%            | 38%                    | 53%           |
| Have no job/cannot find one   | 30%            | 42%                    | 32%           |

Source: European Training Foundation, 2013

With regard to brain waste, another set of interesting findings are provided by the ETF survey. It indicates that having emigrated, people with the highest education are less likely to find a job which corresponds to their educational level than people with lower education, which indicates brain waste in the highest educated group (see table 2).

Working in a position which actually required a higher education level may indicate the acquisition of new skills, assuming this entails the necessity to develop skills either on the job or by undertaking further education parallel to work. However, the share of returned migrants reporting this is rather small (1% to 3%).

Table 2. Type of work performed by level of education

| Statement                                      | High education<br>ISCED 5-9 | Intermediate education<br>ISCED 3-4 | Low education<br>ISCED 0-2 |
|------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| I worked below my education level              | 69%                         | 40%                                 | 13%                        |
| My work and education level corresponded fully | 23%                         | 54%                                 | 83%                        |

Source: European Training Foundation, 2013

Returned migrants who are employed are paid higher salaries compared to non-migrants (Tchaidze and Torosyan, 2010), which might indicate the development of valuable skills. However, to understand the impact of migration on skills formation, understanding the local labour market and the particular skills which have been developed while abroad is essential.

The composition of age groups is also very interesting in terms of skills formation. An IOM study (2003) indicated that labour migrants from Georgia are younger than the general population. 41% of emigrants are under the age of 30. Germany is one of the key destination countries for young emigrants, where they can both study and work. This can be of dual benefit: improved income and skills gained (academic as well as practical).

With regard to brain drain/brain gain, the survey carried out by GeoStat in 2008 showed that most emigrants are working-age educated people (GeoStat, 2009). This does not necessarily indicate that brain drain has occurred. One of the key problems of the Georgian labour market is the lack of match between skills and market demands. Brain waste is thus unavoidable, through being unemployed or being employed in a different sector, causing de-qualification or a change in skillset.

In their report, Labadze and Tukhashvili (2013) argue that despite fears about brain drain, migrants are acquiring more skills abroad and once these skills are developed and opportunities in the local markets are available, opportunities for their return will arise. They also cite as an example the fact that key figures in the government, NGOs, etc. are people who have received a Western education. This may appear as a very positive impact of emigration on the country's development. However, this may also be widening the gap and reinforcing the lack of fairness in the local job market, as returned migrants are preferred to non-migrants due to their acquired Western education. The study Labour Market and Return Migrant Reintegration in Georgia (Tukhashvili, 2012) showed that 21% of returned migrants indicated that working abroad played a major role in the successful development of their careers after returning to Georgia. A discussion about the inflow of foreign labor to meet the demand of specific skills is basically impossible, as there are no data available on the number of labor immigrants, their skills and occupations in Georgia.

This paper is focusing on providing an evaluative review which aims to enhance our understanding of migration and its potential role for development of the country. As an outcome of the migration we can consider this positive effect after coming back of the young skilled citizens from European countries and it is important to understand whether the country has possibilities and capabilities to receive well-educated people from abroad and give them decent jobs. We will try to show it through empirical evidence below.

### 3.12 The role of State policy in preventing emigration

At the same time, migration is equally affected by Georgia's labor market policies, effective labor market policies can have an indirect impact on households' migration decisions. Policies to improve the domestic labor market may reduce the incentive to migrate. Such policies can seek to enhance labor market efficiency through state employment agencies, improve the skills set of the labor force through vocational training, and expand labor demand by increasing public employment programs.

Georgia currently does not have a written migration policy document. The existing legislation governing migration issues consists of a number of laws, regulations and instructions describing the rights of nationals, foreign nationals and stateless persons and regulating entry, residence, return and irregular migration. National migration legislation also relies on legal acts for other branches of law, e.g. administrative or criminal law, to ensure the prevention and prosecution of offences and crimes associated with migration. The main institutions dealing with migration management are the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Internal Affairs and its Border Police, the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Accommodation and Refugees (Mediocre) and the Ministry of Labor, Health and Social Affairs. However, none of these institutions has a clear coordinating role in migration management nor do rules exist regarding the sharing of tasks between existing agencies dealing with migration and with migration management competences.

The government has, in recent years, sought to rebuild ties with Georgian diaspora communities and to build stronger cultural ties with labor migrants abroad. An Office of the Ministry for Diaspora Issues was created in 2008. A number of diaspora organizations have emerged, but they have limited capacity and tend to be organized around informal social networks; their main functions are limited to local cultural activities, charity and advocacy of Georgia. To date, no evidence exists of large-scale economic activity, although the diaspora is becoming increasingly active in terms of new business opportunities.

It must be emphasized that there is still no coherent system in place to collect and analyze migration data and data exchange mechanisms between institutions dealing with migration are defective. There is a lack of accurate information on the number of labor migrants, both legal and illegal, and the absence of a proper system for compiling migration statistics hinders the development of effective migration management policies.

The first and foremost, often the only dimension of migration that theories have aimed at explaining is why people move, or variants of the same question, such as what determines the volume of migration; that is, root causes, not even proximate determinants. This is clearly the case with neo-classical theory, the new economics of migration, world system theory, dual labour markets, and even the venerable ‘push-pull’ framework, only that in abstract terms. Yet, it is not clear that investigating the causes constitutes the most useful and interesting line of enquiry nowadays.

When deciding whether to stay, return home, or move on, when they do have options, their decision-making process may be partly similar to that of economic migrants: they compare their

welfare in their place of displacement with their likely welfare in the place they could move to, including back home. Among safe destinations, they choose the place where they believe they will maximise their welfare, based on economic considerations as well as on a host of other factors, including social, cultural, and political. The Neo-classical theory could help to understudied aspects of decision-making process, we also would like to identify primery concenrns are related to individual choise or state policy, what are the reasons that young educated people are tend to consider in making their decision. While the migration literature has tended to represent migrants as driven by economic pressures, it is important to recognise other hidden factors within this process.



## 4 Methodology

The purpose of this thesis is to develop understanding about migration policy problem and the main migration causes of young people from country of Georgia to European countries. The main goal is identifying causes of personal decisions and policy problems in the country, what are the factors that influence decisions of young university educated people who graduated abroad to stay abroad or to come back to Georgia? What is the push and pull factors for the people who are still outside of the country and for those who already returned? This chapter sets out the methodologies such as research strategy, sampling, data collection, data analysis and operationalization.

### 4.1 Research Strategy

„Qualitative research can help us to interpret and better understand the complex reality of a given situation and the implications of quantitative data”, - The strength of qualitative research is its ability to provide complex textual descriptions of how people experience a given research issue. It provides information about the “human” side of an issue – that is, the often contradictory behaviors, beliefs, opinions, emotions, and relationships of individuals.<sup>1</sup>

„Qualitative researchers aim to gather an in-depth understanding of human behavior and the reasons that govern such behavior. The qualitative method investigates the why and how of decision making, not just what, where, when”.

Every research must involve an explicit, disciplined, systematic (planned, ordered, and public) approach to find out most appropriate results. Qualitative research is inductive in nature, and the researcher generally explores meanings and insights in a given situation [Strauss and Corbin, 2008; Levitt, 2017].<sup>2</sup>

In the handbook of qualitative research Denzin and Lincoln (2005) describe qualitative research as involving “... an interpretive naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them” (p. 3)

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<sup>1</sup> „Qualitative Research Methods Overview” - A Data Collector’s Field Guide

<sup>2</sup> „Qualitative Research Methodology in Social Sciences and Related Subjects”, Haradhan, M., 2018

The main paradigms within the qualitative research are positivist, interpretivist, and critical paradigms (Punch, 2013).

Qualitative research properly seeks answers to questions by examining various social settings and the individual who inhabit these settings. Qualitative researchers, then are most interested in how humans arrange themselves and their settings and how inhabitants of these settings make sense of their surroundings through symbols, rituals, social structures, social roles and so forth (Bruce, 2001).

The purpose of the research strategy is to explore the main incentives and labor market barriers that are available and set forth for the young educated people who graduate from the universities and determine whether they stay a migrant or return to their country. Qualitative method helps me to understand the subjective reasons young people have to emigrate or return home. It also helps me to collect information about topics and issues that influence the young generation in Georgia. After that we looked at the graduates from European universities who are staying abroad and who returned in home country. However, because of the pandemic of COVID-19 in 2020, the interview will be conducted only with 12 young people who will be asked open-minded questions. Correspondingly, their answer will be the basis to identify main causes of the migration of young educated people from Georgia to other countries.

## 4.2 Operationalization

The concrete and specific definition of something in terms of the operations by which observations are to be categorized (Babbie, 1998)

Key to research based upon a closed question is the process of relating the theoretical model to the empirical reality. Crucial is where the theoretical model and the empirical reality are related is when they are translated into observable constructs. This process is called “operationalization”. among others has given a detailed description of the process. Operationalization is the process of changing a theoretical construct into a concept that can be “seen” in the empirical reality. This translation process is guided and supported by theory that can be found in the literature (De Groot, 1969).

Sub research questions were written from the theoretical part and following up the main question.

**Main research question:** *„What are the reasons/factors that influence decisions of young university educated people who graduated abroad to stay abroad or to come back home country?*

**Sub research question 1:** *what opportunities and benefits could young educated people see in host country compared to home countries?*

The main purpose of this subquestion is to identify reasons of decision making process at micro and macro levels perceived by young educated people who graduate at European universities and could stay as migrant in those countries.

**Sub research question 2:** *what difficulties may young educated people face and when stay abroad or return to home countries, how policies could help to alleviate these difficulties?*

The second research question will identify difficulties young people face and also the role of policies to improve conditions for young people in their country. It can be helpful to public policy making, to the role of labor market policy and hiring process which is going on in a particular country. Our intention is to get clear situation in the country and identify main migration reasons, whether it is a personal decision or being forced to leave because of the difficult situation in the country.

**Sub research question 3:** *How young university graduate people perceive benefits compared difficulties when staying abroad or return back to home country?*

The primary purpose of this sub question is to provide an understanding what is the balance between opportunities and benefits and the difficulties young people face when they decide to stay abroad or to return to home country.

The primary purpose of studying this block is to examine whether young people have a strong motivation to stay abroad and how they try to overcome barriers and also whether they have more possibilities abroad rather than their home country. There is an assumption that young people strongly and negatively perceive barriers in most of the cases and that the difficulties associated with the environment influence to other areas of life (such as family, self- development, relationships) discordantly and this consequently has a great impact on their future decision making in the aspects of their carrier and life in general.

### 4.3 Sampling

A central feature of every research design is sampling. In this step, researchers decide not only which material, which cases, persons or groups will be involved in a study. It also determines which comparative potential a study involves (YIN, 2003).

The logic of using a sample of subjects is to make inferences about some larger population from a smaller one – the sample (Bruce, 2001). The social sciences often examine research situations where one cannot elect the kinds of probability samples used in large-scale surveys and which conform to the restricted needs of a probability sample. In these situations, investigators rely upon *nonprobability samples* (Bruce, 2001).

Purposive sampling is sometimes called judgmental sampling, when developing a purposive sample, researchers use their special knowledge or expertise about some group to select subjects who represent this population. In some instances, purposive samples are selected after field investigations on some group, in order to ensure that certain types of individuals or persons displaying certain attributes are included in the study (Bruce, 2001). Purposive sampling is used in the research where researchers are looking for individuals where the processes being studied are most likely to occur (Denzin and Lincoln 2000).

For the purpose of this thesis was used a combination of purposive sampling and snowball sampling. Sampling not only focuses the selection of people to be interviewed for example, or situations to be observed, but also the selection of sites in which such persons or situations can be expected to be found. Sampling in qualitative research in most cases is not oriented on a formal (e.g. random) selection of a part of an existing or assumed population. Rather it is conceived as a way of setting up a collection of deliberately selected cases, materials or events for constructing a corpus of empirical examples for studying the phenomenon of interest in the most instructive way. Therefore, most suggestions for qualitative sampling are around a concept of purpose, talking sampling in qualitative research seriously is a way of managing diversity (Flick, 2007).

Another nonprobability sampling strategy, that some may see as similar to convenience sampling is known as snowball sampling. Snowball is sometimes the best way to locate subjects with certain attributes or characteristics necessary in a study. Snowball samples are particularly popular among researchers interested in studying various classes of deviance, sensitive topics, or difficult to reach populations (Lee, 1993) the basic strategy of snowball involves first identifying several people with relevant characteristics and interviewing them or having them answer the questions. These

subjects are then asked for the names of other people who possess the same attributes as they do (Bruce, 2001).

For the interview we used combination of purposive sampling and snowball sampling, and conducted it among 12 people who were selected and tested by a specific criteria. For a better understanding it is required to explain sampling logic and its structure: Sampling logic is relying on young people who graduated from European universities and stayed abroad afterwards and were hired in the European labor market according to their professions and it is very rare to find someone who did not find a job after graduation. For the interview we chose 12 persons, their age being from 23 to 29 years. At this age, in most cases, a young person holds a Master's Degree and is interested in finding a decent job somewhere. It was important to divide these persons into two groups, one group of interviewers are young educated people who already study abroad and another one is the group of young people who came back to Georgia after studying abroad and are unemployed. When selecting respondents, it is important to ensure that they have a European education and work experience or were trying to be hired in their host or home countries. There is an assumption that some students have made personal decisions that were influenced by state policy in their home country.

#### 4.4 Sampling structure

| # | Name   | Age | Gender | Place of living          | Education level                 | Work Status               |
|---|--------|-----|--------|--------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1 | Lasha  | 25  | female | Brno, Czech Republic     | Master, Financial Markets       | Invoice control associate |
| 2 | Natia  | 29  | female | Brno, Czech Republic     | Master, Energy Policy           | Incident Manager          |
| 3 | Tata   | 27  | male   | Bernkastel-Kues, Germany | Master, Business administration | Sales Manager             |
| 4 | Irakli | 26  | female | Tallinn, Estonia         | Master, Business administration | Software Engineer         |
| 5 | Mariam | 26  | female | Tallinn, Estonia         | Master, International relations | Tour operator             |

|    |         |    |        |                  |                                           |                      |
|----|---------|----|--------|------------------|-------------------------------------------|----------------------|
| 6  | Nino    | 27 | female | Munich, Germany  | Master,<br>Business administration        | Sales Manager        |
| 7  | Liza    | 28 | female | Tbilisi, Georgia | Master,<br>Energy Policy                  | Unemployed           |
| 8  | Gigi    | 28 | female | Tbilisi, Georgia | Master,<br>Business administration        | Unemployed           |
| 9  | Tekla   | 26 | male   | Tbilisi, Georgia | Master,<br>Democracy and<br>Governance    | librarian            |
| 10 | Megi    | 26 | female | Tbilisi, Georgia | Master,<br>Democracy and<br>Governance    | Office manager       |
| 11 | Luisa   | 27 | female | Tbilisi, Georgia | Master, Public policy                     | Unemployed           |
| 12 | Tornike | 24 | male   | Tbilisi, Georgia | Bachelor, Economics<br>and Administration | cinema -<br>operator |

## 4.5 Data collection

The questionnaire is an example of such an instrument, the researcher establishes what he or she need to know to answer the research questions that drive the project and designs questions in the questionnaire that will allow data to be collected to answer those research question. Research methods such as semi-structured interviewing are used so that the researcher can keep more of an open mind about the contours of what he or she needs to know about, so that concepts and theories can emerge out of the data (Bryman, 2001).

The qualitative research interview seeks to describe and the meanings of central themes in the life world of the subjects. The main task in interviewing is to understand the meaning of what the interviewees say. (Kvale, 1996).

A qualitative research interview seeks to cover both a factual and a meaning level, though it is usually more difficult to interview on a meaning level (Kvale, 1996).

Interviews are particularly useful for getting the story behind a participant's experiences. The interviewer can pursue in-depth information around the topic. Interviews may be useful as follow-up to certain respondents to questionnaires, e.g., to further investigate their responses (McNamara,1999).

The guide approach is intended to ensure that the same general areas of information are collected from each interviewee; this provides more focus than the conversational approach, but still allows a degree of freedom and adaptability in getting the information from the interviewee.

The interview will be conducted among 12 people selected by a specific criteria and tested. 6 graduated persons will be employed in their profession in one of the European countries and 6 graduated persons will be unemployed or employed in Georgia. The whole interview goes on from a minimum of 25 minutes to a maximum of 55 minutes in July 2020 in Tbilisi, Georgia via Skype. Before the interview, all participants were informed about the publication of their answers in the research work at the university. They are also aware that the entire interview will be audio-recorded and then transcribed. They allowed me to write their real names, but I will erase them after completing my studies.

#### 4.6 Semi-structured interview

Concepts for many issues we may find that one methodological approach is not enough and therefore extend the design to using more than one method. In general, we can discuss this as semi-structured interview with a focus on promoting the quality of qualitative research (Flick, 2007) but we can also use approach for extending the knowledge we want to obtain in our study. Semi-structured interviews are characterized by topic guides containing major questions that are used in the same way in every interview, although the sequence of the questions might vary as well as the level of probing for information by the interviewer. Semi-structured interviewing is suitable when the researcher already has some grasp of what is happening within the sample in relation to the research topic. However, the researcher should ensure there is no danger of loss of meaning as a consequence of imposing a standard way of asking questions. This could be achieved by conducting pilot interviews (these use broad topic guides with few direct questions) prior to data collection.

Even in a semi-structured interview, the questions posed during the interview should be as open-ended as possible, in order to avoid yes/no or rehearsed answers. Further, the questioning techniques should encourage respondents to communicate their underlying attitudes, beliefs and values that are so central to this method. This can be limited where the interviewee has a lack of awareness/information or is not used to putting feelings into words. Interviewees might feel exposed by questions (in particular where attitudes are probed in sensitive topics such as political attitudes, sexual orientation, borderline or illegal behavior). On the other hand, interviewees might

feel that they need to present themselves in a specific way in order to fit in with their perception of the researcher's requirements, or wish to bring in their own agenda of life-topics that do not fit easily with the aim of the interview. For these reasons, it is important to build a rapport with the interviewee before starting the interview so that both sides can feel more at ease. Different ways of posing questions and using probing and prompting help to elicit more information or steer the interview (Crimson and Morgan, 2006)

Accordingly, for the research we used young people who studied abroad and came back to their home country and who stayed abroad for better job conditions. I assume those people are experienced and know more than anyone else.

## 4.7 Ethical consideration

According to The Research Excellence Framework, research is a process of investigation leading to new insights, effectively shared (Miller, 2009). Research is a multi-stage process. Ethics are central to the research process. Researchers need to take care of various ethical issues at different levels of this process. The reality is that there can be ethical concerns at every step of the research process (Miller, 2009).

When the interviews for the research with various range of people are done, nobody should be able to recognize neither the participants and identify their answers nor companies invited into the research. This is the matter of confidentiality and anonymity. Data from the interviews must be also protected and store at the safe place to avoid their usage (Flick 2009).

All the people interviewed were informed before the interview and agreed to voluntary participation. We informed them that all data collection would be confidential and all of them gave us possibility to conduct that interview without anonymity and everybody who will read this paper had access to the data. Finally, interviews were conducted in a friendly environment in which both researcher and participant were encouraged to engage in open, meaningful dialogues.

## 4.8 Research limitations

The study's main limitation was the inability to interview the respondents because the pandemic of COVID-19. For the interview, I returned to Tbilisi, Georgia, but for above mentioned reason, we could not manage personal meetings and therefore set up contractual meetings in the form of



an online Skype personal meeting. It was difficult to conduct these interviews because of the interviewers who because of his or her work abroad did not have enough time and because of the time difference between the countries, but nonetheless, all of this was counteracted by the display of patience and understanding during the interview by the respondents.

## 5 Analyses

**Sub research question 1:** *“what opportunities and benefits could young educated people see in host country compared to home countries?”*

The main significant benefits that all participants said the graduates would see are better possibilities to find a decent job in host countries compared to home countries. And this is the reason why the young graduates are staying abroad and despite the fact that 6 respondents returned to home country, they still thought that they had better employment and carrier possibilities in European countries. As was shown in our theoretical part of this paper, the causes of migration are different, such as economic crises, political instability, civil wars, ethnic cleansing, social inequality, the development of market economy, gender discrimination, etc. But we emphasized educational factor in this paper, because this is a legal way to stay somewhere for a long time. We studied the motivation of international students to study abroad and agree that one of the main motivations for getting an education abroad is to get a high quality diploma from a prestigious university in an anticipation of better employment prospects in the future. According to these studies, education is a capital investment for the future, which, like every capital investment, should be profitable in the future.

Unemployment in Georgia is in direct relation to the structure of the political and economic systems and the main reason for this is the incompatibility of the demand and supply of qualifications in the labor market. One of the studies on this matter found that there is a significant difference between the high supply and the low demand for higher educated workers in Georgia. Because of the sectorial and compartmentalized structure of the Georgian economy, the number of jobs that require higher education is relatively small. Also, there is a factor of nepotism that one has to deal with in Georgia. To illustrate this, we made a comparison between Tekla and Nia who are graduates from the Masaryk University. Tekla tried to find a job in Georgia, Nia – in the Czech Republic. Tekla, who has more experience and holds 1 Bachelor and 2 masters degrees, it was impossible to do so, because to get a job, you need to have social connections, friends or relatives at the place where you want to work, especially for a young person who wants to work in a public sector, for which there is a small demand now in Georgia. On the other hand for Tekla, who is still in the last year of studies for her Bachelor's Degree, it was still easy to find a job in the Czech Republic, despite the fact that her job is not in direct relation to what she's studying at the

University, but still thinks that the job will give her enormous and useful experience for her future carrier.

Also, in contrast, all the participants of the interview noted that easy access to the labor market was a significant benefit in host countries compared to their country. They also said that to have jobs suitable to their professions was very important and given the labor market situation in the European countries, they have much more possibilities to find jobs of their profession than in their home country. After the interview, we summarized what young people focus on when reviewing careers in host countries, these are: job vacancies published on a website, assistance in compiling an autobiography (curriculum vita), if necessary; internship or job search assistance, database where students can post their autobiographies, post their own autobiographies describing their education, experience and other characteristics (this way the employers are given the opportunity to choose a candidate of interest from this database), career planning staff helps young people take successful steps in the career planning process, trainings and workshops that serve to facilitate job search, teach working in an organization, help write an autobiography, develop skills for an interview, etc., employers' meetings with young people managed by the Career Services, development of a training program in consultation with employers and taking into account market requirements that is a prerequisite for the training of the necessary staff.

As shown in our theory, potential young migrants estimate the costs and benefits of moving to alternative international locations and migrate to where the expected discounted net returns are the greatest, but 6 persons who graduated from universities abroad used their opportunities to stay abroad and find any job somewhere. As one of them, named Lasha, said: "Given the situation in Georgia, where many of my friends are unemployed, I chose to stay in Germany after graduating from one of the universities here and looked for any type of a job. After 3 months of searching, I found work in my profession and I believe Germany is a country where professionals and aspiring young people are properly valued, which I cannot say about my own country, where only through nepotism and acquaintances one can find an employment".

*Sub-partial question 1.1: "What is the main reason why young educated people are going abroad? Do they think there are advantages and benefits related to job opportunities in their or host countries?"*

According to this research, it is reasonable to assume that in decision making of young Georgians to go abroad to study, the economic strength of the host country plays a major role and young Georgians are more than willing to study in an economically strong country. Additionally, studying

abroad maybe related to the student's intention to stay in that country for work experience and short-term or permanent employment. Also, the salaries of qualified specialists are higher in developed countries and therefore, the possibility of migration from the developing countries to home country increases the return on investment in human capital.

As Tekla noted, higher education and diplomas obtained abroad often play a crucial role in finding employment in Georgia. Consequently, the desire of students to continue their studies abroad is great and various exchange programs offer young people the fulfillment of their plans. In Georgia, they will have to win in a highly competitive environment, because thousands of students graduate from higher education institutions in Georgia every year and then they begin looking for a job and try to establish themselves in an extremely competitive environment. And also, it must be said that no matter how prestigious the Georgian university is, the desire of students to continue their studies abroad is quite high. The European or American institutions of higher learning are associated with a high level of education in Georgia and therefore, those with education received there enjoy a clear advantage.

It is noteworthy that education is an investment in human capital. For example, every year spent in a European or American university increases a person's salary by about 10% in the future. Consequently, the more a person spends on education, the more it will contribute to long-term economic growth.

Luisa answered this question in a more detailed manner, she tried to explain differences in home and host countries and told her personal story to explain what she meant. „After graduating from Tbilisi State University, I was working in LEPL National Wine agency. I was always interested to know more about wine and agricultural management in general. At first, I was quite motivated because I thought my job would help my development to gain more knowledge and experience in the future. However, unfortunately the leadership was only job oriented, had a low pay system and I could not stand the routine service with no prospects for any kind of development. So, I decided to go to Germany to study, knowing this would further and improve my employment options. I graduated from a prestigious university and now I work in a wine company which gives me the opportunity for occupational growth and building a successful career”.

Young people with work experience are more likely to explain clearly a difference between home and host countries in terms of employment opportunities and the importance of a good education, because they encounter macro-level barriers rather than micro-level ones.

*Sub-partial question 1.2: "How do young educated people recognize their education and job experience as a value in the labor market in a host country compared to their country?"*

Intercorrelated significant decision for today's young workers, the surest path to have a good job and satisfying career runs through a university. Nowadays, said most of our respondents, generations of parents have told their children that in order to get a good job, they have to get a good education. Regardless of the level of education, more than half (52%) of respondents who are currently employed think that they have the right qualifications for the job. The remaining 38% think that they are overqualified for their current jobs and only 10% think they are underqualified. One of our respondents, Nino, has a Masters degree from a European university and because of the sense of duty she felt towards her family, she came back to Georgia to work, but faced many difficulties to find a job. She knew that her high level of education and experience were important and essential for the Georgian labor market, but still could not find work. She described unemployment among young people in the country. She said: "The main source of labor migration is the lack of relevant experience, knowledge and qualifications in young people, which is why employers refuse to offer jobs to them and give preference to more experienced staff. When employers are announcing vacancies, in most cases, having experience is indicated as a mandatory requirement. Many young people leave the country precisely because they cannot get a job here, while the desire for employment among young people is the highest among all age groups. In addition to the lack of jobs, youth unemployment is also exacerbated by the fact that employers often demand more experienced staff and it is therefore important to develop an internship and training internship program in the country."

Nino also knows German labor market and according to her recommendations, Germany should be trying to place the main responsibility for career information and services on one specific government agency, which will inform citizens about their employment opportunities and possibilities. She also says that implementing structural service reform will make career choices easier and easier to employ.

Thus from the perspectives of the respondents, they know the value of their education and experience and are fully aware how the Georgian labor market does not value their education and experience. All participant of this research recognize how much they'll be valued in their country, but they also know the situation well and therefore, they decided to stay abroad after completing their studies.

To sum up the answers to these questions and subquestions, in conclusion it must be stated that young Georgian educated people know very well the value of their education and experience and they know everything about labor market policy in both countries, and that is why they are incredibly insecure about finding a job in their country. They don't like this because their expectations are different, but due to the lack of labor market opportunities, they are migrating and one of the the main migration reasons for them is higher and better education, because of the consequent easier access into the labor market in the future.

**Sub research question 2:** *“What difficulties may young educated Georgians face when they stay abroad or return to their country?”*

Respondents noted that when returning home, many were shocked by what they saw in the everyday life, work environment and newly established habitual customs in Georgia. This shock was more associated with the requirements and standards of the work environment than with Georgian traditional customs and culture. Interestingly, almost all respondents initially found it quite difficult to find a job, some were unemployed for a long time, many of them went through 50 interviewes and weren't hired and eventually some of them became employed in occupations not related to their professions. According to the respondents, the initial failure was due to several factors: they had a high quality education, but didn't have work experience and had to begin working at a starting position and even when applying for the starting position, the employers sometimes told them bluntly that a person with such a good education would and should definitely have the ambition to work in a higher position. Also, some respondents noted that although they had high cultural and academic capital, they suffered from a lack of social capital and bearing. As one of the respondents noted, although he may have had more knowledge in a specific field of work, his coworkers, who lived in Georgia and knew many people in the field, spent much less time clarifying specific issues and therefore performed a number of tasks more quickly. It too must be noted that Georgian graduates from abroad have a fairly high level of interest in what type of job they will be employed in. These perceptions are not determined by the fact that they want to be directly employed in high positions, on the contrary, they acknowledge that despite their high quality academic education, they lack practical experience. It's highly important for Georgian graduates to find employment in their own field of work or in any related interesting fields where they will have the opportunity to realize themselves and it is important for them to be able to transfer their knowledge to others and feel that they are not doing routine work and can actually utilize knowledge they gained abroad for the benefit of their country. However, despite all of the

aforementioned reasons and obstacles, young Georgian graduates from abroad are still coming back to their country and trying to make a career start somewhere and choose the most suitable job for their profession. Our respondent, Irakli, graduated from the University of Bristol and she never could imagine that after graduation it would be impossible to find an employment in her home country. Consequently, she is starting to find jobs abroad and is coming back to Europe and thinks that the significant barrier for getting a job in Georgia is the lack of sensible labor market policy. As she described in our interview, she had some specific individual barriers to stay abroad after graduation, but now this reason is less problematic compared to her being currently unemployed in Georgia.

The respondents who are staying abroad shared their experience and explained what kind of barriers they face for coming back to Georgia. The main ones being family responsibilities, personal relationships, etc., but they also pointed to one important reason for their staying abroad: they do not have practical possibilities in Georgia for training to enter the labor market.

*Sub-partial question 2.1: “Do young educated people identify any barriers in their and host countries in the transition from universities to the labor market?”*

The issue of student employment is important in developed countries and in Eastern Europe as well. Twelve respondents admitted that there is huge differences in home and host countries in terms of transition from a university to the labor market. In host countries, universities track their students' career development, what success they achieve in the job market, state policy and institutions have strong relationship for students' career development and they use students' data accordingly and have an employed student base to attract students in the future. In addition, schools are interested in their students being highly qualified, competitive professionals and so, universities have career services, or similar structures that provide students with a variety of important information, the chance to meet with employers, provide training in autobiographical data and interviews for more development purposes. It is important that universities take into account the needs of employers and the labor market when designing their curriculums. In this regard, universities consult with employers, as a result of which the necessary skills are identified, which will be useful for their students in the future to transfer to the labor market.

Higher education institutions in developed countries apply various measures to promote student employment. They enter into agreements with business organizations regarding student employment and internships, conduct informational meetings with potential employers, have a

dialogue with employers to develop educational program issues, study the market and record existing vacancies.

In contrast, all respondents agreed that Georgian universities make little contribution to the transitioning for graduates to the labor market. A major problem is also the lack of awareness of employers about students' qualifications; they do not fully understand the difference between the qualifications of someone with a Bachelor's degree and a Master's degree. They mostly rely on the simple logic that somebody with a Master's degree has more knowledge and skills than a person with a Bachelor's degree, which is essentially the case, but employers are less likely to think about how much they need someone with a Master's degree for a particular position rather than an employee with a Bachelor's degree. This is one of the reasons why an intensive and communicative relationship is important and necessary between employers and the institutions of higher learning.

Also, a significant barrier in Georgia that all participants describe in detail is the lack of indispensable state employment policy for which the state needs to implement professional training, retraining and profession related development measures. The so-called "issue of internships" is one of the biggest problems for job seekers, especially young people who want to get a foothold in the labor market, undergo training in the shortest possible time and be actively involved in labor relations to secure their own future. We call the issue of so-called internships because none of the legislative acts in force in Georgia define and regulate the abovementioned issue, the essence of the internship and its goals. In light of the fact that the legislator does not provide a definition of the concept of internship, the concept of internship and its essence are absolutely misunderstood by employers in both the public and private sectors. In the case of an internship in the public sector, as a rule, this issue is regulated by an internal departmental document and the main component of labor relations is the performance of work by a person in return for remuneration. In view of the fact that the issue of internships is completely unregulated, in a labor market that is already devoid of regulations, employers make the interns work in an almost completely the same way as their ordinary employees without a salary. And it is important to know that according to the trade unions in Georgia, in the case of internships, they are a very significant and useful component for the education system. During the internship, the intern must learn, develop professionally and improve his or her qualifications. If the internship has no educational component, the job should be considered as a regular employment for which it is necessary to pay the person working.

Furthermore, one of our respondents, Tata, noted one of the main problems in Georgia: „Many people may not agree with me, but nepotism is the biggest problem when it comes inequity in



being hired for a job. When I see people in completely unsuitable positions and in high positions, I feel a sense of injustice, because of which many Georgian students I have met do not want to return to Georgia, including me. People in Georgia do not value each other, which deprives us of the great potential that each person can have. Unfortunately, post-Soviet values still exist, which clearly shows the low level of development of Georgia, when all opportunities should be used to the maximum.” – said Tata.

*Sub-partial question 2.2: “Do young people consider any state policy when making a decision related to their future carriers as relevant and potentially helpful? (What is their experience in this respect?)”*

Today, more and more European countries are adopting stringent visa and immigration rules. Nonetheless, qualified professionals and deserving young persons will continue to enjoy the post-study work stream in Europe. The strength of the work stream for degree holders is imperative to hold into a consideration. Why? The increasing number of students opting to study abroad and those who intend to work in the same country after their graduations. Our respondents, who are staying abroad, described relationships between universities and employers as part of state policies which are helpful to them. „All in all, universities that boast of good links to the industry and an impeccable reputation among local employers are extremely helpful for international students. However, there are other important things for foreign students that need to be dealt with, such as finding accommodations and visa restrictions.”- said one of our respondents, Teona. In this regard and in contrast to their home country, Tata, Mariam, Irakli and Nia talked about two host countries, Germany and Estonia, as examples. Germany is another great destination with an exceptional work stream for international students and young educated people. It is interesting and important to know that there are no restrictions for all EU nationals to study and work in Germany, but for non-EU citizens their stay in the country is restricted to 18 months after they graduate from a university. However, then you can make use of your local foreign national’s registration office to apply for an 18 month German Residence Permit. Only then will you be in a position to search around for an appropriate and decent job relevant to your skills and in the course of these 18 months, you are allowed to take up any form of employment. This allows you to sustain yourself and fund your job search endeavor. Once you have landed a job that’s pertinent to the courses you studied in Germany, you have the right to apply for an EU Blue Card, or the German Residence Permit, which is very helpful and wonderful.

Estonia is another great destination for international students and young people looking to study and work in Europe. Currently, all the students who are not EU citizens or Estonian nationals have to apply for a temporary residence permit at a nearby Estonian embassy or a consulate in their home country. In case you are a non-EU national already residing legally in Estonia and want to pursue a Master's or a doctorate level of study, you have the right to apply for a resident permit in order to study in Estonia. This Temporary Residence Permit is issued for the span of the nominal studies ( for a Bachelor's level – 3 years, for a Master's – 2 years) and it is interesting to know that international students enrolling for full-time studies in Estonia don't need a work permit to work at the same time. You can work as you study there, as long as you don't disrupt your studies, but you will have to be credited passing grades for a handful of courses and also complete your course study within the nominal time. Right now, Estonia has a great and munificent incentive for international students, giving them a 5-year residence permit immediately after their graduation and there is no limit for the number of hours you can work there as you study.

To sum it up, young people point to the lack of practical experience as a barrier, the ineffectiveness of internship programs that would facilitate their employment and the fact that experience is the main requirement for employment. These problems are also present in Europe to some extent, but unlike in Europe, these problems are very frequent in Georgia, especially in public services. In addition, as we have stated before, nepotism in Georgia is a major problem today. But despite all of these current problems, young people in Georgia and the ones living abroad still wish to see positive changes in the future.

**Sub research question 3:** *“How young Georgian university graduates perceive benefits compared to difficulties when staying abroad or in the case of returning to their country?”*

For all respondents to some extent becoming well educated and acquiring labor market experience for a future success have always posed some challenges, especially those from disadvantaged or minority backgrounds. It is agreed presently that all of these tasks of young people are now taking longer to accomplish than in generations past. Among the challenges young people face as they transition to adulthood, the following two can be considered centrally important: 1) progressing towards and completing their educational goals. 2) Becoming employed and earning enough to gain independence from their families.

From a developmental perspective, the transition to adulthood is a critical period for forging work and career-related identities, with initial plans and training confronting market realities. Those who cannot gain a foothold in the world of work during this time may continue to lag behind their more

successful peers. Thus, we notice the difference in attitude between those striving to have a successful future career and migrating to other countries and those who are content with their present incomes and decide not to migrate. Regarding this, Mariam stated that she saw tremendous difficulties in transitioning from her university after graduation to the labor market for having a successful career and therefore, decided to leave the country for Europe.

Continuing on the above statement, it is important to say that after enrolling into a European university, some of our respondents realized that they could also try starting looking for a job, so that they could have their own income and be financially more independent. The fact is that when thinking about finding a job and fighting to get an employment, several problems arise, among which are: full workload at the expense of elementary pay, incompatible schedule, job shortages and most importantly, work where inexperienced young people are asked for two or more years of work experience and the employer does not want to ask a simple question: When and how should the graduates have gained any work experience? Indeed, if we observe the urgency of the problem by looking at several employment sites, this problem becomes all the more noticeable, when a potential employers require from an applicant having the experience from other potential employers.

One respondent who graduated from a European university and returned in Georgia expressed some thoughts about the benefits for being at home compared to staying abroad. „When living abroad, sometimes work hindered finishing my studies and sometimes my studies impeded finishing my work. But afterwards, I found it useful finding a job that was relevant to my studies.” – said Mariam. But she elaborated on this issues saying that she had tremendous help from the family and friends both abroad and now in Georgia, where she feels safe and happy with her loved ones. But this case is an exception in this research.

*Sub-partial question 3.1: “What is the balance between key barriers and benefits that influence decisions to stay abroad or to return to Georgia?”*

All twelve survey participants emphasize different motivation for repatriated to return home can be divided into three categories: personal motives, professional motives and social motives. For most Georgian citizens returning from emigration, settling in the homeland is not an easy process after a long time. Young people with degree from European university and work experience are more likely to stay abroad for a while encounter macro-level barriers, namely lack of demand for professional labor force from the state, low level of services from employers.

People are constantly striving for something, wanting to achieve more and be better. The main reason for leaving Georgia is that the next generation does not see any prospects here, but it should also be noted that in the West, too, hard work and effort is required for a person to succeed. The young man thinks I will go and be better there, but it is possible that a very talented person will be completely lost in a foreign environment, it is difficult to live in a country where you feel like a stranger. You may eventually get used to it, but it will come at the cost of great labor and effort, it is clear that a lot of people were taken away from Georgia by poverty.

*Sub-partial question 3.2: “What gains do young people find in the labor policy or other policies that may help to overcome the barriers/difficulties they face in host country comparing to home country?”*

Regarding this theme, the questions analyzed with all respondents, several issues were raised during the discussion, six out of twelve started that they faced difficulties but active labor market policy in particular country was helpful to them. Training programs—the classic active labor market policy—are the most frequently implemented labor market programs worldwide this programs comprise all programs aimed at increasing human capital. The goals of boosting human capital and attenuating skills mismatch are attained through a set of training components: classroom vocational and technical training, work practice (on-the-job training), basic skills training (math, language), life skills training (socio-affective, no cognitive skills), and job insertion. Some labor market programs are designed to improve job-seeking skills and the efficiency of the search process and resulting job matches. Components typically include job search training, counseling, monitoring, and sanctions for failure to comply with job search requirements.

On the other hand, Lasha brought her example about for gaining her experience about labor policy in home and host countries - „First of all I wanted to get a European education, wanted to get acquainted with European culture. I was very experienced to go, on the contrary - I was happy to leave an inactive country and go to where they really know the value of time. Georgia is not a country where I could strengthen economically. I have been in Germany for four years and, as time goes on, I realize that made the right choice, will not have a job in Georgia from which I will be paid to live independently. I want to pay the tuition fee myself, but I will not be able to do it in Georgia. I can not live all my life on the neck of my parents, in their home. I am an independent person, want to be separate, to start living with myself and that is why I am forced to be here - in Germany. In addition to working, studying and striving to raise my professional level. What kind

of independent life are we talking about in Georgia, when the country does not even have a student employment program. What to do for a young person who wants to study but his parents do not have the means to get the education they want. In this case, there is only one way - to work and pay the tuition, but there is no job? The state should develop a program to promote student employment. Educated youth is a guarantee of a strong state, it is educated youth that creates the future of the country and should the government know that? Be sure to allocate funds for the implementation of the student employment program.

### **To sum up**

The balance between obstacles and benefits is obvious during migration, young people are introduced to a new culture, learn a foreign language, gain work experience and work in a pleasant environment, which is a kind of incentive to overcome obstacles. They gain their experience through labor market policy in European countries and have strong prediction about their successful carrier in home country after reforming labor policy.

## 6 Conclusion

The purpose of this paper is to answer the main research question: „**What are the factors that influence decisions of young Georgian university graduates, who also graduated from a university abroad, to stay abroad or to come back to their country?**”

The theoretical part of this paper distinguished between macro and micro level of decision-making process by young educated Georgians and the diverse pull and push factors of this process. Based on my observation and qualitative research, it is possible to understand extensively what is the main motivator for young Georgians to return home or to remain abroad and find a job in the host country. All the interesting, credible and informative explanations were given and reached through three sub-research questions, which were very helpful to answer the main question of the research.

Based on the theoretical aspects and qualitative research, the decision-making process of young educated Georgians was influenced in several ways by their aspirations towards higher education, which were possible to be realized abroad in European countries. The answers to this occurrence was easier to find in this research paper by asking sub questions.

First part of the question dealt with the comparison of opportunities and benefits in both countries, determined by the demand and supply of the labor market, especially in home country, and also having a job not related to the profession, lacking work experience and absence of demand of highly qualified and educated young people for a successful development of any sector of the Georgian labor market.

We found out and discovered that young Georgians even with a very high level of education and work experience felt extremely vulnerable in their country, rather than in a host country, and this was one of the main reasons why they chose to go abroad and improve their education and professional skills. And since, Georgian educational standards fully meet the European labor market needs, it was not difficult to find good jobs for young Georgians in host countries. On the other hand, educational standards in home country and the labor market policy do not provide any opportunities for improving the practical and professional skills of young educated Georgians, who, despite the fact that were granted easy access to internships when they studied in Georgian universities, these internship, as all the respondents agreed and stated, were nothing but formalities that did not lead to them becoming employed after their graduations. Whereas, in the European

universities, the labor market has a close and strong relationship with educational system and the state policy for educational standards is highly trusted and respected.

The causes and motivation to migrate for all respondents are the meaningful opportunities and prospects they present and they know very well the value of their education, experience and most of all the precious time, which the educated young are not ready to sacrifice in vain. They are also aware of the ongoing difficult and distressing political processes and are trying to avoid all of this by migrating abroad.

It is also noteworthy that the young people after graduation are prepared to start work in any labor sector but they do not have sufficient practical experience and practice, which are in demand from all employers. The young graduates try to find a solution to this problem by migrating, by enrolling in a European university and by finding an employment in the host country which they are certain will be very useful and helpful in the future for them to build a successful career when they return to their home country.

However, besides the labor market policy, migration policy and the educational standards, another major problem in Georgia such as nepotism leads to such harmful and regrettable consequences as brain drain (the process by which educated people leave their country and find the appropriate work and application for its knowledge in another country) and ultimately, the more rife nepotism becomes, the higher the migration of the educated people and backwardness of the country.

In my view, the migration policy in Georgia is still unevolved and undeveloped and the country does not have a well-developed program to stimulate the remigration of Georgian workers and young educated people. There are many challenges and problems facing migration policy and needs to be refined so that the emigration of Georgians back to the home country can have a positive effect on the country. The labor market policy has its impact on the migration process, because young educated people are willing to take risks and leave the country, because they are not used to such an unfair environment and prefer going abroad instead.

The main purpose of this study was to identify the causes and ways of migration that led to the migration of educated young Georgians to European countries. The factors and reasons for the migration turned out to be within Georgia itself. Only one of the respondents interviewed, named a micro factor as a reason for returning to the home country. I also have to say that I did not find satisfactory answers to the main question of my thesis through neoclassical macro and micro level economic theories. However, the main problematic and push factor for young people is existing

labor market policy in Georgia, because of which even all the participants of the survey who returned to Georgia, already have plans to go abroad again in the near future.

Overall, young educated Georgians recognize and emphasize the fact that the main reasons for their migration are ineffective labor market policy, the absence of a normal and required transition process from universities to the labor market, distrust of state governing organizations, expecting considerable work experience from graduates in their field of study by the employers, not being able to find work according to one's profession, nepotism, low remuneration for work and the unfair working environment.



## 7 Policy implication

There is a need for more private and public sectors to be involved in youth employment. The state should pay more attention to eliminating youth unemployment and employment problems in general. There should be factories that will need more workers that would also have a tremendously positive impact on the economic development of the country.

There should be a working relationship between the universities and the public and private sectors in Georgia that should help the graduates become employed after completing their studies. It is necessary to have a state employment system that will study the economic situation of all people and consequently, will initiate and implement the employment programs for young people. Furthermore, the state also has to eliminate one of its main problems of nepotism, which leads to such terrible results as brain drain, poor services and ultimately, the inability of the country to develop the way it is supposed to economically and politically.

The elimination of problems largely depends on the state policy, steps taken by the private sector and other measures, which, regrettably, are not instituted and implemented in the country. Georgian government can have discussions with private sector and assign responsibilities for the provision of services. It is also essential to ensure flexible working conditions and to offer students work after graduating and eradicate penalizing them by the employers for not having a considerable work experience. Moreover, the education system should be giving advice to students what subjects of demand they should study at universities, so that after graduating, they will not have to work at a job which will not relevant to their profession. It means taking a more individual approach to each side.

The most critical barrier for young Georgians for returning to their home country is the lack of sensible and necessary state policy to deal with the problems mentioned and discussed above. This state policy should be aimed at developing of a program to stimulate the remigration of labor migrants or young graduates from abroad by creating an appropriate environment and jobs in the country, so that the skilled and trained labor force will be willing and able to return to Georgia and use the knowledge and experience acquired abroad for the future development of their country. The institution of a sound and good labor migration policy will have a positive and stimulating

effect on the labor force remigration process and will contribute greatly to the development of the socioeconomic situation of the country and its citizens.

Despite the existence of migration strategies, Georgia's migration policy today does not provide a solution to the migration problem and does not meet international standards. It is possible to identify several problems and challenges facing migration policy in this regard. The government should develop employment policies, including youth employment, define its main directions and principles, it should have a policy for funding youth employment programs and activities, establish a system of transition from educational institutions to employment, under which the state will fund free internships for students at the final stage of education in various organizations in accordance with their qualifications or internships for students of vocational schools.

I am certain that by having a state employment service that will mediate between the unemployed graduates and the employers, it will also be possible to register the unemployed, develop employment programs, establish "career advancement" departments in all universities that will create a database of students and graduates, which will be constantly updated and will be available to potential employers, developing and implementing national, regional, special youth employment programs that will have to be based on systematic labor market research (monitoring) and analysis.

In my opinion, the private and public sectors need to be more involved in creating youth employment opportunities and overall, the state should pay more attention to eliminating the problems of youth unemployment. It is necessary to have a state employment system that studies the prospects and economic situations of young people and ensures their employment in the country. The government needs to improve the normative base for the education and provide decent employment for young people. Also, the establishment of an effective labor inspection agency will be able to effectively inspect labor law violations and disrupt the harmful practice of using young people as cheap or free labor force and thus preventing modern day servitude in the service sector. At the same time, it is necessary to start scientific research for the implementation of the state employment policy and to develop an adequate employment policy, including youth employment, for which the state needs to implement professional training, retraining and professional development measures.

## 8 Appendix (1)

### Masaryk University Thesis interview

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><b>Sub research question 1.</b></p> <p><i>what opportunities and benefits could young educated people see in host country compared to home countries?</i></p>                                                                             | <p>Sub research question 2:</p> <p><b><i>what difficulties may do young educated people face when they stay abroad or when they return to home countries, how policies could help to alleviate these difficulties?"</i></b></p>  | <p><b>Sub research question 3:</b></p> <p><i>How young Georgian university graduates perceive benefits compared to difficulties when staying abroad or in the case of returning to their country?</i></p>                            |
| <p><b>Sub-partial question 1.1.</b></p> <p><i>What was the main reason that young educated people are going to abroad, do young educated people feel the advantages/benefits related to job opportunities in home or host countries?</i></p> | <p><b>Sub-partial question 2.1.</b></p> <p><i>Do young educated people identify any barriers (home and host country) in the transition from university to the labor market?</i></p>                                              | <p><b>Sub-partial question 3.1.</b></p> <p><i>What is the balance between key barriers and benefits that influence decisions to stay abroad or to return to Georgia?</i></p>                                                         |
| <p><b>Sub-partial question 1.2.</b></p> <p><i>How do young educated people recognize their education and job experience as a value in the labor market in host country comparing to home country?</i></p>                                    | <p><b>Sub-partial question 2.2.</b></p> <p><i>Do young people consider any state policy to make a decision related to their future carrier as relevant, potentially helpful? (what is their experience in this respect)?</i></p> | <p><b>Sub-partial question 3.2.</b></p> <p><i>What gains do young people find in the labor policy or other policies that may help to overcome the barriers/difficulties they face in home country comparing to home country?</i></p> |

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