

# The Dynamism of (Female) Emigration: the Evolution of Gendered Migration Trajectories from Moldova & Georgia

---

Michaella Vanore, Research Fellow<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Melissa Siegel, Assistant Professor<sup>2</sup>

**Draft—Do not cite without author's permission**

## **Abstract**

This paper comparatively examines the evolution of migration systems in Moldova and Georgia, focusing on the changing gender patterns of migration and the different paths each country has taken regarding female migration. While large-scale migration from both countries can be traced to the end of the Soviet period, important differences in the post-Soviet social, political, and economic transitions experienced by each country have resulted in unique migration patterns. In reviewing the beginnings, development, and sustained importance of migration systems in Moldova and Georgia, this paper documents how changing economic needs and opportunities coupled with evolving political relationships with neighbouring countries have molded gendered migration processes in each country. Using household survey data collected between 2011-2013 in Moldova and Georgia, this paper finds that political and economic relationships with Russia and the EU are critical determinants of gendered migration patterns in both Moldova and Georgia. Recent shifts in migration patterns reflect changes to the quality and substance of these relationships over time: while migration of low- and medium-skilled male workers has continued relatively unabated from Moldova to Russia, the antagonistic political relationship between Georgia and Russia has stymied the flow of male labour migrants from Georgia to the countries in the Commonwealth of Independent States. Such evolving dynamics are important to understand for both Moldova and Georgia, which have experienced the loss of 25 per cent of their populations to migration over the past two decades.

Key words: migration, feminization, transition, Moldova, Georgia

---

<sup>1</sup> Corresponding author: [michaella.vanore@maastrichtuniversity.nl](mailto:michaella.vanore@maastrichtuniversity.nl)

<sup>2</sup> [Melissa.siegel@maastrichtuniversity.nl](mailto:Melissa.siegel@maastrichtuniversity.nl)

## **I. Introduction**

The dissolution of the Soviet Union brought with it sweeping changes that fundamentally altered life in the former republics; amid political and economic transition, the evolution of large-scale emigration has been particularly impactful, both as a symptom of these larger transitions and as a transition in its own right. In the years since independence, two states in particular—Moldova and Georgia—have experienced sharp increases in the volume of emigration. Over time the composition of migrant flows has changed in response to changing needs of foreign labour markets and changing political relationships with migrant-receiving states. In both countries women are increasingly entering international migration, and with them the migration stream itself is diversifying to encompass more destination countries, new patterns of mobility and return, and a greater diversity of migrant “categories”. This paper explores how migration trends and trajectories have changed over time in both Moldova and Georgia through the lens of rapid feminisation.

The feminization of migration is a transition that has come to the fore in the past decade. Feminisation encompasses not only changes to the composition of the migrant stream—the greater participation of women in international migration—but also the changing reasons for female migration. Historically women migrated either with husbands or other family members or following those pioneer migrants, rarely emigrating independently. As the demand for female-specific skills has increased on the global labour market, the rate of independent female migration has also increased. The expansion of service and care sectors that are traditionally filled by female labour plays an especially key role in this process (World Bank, 2007). Given the fundamental differences between men’s and women’s experiences of migration, understanding gendered migration patterns is essential to understanding the causes and consequences of international migration for countries of origin (Piper, 2008).

Using data from a recently-concluded study funded by the European Commission entitled “the Effects of Migration on Children and the Elderly Left Behind”, this paper illustrates how migratory movements from Moldova and Georgia have changed over time, with women at the fore of changing migration dynamics. The first section explores how the economic and political transitions experienced in the immediate post-Soviet period contributed to large-scale emigration beginning at the end of the 1990s. This review of prior literature provides the context for the interpretation of recent survey data collected on migration in Moldova and Georgia, which is described shortly in the section that follows. The third section delves into the survey data to demonstrate how over time, migration from both Moldova and Georgia changed from being characterised almost exclusively by male migration to the Russian Federation to include high rates of female migration to service- and care-sectors in countries such as Italy, Greece, Turkey, and Italy. The section will further explore how women’s positions as exclusive “stay behinds” or trailing migrants has given way to a new category of pioneering female migrant that is challenging accepted patterns of international migration. The fourth and final section concludes with discussion of how these feminised migration flow signal a fundamental shift in post-Soviet mobility patterns.

## **II. Historical Context**

The evolution of feminised emigration trends from both Moldova and Georgia has occurred within the context of multiple transformations: since the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, both countries have undergone intense economic, political, and mobility changes that have colluded to create the migration situation each country presently experiences. The following section discusses each of these transitions in short.

In the years immediately following the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Moldova and Georgia—among the other former Soviet Union states (FSU)—experienced what has been referred to as the ‘triple transition’ (Offe, 1991), the simultaneous processes of market reform, nation building, and state consolidation. Each of these processes, coupled with the dissolution of barriers to personal mobility, significantly contributed to wide-scale emigration by the end of the 1990s.

As in most FSUs, the immediate post-Soviet period in both Moldova and Georgia was characterised by severe contraction of economic activities and plummeting economic output as the result of movement from central planning to market economies (Svejnar, 2002)—including the privatisation and transfer of state assets, largely via vouchers (Bennett, Estrin, & Urga, 2007)—and the initial economic shock following the breakdown of trading agreements concluded within the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (de Melo, Denizer, Gelb, & Tenev, 2001). Unlike other FSUs like Poland and Slovenia that experienced the most stagnant growth between two and four years after the transition, the Moldovan economy steadily declined until 2000 (Fidrmuc, 2003). In the immediate post-Soviet years hyperinflation wracked the Georgian economy, with inflation average 60-70 percent per month between 1993 and August 1994 (Papava, 2013). Economic decline was not only protracted but severe for both countries: in 1994 Georgia’s gross domestic product was just over one-quarter of the 1989 level (Fidrmuc, 2003), and in 2000 Moldova’s GDP was 32.2 percent of the 1989 level (Fidrmuc, 2003; Pantiru, Black, & Sabates-Wheeler, 2007). For both countries economic growth was negative between 1990 and 2000, with Georgia experiencing an average growth for the period of -7.5 percent and Moldova experiencing -9 percent growth (Fidrmuc, 2003). The recession experienced by the Russian Federation at the end of the 1990s also bore strongly negative consequences for Moldova and Georgia, both of which relied on Russia as a prime export partner. Until 1998 60 percent of Moldova’s exports were destined for Russia. Moldovan industrial output plummeted by 25 percent and agricultural production by 20 percent between 1998 and 1999 following devaluation of the rouble. This crisis compounded existing economic problems related to the loss of control over the separatist territory of Transnistria, which was home to most of Moldova’s energy and industrial plants (Pantiru, Black, & Sabates-Wheeler, 2007). The limited economic growth of both states coupled with the Russian economic crises contributed to a dire economic situation that saw 71 percent of the Moldovan population (IMF, 2006) and 60 percent of the Georgian population (IMF, 2003) living below the poverty line in 1999. It is no coincidence that large-scale emigration began during the worst years of crisis and has continued relatively unabated since.

The protracted recessions experienced by both countries occurred simultaneously with political liberalisation (Fidrmuc, 2003) and state/nation-forming processes that were tumultuous and often violent (Offe, 1991; Kuzio, 2001). In both Moldova and Georgia the processes of state- and institution building were complicated by lack of national unity (Kuzio, 2001) and limited overlap between the borders of the state and the nation (Berg & van Meurs, 2002). In the aftermath of the Soviet collapse, both states faced independence with the threat of civil war and separatism, which largely resulted

from attempts to consolidate ethnic or national identities in opposition to ‘Russification’ that occurred during the Soviet period (Kuzio, 2002; Roper, 2001; Vahl & Emerson, 2004).

In Moldova the proclamation of Moldovan as the official state language in 1989 incited immediate opposition from the Russian-speaking elite in the territory of Transnistria, to whom the language law signalled a shift of power away from Russian speakers to Romanian-speaking Moldovans (Roper, 2001). Competing economic and political interests and struggles over cultural and linguistic issues<sup>3</sup> resulted in open civil war with Transnistria in 1992 (Kolstø & Malgin, 1998). While a ceasefire was concluded in July 1992, the status of the territory has remained unresolved, and Transnistria now essentially functions as an independent state with limited prospects for reunification with Moldova (Popescu, 2005). The conflict with Transnistria and the complications it introduced to trade regimes further contributed to economic stagnation, providing further incentive for a growing-body of economic migrants to seek better economic opportunities elsewhere.

Georgia also experienced civil and ethnic conflicts in the early state-forming period, but the severity was considerably worse and the duration of conflict longer than that experienced in Moldova. Several interrelated conflicts occurred during the post-Soviet transition that are collectively called the “Georgian civil war”: the civil unrest and subsequent coup that overthrew the government of Zviad Gamsakhurdia in 1992 and the inter-ethnic conflicts over the breakaway territories of South Ossetia and Abkhazia (Fawn, 2012; Tuathail, 2009). In September 1990 the northern region of South Ossetia declared independence, and within two months the situation escalated into a bloody civil war that resulted in the ethnic cleansing of both ethnic Georgians and ethnic Ossetians (Wheatley, 2005). Between 1989 and 1992, 1,000 people were estimated as killed in the conflict, and around 23,000 ethnic Georgians became internally displaced persons (IDPs) within Georgia (HRW, 1996). While unstable peace existed between Georgia and South Ossetia following the 1992 ceasefire, open conflict broke out in both 2004 and 2008, with the latter escalating into open war between Georgia and Russia (called the “August war”). The August War resulted in hundreds of deaths and the further displacement of nearly 200,000 people (Tuathail, 2009), the resettlement or return of which is still an ongoing concern of the Georgian state. The territory of Abkhazia has also challenged national consolidation with violent results. As in Transnistria, the conflict in Abkhazia can be traced back to the (threatened) disruption of power from an elite ethnic minority (the Abkhaz) by the Georgian state following *perestroika* (Wheatley, 2005) and radicalisation of Abkhaz identity in response to perceived “Georgianisation” and colonisation of the region (Coppieters, 2004; Kabachnik, Regulska, & Mitchneck, 2012). After Abkhazia declared independence in August of 1992, Georgian troops moved into Abkhazia to regain military control. Bloody fighting ensued (Popescu, 2010) and large portions of the population (up to 50 percent) had been displaced by the end of the active conflict (Coppieters, 2004). By the end of 1993 Georgian forces were expelled from Abkhazia, and the territory has largely remained beyond Georgian control since, despite periodic attempts (as in 2006) to reintegrate some parts of Abkhazia into Georgian territory (Blakkisrud & Kolstø, 2012). The August War also brought renewed conflict over Abkhazia; the continued unrest in the territory has contributed to protracted displacement of the IDPs population, the return of which is seen as unlikely (Kabachnik *et al*, 2012). The Ossetian/Abkhazian conflicts have become grounds for contention between Georgia and Russia. Russia has maintained military presence in both territories since the ceasefire

---

<sup>3</sup> With the exception of a few towns and villages, the region had never been part of Romania, and more than half of the Transnistrian population were ethnic Russians or Ukrainians (Roper, 2001).

agreements were brokered for both regions (Borgen, 2009), which has led to tensions between the two states, particularly in Abkhazia where Russia extended rights to the Abkhazian population such as access to Russian passports (Popescu, 2010). Russia's recognition of the independence of both regions in 2008 further heightened these tensions (Nichol, 2008), providing the impetus for Georgia's withdrawal from the CIS in 2008. The civil war period was characterised by rampant corruption, power struggles, energy outages, and lawlessness—exemplified by the powerful paramilitary group, the *mkhedrioni* (Wheatley, 2005; Kabachnik, 2012). The slow infrastructural and economic development over this period coupled with the inter-ethnic conflicts strongly encouraged large-scale emigration from Georgia, which has been consistent over the past 15 years.

As the discussion of economic and political changes following independence and restructuring reveal, the post-Soviet period was characterised by sweeping transformations that affected the lives of individual citizens in very fundamental ways. One response to these changes was emigration, which citizens of both states took up as a strategy to cope with economic and political uncertainties.

In both Moldova and Georgia, three waves of emigration occurred following the collapse of the Soviet Union. The first period immediately followed independence and lasted until the mid-1990s, and—as would be expected of such a tumultuous period—was characterised by a high level of permanent emigration inspired by the severe economic decline, on-going insecurity and conflict, and ethnic return. In Moldova this corresponded to a loss of over 33,000 people to migration between 1992 and 1993 alone (Cantarji & Mincu, 2013), and in Georgia it was estimated that 650,000 people had left by 1995, a large proportion of which were ethnic Russians, Greeks, and Jews returning “home” (CRRC, 2007). The second phase of the mobility transition saw a drop in the number of emigrants intending to settle permanently abroad and was instead characterised by economic migrants seeking work abroad. In this time period it was estimated that almost one-third of all Moldovan households had a member working abroad (Pantiru *et al*, 2007), while in Georgia the net migration rate between 1996 and 2006 was one of the highest in the world (CRRC, 2007). While within this second period a small number of migrants began returning to both countries, it has been suggested that rather than signally permanent return, the migrants coming back in this period were ushering in an era of circularity and perpetual mobility, particularly to neighbouring states such as the Russian Federation. The third and final wave of migration in the post-Soviet period is defined by a more-or-less steady state of high emigration. In Moldova this has been achieved through a certain degree of migrant return and continual entrance of new migrants into the migration stream. In Georgia this era has so far been characterised by a certain degree of forced return (namely forced repatriations of men from the Russian Federation) as well as accelerating migration to the West (Tchaidze & Torosyan, 2010; IOM, 2009).

Contemporary emigration from both Moldova and Georgia, while still largely economic in nature, has diversified, not only by destination country but also by gender. By 2010 it was estimated that around 21.5 percent of the total population of Moldova was residing abroad, with the largest numbers living in the Russian Federation, Ukraine, Italy, and Romania (Ratha *et al*, 2010). While the majority of migrants are male—estimated at 58 percent of the migrant stock abroad in 2008 (Salah, 2008) and over 63 percent of migrant flows in 2010 (IOM, 2012)—different migrants are attracted to different countries. Men are over-represented in the youngest age cohort of migrants and in the flow of migrants destined for CIS countries, while women represent a much larger proportion of the migrant stock destined for EU countries such as Italy (where women constitute more than 68 percent of

migrants) (IOM, 2012). Economic specialisation is largely responsible for these gender gaps, but the accession of Romania to the EU in 2007—and the access to EU mobility it has granted dual Moldovan passport holders—has naturally also played an important role in this transition. A similar evolution of migration trends can be observed in Georgia: by 2010 over a quarter of the population was thought to be residing abroad, with the largest numbers residing in the Russian Federation, Armenia, Ukraine, Greece, and Israel (Ratha *et al*, 2010). While in the immediate post-Soviet period men represented a greater proportion of migrants than women, the breakdown in the relationship between Georgia and the Russian Federation—the major destination country of male migrants—encouraged greater mobility among women, who constituted the largest flows to Greece, Italy, and other countries in the EU with growing home and elder-care markets (IOM, 2009; Labadze & Tukhashvili, 2013).

While the political and economic situations in both countries naturally contributed to the development of mobility trends, evolving relationships with the EU have also helped shape migration outcomes. Both Moldova and Georgia are members of the Eastern Partnership, a group inaugurated by the European Union in 2009 to provide an institutionalised venue for the discussion of strategic partnership agreements and visa agreements—including visa facilitation—between the EU and former Soviet states (Labadze & Tukhashvili, 2013). Prior to this both countries signed action plans with the EU within the framework of the European Neighbourhood Policy; the EU-Moldova Action Plan was signed in 2005 for a four-year period (Cantarji & Mincu, 2013) and the EU-Georgia Action Plan in 2006 for a five-year period (Labadze & Tukhashvili, 2013). Both of these action plans included provisions for enhanced dialogue with the EU on migration management and facilitation, which have been further elaborated in Mobility Partnerships between the EU and Moldova (signed in 2008) and the EU and Georgia (signed in 2009). For both countries the Mobility Partnership has been advocated as a tool that will be mutually beneficial to both the EU and its partners by fostering better cooperation on migration and development, on managing legal circular and temporary migration, on promoting return and readmission of irregular migrants, and on facilitating legal mobility through visa facilitation (Labadze & Tukhashvili, 2013). In addition to these tools, both Moldova and Georgia have also pursued bilateral agreements with individual member states relating to migration management. While few assessments have been conducted of the impacts of these agreements on migration flows from Moldova and Georgia, it can be anticipated that the growing cooperation will result in ever-growing importance of migration to the EU, which would likely correspond to higher rates of female migration.

Changes to personal mobility coupled with political and economic pressures have worked together to create a complex contemporary landscape for migration, one which women navigate differently than men. The following section explores the potential “gender transition” expressed through increasingly feminised migration flows from both Moldova and Georgia, highlighting the dynamism represented by women in international migration.

### III. Data & Methodology

The state of current knowledge about contemporary migration trends across Moldova and Georgia is uneven across the two study countries. While migration in Moldova is a well-acknowledged and well-researched trend, only relatively few attempts have been made in Georgia to document the characteristics of this phenomenon. In Moldova administrative data on emigration is collected and disseminated on a monthly basis<sup>4</sup>, the quarterly Labour Force Survey (LFS) contains some migration indicators, and many independent data collection initiatives—such as periodic surveys among migrants conducted by the International Agency for Source Country Information (IASCI) and the Centre of Sociological, Politological and Psychological Analysis and Investigations (CIVIS)—provide more detailed data on current migration trends. In Georgia data on net immigration rates are reported by the state statistical agency GeoStat, but disaggregated data on flows is not available. While some smaller data collection initiatives—such as the Development on the Move survey of 2008<sup>5</sup> and periodic small-scale data collection activities of the IOM—provide more nuanced indicators of migration, they are generally not nationally representative and are infrequently conducted. As a result very little is known about contemporary migration trends in Georgia, particularly in the post-2008 period.

While the prior-mentioned data sources provide valuable information on historical and current migration flows, more nuanced data has been collected in both Moldova and Georgia as part of the European Commission-funded study “the Effects of Migration on Children and the Elderly Left Behind in Moldova and Georgia”<sup>6</sup>. This study, which was conducted from December 2010 to June 2013, collected information on migrants and their families through in-depth interviews, a household survey, and a community survey. The data collected from the household survey is particularly helpful in substantiating changing migration trends and will be used in the subsequent section to illustrate the evolution of gendered flows. In addition to information collected on the demographic characteristics of every household member, the survey collected in-depth information on the migration histories of household members, with detailed residency histories collected for the years 1999-2011. In each country the survey was conducted among all regions, excluding the breakaway territory of Transnistria in Moldova and the de facto independent regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia in Georgia. While the sampling frame differed for each country, both surveys were drawn from a random stratified sample, with oversampling of target population groups (children, elderly, and migrants). Following collection of data, weights were provided to enable extrapolation to national level; given the focus of the survey on those households with children, elderly, or both, the data is nationally representative only for such households. Table 1 below provides an overview of the survey sample collected in both countries. Total sample numbers indicate the actual number of

---

<sup>4</sup> Administrative (population register) data is owned and provided by the Ministry of Information Technology and Communications Technologies and the Ministry of Internal Affairs and shared with the National Bureau of Statistics on a monthly basis (NBS, 2012).

<sup>5</sup> Information on the Development on the Move initiative can be found on the website at <<http://www.ippr.org/research-project/44/7060/development-on-the-move>>

<sup>6</sup> Information on the research and its outputs can be found on the Maastricht Graduate School of Governance webpage at <[http://mgsog.merit.unu.edu/research/moldova\\_georgia.php](http://mgsog.merit.unu.edu/research/moldova_georgia.php)>.

observations that occur in the data; weighted proportions represent the relative size of the given population when extrapolated to national level.

*Table 1: Survey Sample by Country*

	Moldova		Georgia	
	Households	Individuals	Households	Individuals
<b>Total Survey Sample</b>	3,548	12,253	4010	16,211
<b>Total Sample by Migration Status</b>				
Non migrant (%)	2,482 (69.95%)	10,596 (86.47%)	1,971 (49.16%)	13,584 (83.79%)
Return migrant (%)	294 (8.29%)	762 (6.21%)	367 (9.15%)	680 (4.19%)
Current migrant (%)	772 (21.76%)	895 (7.3%)	1,671 (41.68%)	1,947 (12.02%)
<b>Proportion of Households by Migration Status (Weighted)</b>				
Non migrant %	74.31%	66.76%	78.26%	92.35%
Return migrant %	8.89%	10.85%	6.08%	2.92%
Current migrant %	16.8%	22.39%	15.66%	4.73%

*Source: Author's calculations*

The sample collected in Georgia was significantly larger than that collected in Moldova. While a much larger number of migrant households were included in the Georgian sample, such households represent a smaller proportion of the total population when weights are applied. Within the survey current migrants were defined as individuals who were living abroad at the time of the survey and had lived abroad for three or more months. Return migrants were individuals who had lived abroad for three or more months at some point since 1999 but had since returned to live in the household. Non-migrants were those individuals who had never lived abroad for three or more months since 1999; while a small number of circular or seasonal migrants who embarked for periods of less than three months could potentially be omitted from the sample of migrants based on the migration definition, it is likely a small number only.

The large sample sizes provide an interesting diversity of migration trends and trajectories, many of which have changed over time. Given the focus of this paper on the changing dynamics of female emigration, the population of female migrants is of particular interest. Within the total sample of migrants in Moldova, women account for just over 38 percent; in Georgia they account for just over 51 percent of all individuals who have had any migration experience since 1999.

*Table 2: Survey Sample by Migration Status and Gender*

	Moldova			Georgia		
	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total
<b>Total Population of Individuals in Sample</b>	6,448 (52.62%)	5,805 (47.38%)	12,253 (100%)	8,885 (54.82%)	7,323 (45.18%)	16,211 (100%)
Non migrant (%)	5,805 (54.76%)	4,791 (45.22%)	10,596 (100%)	7,543 (55.54%)	6,038 (44.46%)	13,584 (100%)
Return migrant (%)	280 (36.75%)	482 (63.25%)	762 (100%)	297 (43.68%)	383 (56.32%)	680 (100%)
Current migrant (%)	363 (40.56%)	532 (59.44%)	895 (100%)	1,045 (53.67%)	902 (46.33%)	1,947 (100%)
<b>Proportion in Population (Weighted)</b>						
Non migrant %	54.8%	45.2%	100%	54.82%	45.18%	100%
Return migrant %	37.9%	62.1%	100%	43.94%	56.06%	100%
Current migrant %	38.5%	61.5%	100%	52.87%	47.13%	100%

*Source: Author calculations*



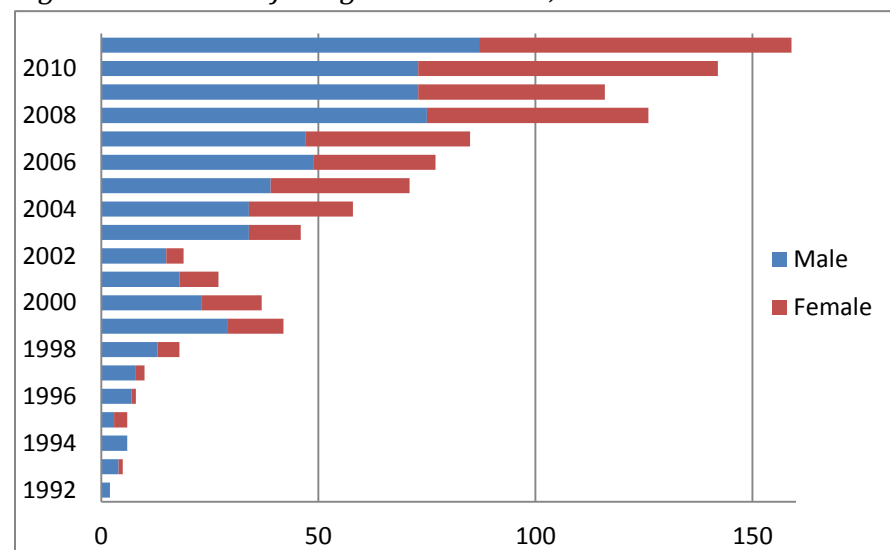
The large number of past and current migrants of both genders enables comparison of migration patterns over time. The following section draws from this survey sample to establish how the dynamics of female migration have shifted from the immediate post-Soviet to contemporary era.

## V. Results: Shift in Mobility Patterns over Time

The populations of migrants in both Moldova and Georgia represent very different migration streams and trajectories. While in both countries migration flows were historically characterised by male emigration, the transformation of migration from a male- to female-dominated phenomenon occurred very differently for the two countries. The following section explores the evolution of female emigration from Moldova and Georgia by describing individual migration trajectories and mobility patterns before exploring the demographic characteristics of migrants. All data from this section is drawn from the data collected in the study “the Effects of Migration on Children and the Elderly Left Behind in Moldova and Georgia” coordinated by Maastricht University.

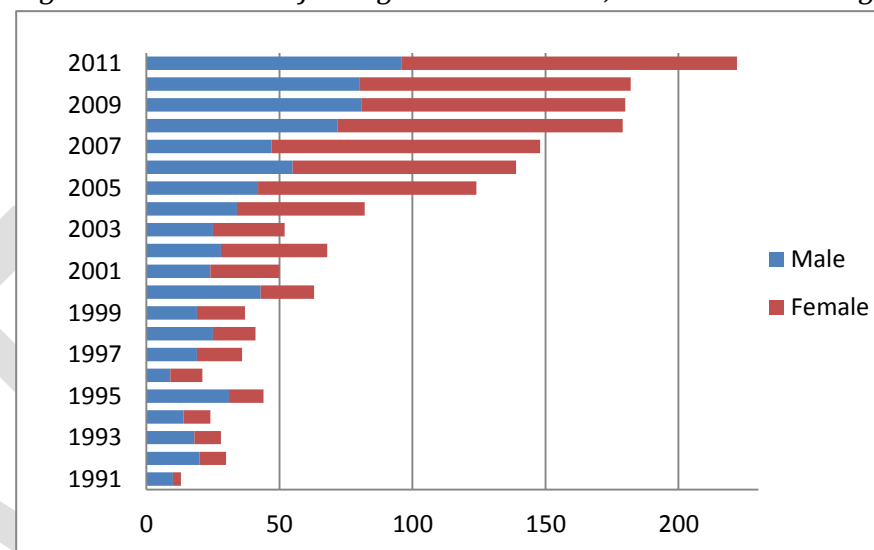
As the discussion on the mobility transition in both Moldova and Georgia revealed, the feminisation of migration experienced in both countries is a relatively recent phenomenon. Prior to the mid-1990s, women were underrepresented in the migration streams from both Moldova and Georgia; while women left Georgia in greater numbers than women in Moldova in the early 1990s, they were still far outnumbered by men until the end of the 1990s. Given barriers to mobility experienced both during and immediately after the Soviet era, the rate of migration was generally low in both countries until the mid-1990s, thus while men outnumbered women significantly, they did not represent sizable migration flows. In Moldova the average year of a woman’s first migration was 2006 and for men, 2005; in Georgia, where large-scale migration began slightly earlier than in Moldova, the average year of first migration was 2005 for women and 2003 for men. In both countries migrants destined for the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) countries—namely the Russian Federation and, to a lesser degree, the Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and Azerbaijan—migrated earlier than to those destined for any other region. While the “average” female Georgian migrant left for the CIS for the first time in 1999, women destined for the EU-27 region or the non-CIS/non-EU region (principally comprised of Turkey, the United States, Canada, and Israel) left for the first time in 2005 and 2007, respectively. While the same pattern holds for women in Moldova, the time lag between destinations is much smaller, with the average year of first migration to the CIS 2006, the the EU-27 2006, and to the other region 2007. The average year of first migration signals key differences between the genders and between migrants from Moldova and Georgia that provides an important basis for understanding how contemporary female emigration patterns emerged in each country. Figure 1 and Figure 2 below show the development of migration patterns over time in terms of the *volume* of emigration and the gendered *composition* of migrant streams.

Figure 1: Number of Emigrants Per Year, 1992-2011: Moldova



Source: Author's calculations

Figure 2: Number of Emigrants Per Year, 1991-2011: Georgia

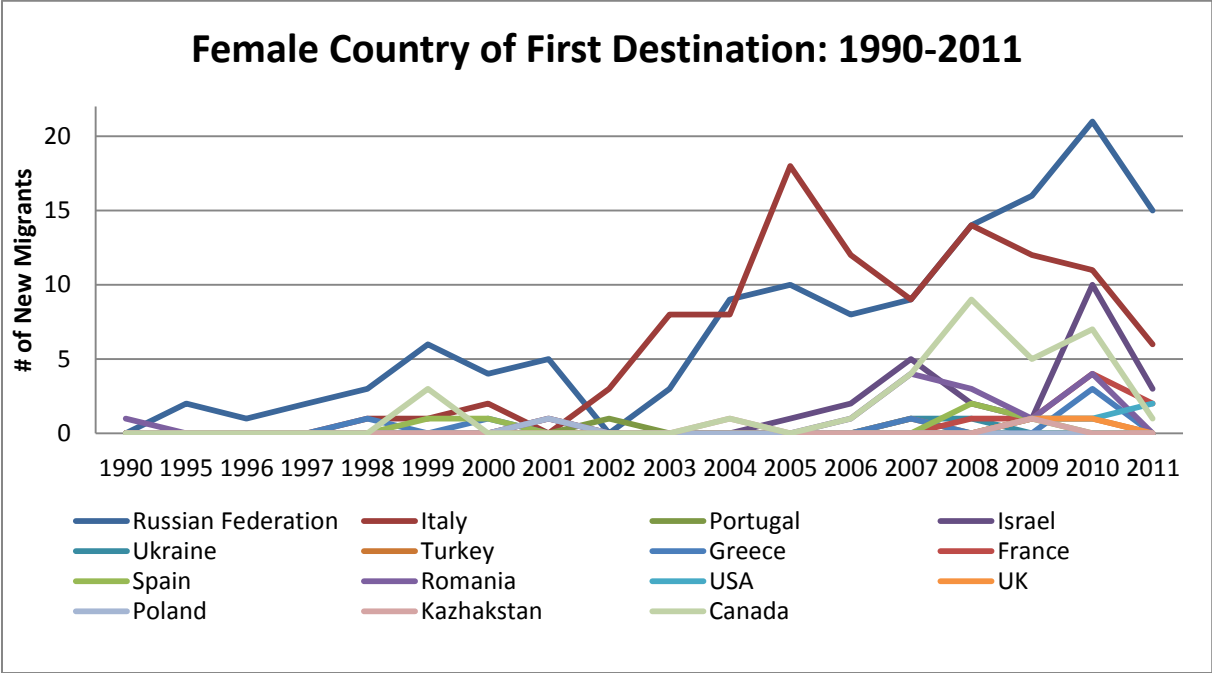


Source: Author's calculation

As the figures make clear, migration from Moldova sharply increased in 2003; while emigration spiked in 1999, this appeared to be an anomaly rather than a precedent, as the years immediately following displayed declining emigration levels. In contrast levels of emigration from Georgia have followed a more consistent and gradual upward slope, with relatively high levels of emigration since the end of the Soviet era. In both countries men dominated earlier years of emigration, but in Georgia women constituted more than 57 percent of migrants by 1996. With the exception of the year 2000, women constituted more than half of all new migrants in every following year, with the highest proportion of female migrants (68.2 percent of all migrants) leaving in 2007. Women in Moldova entered emigration at a much more gradual pace. With the exception of 1995 (when only a handful of migrants left the country), women in Moldova have accounted for much less than 50 percent of all new migrants. The highest proportion of female migrants was measured in 2010, when 48.6 percent of new migrants were women (up from 37 percent a year earlier). The different rates at which women have joined the global migration stream explain the gender composition of the current migrant stock: among the population of migrants currently living abroad captured by the survey, Moldovan women represented 40.6 percent whereas Georgian women represented 53.7 percent.

Just as women’s rates of emigration have changed over time so, too, have the destination countries to which they embark. Figure 3 shows the country of destination by year of first emigration for women, while Figure 4 provides the same overview for men. The two figures represent radically different trends: the clustering of different colours of lines represents a higher diversity of migrant destinations among women, whose primary destinations diverged from almost exclusively the Russian Federation to include Italy, Canada, and—to a lesser extent—Israel. Men, in contrast, have migrated consistently to the Russian Federation, with a much smaller proportion destined for Italy beginning in 2005. While women migrated to a greater diversity of countries, they did so in much smaller numbers than men, with some spikes in destination countries representing relatively small numbers of new emigrants.

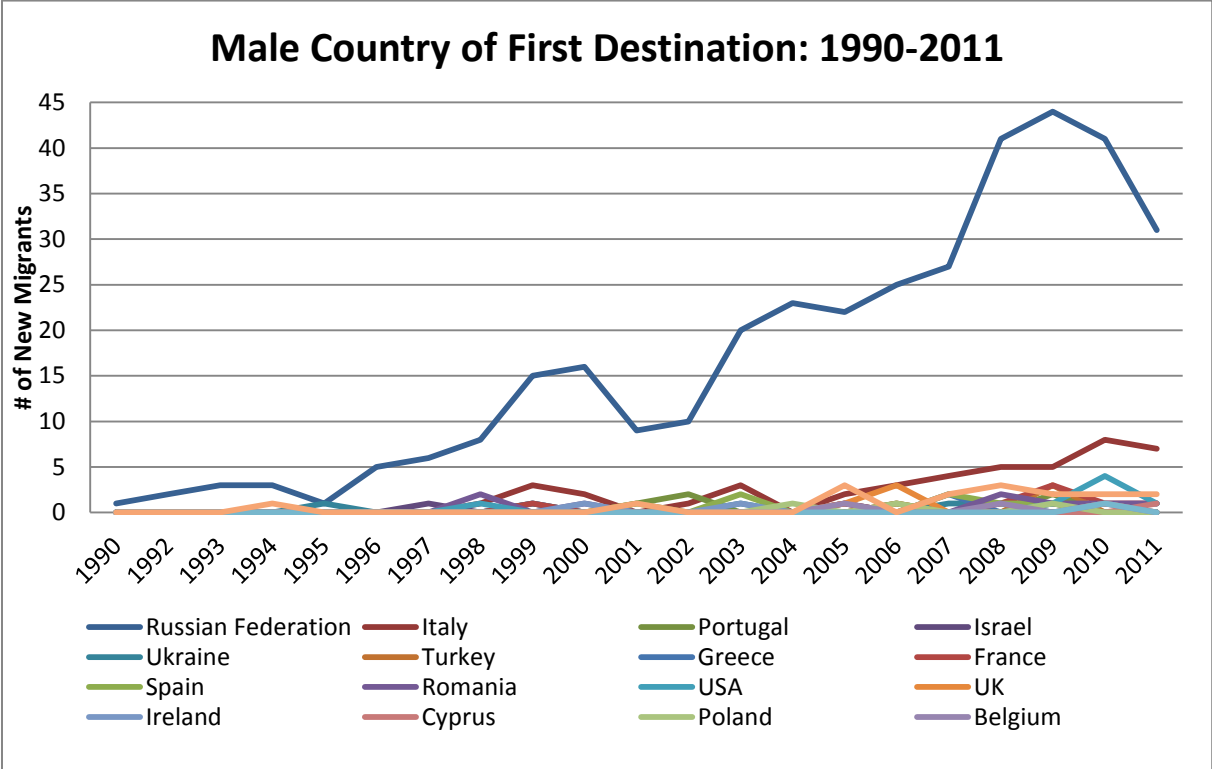
Figure 3: Country of Destination by Year of First Migration, Female Migrants: Moldova



Source: Author’s calculations

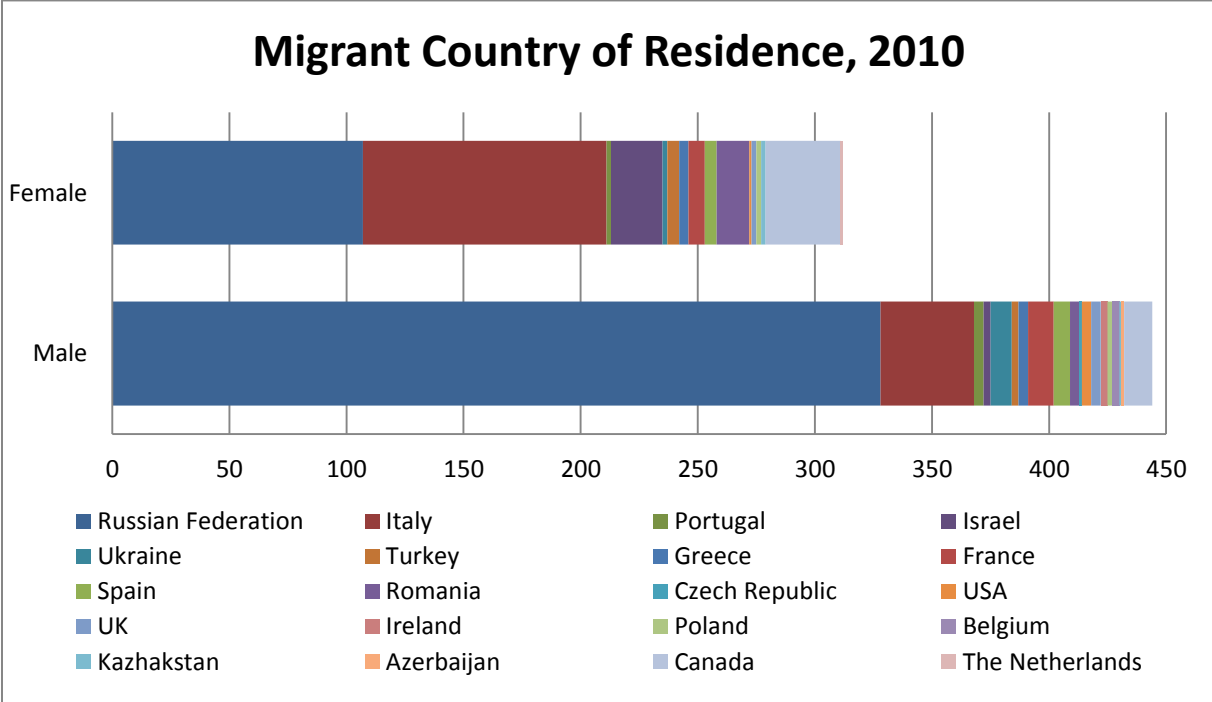
The shift in primary destination countries over time has resulted in some diversity of residence countries among the stock of current migrants. As Figure 5 illustrates, an almost equal proportion of women resided in Italy as in the Russian Federation in 2010, with slightly more women residing in the latter. Canada and Israel were the third- and fourth-largest destinations for migrant women; despite these relative rankings, they were home to a much smaller number of migrants than the first two destination countries. This diversity in residence locales was not shared by men, almost three-quarters of whom resided in the Russian Federation in 2010. Much smaller numbers resided in Italy, France, and Canada.

Figure 4: Country of Destination by Year of First Migration, Male Migrants: Moldova



Source: Author's calculations

Figure 5: Migrant Country of Destination 2010, Both Genders: Moldova



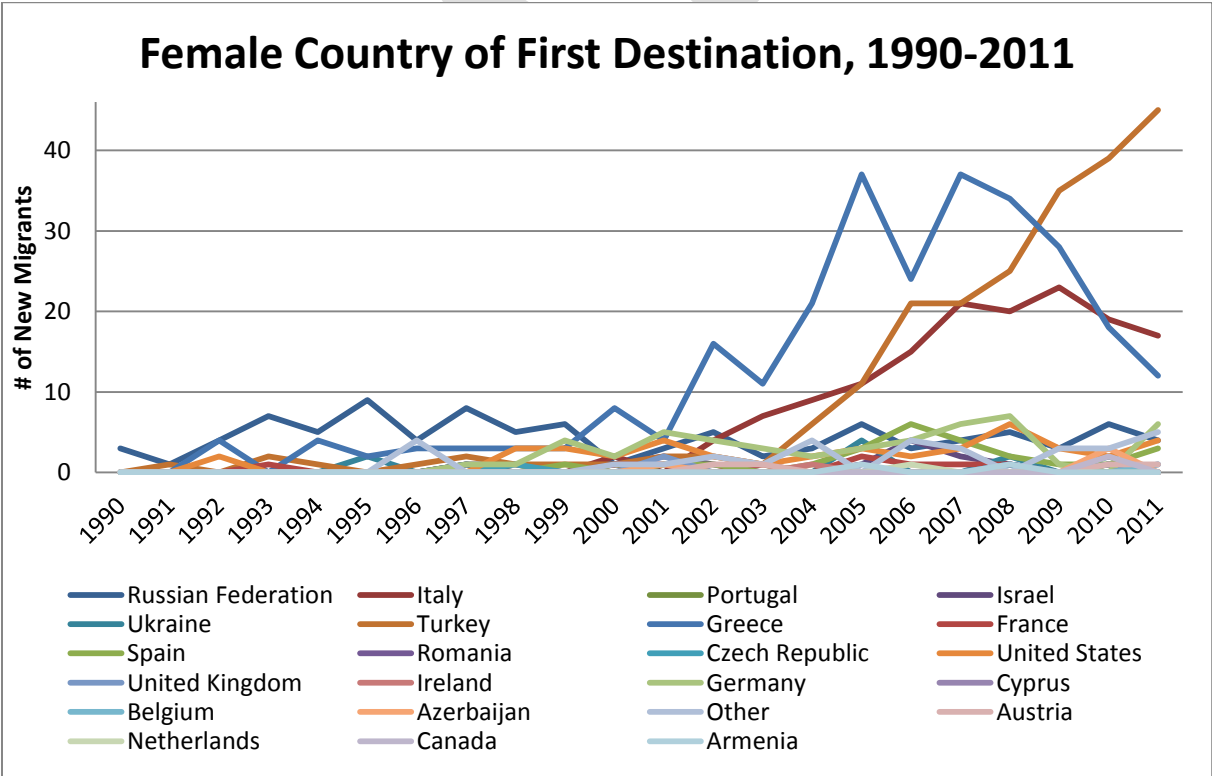
Source: Author's calculations

The migration patterns exhibited by Georgian migrants have developed very differently in the post-Soviet era. Unlike in Moldova where the diversity of destination countries of women and men differ

widely, Georgian migrants of both genders have increasingly become destined for a similar small number of primary destinations. Figure 6 and Figure 7 provide an overview of the destination of first migration by year for female and male migrants. As the figures show, Georgian women left at relatively low rates until emigration sharply increased around 2001, but even before this increase, Georgian women entered international migration in much higher volumes than Moldovan women, which would be expected given the series of conflicts and economic contractions experienced throughout the 1990s.

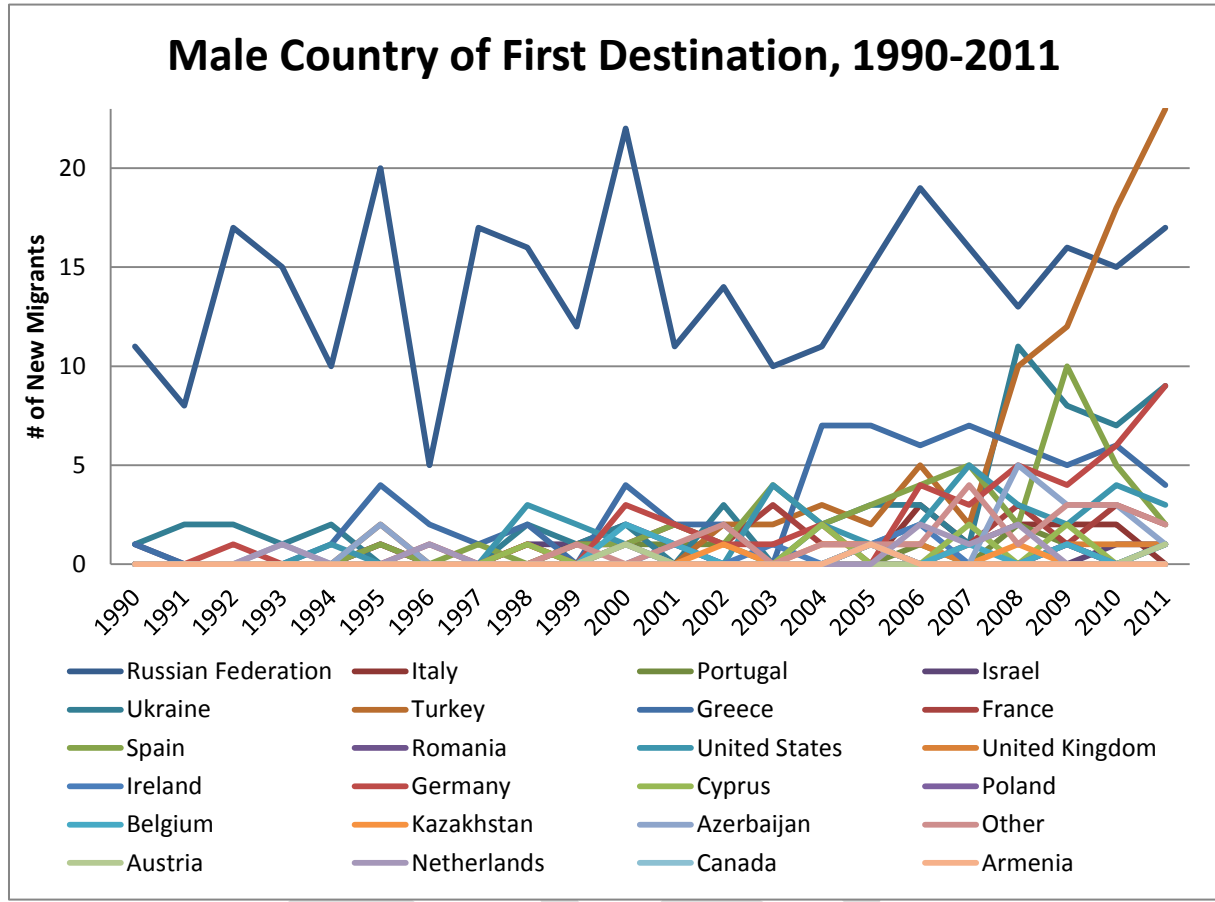
Countries of destination differ considerably for men, who have been consistently outnumbered by women since 2001. While the rate of male emigration has remained relatively high since the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the primary countries of destination have shifted over time. Until 2010 the largest single share of men were destined for the Russian Federation, but as result of the 2008 August War, Georgia’s subsequent withdrawal from the CIS, and the severing of diplomatic ties between the two countries, legal access to Russia has been severely restricted. One obvious consequence of this is diversification of migration destinations. Beginning in 2008 larger shares of new migrants began going to the Ukraine, Spain, Germany, and, most importantly, Turkey. While the number of migrants to the first three countries has varied and dwindled over time, the high pace of emigration to Turkey has continued unabated.

Figure 6: Country of Destination by Year of First Migration, Female Migrants: Georgia



Source: Author’s calculations

Figure 7: Country of Destination by Year of First Migration, Male Migrants: Georgia

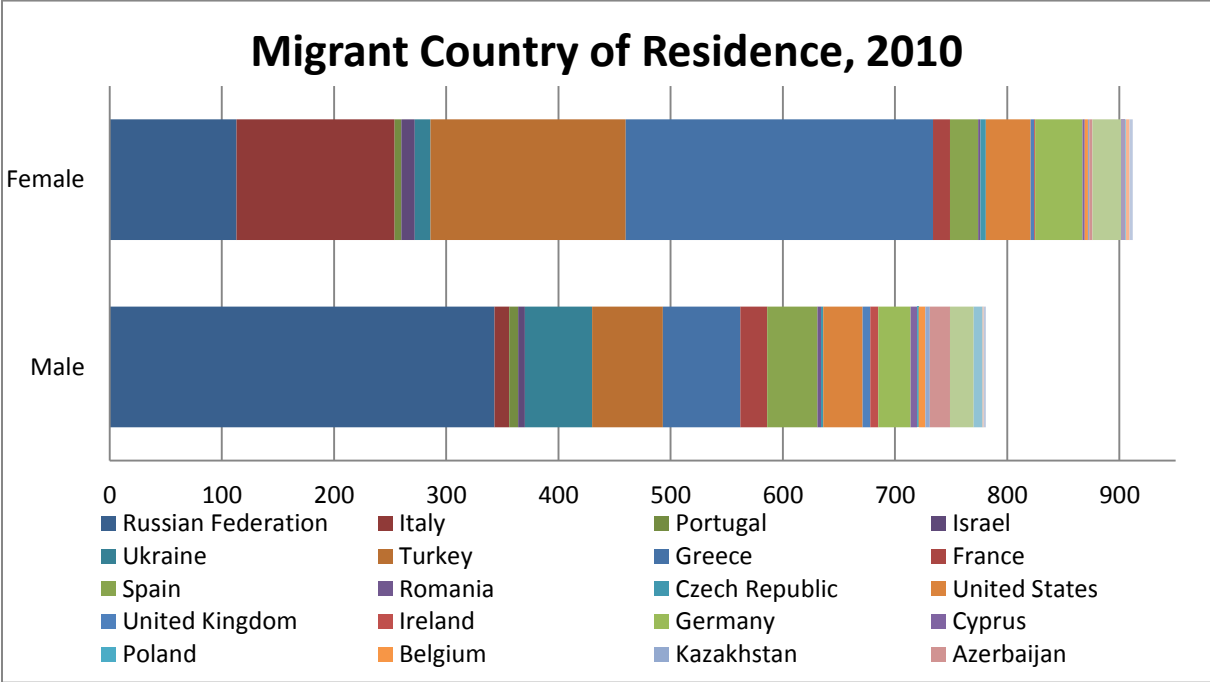


Source: Author's calculations

The increasing diversification of destination countries over time is reflected in the stock of migrants living abroad. As Figure 8 shows, the greatest single proportion of women living abroad in 2010 were living in Greece, which was home to 30 percent of all female Georgian migrants; the second largest population was living in Turkey and the third, Italy. Other countries with relatively large shares of Georgian women were the Russian Federation, the United States, and Germany. Men were primarily resident in the Russian Federation (44 percent of men resided there), and smaller numbers lived in Greece, Turkey, and the Ukraine.

The shift in destination countries over time provides an interesting reflection of changing home country conditions, geo-political relationships, and labour market opportunities. While structural barriers and boons to emigration help shape initial emigration choices, destination countries can shape mobility patterns over time as well. Some migration corridors—such as between Moldova and the Russian Federation, and between Georgia and Turkey—are characterised by a high level of mobility and circularity that promote consistent return to the home countries and limited settlement in host countries. Other countries with less liberal migration regimes, such as countries in the European Union (particularly those that are battling perceived floods of irregular migrants) may inadvertently encourage longer-term or permanent settlement of migrant populations by erecting high barriers to (re)entry. Three interrelated components are important to understand in this regard: legal status, patterns of physical return, and temporal aspects of individual migration episodes.

Figure 8: Migrant Country of Destination 2010, Both Genders: Georgia



Source: Author's calculations

Possession of residency and work permits varied across the two migrant groups by region of destination and migrant gender. Moldovan emigrants living in the CIS or other region had the lowest rate of possession of both types of permits: more than 30 percent of migrants of both genders to the CIS/other regions did not possess residence permits, and over 40 percent of women working in those regions did not have a permit to do so. Reported possession of residence and work permits were higher among Georgian migrants, over 85 percent of whom living in the CIS or EU-27 region had a legal residence permit. While the rate of work permit possession was somewhat lower, it was still relatively high in both of these regions. The rate of residence and work permit possession was considerably lower for those migrants living in the other region, however, where over 30 percent of all migrants had not obtained a residence permit. Rates of permit possession can be seen in Table 3.

Table 3: Proportion of Current Migrants in Possession of Residence & Work Permits

	Moldova				Georgia			
	Residence Permit		Work Permit		Residence Permit		Work Permit	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
CIS	67.8	64	55.9	62.6	85.1	90.5	88.3	87
EU-27	86.5	86.3	71.4	75.3	86.5	91.9	76.8	73.5
Other	64.1	59.3	58.5	48.5	66.7	61.9	71.8	60.2

Source: Author's calculations

Estimates of legal residency should be liberally interpreted, as respondents may not have felt wholly comfortable revealing the legal status of their kin living abroad, particularly given recent immigrant reforms that emphasise return and repatriation. Permit possession trends fall largely in line with expectations regarding specific corridors: migrants residing in states with relatively lax migration

regimes had the lowest rates of permit possession, which may reflect both the lack of necessity to have such documents as well as the low costs of remaining informal. An interesting exception exists, however: within the group of “other” countries of destination for Moldova migrants, Canada and Israel are numerically the most important. The high rate of irregularity in these countries likely reflects visa overstaying, the high cost of return, and the virtual impossibility of re-immigration.

Legal residence/work status may further imply possibilities for physical return: individuals with legal access to entry and stay may be more likely to temporarily return to the home country given the possibility to return to the host country. As such, legal status (and factors such as geographic proximity and terms of employment) is an important component of mobility patterns, which are captured in Table 4 and Table 5 below.

*Table 4: Temporal Characteristics of Moldovan Migrants’ Mobility*

	Moldova: Average Migration Duration, 1999-2010							
	# Migration Episodes		Total Months Spent Abroad		Average Episode Length (Months)		Proportion of Time Spent Abroad	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
CIS Only	4.51	5.12	37.94	40.66	7.55	7.49	26.34%	28.24%
EU27 Only	4.48	4.58	45.58	46.70	10.05	10.14	31.65%	32.43%
Other only	3.30	2.96	30.30	25.83	8.69	8.06	21.04%	17.94%

*Source: Author’s calculations*

*Table 5: Temporal Characteristics of Georgian Migrants’ Mobility*

	Georgia: Average Migration Duration, 1999-2010							
	# Migration Episodes		Total Months Spent Abroad		Average Episode Length (Months)		Proportion of Time Spent Abroad	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
CIS Only	8.48	8.14	95.11	90.44	10.84	10.73	66.05%	62.81%
EU27 Only	5.04	5.5	56.42	61.37	10.82	10.6	39.18%	42.62%
Other only	4.35	4.79	44.43	47.73	9.41	9.15	30.85%	33.14%

*Source: Author’s calculations*

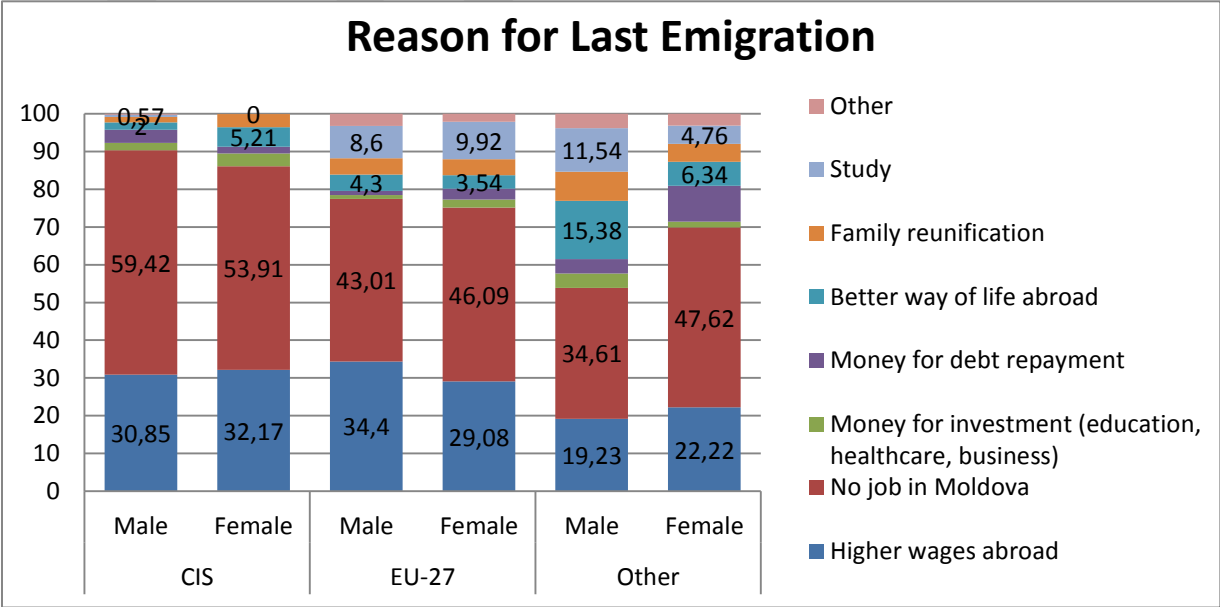
Within the survey sample, the average duration of time spent abroad differed considerably for men and women residing in different regions. On average Moldovan women living in the CIS/EU-27 regions spent less time in migration than their male counterparts. The number of migration episodes they engaged in, the average length of each episode, and the total time spent abroad were slightly lower than those of men, with only women living in the ‘other’ region spending a higher proportion of time abroad in the captured 11 years than men. While the cumulative time spent abroad and number of episodes is generally more reflective of the late entry of women into the migration stream, the relatively long average duration of each episode (ranging from 7.6 months in the CIS to 10.1 months in the EU-27) indicates that women’s mobility patterns do not differ markedly from that of men. A similar pattern appears among Georgian migrants, but with an interesting twist: women residing in the CIS region had on average a larger number of migration episodes, a higher total



number of months spent abroad, the longest average duration of migration episodes, and considerable proportion of the past 11 years spent abroad, with the average female migrant to the CIS spending over 66% percent of the time between 1999 and 2010 in the CIS. Compared to Moldovan women, Georgian women appear to not only have entered international migration earlier but also to have resided abroad for longer periods of time. This may in general reflect different levels of “maturity” of the different migration streams. While in general migrants from Moldova do not pursue permanent residence (IASCI/CIVIS, 2010), particularly in countries such as the Russian Federation that are relatively near and facilitate frequent movement, Georgian migrants have expressed higher rates of permanent settlement. This is, in part, a factor of the migrant selection process and the reasons for which an individual enters migration in the first place.

Based on the economic and political contexts in both Moldova and Georgia, the initial assumption would be that emigration from these countries is largely economic in nature and therefore more focused on meeting short-to-medium-term economic needs, with return coinciding with the meeting of pre-defined investment targets (‘target savers’ or ‘life-cycle migrants’) (Borjas & Bratsberg, 1996; Dustmann, 2003; Vadean & Piracha, 2009). While this may imply residence for extended durations of time, it would generally preclude settlement in a foreign country, particularly within the “new economics of labour migration” perspective in which migration is envisioned as an outlet for diversifying sources of income for the household remaining in the country of origin (Stark & Bloom, 1985; Massey *et al*, 1993; Taylor, 1999). The retained ties between the migrant abroad and a household in the country of origin would be expected to be especially strong if the migrant left independently and is of prime working age—part of the group most likely to have a partner and children remaining in the country of origin. As shown by Figure 9 and Figure 10 below, the largest absence of a job in the home country was the most significant prompt for migration. In Moldova the second-most important reason for emigration was higher wages abroad, while for Georgian migrants, hope for “a better way of life abroad” inspired the second-largest groups of migrants of both genders. While economic drivers do indeed seem to be the most pressing push factors for migrants from both countries, a few interesting differences by destination and gender can be seen.

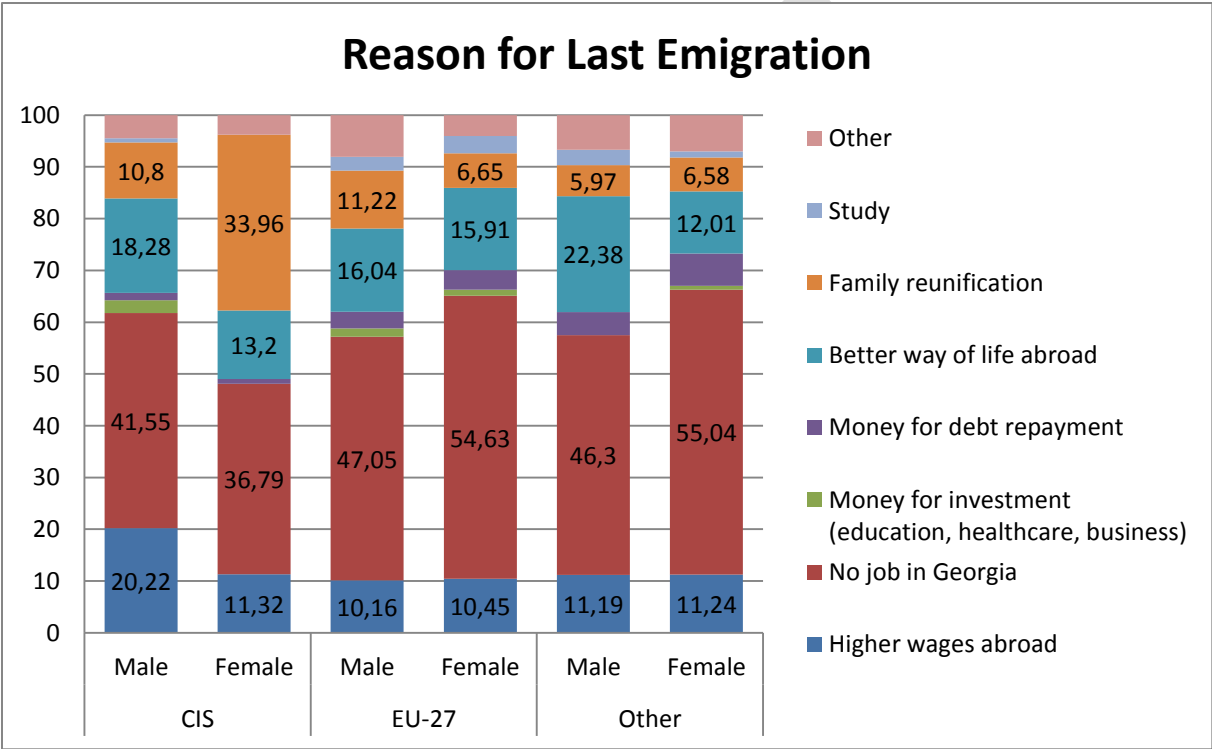
Figure 9: Reason for Last Emigration by Gender & Region of Residence: Moldova



Source: Author’s calculations

A sizable portion of Moldovan migrants destined for the EU-27 left to study abroad, as did a larger group of men destined for countries beyond the CIS/EU. Among Georgian emigrants, family reunification played a role for a larger body of migrants, particularly in the CIS where over a third of women emigrated for the sake of family reunification. This is a likely explanation for the longer migration durations noted above, as women who have emigrated for the sake of family reunification are more likely to be permanent migrants who relocate to establish or join a household abroad. Another interesting trend in this regard is the relatively high number of men who emigrated for the sake of family reunification, which suggests that in the situation of marriage-based family reunification<sup>7</sup>, women are just as likely to be pioneer migrants as men in specific corridors.

Figure 10: Reason for Last Emigration by Gender & Region of Residence: Georgia



Source: Author's calculations

This last trend hints at a pivotal aspect of the gendered migration process that has so far been left unexplored: how the characteristics of migrants themselves correspond to selection into migration. Selection into migration, as well as choice of destination country, is likely not only a function of opportunity and structure but also of personal characteristics. Marital status, for instance, may imply not only opportunities for migration (as in the case of family reunification) but also constraints to migration, particularly among women. This also leads into controversial territory that has been happily exploited in the current discourse on (feminisation of) migration—the potential implications of (female) emigration for family dissolution. In both Moldova and Georgia the migration of women has been cited as a reason for marital dissolution and family dysfunction, particularly among children “left behind”. While this topic cannot be treated in proper analytical depth here<sup>8</sup>, the marital status

<sup>7</sup> In contrast to child-parent reunification  
<sup>8</sup> See our forthcoming work on this in Moldova and Georgia

and position of migrants in households will be evaluated here to better contextualise the role of migrants in relation to their households.

The marital status of migrants differs in an interesting way between the genders and among migrants destined for different regions. In Moldova a higher proportion of men residing in the CIS were currently married than their female counterparts, but the reverse is true of those migrants residing in the EU-27 or other region. In Georgia a completely different trend exists, with the majority of women residing outside of the CIS not currently married.

*Table 6: Marital Status of Migrants by Gender and Region of Residence (%)*

	Moldova		Georgia	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
Marital Status: Married (%)	59.6	69.6	50.2	72.1
Destination in CIS	60.8	74.6	64.7	73.2
Destination in EU-27	56.2	54.3	50	69.4
Other destination	66.2	57.7	43.5	72
Marital Status: Never Married (%)	18.9	26.8	23.9	20.9
Destination in CIS	20.8	22.3	17.3	22.1
Destination in EU-27	19.6	40.4	24.1	26.9
Other destination	10.8	38.5	17.7	24.4
Marital Status: Divorced/Separated/Widowed (%)	21.4	3.6	28.8	4.1
Destination in CIS	18.3	3.0	18.0	4.6
Destination in EU-27	24.2	5.3	25.9	3.7
Other destination	23.1	3.8	38.7	3.7

*Source: Author's calculations*

The truly interesting trend, however, is in the proportion of female migrants who are divorced, separated, or widowed. In both countries the rate of divorce or widowhood among female migrants far exceeds that of men in all corridors. Nearly one-quarter of all Moldovan women residing in the EU-27 region are either divorced or widowed (compared to just over 5 percent of men), as are over 38 percent of Georgian women residing in the non-CIS/EU region (compared to 3.6 percent of men). While not noted in the table, a similar number of women were divorced as widowed in both countries and across all destinations. Perhaps more telling than the differences between the genders within the group of current migrants are the differences in marital status between current migrants and non-migrants. Here the differences appear even starker: while among current migrant women from Georgia, 11.48 percent were divorced and 13.3 percent widowed, a much smaller proportion of women who had never had a migration experience were divorced (only 2.17 percent) while a higher proportion (18.4 percent) were widowed. A similar trend occurs in Moldova, where 14 percent of current migrant women are divorced and 6.34 percent widowed, compared to three percent of non-migrant women who had experienced divorce and 16.3 percent who had experienced the death of a spouse. In both countries the divorce and bereavement rates of men were similarly low regardless of migration status.

The differences in marital statuses between male and female migrants—and between migrant- and non-migrant women—suggests that there is a relationship between marital status and migration trajectory, but the direction of this relationship is not entirely clear. Past research has suggested that migration can lead to marital dissolution due to factors such as stress and limited economic agency of dependent partners, particularly when both partners migrate (Boyle *et al*, 2008; Geist & McManus, 2008; Boyle, Feng, & Gayle, 2009). Other research specifically on female migration has linked

increased rates of divorce to changing (gendered) expectations of both partners women’s greater exercise of agency, and conflicts over remittance usage, among other reasons. If migration occurred after divorce, however, it could be suggested that migration provides a means of escape—both from the stigma and shame of divorce (Parreñas, 2001; Hill, 2004) and from the tenuous economic situations women suddenly faced with economic independence may find themselves in (Piper, 2005). While the specific causal factors behind the higher rate of union dissolution among migrant women cannot be explored here, the higher rates do suggest that changes in the family life cycle bear particularly pertinent consequences for women and their subsequent mobility decisions.

Marital status is not the only individual characteristic that may influence migration selection. Depending on the destination of migrants and what kind of opportunities they face in foreign labour markets, age and educational level would also be expected to differ among migrants. Given the different employment available for male and female migrants abroad, such characteristics would also be expected to differ between men and women. Table 7 below provides a breakdown of key personal characteristics of migrants in the sample.

In both Moldova and Georgia female migrants are on average slightly older than male migrants, a trend that has remained consistent over the course of emigration. Female migrants are not simply older than their male counterparts now but were older at the time of first migration, with marked differences in terms of the migration corridor.

*Table 7: Personal Characteristics of Migrant Sample*

	Moldova		Georgia	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
Age at First Migration	31.85	28.6	36.73	31.31
Destination in CIS	30.08	29.35	31.43	30.82
Destination in EU-27	32.47	26.06	37.07	31.55
Other destination	34.06	28.08	39.02	32.21
Current Age	36.37	33.95	41.9	39.35
Destination in CIS	34.81	35.04	41.9	42.08
Destination in EU-27	36.81	30.52	42.12	37.56
Other destination	37.91	32.58	43.06	36.29
Average Years of Education (Non-Migrants)	8.2	8.04	10.09	9.35
Average Years of Education (All Migrants)	10.86	10.56	12.77	12.63
Destination in CIS	10.72	10.48	11.75	12.44
Destination in EU-27	10.94	11.11	13.03	12.98
Other destination	11.24	11.56	12.44	12.02

*Source: Author’s calculations*

The age difference between migrants of different genders is the smallest among those migrants destined for the Commonwealth of Independent States countries and largest among Moldovan migrants destined for the EU-27 region—where female migrants are on average six years older than their male counterparts—and among Georgian migrants destined for countries outside the EU/CIS regions, where women are also older than men by over six years. The difference between the genders in terms of mean educational level (as measured by number of years of education) is much less marked, with the more notable difference existing between migrants and non-migrants. In Moldova where both male and female members of the non-migrant population have achieved an average of just over eight years of education, migrants have attained an average of over ten; in Georgia, the average level of education is slightly higher at 10.09 years among women and 9.35 years

among men in the non-migrant population, with migrants of both genders achieving over 12 years of education on average. Within the current-migrant population, mean years of education does differ slightly by migrant destination: among Moldovan migrants, those destined for a country outside the EU/CIS (namely Canada, Israel, and the United States) had the highest average number of years of schooling while those destined for the CIS had the lowest. Among Georgian migrants of both genders, those destined for an EU-27 country had the highest level of schooling; while among all female migrants those destined for the CIS had the lowest educational attainment, among men those destined for a non-CIS/EU country (namely Turkey and the United States) had the lowest average years of schooling.

Likely explanations for the disparities between genders in specific migration corridors in terms of age and educational level likely relate to employment opportunities in each region. Figure 11 below displays the sectors in which migrants were employed in 2011, split by gender and by region of destination. Clearly gendered employment patterns exist among both Moldovan and Georgian migrants. For Moldovan migrants across all destination regions, two sectors stand out for the high share of migrants they attract: construction and household employment. In the CIS region the largest share of migrants were working in the construction sector: over 73 percent of men and nearly 39 percent of women worked in construction, which—as often physically-demanding jobs—would be expected to be linked to lower average ages of migrants and slightly lower levels of education. Next to construction, the largest single share of women worked in the wholesale and retail sector (19.5 percent), and an additional 14 percent worked in the household services sector (i.e., elder care, child care, cleaning, etc.). The employment patterns shifts slightly in the EU-27 region: while the largest share of men (nearly 58 percent) worked in the construction sector, no women worked in construction. Instead the largest share (over 40 percent) worked for individual household employers, primarily as caregivers for elderly individuals and children. An additional 19 percent worked in the personal and social services sector (namely as beauticians). Migrants living in a non-EU or CIS country displayed somewhat more diverse employment patterns. While the same proportion of women (40 percent) worked for individual household employers, over 15 percent worked in the personal and social services sector, and an additional 16.6 percent worked in the transportation and communications sector. Male employment represented more dispersion across sectors. The greatest proportion of men (over 21 percent) worked in construction, but sizable numbers also worked in the personal and social services sector, in manufacturing, and in other services.

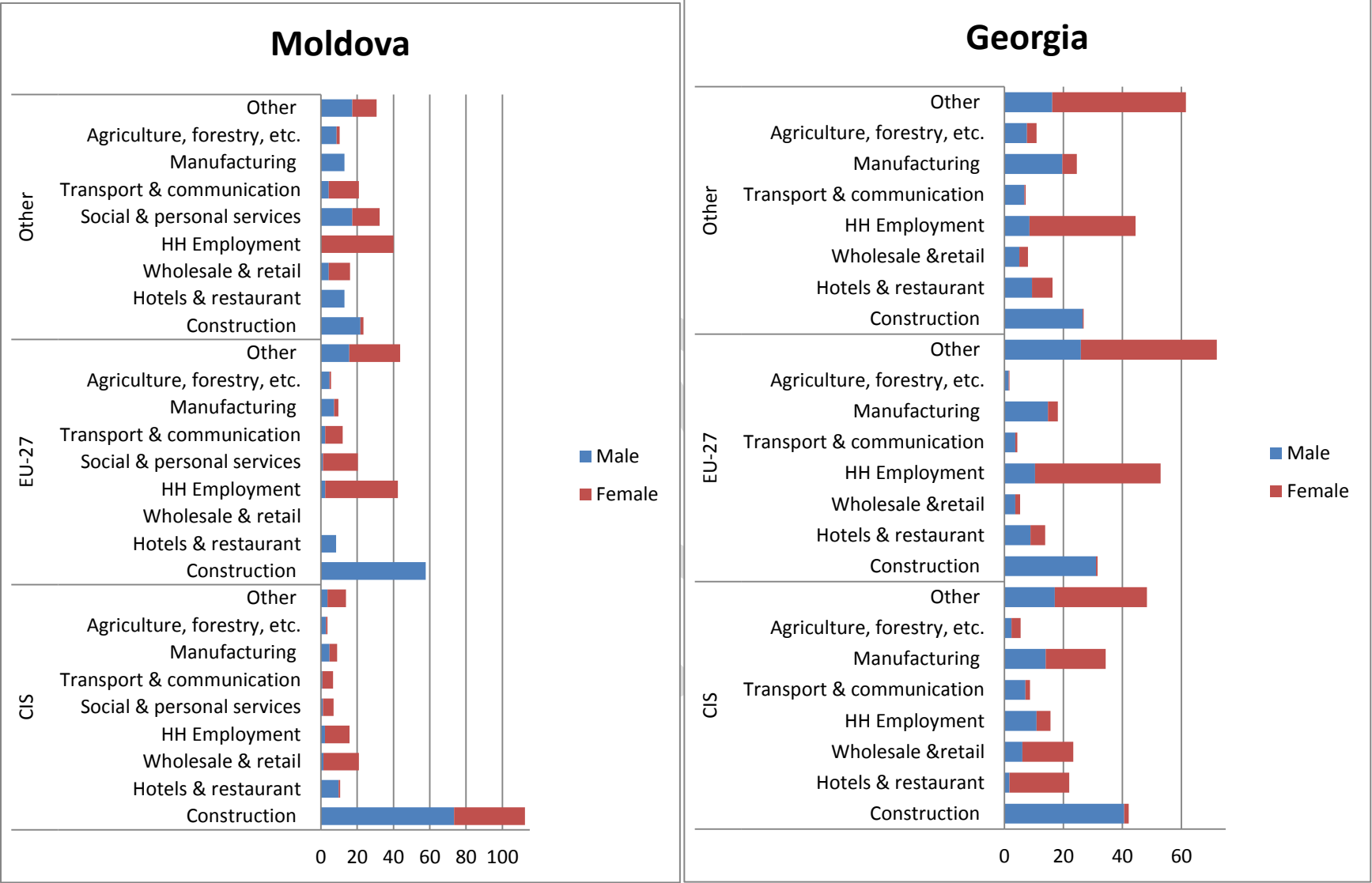
The distribution of Georgian workers across sectors bears some similarities to that of Moldovan workers, but the sectors in which men and women were employed were slightly different. While the singularly greatest proportion of women in all regions were employed in an ‘other’ sector—representing a large and diverse group of sectors such as security, finance, education, international organisations, etc.—women in the EU and other region were predominantly employed in individual households, with over 42 percent of women in the EU-27 region and 35 percent in the other region engaged in household work. In the CIS region, which hosted a smaller proportion of female migrants in general, a similar proportion of women (over 20 percent) worked in hotels and restaurants as in manufacturing, and another significant portion worked in wholesale and retail. In all regions the largest share of Georgian men were employed in the construction sectors, with over 40 percent in the CIS region, 31 percent in the EU-27 region, and 26 percent in the other region working in construction. Aside from construction, a large proportion of men in all regions worked in manufacturing and, somewhat surprisingly, more men than women worked for individual household

employers in the CIS region. The higher number of years of education for EU-27 migrants does not necessarily match employment opportunities, as few migrants were employed in highly-skilled sectors.

The sectors in which migrants of different genders are employed reflects larger shifts in global (emigrant) labour markets. While migrants often assume low-skilled jobs that members of the local labour force do not want or cannot perform—classic “3D” (dirty, dangerous, and dull/degrading) jobs—some labour markets are shifting in response to increased demand for foreign labour in specific sectors. The intense demographic transition experienced by many European countries—resulting in a larger share of elderly individuals and a dwindling population in the youngest age cohorts—has given rise to an acute demand for caregivers that cannot be met exclusively with native labour force (Bettio, Simonazzi, & Villa, 2006). This has given rise to a specific elder- and home-care sector for predominantly female migrant workers, the most appealing of whom are those with some training or education in healthcare or personal care (Kofman, 2004). Migrants from countries with some linguistic proximity to destination countries—such as Romanian-speaking Moldovans in Italy or Greek-speaking Georgians in Greece—are particularly competitive in this sector. While women are increasingly engaged in such medium-skilled, semi-specialised work that draws on their inherent “feminine” traits and attributes, migrant men are largely stagnating in low-skilled, “3D” jobs.

This may suggest that female migrants are becoming relatively more competitive than their male counterparts, particularly in newly-diversified migration corridors such as that between Moldova and Southern European countries such as Italy and Spain or between Georgia and Turkey. Male migrants, on the other hand, are often more competitive in “classic” migration corridors, such as that with the Russian Federation, or in foreign labour markets that rely on low-skilled, brawn-based work. Changing political relationships and geographic orientations—such as the souring relationship between Georgia and Russia—can stymie (legal) emigration opportunities for men through historical migration corridors, but it can also lead to two interesting changes: diversification of (male) destination countries, and feminisation of migration flows. In the case of Georgia, both changes have been witnessed in the post-2008 period.

Figure 11: Sectors of Employment of Current Migrants by Gender & Region of Destination



## VI. Discussion

It is only now, over 20 years since the dissolution of the Soviet Union, that women in Moldova and Georgia have become major, active, and seemingly permanent participants in international migration. The relatively recent transition away from male-dominated migration through specific migration corridors makes it difficult to assess the potential consequences of this particular “feminised” flow, however.

Evidence seems to suggest that migration flows from Moldova and Georgia are becoming dominated by female migrants. Compared to men from both Moldova and Georgia who have historically gravitated to the Russian Federation, female migrants have been destined for a larger number of destination countries since they began entering international migration in large numbers. Women’s destination choices likely reflect not only structural factors that facilitate migration (i.e., favourable visa regimes) but personal characteristics that are more highly rewarded in the foreign labour market. This is especially true of growing sectors that disproportionately reward “female” traits and competencies (such as caregiving), specialised education and knowledge, and linguistic and cultural proximity. Coupled with the strong economic incentives to enter migration—limited job availability in the home country and high wage differentials between home and host country—women’s growing competitiveness will likely result in larger, sustained flows of female migration as well as higher rates of household dependency on female breadwinners.

As women become relatively more competitive players in the global market—particularly in contrast to men who increasingly face skill devaluation or limited migration possibilities to habitual destination countries—their importance as “pioneer” rather than “trailing” migrants is likely to increase. Such a trend can already be seen among Georgian migrants to the EU-27 region and to countries such as Turkey and the United States, where a significant proportion of men have entered migration for reunification with a migrant spouse. This may signal a gradual maturation of the Georgian migration flow, which in general is characterised by longer durations of absence than that of Moldovan migrants. At the same time, the growing need for female migrant labour and growing migrant networks that lower the costs of migration may provide women with outlets for exercising personal agency through independent migration. The higher rate of divorce among migrant women begs the question of whether migration acts as a catalyst to union dissolution or an escape route for women who disproportionately bear the negative consequences of divorce.

The growing size and dynamism of female migration must be understood within the proper country context, however. Despite the past two decades of change and growth, Moldova and Georgia still bear the hallmarks of post-Soviet, transitional states: unstable economies with weak credit and insurance markets, inconsistent waves of democratisation that leave room for corruption and clientelism, and territorial conflicts that undermine trust in stable peace and economic growth. Each of these factors can independently inspire emigration, but they may conspire together to produce an environment that is especially appealing for women to leave. The social changes sweeping the post-Soviet space as the result of the ongoing “triple transition” have not left gender relations unaffected: the movement to a market economy has eroded female participation in the labour force (Pollert, 2003; Nikolic-Ristanovic, 2002; LaFont, 2001), diminished reproductive rights attained in the Soviet



era (Nikolic-Ristanovic, 2002), and led to the “domestication and the marketing of women” (Watson, 1993: 472). Corollary changes to male identities (through, for instance, high rates of male unemployment) and the reinstatement of “traditional” domestic relationship expectations have contributed to growing problems of domestic violence and increased dependency of women on family relationships (Pascall & Manning, 2000). Within this context, higher rates of female emigration would hardly be surprising, but it is a topic that has inspired a surprisingly little amount of research.

DRAFT

## VII. References

- Bennett, J., S. Estrin, and G. Urga (2007). "Methods of Privatization and Economic Growth in Transition Economies." *Economics of Transition* 15(4): 661-683.
- Berg, E., and W. van Meurs (2002). "Borders and Orders in Europe: Limits of Nation- and State-Building in Estonia, Macedonia and Moldova." *Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics* 18(4): 51-74.
- Bettio, F., A. Simonazzi, and P. Villa (2006). "Change in Care Regimes and Female Migration: the 'Care Drain' in the Mediterranean." *Journal of European Social Policy* 16(3): 271-285.
- Blakkisrud, H. and P. Kolstø (2012). "Dynamics of De Facto Statehood: the South Caucasian De Facto States Between Secession and Sovereignty." *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies* 12(2): 281-298.
- Borgen, C.J. (2009). "The Language of Law and the Practice of Politics: Great Powers and the Rhetoric of Self-determination in the Cases of Kosovo and South Ossetia." *Chicago Journal of International Law* 10(1): 1-34.
- Borjas, G. and B. Bratsberg (1996), "Who leaves? The out-migration of the foreign-born", *Review of Economics Statistics* 78(1): 165-76.
- Boyle, P.J., H. Kulu, T. Cooke, V. Gayle, and C.H. Mulder (2008). "Moving and Union Dissolution." *Demography* 45(1): 209-222.
- Boyle, P.J., Z. Feng, and V. Gayle (2009). "A New Look at Family Migration and Women's Employment Status." *Journal of Marriage and Family* 71(2): 417-431.
- Cantarji, V., and G. Mincu (2013). "Costs and Benefits of Labour Mobility Between the EU and the Eastern Partnership Countries. Country Report: Moldova." Report for project EuropeAid/130215/C/SER/Multi.
- Caucasus Research Resource Centres (CRRC) Georgia, 2007. "Migration and Return in Georgia: Trends, Assessments, and Potential". Project reported submitted to the Danish Refugee Council within the project "Toward Durable Reintegration Mechanisms in Georgia."
- Dustmann, C. (2003), "Return migration, wage differentials and the optimal migration duration". *European Economic Review* 47(2): 353-69.
- Fawn, R. (2012). "Georgia: Revolution and War." *European Security* 21(1): 1-4.
- Fidrmuc, J. (2003). "Economic Reform, Democracy, and Growth During Post-Communist Transition." *European Journal of Political Economy* 19: 583-604.
- Hill, L.E. (2004). "Connections Between U.S. Female Migration and Family Formation and Dissolution." *Migraciones Internacionales* 2(3): 60-82.

Geist, C., and P.A. McManus (2008). "Geographical Mobility over the Life Course: Motivations and Implications." *Population, Space, and Place* 14(4): 283-303.

Human Rights Watch (1996). *The Ingush-Ossetian Conflict in the Prigorodnyi Region*. Human Rights Watch Helsinki. Accessed 11 July, 2013 from < <http://www.hrw.org/reports/1996/Russia.htm>>.

International Monetary Fund (2006). "Georgia: Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper." IMF Country Report No. 03/265. IMF: Washington, D.C.

International Monetary Fund (2003). "Republic of Moldova: Poverty Reduction Strategy Annual Evaluation Report 2005." IMF Country Report No. 06/185. IMF: Washington, D.C.

International Organisation for Migration (IOM) (2009). "Testing New Channels and Products to Maximise the Development Impact of Remittances for the Rural Poor in Georgia: Tianeti Household Census 2008 & Tianeti Emigrants to Greece 2008 Fieldwork Report". IOM: Georgia.

International Organisation for Migration (IOM) (2012). "Extended Migration Profile of the Republic of Moldova." IOM Moldova: Chisinau.

Kabachnik, P., J. Regulska, and B. Mitchneck (2012). "Displacing Blame: Georgian Internally Displaced Person Perspectives of the Georgia-Abkhazia Conflict." *Ethnopolitics*, formerly *Global Review of Ethnopolitics* 11(2): 123-140.

Kabachnik, P. (2012). "Shaping Abkhazia: Cartographic Anxieties and the Making and Remaking of the Abkhazian Geobody." *Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies* 14(4): 397-415.

Kofman, E. (2004). "Gendered Global Migrations: Diversity and Stratification." *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 6(4): 643-665.

Kolstø, P., and A. Malgin (1998). "The Transnistrian Republic: A Case of Politicized Regionalism." *Nationalities Papers: The Journal of Nationalism and Ethnicity* 26(1): 103-127.

Kuzio, T. (2001). "Transition in Post-Communist States: Triple or Quadruple?" *Politics* 21(3): 168-177.

Kuzio, T. (2002). "History, Memory, and Nation Building in the Post-Soviet Colonial Space." *Nationalities Papers: the Journal of Nationalism and Ethnicity* 30(2):241-262.

Labadze, L. and M. Tukhashvili (2013). "Costs and Benefits of Labour Mobility Between the EU and the Eastern Partnership Countries: Georgia Country Study." Report for project EuropeAid/130215/C/SER/Multi.

LaFont, S. (2001). "One Step Forward, Two Steps Back: Women in the Post-Communist States." *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 34: 203-220.

Massey, D.S., J. Arango, G. Hugo, A. Kouaouci, A. Pellegrino, and J.E. Taylor (1993). "Theories of International Migration: A Review and Appraisal." *Population and Development Review* 19 (3): 431-466.

(de) Melo, M., C. Denizer, A. Gelb, and S. Tenev (2001). "Circumstance and Choice: The Role of Initial Conditions and Policies in Transition Economies." *The World Bank Economic Review* 15(1): 1-31.

- National Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Moldova (2012). "Population and Demography Metadata". Guide to statistical indicators. Available on the NBS website at <<http://statbank.statistica.md/pxweb/Database/EN/02%20POP/POP07/Population.pdf>>. Accessed 10 July, 2013.
- Nichol, J. (2008). "Russia-Georgia Conflict in South Ossetia: Context and Implications for U.S. Interests." United States Congressional Research Service report. Accessed 11 July, 2013 from <<http://www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?Location=U2&doc=GetTRDoc.pdf&AD=ADA490073>>.
- Nikolic-Ristanovic, V. (2002). *Social Change, Gender, and Violence: Post-Communist and War Affected Societies*. Social Indicators Research Series Volume 10. Kluwer Academic Publishers: the Netherlands.
- Offe, C. (1991). "Capitalism by Democratic Design? Democratic Theory Facing the Triple Transition in East Central Europe." *Social Research* 58(4): 865-892.
- Pantiru, M.C., R. Black, and R. Sabates-Wheeler (2007). "Migration and Poverty Reduction in Moldova." University of Sussex, Development Research Centre on Migration, Globalisation, and Poverty Working Paper C10.
- Papava, V. (2013). "Reforming of the Post-Soviet Georgia's Economy in 1991-2011." GFSIS Center for Applied Economic Studies Research Paper. Georgian Foundation for Strategic International Studies: Tbilisi. Accessed online 26 July, 2013 from: <[http://gfsis.org/media/download/library/articles/papava/Papava\\_Reforming\\_of\\_the\\_Post-Soviet\\_Georgia\\_Economy\\_in\\_1991-2011.pdf](http://gfsis.org/media/download/library/articles/papava/Papava_Reforming_of_the_Post-Soviet_Georgia_Economy_in_1991-2011.pdf)>
- Parreñas, R.S. (2001). *Servants of Globalization: Women, Migration, and Domestic Work*. Stanford University Press: California.
- Pascall, G., and N. Manning (2000). "Gender and Social Policy: comparing Welfare States in Central and Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union." *Journal of European Social Policy* 10(3): 240-266.
- Piper, N. (2005). "Gender and Migration". Paper prepared for the Global Commission on International Migration, Policy Analysis and Research Programme. Accessed 19 July, 2013 from <[https://www.iom.int/jahia/webdav/site/myjahiasite/shared/shared/mainsite/policy\\_and\\_research/gcim/tp/TP10.pdf](https://www.iom.int/jahia/webdav/site/myjahiasite/shared/shared/mainsite/policy_and_research/gcim/tp/TP10.pdf)>.
- Piper, N. (2008). "Feminisation of Migration and the Social Dimensions of Development: the Asian Case." *Third World Quarterly* 29(7): 1287-1303.
- Pollert, A. (2003). "Women, Work and Equal Opportunities in post-Communist Transition." *Work, Employment, and Society* 17(2): 331-357.
- Popescu, N. (2005). "The EU in Moldova: Settling Conflicts in the Neighbourhood." The European Union Institute for Security Studies Occasional Paper No. 60. Paris.
- Popescu, N. (2010). "The EU and Civil Society in the Georgian-Abkhaz Conflict." MICROCON Policy Working Paper No. 15. MICROCON: A Micro Level Analysis of Violent Conflict, Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex: Brighton.
- Ratha, D., Mohapatra, S. and Silwal, A. (2010). *Migration and Remittances Factbook 2011*.

World Bank.

Roper, D. (2001). "Regionalism in Moldova: the Case of Transnistria and Gagauzia." *Regional and Federal Studies* 11(3): 101-122.

Stark, O. and D.E. Bloom (1985). "The New Economics of Labour Migration." *American Economic Review* 75: 173-178.

Svejnar, J. (2002). "Transition Economies: Performance and Challenges." *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 16(1): 3-28.

Taylor, J.E. (1999). "The New Economics of Labour Migration and the Role of Remittances in the Migration Process." *International Migration* 37(1): 63-88.

Tchaidze, R., and K. Torosyan (2010). "Development on the Move: Measuring and Optimising Migration's Economic and Social Impacts in Georgia". Project report for the Global Development Network.

Tuathail, G.O. (2009). "Russia's Kosovo: A Critical Geopolitics of the August 2008 War over South Ossetia." *Eurasian Geography and Economics* 49(6): 670-705.

United Nations Development Program (2009). Human Development Report 2009: Overcoming Barriers - Human Mobility and Development. United Nations Press: Tokyo.

Vahl, M., and M. Emerson (2004). "Moldova and the Transnistrian Conflict." *Journal of Ethnopolitics and Minority Issues in Europe* 2004(1): Chapter IV.

Wheatley, J. (2005). *Georgia from National Awakening to Rose Revolution: Delayed Transition in the Former Soviet Union*. Ashgate Publishing Limited, Hampshire: United Kingdom.

Vadeanm F.P. and M. Piracha (2009). "Circular Migration or Permanent Return: What Determines Different Forms of Migration?" *IZA DP No. 4287*

World Bank (2007). *The International Migration of Women*. Morrison, A.R., M. Schiff, and M. Sjöblom, eds. World Bank and Palgrave Macmillan: Washington, DC. Accessed from <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/6804>.