

# Georgian Migration to Turkey

## between 1990 and 2012

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DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

International Relations

Academic Advisor: Prof. Dr. Ayhan Kaya

Submitted: 18.02.2016

Georgian Migration to Turkey

Between 1990 and 2012

Türkiye'deki Gürcü göçler  
1990 ve 2012 yıllar arasında

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Tezin Onaylandığı Tarih:

12.02.2016

Toplam Sayfa Sayısı:

96

Anahtar Kelimeler (Türkçe):

- 1) Göç
- 2) Ağ Kuramı
- 3) Gül devrimi
- 4) Gürcü - Rus savaşı
- 5) Entegrasyon Teorisi

Anahtar Kelimeler (İngilizce):

- 1) Migration
- 2) Network Theory
- 3) Rose Revolution
- 4) Georgian – Russian war
- 5) Integration Theory

## Abbreviations

OECD - Organization for Security and Co-operation

Geo Stat - National Statistics Office of Georgia

Turk stat - Turkish Statistical Institute

UNESCO - United Nation's Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

UN - United Nations

UDHR - Universal Declaration of Human Rights

NCDC - National Climatic Data Center

MENA - Middle East and North Africa

MOI - Ministry of Interior

CPI - Corruption Perception Index

GDP - Gross Domestic Product

MFA - Ministry of Foreign Affairs

BSEC - Black Sea Economic Cooperation

CRRC - Caucasus Research Resource Centre

## Abstract

This dissertation attempts to address the phenomenon of migration and specifically Georgian migration to Turkey. The aim of this research is to analyze the migration process of Georgians to Turkey from the perspective of Network Theory. I try to analyze the theory in practice by conducting face-to-face interviews with the Georgian migrants in Turkey who have migrated during 90s. Due to the complexity of the interlocutors the topic is analyzed from the different perspectives. I try to contribute to the literature while analyzing positive and negative impact of having networks in the country of migration and its final effects on the Georgian migrants living in Turkey.

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# Introduction

## 1 Context

Migration has recently become one of the problematic issues and has had significant consequences worldwide (Kaya 2009). Living in the globalized world movement of people from one place to another seems to be uncontrollable. As the number of international as well as internal migrants grow rapidly the policy makers all over the world are concerned about maintaining the control over such an intense flow of people from one place to another. The reasons for their concern are the security perceptions and the demand of development related their countries. While the number of migrants grow dramatically it is becoming a challenge for the public officials to offer them proper living conditions for a better integration.

The reason I have chosen migration as a topic of my thesis is that it has been one of the most important and problematic issues all over the world for a long time. It is a rather diverse topic that cannot be fully covered easily since the number of internal as well as international migrants is becoming larger each day. Migration is recently changing and shaping international policies. It has significantly affected internal also international politics. Migration is not an event that happens in a limited time and space but it is a continuous process that crosses borders and time limits. Migration changes international reality and affects it socially, culturally and economically.

This thesis entails the description of the term, reasons, the problems that migrants face before and after migration and the possibilities of returning to the country of origin. This research focuses specifically on the reasons of migration and the facilitation of the process while applying to the Network theory. Moreover, this thesis

discusses the current problem of migration in Turkey. As number of migrants keeps growing in Turkey the government is becoming more concerned about the issue. Even though migration is a worldwide problem, the situation of Turkey nowadays is becoming harder than before due to its geo political location. Being located in the middle of two continents Turkey has become country of destination as well as country of transit for people who try to migrate to Europe. Therefore government is obliged to implement specific migration policies considering Turkey as a country of destination as well as a transit country. It should be noted that this thesis focuses specifically on Georgian migration to Turkey. Even though the number of Georgians in Turkey is not as much as other minorities, Georgian migration counts several centuries. The first wave of migrants who have migrated before the collapse of Soviet Union have already integrated into Turkish society and they do not identify themselves as Georgians any more.

Georgian population has been diminishing dramatically since 1990. While in 2004 the population was 4. 371, 535 latest researches conducted in 2014-2015 showed that the population of Georgia consists of 3.729,500 million (Geo Stat). Georgia as an ex-Soviet Union member country has faced several wars preventing the society from living a stable life. Low living conditions can be one of the main reasons for growing emigration from the country. One of the main destinations for Georgian migrants used to be Russia since the two countries have close cultural and historical ties. Most importantly Georgia and Russia share the same religion - orthodox Christianity. After the worsening of the diplomatic relations in its classical meaning and specifically closing the Russian embassy in Georgia, flow of people to Russia reduced significantly. On the other hand easy requirements and no visa regime for Georgian citizens to Turkey conditioned that Turkey became one of the most popular destinations for people from

Georgia. Recently, passport free regime has been introduced which allows citizens of Georgia to enter Turkey only with their ID cards. Georgians travelling to Turkey and vice versa citizens of Turkey travelling to Georgia can proceed without presenting their passports at the border. Due to this reasons large number of Georgians have migrated to Turkey since then and the migration process has been going on.

This thesis describes four waves of migration. First of all, the brief description of the ethnic Georgians is provided in order to have a general idea of the Georgian community in Turkey. The migration of ethnic Georgians took place during the Ottoman Empire therefore the thesis includes brief introduction about this segment. Following, the thesis describes the migration wave that took place during the fall of Soviet Union. As described in the chapters as long as Georgia faced economic and social crisis after the fall of Soviet Union large number of Georgians were forced to migrate to the neighbor countries. The thesis also includes the description of the migrants who left Georgia after the Georgian-Russian war as the country faced the problem of unemployment followed by economic crisis. Finally, in order to make a comparison I describe the migration wave which takes place recently within the Georgian community.

## **2 Research Question**

This research aims to focus on the Georgian migration to Turkey from the perspective of the Network Theory. It includes the reasons of migration after the fall of Soviet Union and the Georgian-Russian war often referred as August war as well. While making the identification between two decades Network Theory, stating that one of the facilitators of migration is having networks in the country of direction, will be applied. Migrant networks play significant role in the process of migration and in the process of integration as well. Networks mostly represent the family or the relatives of the migrant.

Mostly family members tend to keep in touch and help each other in making migration process easier, which means providing place to stay, food, general information about the country and most importantly making integration process easier for the new migrants. The reason that Network Theory is being applied in the thesis is that family ties play essential role in the Georgian culture. Therefore applying the Network Theory and testing its role in the Georgian migration to Turkey may prove that networks can play significant role.

As many scholars have stated networks might be one of the main reasons of migration (King 2012). With this thesis I would like to apply the Network Theory and analyze positive and negative role of having connections in the country of destination in the migration as well as in the integration process. Due to having a chance to meet Georgians who have migrated to Turkey during different time periods I aim to strengthen my statement with the interviews that took place during the research. While conducting the interviews I tried to focus on the role of networks in the process of making a decision about the country of destination and I tried to raise the issue of the role of networks in the process of integration. Therefore the research question of this thesis is: Does having networks in the country of destination affect migration process in the case of Georgian migration to Turkey? In the first place thesis describes the migration process after the fall of Soviet Union and on the other hand focuses on the migration after the Rose Revolution while applying to Network Theory. As the thesis states, during the research I have found out that having networks can have positive and negative effects on the quality of lives of migrants. I have provided a final statement by analyzing the outcome of the interviews which lead me to the answer of the research question.

The reason Network Theory has been chosen to be examined is that people migrate due to their economic situations however they often find it hard to decide on the country of destination. Even though decision about migration is depended on the economic situation, choosing the country of destination might be influenced by other factors too. Therefore this thesis states that having networks in one specific country play significant role in the process of making a decision about the country of migration. Even though migration is influenced by various reasons, having networks may have the decisive importance. Most of the scholars raise the positive role of networks. The issue is raised during the field work as well. The issue is examined with the interlocutors as they explain the possible negative role of having networks especially in the process of integration. Therefore this thesis discusses the negative as well as positive roles of having networks in the country of migration and strengthens the theory with the interviews conducted with the Georgian community in Turkey.

### **3 Pre-research Readings**

In this thesis the sources of books, online journals and reports of international organization of migration were used. In the first chapters the definitions and explanations are provided from the UNESCO's glossary on migration. The concepts and theories of migration are explained based on the works of scholars such as King and Nowak. Nowak describes three types of networks which are family networks, labor networks and illegal networks (Nowak 2012). This thesis mostly focuses on the family networks and labor networks therefore I found the work of Nowak relevant for the thesis. Russell King (2005) in his work describes the theory of networks as well as push and pull theory and explains its effects on the process of migration. Tilly and Boyd (2007) describe the importance of family networks and explain positive as well as negative sides of networks. Scholars state that networks may be one of the most

important reasons of migration. They both agree that family networks play important role in the process of migration and can be one of the core reasons while choosing country of destination.

The history of migration and its general concepts are based on the book by Peter Bellwood (2013) who has discussed the history of migration according to different time periods in his book "First Migrant". While describing the first migratory flows the writer explains closely the possible reasons of migration as well as its affects worldwide. The concept of migration is explained in the book of Khalid Koser (2007) where he gives short description as well as introduction to the concept of migration. Following the article of Jose Antonio Alonso (2011) has been applied while describing modern development of migration and its challenges. Alonso describes the factors driving migration and its affects in the modern world while applying to the concept of remittances and the problem of brain drain. It should be noted that as long as there is significant number of Georgian labor migrants to Turkey describing the concept of remittances and its effects is relevant to mention.

The history of Georgia is based on the books by Georgian historians such as Putkaradze and Surguladze. The works of Georgian historians focus on the reasons of migration while highlighting economic and social problems. Putkaradze focuses on the Georgians in Turkey and their integration into the society (Putkaradze 1998) while Surguladze highlights the earlier history of Georgian and provides more information about its ancient culture (Surguladze 2001). While describing current issues and conflicts in Georgia the article of Mitat Celikpala (2005) who focused on the region of Caucasus has been applied. In his article he provides comprehensive information about the South Ossetia as well as Abkhazian conflict and analyzes the effects of the conflict on the current situation of Georgia. While Celikpala focuses on the conflict between

Georgia and Abkhazai the article by Bulent Aras and Pinar Akpınar (2011) covered Turkish policies towards Caucasus and specifically Turkish-Georgian relations after the Russian-Georgian war. The authors try to focus on the Turkish policies towards Caucasus with regards to the energy as a connection to Europe. The article is significant as long as it focuses on the Turkish-Georgian relations after the war and explains in details the support that was provided by Turkish government for Georgians during and after the war. The article by Justina Szalanska (2012) has been applied widely during description of the current issues between Turkey and Georgia as long as it covers the major modern projects such as Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan which play important role in the relations of two countries. The relations between the country of birth and country of destination are important for the migrant in the decision making process. As explained below the number of Georgian migrants in Russia has decreased as the relation between two countries got worse. As long as this thesis explains reasons of migration to specific country it is significant to mention the relations between two countries in order to have a clear picture of the situation. It is important to mention the article by Marianna Vindimian (2010) who describes the history of Turkish Georgian relations and the foreign policies of the countries. The author mentions the limited availability of any diplomatic relations between two countries and the friendly relations since the collapse of the Soviet Union. While Vindimian discusses Georgian Turkish relations before and during Soviet Union, Modebadze, Sayin and Yilmaz (2014) give more detailed explanation of the evolution of the relations after the fall of Soviet Union. The writers describe the relations between two countries in the field of economy, energy and transportation. Moreover the relations between two countries are explained in details after the Rose Revolution. As long as this thesis focuses on Georgian migration to Turkey the relations between two countries has significant impact on migration.

Therefore it is relevant to describe the history and the complexity of the relations between Turkey and Georgia.

In this context it is important to refer to Salukvadze and Meladze who have discussed main risks of migration on the development of Georgia. While Meladze provides extensive details about the Soviet era in Georgia (Meladze Tsuladze 1997), Salukvadze focuses on the possible reasons of growing migration after the fall of the union (Salukvadze 2013). In order to further describe Georgian migration to Turkey before the fall of Soviet Union “Migration and Power Politics: The settlement of Georgian Immigrants in Turkey” by Oktay Ozel (2010) has been applied. The writer describes the situation of the newly migrated Georgians during the era of Ottoman Empire. He describes the difficult situation of Georgian migrants as well as poor life conditions of Turkish local people. Several articles about ethnically Georgian Turks have been gathered from the different internet sources and have been applied while discussing the issue of Georgians in Turkey. As long as this thesis describes Georgian migration to Turkey according to the timeline it is relevant to make a short description of the existing situation before the fall of Soviet Union as well therefore I consider it useful to apply to Oktay Ozel. Current migration issues are discussed based on the works of Icduygu as long as scholar provides clear explanation and analysis of the problem and discusses the transformation of Turkey from country of immigration to country of emigration and transit (Icduygu 2009). While discussing the issue of Georgian diaspora in Turkey I have applied to the article of Veysel Erdemli (2012). The writer tries to identify Georgian migrants as a diaspora in Turkey and discusses some important issues about the features of Diasporas. Moreover he describes Georgian diaspora in great details while analyzing the process of Georgian migration to Turkey as well. In his work he defines the terms such as Muhajir and Chveneburi and highlights

their importance for the Georgian community in Turkey. The thesis is based on the reports of the International Organization for Migration as long as the organization provides detailed information about migration each year. The statistical information is taken from the National Statistics Office in Georgia as well as in Turkey. The official web sites of the organizations provide exhaustive information about the flows of people from one country to another on yearly basis.

#### **4 Rationale of the Research**

The rationale for claiming the significance of networks in the process of migration is strengthened by the face to face interviews with the Georgian migrants who have moved to Turkey at different time periods. This thesis aims to test Network Theory while interviewing Georgians who have migrated after the fall of Soviet Union as well as during the recent years. Even though several researches have been done about Georgians living in Turkey it should be noted that network theories have not been tested by scholars before. Therefore with the interviews and the face-to-face meetings with the migrants I try to analyze Georgian migration to Turkey from the perspective of Network Theory. While interviewing people who have migrated at different time periods I aim to study negative as well as positive role of having networks in the process of migration and integration. Networks influence migration in many ways. Not only does it affect the process of making decision about the country of migration but also it has impact on the process of integration. Even though assimilation process may be a wide concept I try to test the role of networks in the integration process as well. As most of the scholars have mentioned networks usually play positive role in the process of migration and moreover having networks can be one of the crucial reasons of migration however there is limited number of literature about the negative outcome of having networks in the county of migration. Therefore I would like to highlight not only

the positive role of networks but analyze its challenging side as well. Network Theory has been studied and analyzed by many scholars. Moreover it has been applied to different situations however Georgian migration to Turkey has not yet been studied from this perspective. Therefore I find it interesting as well as challenging to analyze the migration and integration process while applying to Network Theory.

Even though there is a significant number of Georgians in Turkey there has not been many studies about the recently migrated Georgians. As long as most Georgians are involved in the labor migration most of the studies have focused on this segment. In this thesis I would like to interview Georgians who have migrated during Soviet Union as well as after Rose Revolution. While interviewing interlocutors who have migrated at different time periods I aim to find out the significance of networks from old migrants as well as from recent migrant's point of view. Analyzing the role of networks in Georgian migration to Turkey is important as long as Georgians try to stay close to their family and friends and therefore networks are usually applied in the process of migration. As mentioned above the thesis aims to study Georgian migrants to Turkey at different time periods from the perspective of Network Theory which has not been studied by scholars before.

## **5 Methodology and the Universe of the Research**

In order to be fully able to apply the Network Theory in the case of Georgian migration to Turkey it is important to first of all describe the history of the country and the reasons of migration. Push and pull theory states that in the process of migration some existing factors might push an individual to migrate from the home country and on the other hand some factors about the country of migration shall pull the migrant to stay there. It is crucial to explore the push factors that made Georgian migrants leave their country of birth and pull factors that caused migration of a significant number of Georgians to

Turkey. In order to be able to describe the reasons taking a short overlook on the history of Georgia is essential as well therefore qualitative research method will be applied. Accordingly the first chapters of the thesis are theoretical while the last chapter is empirical assessment of the outcome. Theoretical part is based on the books and the articles published on internet. Key concepts and theories are discussed in details based on academic literature and publications of scholars. The variables that have been analyzed during the interviews are the socio-economic reasons of migration, migrant networks and their role in the process of migration as well as in the process of integration.

The thesis further describes theories of migration and applies to Network Theory in the final chapter. Network theory suggests that having networks such as family members, relatives or friends in the country of destination shall make the process of migration easier and reduce the risks. As long as in Georgian culture family ties play important role it shall be significant to apply the Network Theory in the case of Georgian migration to Turkey. The empirical part describes integration process of Georgian migrants in the Turkish society and analyzes it while applying to Network Theory. The time frame comprises of the years of 1990-2012. This period is connected to the fall of Soviet Union and gaining independence by Georgia as well as beginning of the new era for Georgia with the Rose Revolution. The discussion is depended on the conducted interviews and its outcomes. Within the research Georgian migrants in Turkey are interviewed about the reasons of their migration and their experiences with the migrant networks.

I have collected data through face to face interviews with the Georgians residing in Turkey in order to analyze the theory into practice. While concepts and conceptions are mental creation observation and experiences are real (Babbie 2001). Therefore I

tried to conceptualize the theory and make the concept more specific and precise. Unit of analysis was Georgians or Turks who are ethnically Georgian, therefore as the level of measurement I chose nominal measure having the characteristics of exhaustiveness and mutual exhaustiveness (Babbie 2001) such as ethnicity. During the interviews I used snowball sampling as the interlocutors were asked to suggest others (Babbie 2001). Interlocutors were chosen according to the years of migration. I managed to interview 20 migrant. Their years of migration are different from each other and is within the years of 1990 to 2012 with some exceptions. The interlocutors were contacted through Georgian Art Center. Hereby I would like to mention that due to the fact that the interlocutors were already chosen with the help of networks I was faced with the risk of selective bias. However I also used my personal contacts for the interviews therefore I tried to avoid selective bias. Most of the interviews were held face to face however Skype interviews was used as well. The reason I chose to use the word interlocutors is that the interviews are conducted with the open questions from both sides. During the interviews interlocutors also felt freedom to ask me questions as long as they considered me as one of them due to my ethnicity. I chose the position role of observer-participant which helped me to get the trust of the interlocutor (Babbie 2001). During the interviews I used open-ended questions in order to give the interlocutor freedom to talk about his/her experience. The questionnaire includes in-depth questions which are described as form of conversation as well (Lofland&Lofland 1995). This way interlocutor is given freedom of providing further explanation of the situation as well as making interaction with the researcher. As the range of interviews I applied to semi-structured interviews as the questionnaire was not followed in the same way. I tried to follow the responses of the interlocutors in order to get the full description of the issue. In conclusion due to my ethnicity and their conception of me

as one of them allowed me to get their trust which allowed me to obtain the necessary data in order to analyze their situation from the perspective of Network Theory.

## **6 Scope of the Study**

This thesis entails short description of the term migration as well as explanation of migration types and differences between them. It provides characterization of reasons and effects of migration based on the works of different scholars. The chapter further makes a short overview of the perception of migrants and the effects of migration. Nowadays the issue of migration is becoming a worldwide concept and the problem is becoming more important as the number of migrants grow dramatically. Therefore it is crucial to have the clear understanding of the term migration as well as its types and reasons. Due to the fact that migrants are usually seen as the threat it should be acknowledged that they are the ones who have been trying to escape the threat in their own country. Therefore I consider it important to describe the reasons of migration followed by the perception of migrants. As long as this research aims to apply the Network Theory on the Georgian example first chapter includes analysis of Network, Integration and Pull and Push Theories which play crucial role in the process of migration. It should be noted that different theories shall be applied in the different situations however this thesis mostly focuses on the Network Theory due to the importance of the networks within Georgian society. The chapter also includes a short overlook on the situation in Turkey concerning migration. Today number of migrants grow dramatically all over the world however it should be noted that in Turkey migration is one of the leading problems due to its geo political location. Due to the fact that it shares border with Syria, currently a significant number of Syrian refugees have migrated to Turkey. Therefore discussing current situation and analyzing its significance is important. The second chapter covers the history of Georgia specifically

between the years of 1990-2012. As it involves description of the general environment in 90s it estimates the possible reasons of the growing emigration from the country. The chapter also describes Rose Revolution as a new era for the country. Moreover it covers the history of Georgian migration to Turkey during the above mentioned years. As long as Georgian migration to Turkey counts several years Georgian Diaspora in Turkey is significantly active as well. Therefore chapter two also covers the description and the analysis of Diasporas. It includes the description of Georgian society in Turkey and evaluates them as a new or old group of migrants. Furthermore the thesis makes a description of the Turkish-Georgian relations and states the possible causes of Georgian migration to Turkey. The final chapter includes the results of the face to face interviews with the Georgian Diasporas as well as newly migrated Georgians. The interviews are focused on the reasons of the migration and the integration process while focusing on the existing networks.

Hereby I would like to mention the journal ‘Chveneburi’ and its significance to Georgian migrants in Turkey. The final chapter describes the history of the establishment of the journal as well as the tragic death of its main editor – Ahmet Melashvili. Moreover the thesis offers face to face interview with the son of Ahmet Melashvili – Iberia Melashvili who is one of the most important figures within the Georgian society in Turkey and at the same time a head of Georgian Art Center. The final chapter also discusses the core reasons of migration in the Georgian case. Moreover chapter offers possible reasons of choosing specifically Turkey as a country of migration. The outcome of the interviews are analyzed and discussed in the last chapter of the thesis. Most importantly last chapter tries to apply the Network Theory and find out if in Georgian case Network Theory plays negative or positive role in the process of integration. As it has been mentioned above due to the fact that the Georgian

case has not been studied before from the perspective of Network Theory it shall be interesting to discuss and analyze the issue with the given literature and the conducted interviews with the Georgian community in Turkey in order to see the theory into practice. In conclusion I try to make an overview of the research and make a short summary of the outcome while describing positive and negative effects of migration.

# Chapter 1

## Theory and Concepts

This chapter makes a short overview of the definition of migration as well as its types, reasons and effects. The chapter provides a framework of the perception of migrants nowadays. As the number of migrants grow rapidly the viewpoint about them changes as well. The Network Theory, Integration Theory is analyzed further in the chapter followed by definition of the Pull and Push Theory. As long as the study aims to analyze Georgian migration to Turkey from the perspective of Network Theory it is significant to highlight the importance of the above mentioned theories in the process of migration as well as integration.

### **1.1 Migration**

In 2000 United Nations (UN) General Assembly proclaimed 18<sup>th</sup> of December as a day of the international migration after three years of designation. UN defines Migration as a movement of people to new country for more than one year (UNESCO's Glossary on Migration) however this definition is not enough to fully cover the concept of migration as such. It is far more complicated and wider topic to be able to describe it in one sentence. Therefore this chapter aims to shortly define migration and its theories. Dramatically increasing migratory flows serve as a reason of migration becoming a worldwide problem. Migration has become one of the most debatable topic nowadays however people have started migrating long time ago. The reasons of migration have always been poverty, slavery and most importantly religion. People were migrating starting from 11<sup>th</sup> century in order to spread religions such as Christianity or Islam. It is difficult to say exact years of the very first migration attempts however Christian migrants in 11<sup>th</sup> century, Muslim migrants in 12<sup>th</sup> century and Jewish migrants in

Europe during 17<sup>th</sup> century are considered to be one of the first migrants followed by European colonization in 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries (Bellwood 2013)

Nowadays migration is connected to global problems such as poverty, economic crisis, unemployment and human rights. While the number of international migrants grows the economic, social and political problems increase as well. Migration is not a single term any more but entails several other social or economic issues. Accordingly it affects not only migrants but their host as well as their home countries. People tend to leave the poor countries and seek for the better lives abroad however the results are not always the way expected. Migration is often described as a negative event. People tend to fear the migrants and moreover consider them as having impact on spreading HIV/AIDS, raising level of crime and unemployment. The fear in the society is often strengthened with the political will of the governments that resist recognizing basic rights for migrants. As mentioned above migration has become much polarized nowadays more than ever. For this reason the attitude towards the migrants in the society may be discriminative and unfair. On the other hand, there are many issues that are left uncovered for the society such as the death of migrants, trafficking, using migrants as forced labor. In most of the cases migrants are not aware of their rights and are not able to exercise their most basic human rights while being denied any kind of protection as workers as well.

As stated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) humans are equal and Human Rights shall be universal however in the case of small minority groups these provision is often violated not only by society but by governments as well. Nowadays there are 150 million people that have left their countries of birth and migrated to other countries (Alonso 2011). However even though migration has been a problem since long time ago it is now becoming a worldwide dispute. One of the

reasons that it has become a complication for the governmental institutions is that it is hard to gather accurate data about the number of migrants. They still manage to keep track of the people entering the borders however undocumented migrants are not easy to follow. Every day people try to escape from their country of birth and find a way abroad. With the lack of the documents it is impossible to identify people. Due to the lack of the data it has been difficult to establish migrant associations or unions which would make governments work with them in an organized way. Therefore, there has been a failure by governments in establishing a mechanism that would solve the growing problem of migration. In order to have a clear picture of a deeper idea of migration next section will make a short overview about different types and the reasons of migration.

## **1.2 Types of Migration**

Categorizing migrants is one of the most difficult issues as long as most of the time they may fall into more than one group (Koser 2007). First of all migration can be classified as international and internal event. International migration means changing the place from one country to another while internal migration can be defined as moving within the country more often from rural to urban areas or vice versa. Internal migration affects the countries internally. The effects of internal migration may be reducing population in the rural area that accordingly causes less production of agricultural goods. Most of the time internal migration is caused due to the lack of opportunities and possibilities in the rural areas for the young people as well as for the farmers. The educational institutions in the rural areas cover only secondary and high school. In order to gain undergraduate degree young people are forced to move to urban areas where most of the time they find jobs and stay after they finish universities. For this reason most of the younger people tends to leave the villages and move to cities aiming for

finding better job opportunities. As for the older generation such as farmers they lack the material that could help them develop their business or harvest more often. Accordingly they are forced to leave the countryside and move to the cities where they find low paid jobs and try to survive in this way. This affects countries in many ways. One of the most important outcomes is the decrease of the development of agriculture that can affect the economy of the country significantly.

On the other hand international migration is far more complicated issue. It consists of people who are forced to migrate from their home country. International migration not only affects the country internally but also shapes the international environment. It has consequences on the host country as well as on the home country of migrants. This research aims to focus on the international migration issues. Furthermore, migration can be grouped as regular or irregular (Koser 2007). Regular migration can also be called as legal migration which means that the person is migrating legally going through all the necessary and legitimate processes. Whilst irregular migrant is a person violating the law and crossing the border illegally without the necessary documentation. The hardest part is to separate these two types of migrants from each other as long as a legal migrant can always stay in the country of destination longer than allowed after which he becomes an irregular migrant and on the other hand irregular migrant can always succeed in providing the necessary documents and after paying a fine become a legal migrant as well. Therefore it is a challenge to keep track of the number of regular as well as irregular migrants. It is clear that following the numbers of irregular migrants is a bigger challenge as long as it tends to grow or reduce any time without governments noticing it. The number of irregular migrants grow dramatically especially in the Middle East area. People are forced to escape from the wars and leave the country by crossing the border illegally without any identification

documents. It shall not be ignored that these people do not choose to be irregular migrants but they are forced to do so. Therefore before judging them and making them an object of violence it should be considered that being an irregular migrant is not a choice but a step for survival. As Khalid Koser has claimed it is obvious that the number of regular migrants exceeds the number of irregular migrants (Koser 2007). Though it is hard to follow the numbers of irregular migrants as far as they travel without documents trying to cross the borders without any data being recorded. Governments have been struggling to establish a mechanism that would make it possible to keep track of the irregular migrants however the problem remains unsolved.

Another distinction that shall be discussed is voluntary and forced migration. Voluntary migration can be defined as changing the country with one's own will however it should be highlighted that the number of migrants who voluntarily change the place of their birth is not high (Koser 2007). Mostly migration is forced due to the several reasons however forced migration shall not be understood directly. There are several types of forced migration as well. The reasons of forced migration might be social or economic problems. It can also be caused due to being unable to afford a quality life. Scholars also distinguish family migration which means reunification of the members of the families. Some governments support this kind of migration considering the high importance of the unity of families. In this regard Network Theory plays significant role which will be discussed in the following chapters.

People who change their place of birth in order to find a better quality lives also fall within the framework of forced migrants. They can be classified as highly-skilled and low-skilled. People with undergraduate or graduate degrees, managers or executives working for international organizations can be categorized as highly skilled migrants. Home countries often experience brain drain which means emigration of

highly skilled migrants (Mountford 1997). It can be regarded as one of the negative effects of the migration for the home country. Categorizing migrants is not an easy task and cannot be fully accurate due to the fact that as already mentioned above some of the types of migration might overlap and person who falls under one group shall be considered in another group as well.

### **1.3 The Reasons of Migration**

Migration has become more complicated and complex issue and therefore it is difficult to state one single reason of migration that is valid for each migrant. The grounds of changing the place of birth are diverse and vary from country to country and individual to individual. This research focuses more on the reasons of migration. For that regard the general motives of migration shall be defined one by one. The motives of migration can be grouped in push and pull factors (King 2012). Push factors are the reasons of migration from a country while pull factors can be defined as reasons that keep you in one specific country. The reason of migration can be increasing conflicts between countries, racial discrimination, environmental issues, corruption or denial of democracy. For the clearer picture the grounds for migration shall be separated into four groups which are economic, political, social and environmental grounds (Skeldon 2013). One of the most common reasons of migration are economic and social problems. As long as migrants aim to search for better life conditions people from poor countries tend to move to richer countries in order to establish a better quality lives. Therefore economic problem can be regarded as one of the main reasons of migration. Poor economic conditions, overpopulation or natural disasters can be considered as the economic reasons of migration. Overpopulation can be a push factor considering the people who would like to raise their kid in a less crowded living conditions and providing better educational opportunities for them. Natural disaster can also be

considered as an economic reason for migration as long as natural disasters may cause economic crises that can play as a push factor for migration. As an example I would like to mention Hurricane Mitch in 1998 that destroyed most of the crops in rural areas and resulted as the migration of majority of its society (NCDC).

Migrants are the people that are able to move from one country to another. A number of people who search for better quality life however never manage to migrate due to the lack of affordability. The profiles of people who migrate due to the economic reasons can be extremely different from each other. Most of the time less educated people try to find low paid jobs and seek for the survival. On the other hand well educated migrants try to look for the well paid jobs however they might find themselves working out of their sphere of education. In this case the loss is experienced not only by the individual but the home country as well. Political causes of migration can be war, military invasion, escape on the religious or political grounds or from prosecutions for the committed crimes. This dissertation includes description of migration due to the reasons of Georgian-Russian war that forced internationally displaced people to find their ways to Turkey.

Migration on the grounds of social problems tends to be less dramatic compared with the politically and economically driven migration. Seeking for personal freedom or on the other hand reuniting with family members or friends can be regarded as social causes of migration. Changing place of living with the aim of reuniting with family may also be regarded as chain migration. In the theories of international relations Network Theory can be applied to the migrants who leave their countries due to the chain migration.

As mentioned before migration can also be voluntary. Students wishing to continue their education abroad can be regarded as voluntary migrants. In the countries

that are still in the process of development the level of education is usually very low. Younger generation does not have access to the high quality education. The undergraduate or graduate institutions are not able to offer the education that can be provided in the developed countries. Therefore young people usually choose to obtain their degrees in the foreign countries. This type of migration shall be considered as a voluntary migration. Referring to the fact that home country is not able to offer the good quality education to its citizens, younger generation shall voluntarily decide to go abroad. In this cases students graduating from universities choose either to return to home country or to find a job and stay.

#### **1.4 Effects of Migration**

Migration affects the individuals who decide to change their places of birth but also the host and home countries. This paragraph discusses the effects of migration on the people changing their countries of birth. It should be noted that individuals who leave their places of birth are forced to do so and there is very little number of people who migrate on their own will. Therefore they face social or economic problems already in their own country. While taking a risk to migrate to another country they have to go through a dangerous path which does not guarantee a high quality life as well. The process of migration before reaching the country of destination can be extremely dangerous and the chances of survival might be very low. Once migrants reach the country of destination they have to deal with more difficult issues. Migrants face the problem of adaptation and integration in the society. They do not speak language of the host country and most of the time it is impossible to communicate with the society. Assimilation problem can continue over generations due to the lack of language skills as well as cultural or religious differences between the migrant and the host society. They usually find it hard to assimilate and integrate in the society also due to the lack

of assistance by the governments who do not offer proper possibilities of integration but on the other hand contribute in creating negative stereotypes about them. Host country is strongly affected by migration as well which can be understood as negative or positive event. Usually it is thought that migrants try to steal the jobs of the local people and effect negatively on the welfare system of the countries. The following section describes the issue of perception of migrants by local population more specifically. On the other hand, migration can be assessed as a positive event for the host country considering the fact that migrants are ready to be employed for the low paid jobs that would not be done by the local residents. Therefore host country can benefit by cheap labor.

Migration can cause crucial effects on the home country as well. This paragraph describes the definition of remittances as well as its positive and negative outcomes. Remittances are the money earned by the migrant and sent to family or relatives from a host country (CRRC). Most importantly it is one of the ways to maintain circulations between migrant and the home country. On the other hand, as it has already been mentioned above while the younger generation migrates, the home country experiences loss of future professionals and experts. This can be assessed as brain drain which can be regarded as one of the crucial negative effects of the migration on the home country (Mountford 1997). Usually the students going abroad in order to purchase their degree, prefer to stay in the host countries due to the opportunities that are offered to them. As there is lack of availability of proper education and jobs for the younger generation brain drain is a loss for the home countries and cannot be refunded. As the conducted interviews have shown some of the students that have migrated to Turkey in order to obtain education claim that the reason of applying to Turkish universities was the low quality of education offered in Georgia. During interviews they also stated that due to

the lack of jobs in Georgia as well as the low wages they prefer to stay in Turkey or migrate to another European country that offers more job opportunities with the higher salaries. Last but not least population decrease can be regarded as one of the negative effects.

International migration also affects international relations and multi-national issues. As an example several immigration and open border policies shall be mentioned. Moreover migration may affect security issues on international level considering cases of human trafficking and slavery. Finally it should be stated that migration has become not only the individual problem of a migrant but is has affected host countries, home countries as well as international policies. Even though migration is a global problem nowadays and the topic of the politicians worldwide, it should be remembered that while assessing the problem as a global issue, there are people behind the problem who have faced a number of problems while migrating. Therefore the next paragraph discusses the perception of migrants as while most of the time society creates negative stereotypes about migrants, the real individuals behind these stereotypes are usually forgotten and ignored.

### **1.5 Perception of Migrants**

As the number of migrants grow the perception of them by the public changes as well. Nowadays they are thought to be threat to public security. Society tends to relate social or economic problems such as unemployment or poverty to migrants. First of all the problem is that usually society perceives migrants as a group of people and not as individuals. Most of the time they are seen as a group of people that brings threat to national security. Migration is a global event with its positive and negative sides. It can be argued that migration can be followed by economic and social developments. Human mobility can be the key to the human progress (UNDP). Getting familiar with the new

culture, history or traditions can play an important role in the process of developing more liberal societies. Migration is a complex event that consists of several negative and positive sides however focusing on the negative side only creates stereotypes and facilitates violence against minorities. On the other hand realizing positive sides of migration shall be beneficial not only for the migrant but also for the host country (Castles & Miller & Haas 2013).

The problem of considering migrants within a group called migrants and not perceiving them as individuals may lead us to overgeneralization. One of the best examples may be the perception of Georgian migrants in Turkey. As long as most of Georgians go to Turkey in order to find jobs due to lack of skills they only manage to work as housekeepers or babysitters. Therefore the perception of Georgian migrants in the Turkish society is limited to the framework that Georgians can only manage to be employed in this sector. However significant number of educated Georgians are also employed at the high rank jobs. As the last chapter describes before reaching a high rank positions some Georgians had to break existing stereotypes about themselves. Due to low reputation of uneducated Georgian migrants the educated Georgians also have to go through the difficult phase of proving themselves.

Another fact that helps the stereotypes strengthen their roots in publicity is the way migrants are described in the statistics and reports made by the international organizations (Kaya 2009). Migrants are often mentioned as numbers which in the end create a picture of migrants being a group of people. Though migrants are more than just the numbers as described in the public speeches of governmental figures. Migrants face difficulties and problems which remain in their lives forever. The harsh way of migration process leaves its footsteps on the psychology of migrants. They seek the lives that they were denied in their own countries. While referring to migrants as simple

numbers it should be considered that no one would like to leave their home countries where they were born and raised unless they are forced to do so. Migration includes not only numbers and grouped people but fears, stress, fight for survival and much frustrations. There are people with hopes and dreams behind the numbers and the charts. Referring to migrants as numbers creates a stereotype that consider them as unequal to the genuine society of the host countries.

### **1.6 Network Theory**

There are several theories such as push and pull theory and rational choice theory that try to define the reasons and motives of migration. Network Theory is one of those theories that try to provide an empirical explanation of migration motives. Networks can be regarded as one of the main reasons of migration which serve as the strong ties between migrants and potential migrants (King 2012). These connections often become a social formation that aims to help the potential migrants as well as new migrants to find their ways in the society where the old migrants have already established their lives. There are three types of networks: family networks, labor networks and illegal migrant networks (Boyd and Nowak 2012). Labor networks are used widely. As mentioned above one of the reasons of migration is unemployment. Therefore labor networks are widely applied in the process of migration. Not only do they help potential migrants in obtaining information about the availability of the job positions but help new migrants to settle before starting a job. Even though applying to labor networks might be helpful it should be highlighted that not always can it be trusted. During the interviews several interlocutors have stated that the jobs that were provided for them via labor networks turned out to have poor working conditions as well as low salaries which were not provided on time as well.

Secondly family networks shall be mentioned. These connections provide new migrants with the feeling of hospitality, familiarity and helps them preserve their culture and close ties with the families (Castles & Miller & Haas 2013). According to Tilly, even though networks can be beneficial on the other hand it may create problems for the people who do not accomplish their commitment in the society (Tilly 2007). Being a member of the network comes with its obligations and once the mission is not fulfilled it may cause exclusion of the individuals from the networks. Another type of networks are illegal networks that include human trafficking and smuggling. As noted by Boyd illegal migrants try to have less ties with the family or labor networks (Boyd 1989). Accordingly they do not engage in the legal networks but try to find jobs with the illegal connections. In this thesis the emphasis is made mostly on the family and labor networks.

Potential migrants tend to choose the places of migration according to the countries where they already have friends or family members or people they know that come from their home countries. In this way they can easily get the information about the country they are planning to migrate to (King 2012). The information reduces the tension that potential migrants tend to have before they make decision about the destination. Networks can be regarded as one of the important clusters among migrant's location choices. On the other hand having networks ease the process of making decision about the country of migration and make the process of integration faster. Therefore having networks in the country of destination can be one of the main reasons of migration (King 2012). Once the first wave of the migrants settle to new places of residence they assist their family members or friends in order to migrate. Accordingly the migration process for the second wave is made easier considering the costs and the risks. Due to having information about the previous example the migrant has the feeling

of security and protection. Most of the migrants try to make stronger ties with the previously migrated people in order to reduce the costs and the risks. Migration may be based on the individual will however it shall also be a chain with the systematically interconnected individuals. As an interconnected system networks and the households decide who should be the first to migrate (Boyd and Nowak 2012). Usually the most educated ones are the first to leave the country and try to settle in the country of destination. Accordingly the first migrants are supposed to pass the information about the migration and try to reduce the costs and the risks of the new migrants so that the process is easier and more accessible (Gurak and Gaces 1992).

Even though one of the strongest component of the network theories can be family networks weak ties may also play significant role in the migration process (Tilly 2007). Relations between migrant and a potential migrant may be weak but once they are in the foreign country the ties become closer as they share the same language, culture and religion. Therefore they develop a mutual reliance with each other. These relations often turn into close friendship as they try to provide information for each other reducing costs and the efforts that potential migrants have to contribute while migrating. Most importantly new migrants are eager to get familiar with the experiences of the people who have migrated before them. It should be highlighted that networks as one of the significant reasons of migration have become more evident and useful as the internet has become more accessible for the wider society. Networks may also play significant role before migration. Being aware of the existing networks the potential migrants is likely to walk the same pass which has already been experienced rather than taking the risk of migration without any actual information (Massey Garcia 1987). It is not easy to measure networks however it shall be clear that the bigger it is the stronger it becomes (Boyd and Nowak 2012) as they can offer wider opportunities to the new

migrants such as more information, job opportunities and less risks. Once the networks get stronger the society becomes more independent economically and socially. While the societies become more independent their needs from the government becomes less. Accordingly the control of the government over the society becomes weaker as well. The independence of the networks has its effects on sustaining of migration as well (Boyd and Nowak 2012). Being more independent, networks shape the internal as well as international policies more and make the migration process easier which affects the length of migration. The role of families, friends and other networks are significant while helping the migrant to integrate into the society.

Networks in general can affect the process of making a decision about the potential country of migration however it is difficult to determine exactly how it affects the process. It can be assisting with the necessary information, helping the new migrants in finding jobs or in some cases it can also be financial help at the beginning of migration. This issue is studied during this research while interviewing Georgian migrants to Turkey and their experience with the already existing networks. Hereby it should be mentioned that Network Theory shall be useful while applying to the Georgian case as long as the families are very important in the Georgian culture. Historically members of families tend to stay close together and avoid separating. Accordingly if one of the members of a family has migrated it is more likely that the other members shall migrate as well. Due to the close ties between families and relatives in Georgia it is relevant to apply the Network Theory.

### **1.7 Integration Theory**

Integration theory is one of the important theories while discussing the problems of migrants after they have arrived in countries of destination. They face number of problems in the process of migration however the process of integration is a long and

complicated process which may last from generations to generations. Scholars define integration as a process of acceptance of migrants by the receiving society (Heckman 2008). Integration is the process that is experienced not only by a migrants but also by a host society. The process entails many difficulties as long as the migrant has to assimilate himself with the society that usually fears him and has negative attitude. Being from a different culture with different ethnicity and religion makes it complicated integrate. Therefore big number of migrants face problems in this process. Integration may last over decades and one can live in another country without being able to integrate at all. While discussing the concept it should be noted that the term that covers many social issues. It is a complex process which can be separated into different spheres. Some scholars separate spheres of integration process: economic, social, cultural and political (Engbersen 2003). Economic integration focuses on the labor market. This concept includes the type of jobs that migrants are given and the amount of their wages (King, Skeldon & Vullnetari 2008). Usually it is difficult to find a job that suits the skills of the migrant due to the reason that he is a foreigner. In the Turkish Labor law (Turkish Labor Law) there are several sharp articles that make it difficult for a migrant to find a job that suits his skills. The law states that it is forbidden for a foreigner to occupy top professions such as lawyer, doctor or judge. Moreover it is forbidden to employ a foreigner for a job that can be done by a Turkish citizen as well. This articles makes it difficult for the skilled minorities to find a suitable job. Therefore in most of the cases migrants tend to find jobs that are not suitable for their education and are paid poorly. On the other hand, in order to be employed at the Turkish companies a work permit is required. There are requirements from the employee and employer as well. According to law employee shall have 100 000 TL deposit in order to apply for the work permit (Turkish Labor Law). In most of the cases small companies

employing foreigners do not have a capital of this amount and therefore employ foreigners without applying for their work permit. Even though in this way migrants are made illegal workers there is no other ways left for them to find the income and they are forced to work illegally which might be a reason of legal migrant turning into irregular migrant. Hereby it should be mentioned that some welfare countries may offer better designed policies that help migrants develop professionally and gain good quality education which helps them integrate faster.

Social integration is mostly understood as being able to find a proper accommodation, have access to healthcare and good education and being able to make friends. It can be separated into functional, moral and expressive dimensions (Engbersen 2003). Functional dimension includes the participation of the migrants in the educational institutions, moral dimension involves the issue of minorities being able to integrate into society without any harm and expressive dimension includes the issue of being able to develop as an individual and maintain identity as a migrant (Engbersen 2003). Migrants usually face the problems while trying to participate actively in the society without having negative attitudes and are usually forced to hide their identity.

Political integration is defined as the possibility for the migrant to participate in the political activities. Usually migrants are excluded from political participation and activities. It is not easy to integrate into the society politically as long as migrants lack not only the language skills but also the rights to form political parties in the host countries. Most of the governments are against of active political participation by migrants as long as it shall cause dissatisfaction in the society causing the reputation of parliamentarian fall down. Accordingly it is still difficult to find a way to actively integrate in the society politically. Therefore this issue still stays problematic and the political participation of the migrants cannot be released in most of the host countries.

While discussing cultural integration the important issues such as language and religion shall be highlighted. This issue is relevant in the case of international migration when the migrants from different countries with different language and religion try to integrate in the host society. The lack of language skills is one of the barriers for migrants to integrate. In most of the cases they cannot afford to learn the language and most importantly they are not offered any language classes. Therefore the process of integration lasts longer with the more severe environment. On the other hand if migrants have to choose the country of destination with the different religion they might also face some severe problems. This is clearly shown in the case of the Muslims migrating to Europe with the growing Islam phobia (Sanu 2015). This issue is relevant in the case of Georgian migration to Turkey as long as the religion of majority in Georgia is Christianity while the religion of majority in Turkey is Islam.

### **1.8 Pull-push Theory**

One of the migration theories that is significant in the Georgian migration to Turkey is push and pull theory emerging in 1960. According to Ravenstain one of the main theories that can govern migration is push and pull theories (Ravenstain 1885). The theory states that the conditions such as low quality life, high taxes or unhealthy environment, shall play as push factors and force an individual to change the country of residence. Push and pull theory is depended on choosing the values and making the rational choice. On the other hand, good living conditions such as secure job and healthy environment shall pull a person to stay in the country of residence as well. According to neoclassical economic theory migration shall be connected to demand for labor (Sjaastad 1962). If the country is developed or is in an active developing process it will have high labor demand which provides better job opportunities for individuals. Once there is a high demand accordingly the wages paid to employees shall be high as

well. On the other hand there are jobs that would not be done by a locals due to poor working conditions. For that reason migrants are usually employed in the kind of jobs which in the long run become one of the pull factors for the migrants with the economic problems. As long as poor countries cannot offer good living conditions to their citizens usually individuals are pushed out of the poor countries and the developed welfare countries that shall offer to individuals good living conditions shall be pulling them to establish their lives there.

It is difficult to straightforwardly name pull and push factors as long as each country shall have its negative and positive sides. As it has already been mentioned before push and pull factors are decided individually on the basis of the values that are more important than other values individually. Personal characteristics such as race, sex and education play significant role while deciding on push or pull factors ((Sjaastad 1962). Accordingly the importance of pull or push factor depends on the individuals. Therefore personal factor is an important element in push and pull theory.

The theory also plays significant role in the case of internal migration. People living in rural areas are often experiencing poor living conditions, lack of quality education and employment possibilities. Therefore they are pushed away from rural area to urban area where the pull factors can be high quality education and more opportunities for employment (Guterres 2003). Accordingly in most of the cases individuals are pushed away from rural areas and pulled to the urban areas. The fear of being far from the family and friends may often play significant role while deciding on migration. On the other hand getting familiar with the language of new country of residence may take long time and in the case of failure may be a push factor for a newly migrated individual. Therefore push and pull factors play significant role in the process of making a decision about migration and also after the migration. This theory can also

be applied to Georgian case as long as Georgia serves as a country that is still in the process of development. Hereby it should be mentioned that according to democracy index Georgia ranks as a 57<sup>th</sup> country meaning that it is still in the process of development (Democracy index). Therefore in most of the cases people from Georgia are pushed away from their country due to the poor conditions. On the other hand the conditions in the countries of migration play as pull factors for a migrant to establish a life in a country of migration.

To recapitulate, this chapter offered description of the concept of migration and its reasons. As long as the following chapters focus on the perception of Georgian migrants in Turkey I tried to describe how the stereotypes about migrants are born within the society and what can be their negative role. As this thesis attempts to study Georgian migration to Turkey I tried to define theories of international relations. It is important to have a clear picture of the network theory therefore the concept of the theory is offered in this chapter as well. The next chapter explores Georgian history and migration to Turkey according to the timeline.

## Chapter 2

### Georgians in Turkey

This chapter describes the current issues of migration in Turkey. As long as the number of migrants from around the world grows every days it is significant to make a short overview of the situation today. The thesis chronologically describes the situation in Georgia and characterizes the reasons of migration between the years of 1990-2012. As long as the research focuses on the migrants specifically from Georgia it is important to study the actual situation in the country. Therefore this chapter offers the description of the post-soviet crisis, further illustrates the new era and outlines possible reasons of migration.

#### **2.1 Diasporas**

Diaspora is defined as a group of people spread out of their country to another country (UNESCO's Glossary on Migration). Forming Diasporas has begun in late 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> centuries by a group of Jews in Israel. Diasporas may be modern or classical. Traditional Diasporas stick to the idea of returning home while modern Diasporas make the new homeland a home. Diaspora is an expatriate minority community that should exist in at least two different parts of the world. The members of the Diasporas shall be maintaining the origins of their homeland and shall always have a hope to return. Most of the time members of Diasporas tend to be excluded from the society and tend to have difficulties in assimilating with the local society which pushes the people with same ethnicity and culture to stick together and form a network. Most of the time the belief of return stays as a myth. Diasporas contribute in building and maintaining national identity in the country of residence (Cohen 1997). They try to work for the benefit of their home country. Diasporas play significant role in the international communities

and most importantly in the making of the international policies by the governments. They try to be actively involved in the politics of both host and home countries. Diasporas operate as an organized group of people with the same ethnicity while trying to maintain their identity in the countries of their residence. They try to apply different ways to form a strong network such as organizing several multicultural events, sticking together and helping each other in different ways. They serve as a community of the people with the same ethnicity trying to maintain their identity. Diasporas are usually politicized groups and the political interest within the communities is very high (Cohen 1997). They tend to have strong lobbies in the countries of residence that may shape the decisions and policies of the government. One of the strongest lobbies is Armenian lobby in United States. Hereby I would like to mention that Georgian lobby in Turkey is becoming stronger nowadays as well.

Diasporas also tend to be socially active and creative while trying to present the culture of their countries of origin to the society. Being a member of a diaspora means having an emotional connection with your homeland, culture and religion. Being a member of diaspora means being endlessly in love with your country of origin, sticking to cultural and religious traditions and being concerned with its future development.

In 2008 the state ministry of Georgia for Diasporas was established in order to maintain and spread the culture. Nowadays there are around 200 diaspora organizations all around the world. Most of them are socially active trying to spread the information about Georgian culture, identity and language in the countries of their residence. One of the strongest Georgian Diasporas is in Turkey. There are several reasons for it. Turkey has always been one of the preferred countries to migrate for Georgians considering the historical ties between two countries starting from Ottoman Empire.

The process got even easier once the visa regime was canceled between the two countries.

Hereby I would like to make a clearer distinction between Georgian diaspora and Georgian migrants. As mentioned above, diaspora is a concept that includes strengthening national ideas in the host country and is strongly connected to the home country. In order to identify Georgians as a diaspora having migrated long time ago does not automatically mean that they are diaspora (Safran 1991). Diasporic group shall have several criteria such as connection to culture centers, hope to go back to their homeland, ties with their language and ties with their homeland (Erdemli 2012). It should be noted that majority of Georgians have maintained their language even though they might be using old Georgian which is different from the modern language. On the other hand it should be highlighted that the younger generation of the ethnic Georgians can hardly speak Georgian and consider Turkish as their mother tongue. In this case it is difficult to identify this group as a diaspora. Erdemli also states that Georgians are no more connected to their homeland (Erdemli 2012). However during my interviews I was able to meet Georgians who represent Georgian Art Center and even though they have established lives in Turkey they apply for Georgian citizenship in order to return back to Georgia. Therefore I would like to highlight that Georgians tend to hope that one day they might return to their home country and they are actively involved in the political and social developments of Georgia. With the above mentioned analysis it can be stated that in Turkey there are several groups of Georgian migrants. Migrants from one group identify themselves as a diaspora while another group consists of recently migrated Georgians who do not have any ties with the Georgian diaspora in Turkey.

Nowadays there are around million ethnic Georgians in Turkey (Al-shamahi 2015). Especially in Istanbul there are several Georgian culture centers trying to

promote Georgian songs, language, musical instruments as well as Georgian history. One of the biggest and strongest Georgian diaspora group is in Turkey however their main activities are more cultural and less political. Georgian Diasporas in Turkey operate more by implementing cultural or educational projects independently. However I would like to mention hereby that after the 2 year lobbying by Georgian diaspora to Turkish government, today Georgian language is offered at Turkish public schools as an elective subject. This is one of the examples of the power of diaspora lobby on the policies of the governments. Diasporas hold several transnational activities such as cross-border marriages, visits or cultural activities. Nowadays holding such activities is becoming easier due to the easy access to internet, modern technology and cheap flights. These kind of activities help communities maintain their close ties.

These kind of events allow the representatives of Diasporas stay together and establish stronger ties between each other. Keeping in touch with each other also keeps them close to their culture and language. People representing Diasporas are loyal and welcoming to the new migrants from their home countries. Moreover they try to assist them in learning language, finding an accommodation and job. Having this kind of assistance facilitates newly immigrated people to stay in the new country of residence and try to establish a stable life. Due to above mentioned reasons I would like to state that the Diasporas play important role in the process of migration.

As mentioned before Georgian migration to Turkey has been studied many times by different scholars however it should be highlighted that the case has not been applied from the perspective of Network Theory. Networks shall be relevant in the case of people who have migrated long time ago as well as the recent migrants. To make it more specific I would like to state that old migrants can form as networks for the new migrants and they might play significant role in the decision making process of the new

migrant. As I have found out during the conducted interviews there have been many cases when old and experienced migrants have helped new migrants in many ways such as finding accommodation or jobs. Even there have been cases when old migrants have helped new migrants financially in order to establish their own businesses. Recent migrants tend to contact ethnically Georgian people in order to ask them for assistance in migration. As it is shown in the last chapter there have been some cases when recent migrants were able to establish businesses with the great assistance of ethnically Georgian Turks who are trying to help new migrants. Therefore as long as Georgian people tend to support each other applying networks theory in the case of Georgian migration to Turkey can be significant. The scope of this research aims to interview on one hand the historical diaspora representatives who have migrated to Turkey in late 90s after the fall of the Soviet Union and on the other hand people who have recently joined the Georgian Diaspora in Turkey specifically in Istanbul.

To conclude, this chapter offered the history of Georgia and description of the Georgian migration to Turkey. It has further analyzed the causing reasons of migration such as poor living conditions and problem of unemployment for the young people. As it has been highlighted there is strong Georgian diaspora in Turkey which has its impact on the policies of the government concerning the issue of Georgian identity. Therefore the short description of Diasporas and its main concept was outlined with this chapter. Following, I will try to analyze personal interviews with the Georgian migrants and offer its outcome.

## **2.2 Migration to Turkey**

This chapter aims to draw attention to the challenges of the migration in Turkey. Due to its geo political location Turkey serves as a country of emigration, immigration and transit migration at the same time (Icduygu 2009). Taking a glance at the history Turkey

signed bilateral labor recruitment agreement with Germany in 1961 allowing Turkish people to enter Germany easily and find low paid jobs (Recruitment agreements). Accordingly Turkey became one of the major transitory sending large number of migrants to Germany. During these years mass emigration of people took place in Turkey resulting as flows of around 100,000 people to Germany (Icduygu 2009). Migration was followed by forming agreements with Middle East and North Africa (MENA) and still continued in the year of 1980 (Icduygu Sirkeci 1998). Due to the poor economic conditions significant number of people immigrated to European countries in order to establish a better quality life. According to unofficial studies more than 2,500 000 people left Turkey for Europe (Icduygu 2009). Despite this fact Turkey has recently become a country of immigration while developing as a republic when a lot of Turkish citizens from the neighbor countries decided to go back to their country of origin.

Since the collapse of Soviet Union due to its geographical location many Georgians found their ways to Turkey as long as it seemed to be more developed economically and socially in 90s compared to Georgia. Even though Turkey was promising for the CIS countries the only jobs available for migrants were the jobs that would not be done by Turkish people. These jobs covered babysitting, entertainment and housekeeping. Even though there is not a lot of available information, entertainment and prostitution sector was extremely popular in Turkey. After the fall of Soviet Union a significant number of women from ex member countries were forced to migrate to Turkey and get involved in the prostitution business as they were labeled as “Natasha” groups (IOM). Even though this group of people are not easily reachable it is known that they face sexual harassment and violence. The problem is that they are illegal workers and therefore do not fall in any regulation and are not protected by anyone. Despite the danger of this kind of jobs due to extremely poor living conditions

Georgians kept migrating to Turkey in order to get involved in the illegal jobs without any kind of residence or work permit.

Nationality	Prostitution	Expired visa	Illegal entry - exit	Informal employment	Other	Total	Male	Female
Afghanistan	0	51	3.080	20	163	3.314	2.764	550
Azerbaijan	215	224	291	97	465	1.292	546	746
Georgia	337	71	372	1.149	2.339	4.268	2.663	1.605
Iraq	0	20	1.113	2	362	1.497	1.342	155
Iran	2	13	379	15	473	882	754	128
Kirghizstan	166	175	30	48	195	614	100	514
Moldova	144	205	29	55	247	680	88	592
Myanmar	0	0	523	0	0	523	456	67
Uzbekistan	209	510	105	122	443	1.389	348	1.041
Pakistan	0	2	2.322	1	93	2.418	2.411	7
Russia Federation	127	55	26	108	250	566	103	463
Syria	0	46	800	86	311	1.243	1.047	196
Turkmenistan	253	1.673	79	570	724	3.299	1.763	1.536
Ukraine	126	90	9	101	170	496	98	398
Total	1.579	3.135	9.158	2.374	6.235	22.481	14.483	7.998
Overall Total	1.715	3.591	11.147	2.631	7.805	26.889	17.454	9.435

Table 1. Deported Foreigners By crime, sex and year Source: IOM

The table above shows the number of the deported people according to their nationalities and the crimes they have committed. As it is clearly shown that the largest number of people being involved in the business of prostitution was from Georgia. Around 300 Georgian women who were engaged in prostitution were detained and later on deported to Georgia. Even though these Georgians were involved in the illegal business there was no justice they could apply for to claim their rights in the case of sexual harassment and violence. On the other hand it is difficult to separate women who involved in the business with their own will and on the other hand the women who are the victim of trafficking. The problem is that the situation has not changed much. In November 2015 six women were detained in Rize, Turkey with the charges of prostitution (IOM). As stated above the problem is still on the table and there is no regulations in order to improve the situation.

There is a number of migrants that enter Turkey legally but exceeded the duration of their visas which automatically make them irregular migrants. As for being in the middle of the two continents of Asia and Europe Turkey seems to be promising a lot of opportunities to the regular as well as irregular migrants. Therefore it has transformed from country of emigration to the country of immigration. It should be noted that Turkey is used by transit migrants to reach Europe. Mostly transit migrants enter Turkey illegally and try to enter Europe using the same ways. Unofficially there has been around 50 000 migrants in 2000 trying to enter Europe via Turkey illegally (Icduygu 2009). Even though Turkey has struggled a lot fighting irregular migration and as well as irregular transit migration nowadays the situation is still not coordinated. As a legal framework Turkey has signed several agreements with UN in order to eliminate the problem. First of all UN convention against transnational organized crime and its additional protocols, Law on Combating benefits-oriented criminal organizations and Palermo protocol against trafficking in person shall be mentioned. Considering the above mentioned agreements that were signed by Turkey it shall be noted that the country has tried to abolish any kind of illegal migration attempts however it has found difficulties in implementation of the law in practice. On the other hand there is growing legal migration to Turkey as well. Looking at the region it is fair enough to say that Turkey is developing faster than its neighbor countries especially in the Middle Eastern part. Accordingly citizens of Iran, Iraq and Syria try to migrate to Turkey in search of a better quality life. Significant number of people from Arab countries also tend to migrate to Turkey due to the ongoing war and fear of instability in their own countries. Growing migration to can be explained on one hand by Turkey being more developed country than the others in the region, secondly because of Islam being the religion of majority and thirdly having the easy process of obtaining a

residence permit. As for the region Turkey managed to become candidate for membership of European Union and managed to develop its economy rapidly (MFA).

On the other hand it should be mentioned that Syria that shares its border with Turkey is experiencing a dreadful war. The situation is not peaceful also in Iran and Iraq. Therefore people from Arab countries migrate to Turkey with the hope to find more peaceful lifestyle. Therefore they look at Turkey as a developed and at the same time Islamic country which makes it one of the most attractive places to migrate to. The easy process of obtaining the residence permit in Turkey should be considered as one of the reasons as well. The process includes making an online application and later on submitting the documents to the police. The process in total lasts for three months and allows a legal migrant to stay in Turkey for one year. The residence permits can be extended several times after which a person can apply for permanent residence permit or citizenship (MOI). Therefore the number of migrants especially from Arab countries grow dramatically transforming Turkey from a country of emigration to a country of immigration.

### **2.3 Syrian Issue**

Today Turkey is fighting the problem of growing Syrian migration. Due to the Syrian crisis which started in 2011 a lot of migrants escaped from their countries and applied for asylum in Turkey. During these times minister of foreign affairs of Turkey announced that Turkey was ready to accept the Syrians (Ozden 2013). As mentioned above Geneva Convention of 1951 Turkey was only granting refugee status to migrants coming from European Union countries however in 2014 Turkey adopted new law on foreigners and international protection allowing asylum seekers to apply for the refugee status regardless of their country of origin (Law on Foreigners and International Protection). It is estimated that since the Syrian crisis began more than one million

refugees migrated to Turkey asking for shelter (Ozden 2013). Turkish side of the Turkish Syrian border is mostly occupied by Syrian refugees trying to survive the crisis. The government and the non-governmental organizations try to organize camps and humanitarian aid for the refugees. Lots of Turkish and European volunteers have moved to Turkish-Syrian borders in order to work with the refugees (Saez 2013). There are several camps that offer Syrian asylum seekers place to stay and food however considerable number of refugees are still staying out of camps residing without any shelter. The number of the refugees grow as the conflict gets worse in Syria. People who had their houses bombed or demolished try to find help while escaping to Turkey (Ozden 2013). On the other hand Turkey hosts Syrians who used to be political activists trying to escape from the Syrian regime. Most of their names are on the black list of Syria and in case they try to enter the country they shall directly be detained by the Syrian regime.

#### **2.4 History of Georgian Migration to Turkey**

For the better understanding of Georgian identity this chapter includes short introduction of the history of Georgia. To begin with, the oldest writing available today with Georgian alphabet dates back to the 5<sup>th</sup> century (Surguladze 2001). Even though it is believed that the alphabet existed much earlier there is no evidence to prove it. The majority of Georgians speak the language which is called Georgian and belongs to the Kartvelian group. Kartveli is Georgian word Georgians while the country is called Sakartvelo meaning the land for Georgians. The country itself is divided to several ethnic groups such as: Kakheti, Kartli, Samegrelo, Adjara and more. Moreover it includes different dialects for each ethnic group which makes Georgia a complex country with many different cultural and religious groups. Christianity entered Georgia in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century by Saint Nino from Cappadocia (Surguladze 2001). Georgia has been

invaded by Iranian empire, Byzantine, Mongols, Ottomans and Russians. In 18<sup>th</sup> century when Russia invaded Georgia it became the member country of Soviet Union and remained a member until 1991 when it gained its independence. Due to its good geo political location Georgia was invaded many times by different empires however since 1991 it remains an independent country.

Georgian Ottoman relations dates back to 1578 when the Ottoman empire invaded part of Georgia (Putkaradze 1998). During these years many Georgians migrated to Artvin and to other border cities with Turkey. The second wave of migration took place after Ottoman-Russian war when majority of Georgians resided in Samsun, Ordu and Sakarya. They were referred as Chveneburi (Putkaradze 1998) which in Georgian means people from our side and has a crucial essence for Georgians and their identity. Chveneburi is the name of the journal that was published by Georgian migrants in Turkey as well (Chveneburi Journal). The next chapter will discuss the story of the main director of the journal, an important figure in Georgian community in Turkey – Ahmet Ozkan Melashvili and his tragic death.

Georgian migration to Turkey has been growing rapidly since the first wave of migration during Ottoman period. Different scholars and sources predict different number of Georgians residing in Turkey. Roughly it was estimated that 1, 5 million Georgians have migrated to Turkey and they have declared Georgian as their second language (Andrews 1989). Georgians who have migrated before the dissolution of Soviet Union have managed to fully integrate into the Turkish society. Most of them live in Artvin and Hopa and they identify themselves as Georgian Muslims with the Turkish citizenship (Andrews 1989). Their religion is Islam and their first language is Turkish. It should also be mentioned that the codes of behavior and culture between Georgian and Turkish people is very similar. Moreover there is obvious facial

similarities between people from both nation which on one hand can make the integration process easier or on the other hand cause misunderstanding.

Even though majority of ethnic Georgian migrants have transferred to Islam there is significant number of Georgian migrants who migrated after the dissolution of Soviet Union and have not changed their religion. These group of people have maintained Christianity as their religion however they find it difficult to practice their religion as far as there is no Georgian orthodox church in Turkey. Number of Greek and Russian orthodox churches can be found in Istanbul but they differ from Georgian orthodox churches. As for the given reason many Georgians can be spotted in Greek or Russian churches praying in Georgian language. Following paragraph describes Georgian migration to Turkey after the fall of Soviet Union when a significant number of Georgians were forced to leave their countries of birth and escape to Turkey in search for a better quality life.

### **2.5 Migration during 90s in Georgia**

Georgia as a Soviet Union member country had to face a long struggle in 1991 when finally it succeeded to get independence from the union (Salukvadze 2013). However it can be assumed that after the fall of Soviet Union Georgia failed to succeed as an independent country. Due to the deconstructions of large number of industrial factories Georgia turned out to be a failed country with no political and economic stability (Archvadze 1997). Moreover South Ossetia and Abkhazia conflict affected the development process of Georgia to large extend. Almost around million migrated from conflicting areas to the capital as long as government was not able to offer them minimum living conditions or jobs. During the Soviet Union it was practically impossible to leave the country. With the weak political structure and lack of finances some illegal armed forces were created called “Mkhedrioni”. Meanwhile military coup

was emerged by “Mkhedrioni” calling massive killings of people in the streets of Tbilisi. Looking back at the history 20% of the Georgian territories were not governed by the government and the status of Abkhazia and south Ossetia remained unsolved (Celikpala 2005). The weak political system could hardly handle the emerging conflicts related to its sovereignty as Russia kept on provoking the conflicting regions to declare their independence causing instability within the region. However after the fall of Soviet Union due to the failure of economic stability a lot of people decided to leave the country for Russia, Greece and Turkey. The number of emigrants was growing dramatically. The factors that accommodated increase of migration was conflict with the two ethnical groups within Georgia – Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

After the fall of Soviet Union Georgia faced challenging years that reflected in decline of every sector of the country. As long as industrial sector had 0.5 million employees (Chikava 1997), after the fall of Soviet Union the unemployment level rose dramatically while the industrial products were totally declined. In order to make a clearer view of the economic situation in Georgia I would like to highlight that the GDP per capita used to be 6,000 USD during Soviet Union while after the collapse is reduced to 500 USD (Archvadze 1997)

There was a growing economic problem in the country caused by the civil war and lack of access to Soviet markets. Several programs were launched with the support of international organizations in order to fight the poverty however with the poor political system and low conditions of industry the efforts from abroad could not improve the situation (Salukvadze 2013). Meantime the death rate started to grow while birth rate reduced. Economic problems were pushing younger generation to migrate from the country of their birth as long as Georgia was found to be a failed country after the fall of Soviet Union. Georgia was facing serious problems in every sector and

accordingly the official statistics that have been carried out during those times lack the reliability component. However there have been several publications that shall be regarded as more reliable. According to the publications the migration rate during 1990-2000 reached 1 million people (Meladze & Tsuladze 1997). While in 1990 the population of Georgia was around 5 million, in 1997 it was reduced to almost 4 million (NSO). I would like to mention the currency crisis in Russia in 1998 and economic crisis in Turkey in 2000 which affected Georgian economy to large extend (Salukvadze 2013). Georgia was recognized as 84<sup>th</sup> country among 99 countries according to the level of corruption perception index by transparency international (CPI). Moreover during 90s Georgia had one of the highest net migration proportion within CIS countries. According to the official statistics emigration reached its peak in the years of 1990-1996 when during 6 years the numbers of migrants was 673, 000 people while before 1990 during 35 years the rate of emigrants counted only 474,500 people (NSO). However it should be considered that before 90s Georgia was still Soviet Union member country and therefore all the borders were closed for the people wishing to emigrate. During Soviet Union people were forced to remain in their countries. The concept of Soviet Union, being the best place to live, was spread in the society by the government authorities. Therefore people were not able to express their will of moving to another country until the collapse of Soviet Union. The statistics show us the migration rate dramatically grew after the collapse of Soviet Union. The reasons can be poor social and economic situation but at the same time the protest within the society and the interest of the world out of the Soviet Union.

One of the main reasons of migration was the problem of unemployment in Georgia. The farmers in the agriculture area were self-employed however due to the lack of seeds and proper equipment and most importantly due to being unable to afford

larger lands they could not develop their own business. Moreover the lack of accessibility to cheap credits made farmers give up on farming and became officially unemployed as well. Georgia was facing problems both in rural and in urban areas.

## **2.6 Rose Revolution**

This section describes the political environment in Georgia in 2003 when the revolution leaded by *Mikheil Saakashvili*, *Zurab Zhvania* and *Nino Burjanadze* took place. In 2003 the country was ruled by the President *Eduard Shevardnadze*, the last soviet era ruler of Georgia. Shevardnadze as one of the Soviet leaders was not a democrat leader and did not have good reputation within the country. Even though they tried to democratize Georgia in the eyes of western world the reality was different. The country was ruled by high class elites. Even though Shevardnadze was authoritarian he allowed the freedom of media and also gave freedom to civil society to form active civil organizations. Growing nepotism in Georgia had its results in the development of the country. Civil organizations kept on protesting the existing political system. Due to lack of ability to pay salaries to the public servants they were forced to take the bribes in order to make their living. It was clear that the political system was falling down and the country was going deep in corruption. Many people left ruling party and formed opposition groups after 2001 when Shevardnadze tried to have control on TV channels which affected seriously the freedom of media (Modebadze, Sayin and Yilmaz 2014). In the parliamentary elections of 2003 president Eduard Shevardnadze with the forged ballots managed to win the elections. Several non-governmental organizations observed the process of elections as the results of the exit polls were significantly different from the results that by official public institutions. This became the reason for the protest in society. For around one month opposition leaders with the civil society organizations were protesting the results of the elections every evening in front of parliament with the

leadership of three young activists (Kandelaki 2006). In November 50 000 people attended the protests in front of the parliament. The people gathered in front of the parliament were representing non-governmental institutions, opposition parties and civil society. On the day of the first speech of president Shevardnadze, one of the activists Mikheil Saakashvili broke in the building of parliament with his team calling on resignation of Eduard Shevardnadze

On 23<sup>rd</sup> of November 2003 *Eduard Shevardnadze* was forced to resign and leave the floor for the young activists (Kandelaki 2006). President Shevardnadze was forced to step down directly from the parliament while giving an opening speech. This was the beginning of the new Europe oriented era for Georgia. One of the main actors of the revolution were Mikheil Saakashvili, Zurab Zhvania, Nino Burjanadze and the TV channel Rustavi 2 which played as a model of an independent media. After the Rose Revolution new hope for the future was created within the society and it did not take long time to spread this hope out of the borders of the country. A lot of migrants decided to go back to Georgia with the expectation that the new government would offer them better living conditions, better social and economic environment and more job opportunities. 2003 was beginning of new era in Georgian history and the society was hopeful for the future. Therefore if we take a look at the statistics the positive migration level was the highest during 2003-2005 years (NSO).

In the beginning of 2004 *Mikheil Saakashvili* was elected as the president of Georgia. In the beginning of his ruling period he managed to improve the systematic failures of the country and tried to show his will to develop close ties to the western world. Being a graduate of the Columbia Law School in United States he had good networks all over the world as well as strong trust from the western world that he was able to improve the social and economic situation in Georgia. As the country was in

need of demolishing the old systems massive new reforms started to be implemented right after the new government came into power. The aim of the reforms was to transfer Soviet Union member country into a democratic European country. Several projects were implemented in order to liberalize social and economic situation of the country. Government decided to privatize most of its bodies including public universities (Salukvadze 2013). The aim of the government was to facilitate foreign investments for the future development of the country. Meanwhile the GDP rate grew significantly making 12.3% in 2007 (Gachechiladze 2011).

Even though the new government managed to play significant role in developing foreign relations between Europe and United States, it failed to create successful policies. As they tried to implement the modernization and Europeanization policies they failed to make clear economic analysis as well as long-run oriented consistent actions. Moreover one of the crucial factors that had its effect on Georgian migration to Turkey was Georgian-Russian war that is discussed in the following section.

## **2.7 Georgian-Russian War**

Georgian-Russian war took place in 2008 and had dreadful effect on the social and economic development of Georgia. The former president of Georgia *Mikheil Saakashvili* had promised Georgians that he would re-unify the country. During first term of Saakashvili's presidency both countries were willing to decrease the tension and establish closer economic and cultural ties. On the night of August 8, 2008, Georgia broke into the capital of South Ossetia – Tskhinvali in order to regain control over separatist territories. After couple of hours, as a response Russian forces crossed Georgian border into South Ossetia with a large number of armored battalions, marines and air power, defeating and destroying much of the Georgian militaries. Later on it also recognized independence of South Ossetia and Abkhazia and created the areas of control in the territories of Georgia. The five day war resulted as the deaths of more

than 800 people, damages of civilians, cutting all diplomatic relations and recognizing separatist territories as independent countries.

Following to the events, the positive migration soon turned to negative migration in the years of 2009-2014 (NSO). Georgian-Russian war made the country's economy even poorer. The GDP fell from 12.3% to 3.8% in 2009 (Salukvadze 2013).

Moreover already big number of internationally displaced people grew up to 150,000 and left government with the duty to build new town for the people who were forced to leave their homes due to the war. Besides the internal crisis world crisis had tremendous effect on the Georgian economy. As the economy got poorer the problem of unemployment kept growing as well.

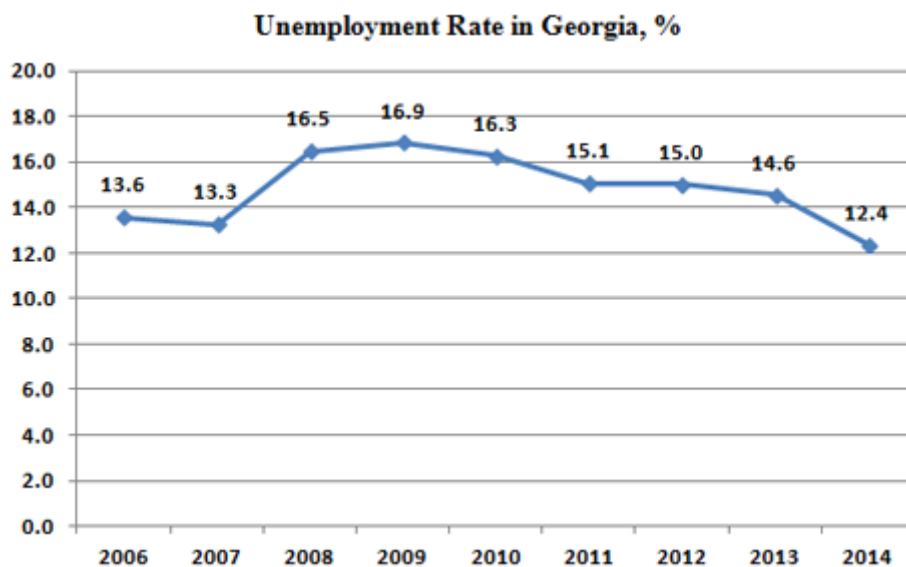


Table 2. Unemployment Rate in Georgia Source: National Statistics Office of Georgia;

Available from: <http://www.geostat.ge/index.php?action=0&lang=geo>

The table above shows the unemployment rate in Georgia from 2006 to 2014. The picture shows that the level was dramatic in the years of 2008-2009 just after the Russian Georgian war. During these years the situation in Georgia was hopeless as the world crisis hit the Georgian economy and had its influence as well. Therefore people lost their hope and decided to migrate from Georgia. This was second phase of big

emigration. One of the most attractive places to migrate used to be Russia for Georgians before the war however after the war all the diplomatic relations between two countries were cut as the visa regime was introduced by Russia for Georgian citizens. Accordingly the number of Georgians migrating to Russia reduced slightly and one of the most popular places to migrate became Turkey as far as it was one of the most developed countries among the neighbor countries of Georgia. Moreover Georgians were allowed to stay in Turkey for 6 months without visa.

#### Number of foreigners entering Turkey according to year

Nation ality	2000	2005	2010	2011
Russia	680.473	1.855.900	3.091.974	3.447.001
Iran	404.148	957.244	1.884.898	1.879.034
Bulgaria	378.329	1.620.939	1.432.416	1.488.425
Georgia	180.480	367.148	1.109.615	1.149.362
Syria	123.787	287.343	898.123	970.163

Table 3. Number of foreigners entering Turkey according to year: International Organization for Migration;

The table above shows the number of foreigners entering Turkey according to years during 2000 – 2011. While Russian federation is on the first place it should be noted that Georgia is fourth in the top five countries. The table shows the rapid growth of the migrants from Georgia to Turkey during the years of 2005 – 2010 which can be explained by post war crisis. Due to the growing unemployment problem in Georgia significant number of young or middle aged Georgians had to migrate to Turkey in order to find jobs. The big number of irregular labor migrants shows that most of the Georgians are not able to get the work permits and work illegally as long

as their documents are not in accordance with the Turkish law. As revealed during the interviews majority of the female migrants had experienced working illegally without any work permit. The reasons were different however all of them were due to the lack of necessary documents for applying for work permit.

## Chapter 3

### Evaluation of the Research Universe

This chapter includes evaluation of the Georgian community in Turkey. It further analyses the possible reasons of migration and the role of networks during this process. Given the chance to meet Georgians who migrated to Turkey long time ago as well as those who recently migrated this chapter focuses on the interviews conducted with the migrants. In what follows, primarily the impact of Georgian-Turkish relations on migration will be analyzed, secondly the outcome of the conducted interviews will be covered followed by the discourse analysis.

#### **3.1 Impact of Georgian-Turkish Relations on Migration**

The relations between home country and host country has certain effects on the migration process. As I have already mentioned before since Russia introduced visa regime for Georgian citizens and made the process of entering the country much harder the migration level to Russia reduced significantly (Geo Stat). Before changing the place of residence potential migrants consider the situation and attitude they might be faced with in the country of their destination. Due to the existing situation in Russia many potential migrants decided to migrate to other countries such as Turkey, Greece or Italy.

Turkey has become one of the most popular places to migrate for Georgian migrants. This paragraph hereby takes a short look at the relations between two neighbor countries. Georgian-Turkish relations have been frozen during Soviet Union as long as Georgian borders have been strictly closed. Two countries were left with no chance to form any relations or bilateral agreements (Celikpala 2005). On the other hand the relations between two countries have been getting closer since the fall of

Soviet Union. Turkey gave a warm welcoming signals to the new emerging states especially to the Muslim populated regions. It should be noted that Turkey was the first country to recognize the independence of the newly born countries (MFA). As far as Georgia has important geopolitical location Turkey decided to keep close relations with the country and even tried to support it in the process of development in many ways. Soon afterwards Turkey opened its borders for Georgian citizens (MFA). This was a big economic relief for Georgians as far as they could cross the borders easily and try to sell the goods. Therefore a significant number of Georgians got involved in the commercial activities with Turkey specifically in the Black Sea region. Many were able to improve their economic situation only with selling goods such as textile and agricultural products in Turkey. Georgians entering Turkey were mostly seeking for jobs in the Black Sea region as long as it was easy to go back to their home country from the borders. Mostly they were harvesting tea, nuts and cotton. Following these events, in 1991 Turkey recognized independence of Georgia and the relations between two countries got even closer (Szalanska 2012).

Soon afterwards two countries introduced visa free regime which played a positive role on the relations between the countries (MFA). First of all visa free regime had biggest positive impact on labor market. Visa free regime was followed with the passport free regime in 2011 after the meeting between Georgian president *Mikheil Saakashvili* and Turkish prime-minister *Recep Tayip Erdogan* (MFA). Since then Georgians and Turks were able to enter countries using only their ID cards. This agreement was finalized in December 2011 and is believed to be first passport free initiative in the Caucasus region. Due to this regulation Georgians entering Turkey grew up to million in 2011 (Turk Stat).

There are wide range of areas such as military powers, transportation and investment where two countries manage to cooperate. First of all Turkey helped Georgia in modernizing its military forces (Aras & Akpinar 2011). While introducing passport free regime Turkey also helped Georgia in building a new airport in Batumi for domestic flights. Moreover the relations were deepened while the new project – Kars-Tbilisi-Baku was initiated (Szalanska 2012). Nowadays there are three major projects that have resulted as a friendly bilateral relations between two countries. These projects are: Kars-Tbilisi-Baku, Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum and Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (MFA). The initiation of these projects has resulted as a stronger regional cooperation.

Due to this events Turkey became biggest commercial partner for Georgia (Aras & Akpinar 2011). Moreover there are strong transport connections between two countries as well. Every day there are direct flights between two countries and the buses from Batumi and Tbilisi several times a day. The availability of cheap transportation has also effected the number of people migrating to Turkey temporarily or permanently. Passport free regime did under no doubt play significant role in the growth or temporary or permanent migration from Georgia to Turkey. The policy of Turkish government that entailed zero problems with neighbor countries should be mentioned as well (MFA). Due to several reasons Georgia is one of the countries where Turkey succeeded to implement its policy.

Hereby Georgian-Russian war in 2008 and Turkey's role within the conflict should be highlighted. Even though the war took place only for 5 days it had important outcome within the region. The tension in the region was a problem for Turkey as well therefore it initiated to send humanitarian aid to Georgia and help build houses for the refugees (Aras & Akpinar 2011). Large number of refugees were able to find the shelter after the war with the help of Turkey. Following the war Turkey also tried to normalize

the situation by establishing Caucasus Stability and Cooperation Platform in 2008 (Vindimian 2010). Within the framework of this platform Turkey tried to play as a mediator country between Georgia and Russia in order to establish stability within the region. Due to all these facts it is clear that Turkey sees Georgia as a strategic ally and as a country that plays important role in the international politics due to its geo-political location. There have been a number of bilateral agreements signed between Georgia and Turkey. Georgia has also become a member of Black Sea Economic Cooperation and has played important role in the initiatives taking place at the coast of Black Sea (BSEC). On the other hand Georgia sees Turkey as an important trade partner and an important ally in the region as well. Hence due to the close and friendly relations between two countries the potential migrants prefer to migrate to Turkey rather than Russia and accordingly the number of them grows dramatically year by year.

The concept that the visa free regime played important role in the migration process was strengthened by results of the interviews with Georgians as well. More than half of the twenty interlocutors stated that visa free regime was one of the most facilitating reasons while making their choices about the country of destination. As mentioned before for Georgians Turkey was the easiest reachable destination. After the introduction of passport free regime the process became even easier as long as some Georgians were not able to get their passports due to lack of affordability. Therefore passport free regime was one of the facilitating reasons for migration to Turkey for most of Georgian migrants. In the following section I would like to discuss the story of the Georgian journal that was founded by an ethnically Georgian Turk and played an important role within the Georgian community in Turkey.

Nowadays Georgians living in Turkey are mostly involved in the labor sector. They tend to enter Turkey with their IDs or tourist visas and overstay which makes

them illegal residents of Turkey. Therefore when they find jobs they cannot apply for work permits as long as in order to apply for work permit one should have a residence permit allowing an individual to stay in the country for at least 6 months. However in order to be able to get the residence permit individual shall be staying to Turkey legally. As long as these types of Georgians have already violated the law if they apply for residence permit and fail to show all the necessary documents they shall be deported due to not prolonging their visas. These problems make them violate law again and get involved in illegal jobs. This is problematic not only for the illegal migrants themselves but also for the Georgians staying in Turkey legally. Nowadays educated Georgian migrants face several problems as long as the general stereotype of Georgians specifically in Istanbul is that they are employed for low paid jobs. Therefore in many cases educated Georgians have been offered lower salary than the nationals of other countries as long as Georgians are related mostly to low paid jobs.

During this research a Georgian lawyer who migrated to Turkey was interviewed who had to face with the discriminative working conditions due to her nationality. That is why illegal stay of Georgian migrants in Turkey has its consequences in the recognition of the Georgian identity by public. The problem is faced usually at the main police station where migrants try to get their residence permit. Most of the times Georgians tend to have problems with their documents. Biggest problem is overstaying the duration of their visas or crossing the border illegally. In several cases Georgians cross the border illegally and therefore have no entrance stamp in their passports which makes the police suspicious about them. Therefore Georgians are not able to submit the documents to obtain residence permit. Staying illegally causes absence of work permit, social security, insurance and any access to medical services

as well. The situation for illegal Georgians in Turkey is problematic and seems to have no solution at given time.

Female migrants are usually working as babysitters or taking care of houses of rich Turkish families while male migrants are involved in the construction sector. This thesis includes interviews with the people from both sectors. It should be noted that female migration started actively from 2008. Most of these migrants identify themselves as Georgians with orthodox religion and maintain Georgian as their first language. They are main sources of income for their families and send significant amount of remittances to their families each month. This model has several explanation. First of all the salaries that Turkish families pay female migrants for the housekeeping or babysitting is triple the amount that they would have been paid in Georgia. Therefore they prefer to migrate temporarily to Turkey and support their families from abroad. On the other hand for the Turkish families the amount of salaries paid to Georgian employees is significantly less than the amount that would be demanded by a Turkish national for the same job. Therefore it is a famous model for the Turkish people specifically in Istanbul that Georgian people are mostly related to the low paid jobs that would not be done by Turkish people with the same amount of salary. These kind of temporary migrants used to work illegally before work permits for housekeeping issues was allowed (MLSS). Therefore currently Turkish families employing Georgian migrants as housekeepers or babysitters can now apply for the work permit for their employees which makes Georgian migrants legal workers according to the law.

There is another group of Georgian female migrants that should be discussed. These are merchant migrants who try to sell goods from Turkey for lower price and sell it in Georgia for the higher price. It is easy to spot these migrants in the heart of Istanbul, specifically in Kadikoy, the neighborhood that is famous for its shopping streets.

Georgian female merchants can be easily recognized in this neighborhood with full bags in their hands and curiosity in any shop for clothing or accessorize. It should be noted that some of them have legally registered shops in Georgia and they sell goods from Turkey while paying all the taxes legally. However most of these female migrants do not own an established shop and therefore sell goods without paying any taxes. These type of female merchants cannot be considered as permanent or temporary migrants as long as they always travel between Georgia and Turkey however it should be noted that these is a large group which is getting larger every year with the help of networks.

As far as Turkey is a neighbor country of Georgia a lot of emigrants find it easy to immigrate to Turkey rather than the European countries. Due to the friendly relations between two countries, Turkey has received big number of migrants from Georgia especially in the Black Sea region. It should be noted that the biggest group of people from Caucasus living in Turkey are Georgians counting around 80 000 ethnic Georgians (Magnarella 1979). The majority of Georgians that migrated to Turkey in 90s have already established lives. In the framework of this thesis I will be interviewing Georgian migrants who have left their countries decades ago.

### The Socio-Economic Background of the Interlocutors

<b>Contact</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Year</b>
<b>Art Center</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>Worker</b>	<b>2009</b>
<b>Art Center</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>Nanny</b>	<b>2013</b>
<b>Art Center</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>House Keeper</b>	<b>2012</b>
<b>Art Center</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>Nanny</b>	<b>2012</b>
<b>Art Center</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>Taking care of old person</b>	<b>2008</b>
<b>Art Center</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>Nanny</b>	<b>2004</b>
<b>Art Center</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>Businessman</b>	<b>Turkey</b>
<b>Art Center</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>Worker</b>	<b>2012</b>
<b>Art Center</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>Owner of Restourant</b>	<b>2009</b>
<b>Art Center</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>Nanny</b>	<b>2006</b>
<b>Art Center</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>Teacher of Turkish</b>	<b>2013</b>
<b>Friend</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>Student</b>	<b>2012</b>
<b>Friend</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>Musician</b>	<b>Turkey</b>
<b>Friend</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>Student</b>	<b>2012</b>
<b>Friend</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>Nanny</b>	<b>2008</b>
<b>Art Center</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>Taking care of old person</b>	<b>2008</b>
<b>Art Center</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>Teaching Russian</b>	<b>2012</b>
<b>Art Center</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>House keeper</b>	<b>2009</b>
<b>Art Center</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>Worker</b>	<b>2008</b>
<b>Art Center</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>Teaching Turkish</b>	<b>2012</b>

### 3.2 “Chveneburi” Journal

This section is dedicated to one of the important figures among the Georgian society in Turkey – Ahmet Melashvili. Born in 1922 he was the descendant of the first wave Georgian migrants in Turkey. During these years Georgian society in Turkey was fearing that Georgian ethnicity and language could be lost. They saw the risk of assimilation with the Turkish identity. That is why Ahmet Melashvili established one of the most famous Georgian journals in Turkey – “Chveneburi”. Within the framework my research I had the chance to meet with the son of Ahmet Melashvili - Iberya Ozkan Melashvili. During the interview I was able to get familiar with the impressive story of the life and death of his father.

“During my childhood and young years my father used to teach me Georgian songs in order to learn Georgian language and maintain Georgian identity” (Personal Interview with 61-year-old-male, Istanbul, 2015).

Even though the family of Ahmet was very poor his relatives helped him to get education at the university in one of the cities of Turkey – Balıkesir where he got familiar with Georgian alphabet and culture more deeply. Being able to travel to Europe he met Georgian migrants and with their help managed to learn Georgian alphabet, Georgian songs and dances. By the time he went back to Turkey he had already made strong networks with the Georgian society in Turkey and was actively organizing events in order to maintain Georgian identity and culture. He managed to enter Istanbul Technical University where he was given chance to get closer to the Georgian society. With their help he got actively involved in the events aiming to preserve Georgian culture and history within Georgian society in Turkey. As told by Iberya, his father was

already famous within Georgians in Turkey and with the help of strong networks within Georgian society he was able to organize events, establish journal and create several opportunities for preserving Georgian identity (Personal Interview with a 61-year-old-male, Istanbul, 2015).

After finding a job in Bursa Ahmet decided to move there and establish a cooperative aiming to promote education and business establishment for Georgians residing in Turkey. With the cooperative he was able to send skilled Georgians from Inegol district to Germany and other European countries in order to assist Georgian society to develop and integrate more. As Iberyia remembers the group for dancing and singing was established by Ahmet Melashvili as well in order to preserve Georgian dances and songs counting several centuries. During interview Iberyia Melashvili remembered some dramatic years of his life when his father with the help of Georgians in Turkey managed to write a book called – “Gurcistan” in the year of 1968 which in Turkish means Georgia (Personal Interview with a 61-year-old-male, Istanbul, 2015). Due to this reason he was detained by Turkish government stating that with this book he was disrespecting Islam and Turkey and was spreading communist ideology within the society however after several months he was released and was given the permission to publish the book.

One of the most important events for Georgians in Turkey was establishment of Georgian journal “Chveneburi”. As Iberyia remembers it was one of the first journals that provided information about Georgian history and culture for the Muslim Georgians in Turkey. This journal was one of the tools for unification of Georgian society in Turkey. While the life of Ahmet Melashvili was dedicated to spreading awareness about Georgian identity his life was full of fear too. The policies of government then did not consider development of the ethnic groups therefore Georgian society had to stay

together and maintain their identity by strengthening networks within their society. During the interview I could see that Iberyia got nervous while discussing the death of his father. In 1980 his father was killed in front of him while he was strongly wounded as well. There are several versions about the death of Ahmet. One of the versions is that he was killed by ultra nationalist groups that could not bear with his active involvement in developing Georgian identity and culture in Turkey. During interview Iberyia Melashvili mentioned high importance of having networks in the case of Georgian integration to Turkish society:

“Without the help of old Georgian migrants and relatives my father would not be able to achieve what he has achieved” (Personal Interview with a 61-year-old-male, Istanbul, 2015)

Moreover with Iberyia we managed to discuss modern migration to Turkey. He stated that nowadays he has established a Georgian Art Center in the middle of Istanbul in Kadikoy. He stated that this is the place where a lot of Georgians who have migrated recently as well as long time ago can gather and get familiar with each other making strong networks. He has offered jobs opportunities and accommodation to many Georgians in Turkey. Nowadays Georgian Art Center offers Georgian language, dances and singing classes for not only Georgians but also Turkish people. In order to preserve Georgian culture Iberyia Melashvili tries to offer many possibilities to the Georgian society in Turkey. I had the chance to attend the Georgian language lesson which was offered by Tamar Tevdoradze who has just recently migrated to Turkey. By offering these opportunities to Georgian society Iberyia Melashvili believes that he is continuing the job of his father and considers himself responsible for the wellbeing of Georgians

in Turkey. As I have already mentioned before this kind of networks is important for Georgians as long as they tend to stay close to each other and help each other in the case of need. Therefore Georgian Art Center and Ibery Melashvili himself are clear examples of the importance of having networks in order to make the migration as well as integration process easier.

The process of meeting with Georgians in Turkey was unforgettable experience. I managed to interview 20 people with very different profiles. Most of them were recent migrants who were in the process of integration into the Society. Half of the people I met migrated to Turkey after the collapse of Soviet Union while another group of people migrated during 2010-2015. As long as I had the chance to meet most of the interlocutors face to face the type of questions I used was open questions giving them the chance to discuss their experience in details. I was lucky to meet the people who had invested a lot of energy and time in order to maintain Georgian identity, language and culture. As long as some of the interlocutors were in another city I had to use Skype which was less comfortable due to the poor internet connection however I was able to listen to different experiences and also share my experience with them. The interviews were held individually. The questionnaire included yes no questions as well as open questions which gave the interlocutor more freedom to share their experience. Most of the interlocutors stated that they had arrived to Turkey alone. Only two of them stated that they had arrived with friends or husband. Even though the reasons of migration were various the idea inside it was similar. Most of the interlocutors stated that they migrated because of the poor conditions in the country which caused economic problems. Some middle aged women who migrated after the collapse of the union stated the same problem. During 90s there was growing problem of unemployment. As they highlighted their husbands and sons were not able to find jobs therefore they were

forced to migrate and seek for the job opportunities in a different country. During 90s there was a mass migration of Georgian women whose husbands were unable to find jobs:

“My husband was an engineer, but who needed engineers when there was no constructions going on and all the infrastructure was falling apart?” (Personal Interview with a 45-year-old-female, Istanbul, 2015).

It is believed that Georgian women managed to save families as they migrated to find jobs abroad and send remittances to their children and husbands. The problem is that this group of women is still forced to work abroad and send remittances to their families as the poverty and unemployment issues are still relevant in Georgia. The fact means that even though the situation is better today compared to 90s, there is still lack of jobs and affordability.

I also had the chance to meet some of the women who migrated after the Rose Revolution in Georgia. They were claiming that due to the change of the government and new policies people aged over 30 years were not able to find jobs. The new government was implementing regulations in order to modernize the country. Therefore they were seeking for freshly graduated employees and were trying to get rid of anyone who had experience in working during the Soviet Union. Therefore significant number of educated people were left jobless and were forced to leave the country to find opportunities in the different places. Usually they were offered jobs that they were over skilled for however being left without any other choice they had to accept the offer (Personal interview with a 39-year-old-female, Istanbul, 2015). The younger people I managed to meet complained about lack of jobs and financial support while stating that

every day seemed to be same back in Georgia and there was nothing interesting to stay for. They claimed that they could not afford to travel and get different experiences therefore preferred to migrate to new country and establish life there.

While some interlocutors stated that they needed to change the environment and felt bored in Georgia without any hope for establishing a quality life most of the interlocutors stated that their main problem was lack of jobs and economic problems such as debt of banks. While discussing the process of making a decision about the country of migration most people stated that visa free regime facilitated them to migrate to Turkey (Personal interview with a 29-year-old-female, Istanbul, 2015). Due to lack of funds and lack of jobs the embassies of European countries would not grant the potential migrants the visas. Therefore they preferred to migrate to Turkey due to the passport free regime. All of the interlocutors who recently migrated to Turkey stated that they had some networks in Turkey and otherwise they would not dare to migrate to a new country all alone. With the recommendations of the existing networks they decided to move to Turkey. Some of them highlighted that they were even offered to live with their neighbors at first stage of the migration:

“My husband was not able to find a job, but our four year old kid still needed food. I remembered my old friend who due to poverty went to Turkey to work as a house keeper. I immediately contacted her before coming here and asked for a help. In a month she found a family for me with a baby who was looking for a babysitter. This is how I found a job in Turkey leaving my four year old girl at home in Georgia” (Personal interview with a 41-year-old-female, Istanbul, 2015).

She stated that without having her friend she would never manage to migrate or stay in Turkey for more than one month. While most of the interlocutors had networks before migrating, two of them stated that they found networks after migration to Turkey (Personal Interviews). They stated that once they found Georgians and made close ties with them, they were ready to help them in finding accommodation as well as jobs. One of the interlocutors stated that she started living with the Georgians who had migrated before (Personal interview with a 33-year-old female, Istanbul, 2015). They helped her not only in finding a job but also introduced the codes of conduct in Istanbul.

All of the interlocutors highlighted the important role of the networks in the process of migration and integration. They stated that without networks they would not be able to stay in Turkey for more than a short period of time. As mentioned by the interlocutors networks of Georgian migrants helped them whenever they had difficulties with finding accommodation or source of income (Personal interviews). While discussing the integration period most of the interlocutors stated that they managed to integrate in the Georgian society in Turkey however they found it hard to integrate in the Turkish society. Due to the fact that they mostly were spending time with Georgians they did not manage to learn Turkish language or managed to communicate with very poor Turkish. Some of the women who were working as housekeepers stated that due to being uncomfortable they had to change five Turkish families. We did not have the chance to go into details as long as the interlocutors felt uncomfortable to discuss the issue. They stated that even though some Turkish families treated them well most of the families did not look at them as equals:

“In one of the families I worked with there was another Turkish babysitter. Even though the family treated me well I could see the difference between the salaries

that the family was paying us. The salary of the Turkish babysitter was almost three times more than mine and the only reason was my Georgian ethnicity.” (Personal interview with 56-year-old-female, Istanbul, 2015).

The problem of inequality in the amount of wages was mentioned by many interlocutors. Most of the time Georgians were paid much less compared to Turkish as well as nationals of other European countries. Most of the Georgians stated that due to the lack of language skills they faced many problems. They stated that without Georgians in Turkey they would not be able to find accommodation or jobs as they did not even have any access to the information about available accommodation or job opportunities. Some Georgians also stated that networks helped them not only in finding accommodation or jobs but also to avoid the feeling of homesickness and loneliness. As mentioned above, Georgians tend to have very close family ties. Due to being far away from their families there was danger that they would not be able to stay in the different country for a long time however as they have stated Georgians in Turkey helped them to avoid being totally alone in the new country (Personal Interview). This played significant role in their decision to stay in Turkey longer than expected. Due to lack of language skills they were not able to make Turkish friends and therefore all of them highlighted the importance of networks from their own country in the place of migration.

One of the memorable interlocutors was a Georgian girl who migrated to Turkey in 2010. She stated that in Georgia she studied Turkish culture and language and due to lack of job opportunities in Georgia with this profession she decided to migrate to Turkey:

“I am from a town called Kutaisi in Georgia. First I went to study in Tbilisi but afterwards with my profession it was impossible to find a job. That is when I decided to move to Turkey” (Personal interview with 33 year old female, Istanbul, 2015).

Being denied a scholarship from the Georgian government she managed to finance her studies with the help of Turkish government as Turkey offered her scholarship and free accommodation at the student’s dormitory. It was not possible to achieve in Georgia. Being able to speak both Georgian and Turkish languages she got familiar with Georgian diaspora and especially Georgian Art Center established by Ibery Ozkan Melashvili. As she deepened her networks within Georgian society she got the job as a teacher of Georgian language at the art center. She stated that even though she was granted a scholarship it was difficult to cover her expenses therefore finding the right networks helped her find a job within the community (Personal Interview). Discussing with her the story of her life was interesting as long as her experience was a clear example of how having the networks can influence the quality of life in the country of migration. On the other hand she stated that several times she found a job with the help of the networks however she had to leave it due to the problems with the salaries. As long as she was considered as someone employed with the help of networks she was not taken into consideration as a serious candidate for several jobs. She stated that one of the most important things in order to integrate into society is having networks and the knowledge of the language. She mentioned that there are several cultural differences between Georgian and Turkish societies. As long as Turkish society seemed for her a bit more conservative than Georgian she highlighted the importance of knowledge of the customs:

“People surrounding me in Turkey seem more conservative than the people from the city where I come from. Therefore having Georgian networks here is important for me as long as I can be myself with my friends from Georgia” (Personal Interview, female, 31, Istanbul, 17 November).

In the end of the conversation she stated that even though having networks is very beneficial also on the other hand it may be dangerous too. It is important to have relations with the people you trust and their nationality shall not be given big importance.

Another group of migrants is ethnic Georgians referred as Muhajirs. Muhajir is an Arabic word and means the one who has immigrated to another country (Personal interview). The available information about this group of migrants is very poor. One of the scholars working with this ethnic groups states that the only information he has gathered was by oral meetings with them (Personal Interview). As it is known the organizer of the immigration was the Ottoman Empire who tried to bring as many Muslims from Caucasus to Turkey as possible in order to save them from Russian empire (Megrelidze 1964). The existing poor living conditions resulted in massive migration of people from Achara region to Turkey. In 1879 the first wave of Muhajirs emigrated from Georgia to Turkey following another waves in 1880 and 1881 (Megrelidze 1964). There is no official document that states the number of the emigrants. The scholars working on the issue claim that there were around 150 000 emigrants from Georgia (Chichinadze 1964). Muhajirs were spread in the Black Sea region of Turkey in the cities such as Artvin and Inegol while significant number of Georgians migrated to Hopa and Trabzon as well. Ethnic Georgians were easily assimilated with the Turkish society as long as they shared culture and religious

believes (Topchishvili 2005). During the interviews I had the chance to meet the descendent of this group of migrants Mustafa Eristavi. His ancestors were Muhajirs who lived in Artvin. During the interview he stated that he was born and raised in a Turkish family however he was always taught about his Georgian ethnicity (Personal interview with a 70-year-old-male, Istanbul, 2015). While discussing the importance of the networks he stated that with the Georgian networks he managed to find the Georgian Art Center where he was able to get actively involved within the society. By active communication he managed to learn Georgian language and get close to the Georgian community in Istanbul. As long as he was already integrated into the Turkish society he did not have the need to find accommodation or job for himself however he mentioned that being close with the Georgian community played important part of his life. As stated by the interlocutor ethnic Georgians considered themselves as Turkish but were trying not to forget their Georgian roots. Therefore being close to the community at the Georgian Art Center meant being close with the people coming from the same place as he did. During the interview he stated that due to being close to his own people he managed to learn Georgian and moreover teach the language to his granddaughter (Personal interview with a 70-year-old-male, Istanbul, 2015). During the interview he seemed proud to be able to learn the language and accordingly maintain ties with his own country.

### **3.3 Rhetoric Analysis**

Being given a chance to meet the interlocutors face to face I tried to provide discourse analysis as well. As mentioned above the interviews were held in Georgian which gave me the ability to further analyze the outcome of the meetings. While communicating with the old migrants I could notice that their Georgian was not the Georgian that is being spoken today in the country. They were mentioning rather old words that are out

of use today and is not easy to understand for a modern Georgian speaker. It was easy to notice their will of sharing their experience with a Georgian. Therefore I was given a chance to be introduced to their whole story with all the necessary details. As they have stated if I was a foreigner they would not feel so comfortable. This fact also seemed to me one of the reasons that networks are so important in the process of Georgian migration to Turkey. They were ready to answer all of my questions and help me as much as they could. They stated that as long as they are already minorities in Turkey they should stay close to each other and help the new educated migrants to establish their lives. Due to the fact that they had missed their country, language and culture they were always fascinated to communicate and talk to anyone from Georgia especially in their mother tongue. While meeting with the Georgians who have recently migrated to Turkey the profiles of interlocutors were significantly different. The reasons of migration for them was a lack of available jobs and the monotony of each day. I met some recently migrated Georgians who managed to learn language and integrate into Turkish society while some of them were unable to speak Turkish at all due to lack of time or communication with Turkish people.

While conducting interviews almost all of the migrants had left Georgia due to lack of job opportunities and the low wages offered in Georgia. Only three interlocutors had left Georgia in order to get the education as long as they were granted scholarships from Turkish government or university. Almost all of the interlocutors stated that they managed to find jobs very easily however the jobs they got involved in were the low quality jobs and the wages were not so high. However they all stated that they had no social assistance or social security from local authorities and the only assistance they got was from Georgian networks they had before migration. During the interviews with the old migrants the word “Chveneburi” was often used in order to refer to me. As

mentioned before this word means one of us and is used while referring to very close persons. Referring to me with this word made me realize that I had their trust and willingness to help.

During the interviews with the educated Georgians who work in the Turkish or international companies I discovered that the existence of the stereotypes about Georgians who only work as babysitters or housekeepers may be problem for them. One of the interlocutors stated that she worked in a Turkish law firm who had another Georgian working for them in the construction issues such as fixing the technical things. The Georgian man working for a Turkish law firm was not educated enough, he was from one of the villages in Georgia and at the same time could not speak proper Turkish. While Georgian girl had her education in Europe and was able to speak five languages. Even though she was skilled enough her wage was three times less than her Turkish colleagues who were doing the same job but were less educated and less skilled (Personal interview). While discussing her problem she stated that in her view, since the partners at the law firm already had a specific stereotype about Georgians such as less educated people who did the job for the less salaries, she was also paid less. During her job at the immigration center she was also told that she did not look like Georgian and she was exceptionally educated compared to the other Georgians that were asking for residence permits. It is difficult to prove why she was not respected the way other employees were however it should be noticed that the existing stereotypes of Georgians may create discomfort for the educated and skilled Georgian migrants in Turkey.

As I realized from the interviews the people who had migrated long time ago managed to integrate into the society more easily. Due to the fact that they learnt the language and some of them changed the religion they were easily assimilated with the Turkish society. There are several grounds for it. First of all similar cultural values and

religious believes shall be considered. As old migrants were transferred to Islam it was easy for them to assimilate with the society better. On the other hand the facial similarities between the two nations can play significant role in the process of integration into the society as well.

Hereby I would like to discuss another example of the important role of networks by mentioning recently established Georgian restaurant which is the first ever restaurant that offers Georgian food in Istanbul. The restaurant is located close to the Beyoglu district of Istanbul which as I have learned was believed to be place where a lot of Georgians were living. The district was also referred as Gurcu Kapi which in Turkish means the door of Georgians (Personal interview with 29-year-old-male, Istanbul, 2015). The name of the place is “Galaktioni” which was the name of one of the famous Georgian poets. The name has not been chosen accidentally as far as the owner of the place is a poet himself too. During my research I also had the chance to visit the restaurant and interview the owner of the place and poet - Irakli Kakabadze. He called himself a new migrant to Turkey and stated that he always felt his attachment to Istanbul. He explained that due to the fact that he always felt interest towards Georgian cuisine from Turks and also ethnic Georgians he decided to establish the place with his family (Personal interview). He stated that himself he is the main cook and his wife deals with the administrative issues. Due to having connections with the Georgian Art Center he managed to turn his plan into reality. He clearly highlighted that without the help of Georgians living in Istanbul he would not be able to establish his business. He also mentioned that the art center and other Georgians helped him not only physically but also financially. During Georgian Art Center has been organizing many events in order to help Georgian community in Turkey. The center offered its space to teachers of Georgian language for free in order to give lessons to ethnically Georgian

Turks who show their growing interest in Georgia and think of migrating to Georgia as well. During the interview he highlighted importance of having networks as a new migrant and said that the huge involvement of Georgian community in establishing his restaurant was a clear example of how Georgian networks work in Turkey.

### **3.4 Negative Role of Networks**

Even though most of the scholars describe networks as one of the tools of integration during the interviews the outcome was different. Networks did really help almost all of the interlocutors I met but they unanimously admitted that the networks helped them to integrate into Georgian community in Turkey however prevented them from integration to Turkish society (Personal interview). The reasons of this problems were several. First of all they claimed that as long as they only had to communicate with the Georgian community they did not need to learn Turkish. Even the jobs they found with the help of networks were mainly with the ethnic Georgians who understand Georgian. Some of the interlocutors stated that if they had no networks in Turkey they might have been forced to learn the language. On the other hand due to spending most of the free time with the other Georgian communities newly migrated Georgians were not able to get familiar with Turks. Mostly they were organizing or attending the events within the Georgian community and very limited number of Turks. Therefore lack of the Turkish language skills and lack of free time to spend with Turks the interlocutors stated that having networks did help them in many ways however it also prevented them from integrating in the Turkish society which reflected negatively on their assimilation process. They stated that if they were given a chance to study the language by communicating with Turks it would have been easier for them to integrate better in the society and find better job opportunities as well.

Another group that I got to know about was female workers that have started migrating to Turkey after the dissolution of the Soviet Union and keep migrating today as well. I had the chance to interview four female migrants who worked as a housekeepers in the different families. Their stories were all different however the reason was the same. Their family members could not find jobs in Georgia and therefore they were forced to migrate. As a consequence of being able to find jobs they kept staying in Turkey even after the change of governments and after the better economic situation in Georgia as well. What brought my attention during the interviews was that all of the female migrants had received high level education and were able to speak two or three languages. As they stated with their professions it was impossible to find any job in Georgia therefore they were forced to work in Turkey as housekeepers or babysitters (Personal interview with 33-year-old-female, Istanbul, 2015). The wage they would be paid in Georgia for their profession was much less than the wages they were getting as babysitters in Turkey. I got to notice that all of the female labor migrants were planning to go back to Georgia as long as they had left their husbands and kids back home however none of them had any idea about the date of return. All of the female labor migrants unanimously stated that they found jobs with the help of the existing Georgian networks in Turkey and they would not be able to find jobs without networks due to the lack of information about the available jobs.

To recapitulate, there is a significant number of Georgians with different backgrounds living in Turkey. On one hand we see a picture of educated and motivated Georgians who with the existing connections and active multicultural events have resulted as a strong Georgian community. With the strengthened ties this group of Georgians have managed to establish several institutions aiming to popularize Georgian culture and identity. On the other hand, there is a number of Georgians who have

migrated to Turkey due to some social and economic problems. This group has been working mostly with the Turkish families as babysitters or house keepers. The research included interviews with the interlocutors from both of these groups. As the chapter has concluded, almost all of the interlocutors have managed to establish their lives through the help of existing networks. This chapter as follows, attempted to study practical examples from the lives of individuals to show the significance of the network theory in Georgian migration to Turkey as long as the issue has never been studied from this perspective.

## Conclusion

This thesis has attempted to describe Georgian migration to Turkey from the perspective of Network Theory. Migration is a growing problem as long as the number of migrants grow each day. Significant number of people are forced to leave their places of birth and enter another country legally or illegally. It should not be forgotten that these are the migrants that are forced to leave their places of residence due to economic situation, lack of jobs, wars or other problems. It is important to consider that no one would leave their places of birth with their own will. Therefore being a migrant is already a situation caused by the existing problems.

While judging migrants for bringing problems to the country to emigration it should be highlighted that the process of migration itself is full of danger therefore a migrants would not take this way unless forced to. Accessing migrants as numbers also makes international society think about migrants not as individuals but as a group of some numbers that does not even seem real however there are human beings behind these numbers who are suffering every day to find themselves food to eat, water to drink and a bad to sleep.

The thesis has discussed the situation in Turkey today that is devastating and hopeless for the migrants and for the society. Moreover, Syrian refugees keep entering the borders of Turkey day by day. While Turkish government has opened borders for the refuges it is difficult to offer them accommodation, food or any other tools that are needed for integration. Therefore most of the migrants suffer from the lack of minimum living conditions. Some Turkish conservatives are against accepting migrants at all and they see the danger of Turkey becoming dangerous place as long as the asylum seekers might start to steal once they are not able to find themselves food and accommodation.

The fear keeps growing as the number of terrorist attacks grow not only in Turkey but also in some other European countries as well.

The concept of Network Theory has been discussed in the second chapter and its significance in the case of Georgian migration has been raised. Further I have discussed Georgian migration to Turkey according to time periods. The meetings with the interlocutors aimed to find out the role of networks while studying their experiences. I had the chance to interview Georgians who migrated after the dissolution of Soviet Union as well as Georgians who have recently migrated to Turkey and are still in the process of integration. Therefore I had the chance to analyze the results from both waves of migration and discuss the role of migration with the new as well as old migrants.

As many other scholars have discussed the role of networks in the process of migration is crucial and can become the core reason of migration in the specific country. Networks can play significant role in facilitating migration. The research has highlighted the role of networks in the process of making a decision of migration and in the different stages of migration processes. Based on the experiences of the migrants I have found out that networks have played role in the process of making decision on the migration country as well as in finding accommodation or jobs. Even though there have been several other reasons of migration having networks have been decisive issue while choosing Turkey as a country of migration as stated by new migrants. As most of the interlocutors have highlighted the existing networks gave them more sources of information about the job possibilities. Majority of the interlocutors anonymously admitted the high role of networks in order to find accommodation and jobs.

Furthermore it should be noticed that as long as most of the interlocutors left their families and kids in Georgia there was a danger that they would not be able to stay

in Turkey for a long time and would have to return back home. Most of them stated that having networks helped them to overcome the problem of homesickness in a very strong way (Personal interview). They stated that whenever they had the need to talk to someone and not feel alone Georgian friends were always ready to meet. Most of the time they were also organizing events and exhibitions which helped them integrate more in the Georgian community and accordingly widen the connections. While meeting with Georgians who have migrated after the dissolution of Soviet Union I learnt that they have put a lot of efforts in helping new migrants to establish lives in Turkey. As mentioned above Georgian Art Center has been organizing several events in order to help migrants learn the language. The efforts taken by the Georgian Art Centers are crucial for maintaining Georgian identity and culture.

On the other hand it should be noted that some of the interlocutors highlighted the negative role of having networks as well. As long as the new migrants were able to find jobs with the connections they did not need to learn language since the jobs only required knowledge of Georgian or Russian. Therefore even the Georgians that have been living in Turkey for several years could not manage to learn the language which has prevented them from integrating in the Turkish society. As one of the interlocutors stated having networks helped her to integrate in the Georgian community however prevented her from learning the language and integrating in the Turkish society. Therefore I would like to state that even though the networks play crucial role in the process of migration it may have some negative effects on the process of integration. While Georgians try to socialize with the Georgian society they lose the chance to learn the language, develop their skills more and find the opportunities in the Turkish society which may offer better conditions. During the conducted interviews I have found out that negative effects of networks can be seen in the bigger picture. As a result, being

prevented from integration in the Turkish society put Georgian migrants in a situation of having low skilled jobs. Therefore having networks can have crucial role on the social status of migrant.

Overall it should be noticed that Georgians tend to stay together once they find each other. Therefore applying to networks theory to Georgian migration to Turkey was relevant. The thesis as it is attempted to bring the theory and the practice together by looking at the experiences of the individual Georgian migrants. As it has been stated several times by interlocutors, networks have played decisive role in the process of making a decision about the country of emigration and has positively resulted in the integration process from the perspective of finding jobs and accommodations. Therefore it should be mentioned that Network Theory is one of the international relations theory that is often applied in the real life.

With this thesis I have attempted to study the role of networks in the Georgian migration to Turkey. As stated above, networks can play significant role in the process of making a decision about the country of migration. Hereby I would like to highlight that scientifically there are more issues to be studied about the topic. I have shortly mention the negative role of the networks. Some of the interlocutors stated that the fact that they had Georgian networks in Turkey prevented them from integrating into the Turkish society. As explored during the interviews, Georgian migrants kept close ties with Georgians, being unable to study or practice Turkish language which affected their integration into Turkish society negatively. Therefore Georgian migration to Turkey can be further studied while focusing on the negative role of having networks specifically in the process of integration.

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