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MIGRATION AND SKILLS IN ARMENIA AND GEORGIA

COMPARATIVE REPORT

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RESULTS OF THE 2011/12 MIGRATION SURVEY ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SKILLS, MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT

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PREFACE

The European Training Foundation (ETF) has a long-standing interest in the relationship between international migration and human capital in the European Union's neighbourhood region. This key relationship is central to any consideration of migration and economic development and is of vital importance to labour markets, particularly in countries with high rates of emigration or immigration. Previous ETF migration surveys in Albania, Egypt, Moldova, Tunisia and Ukraine, conducted in 2006 and 2007, provided new empirical information on those countries and established the value of a new survey instrument.

In 2011, building on its prior experience in skills and migration studies, the ETF developed surveys to investigate the relationship between migration, development and skills in three countries: Armenia, Georgia and Morocco. This report provides an initial comparative overview of the data from Armenia and Georgia. It analyses the results of two countrywide surveys implemented between October 2011 and January 2012 involving interviews with 8 000 respondents (both potential migrants and returned migrants). It supplements more detailed country reports on the data from Armenia and Georgia and will be followed by a more extensive three-country analysis once the Moroccan survey is complete.

The ETF surveys focused particularly on the connection between qualifications and labour migration. They provide data on the qualifications of both potential and returned migrants, whether these qualifications were used while working abroad, whether new qualifications were added during the stay abroad, and to what extent the qualifications of returned migrants are being used in the domestic economy and labour market. This data is used to assess the extent of brain gain, brain drain and brain circulation, three key factors in the evaluation of the overall cost and benefits of migration.

The surveys provide evidence that can be used by policy makers in Armenia, Georgia and the European Union (EU) to design supportive policies and instruments. The EU signed a Joint Mobility Partnership with Georgia in November 2009 and with Armenia in October 2011. These partnerships provide a framework for dialogue and cooperation on migration and development, legal migration and mobility, asylum and the fight against illegal migration. Two priorities established in these agreements are to improve opportunities for legal migration and to maximise the benefit to all parties. The data provided by the ETF surveys will allow the authorities to focus their interventions on areas where they are most needed, such as pre-departure training for migrants and the use of returned migrants' qualifications in the domestic economy.

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1. COUNTRY BACKGROUND

Both Armenia and Georgia are former Soviet republics. Although both countries experienced net immigration for much of the 20th century, economic decline, which started in the 1980s and worsened after the collapse of the USSR, resulted in increasing emigration. Both countries now have very high net emigration rates and are economically dependent on the remittances sent home by migrants.

Armenia gained independence from the Soviet Union in 1990 and Georgia followed suit one year later. Like most former Soviet republics, both countries experienced significant emigration immediately after independence, chiefly of ethnic minorities (mostly Russians). In 2010, the population of Georgia was estimated at 4.7 million, a decline of 20% since independence. Likewise, the population of Armenia declined by almost one million (approximately 25%) after independence to an estimated 3 million in 2010. Quite apart from recent history, there are many similarities in how these two neighbouring countries have been affected by international migration.

Following independence in 1991, Georgia faced a series of political crises that devastated its economy and had a dramatic impact on migration patterns. Post-independence migration has been marked by three distinct stages. During the first four years of independence, economic collapse and conflict gave rise to the most dramatic period of mass emigration. Between 1995 and the Rose Revolution in 2003, the economic situation remained very poor and international migration was one of the only solutions for many Georgians seeking employment. Since 2004, although many economic indicators have improved, there is evidence that labour market indicators continue to deteriorate (Bardak, 2011).

According to the National Statistics Office, the 2011 employment rate in Georgia was 55.4%. The official unemployment rate was 15.1%, although the real figure is thought to be higher due to high underemployment in subsistence agriculture. The official employment figures include people who work in their own households and the category of self-employment includes people working for as little as one hour a week on a plot of land. The International Labour Organisation (ILO) has estimated the real unemployment rate to be 30% to 35% (ILO, 2010, p. 44). Youth unemployment was also high (35.6% in 2011) and tends to be higher among urban and better educated youth. Overall, more than 50% of employment is in agriculture, a sector characterised by low productivity and scant social protection. These statistics are an indication of the large number of people who are living precariously.

Today, migration plays an essential role in the Georgian economy and is driven mainly by high unemployment. Migration statistics were disrupted in the post-independence crises and data collection is still problematic; it is thought that much migration still goes undocumented. Nevertheless, we do know that temporary migration involves between 6% and 10% of the population annually and that migrant stocks abroad amount to more than one million people (more than 20% of the population). There is evidence that the number of women involved in international migration is increasing: surveys in 2000-01 found that women accounted for between 33% and 40% of international migrants (Badurashvili, 2001; Dershem and Khoperia, 2004; IOM, 2002). Dependence on migration is significant; the 2006 Georgian Integrated Household Survey found that 5% of all households received remittances, which make up half of their budget.

Armenia has a very significant and ancient diaspora that is estimated at around 8 million people, compared to a national population of just over 3.2 million in 2010. This diaspora population includes many generations of migrants and the most recent flows of people born in Armenia are still substantial: 870 200 migrants were registered as living out of the country in 2010 (28.3% of the total population). A pattern of labour migration became established in the 1960s, and by the late 1980s the outflow was approximately 40 000 people a year (1% of the population). The data on these movements is thought to be accurate until 1988, when voluntary registration systems began to

collapse. As in Georgia, accurate data collection on migration was not established in Armenia until more than ten years after independence, and even current statistics are not altogether reliable. Independence in Armenia was followed by a period of instability that lasted until 1995, with stability returning only gradually by 2001.

Today, Armenia's labour market is quite similar to that of Georgia. In 2011, the total employment rate was 51.4%, with unemployment at 18.4%. Youth unemployment was particularly high (39% in 2010) and tends to be higher among women and urban and better educated youth. Moreover, the rate of informal employment (self-employment and unregistered employment) is very high, accounting for 59.2% of the total working age population (ILO, 2011). As in Georgia, agriculture is the largest employer. In 2010, it accounted for 40% of total employment but only 17% of gross domestic product (GDP), indicating the large share of subsistence in this sector. The 2010 labour force survey showed that 19% of all employment in Armenia takes the form of temporary, seasonal, occasional or one-off activities. A sizeable proportion of the population therefore has no social protection except whatever they can provide for themselves.

Armenia is unusually dependent on remittances. From 2003 to 2007 remittances accounted for between 17% and 24% of GDP, and some 36% of all households in the country received remittances. Since independence, Armenia has sought to safeguard continued emigration through bilateral agreements on migration with four destination countries (Georgia, Russia, Ukraine and Belarus), although implementation is not always effective. It has also signed readmission agreements with ten countries since independence, including several EU Member States.

Both Armenia and Georgia have long-standing relationships in the migration field with the institutions of the EU. Both countries established official contact with the EU soon after independence and they are now both partners in the EU's Neighbourhood Policy. Relations were initially regulated by Partnership and Cooperation Agreements with the EU, which entered into force in 1999 for both countries. The European Commission's Country Strategy Papers for 2007-2013 for both countries highlight migration as a priority within the area of justice, freedom and security.

The positive relationship between the EU and both Georgia and Armenia is further highlighted by the fact that they are amongst a small handful of countries to have signed Mobility Partnerships with the EU: Georgia in 2009 and Armenia in 2011. Overall migration, and particularly the relationship between migration and human capital, is of significant strategic importance for both Armenia and Georgia and for their relations with the EU.

2. HUMAN CAPITAL AND MIGRATION

The relationship between human capital and migration, and particularly the impact of migration on development, has always been a central issue in migration policy. Over time, with a broader understanding of migration and development, the standard view of this relationship changed from a highly pessimistic position to a more optimistic view, and is now perhaps returning to a more nuanced position that takes into account the full complexities of the issues involved (de Haas, 2010).

The earliest discussions on the impacts of international migration on development (e.g. Adams, 1968) were marked by concerns about brain drain. The concern expressed was that international migration would involve a substantial loss of human capital in the countries of origin and was therefore a drain on state investment in education.

This predominantly negative view was challenged in subsequent decades. Although high-skilled migration continued, the mass migrations of the 1960s and early 1970s involved predominantly low-skilled individuals, who represented a lower investment on the part of their state of citizenship. Population growth and the gradual spread of simple mechanisation meant that not only was the migrants' labour not missed in their home communities, they were typically unemployed or underemployed before they left. This situation did much to assuage concerns about brain drain, and the position of governments in the countries of origin regarding the outflows of low-skilled migrants became increasingly ambivalent.

Two further developments did much to transform this ambivalence into greater enthusiasm. The first of these was the growing appreciation, through the 1980s and 1990s, of the reliability and amount of the remittance transfers sent home by migrants. Remittances demonstrated that international migrants were not 'lost' to their countries of origin but could still make a substantial contribution. Some countries took the strategic decision to train more people in certain professions than the domestic labour market could absorb, thereby investing in emigration in the hope of continued returns through remittances. The Philippines' approach to training nurses is probably the best known example, but the principle that effectively managed labour markets can cope with even a significant amount of highly skilled migration is now widely accepted.

The second change over this period was the realisation that migration did not have to be permanent. Permanent emigration, even of highly skilled individuals, was not inevitable and the return of migrants provided an opportunity for the country and community of origin to benefit from their skills. The ideal scenario suggested that migrants' skills could be enhanced by the training or experience they received abroad and that migration, far from being a brain drain in fact represented a brain gain (Stark et al., 1997). Temporary return programmes, such as the United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) Transfer Of Knowledge Through Expatriate Nationals (TOKTEN), sought to capitalise on this brain gain.

While the positive conclusions of the brain gain argument represent an important correction to the previous, very negative, perception of migration as brain drain, the argument does tend to represent a somewhat idealised vision of the migration process. No doubt some highly skilled migrants find work abroad at an appropriate level that allows them to acquire the experience or training they need to develop their skills before a temporary or permanent return to their home country. However, this scenario does not reflect the experience of many, or probably most, international migrants (Schiff, 2005). As barriers to international migration increase, individuals often have to work below their skills level to reimburse the cost of migration. Even if they do return home, they may find that their skill sets have declined as a result of the time spent working below their capacity. Thus brain waste is a further concern that relates to the match between the individual and the employment they take up abroad.

Recent EU policy initiatives reflect this more finely balanced understanding. The European Commission's Communication (2011) on Global Approach to Migration and Mobility (GAMM) and accompanying staff working paper on migration and development displays a more flexible understanding of these issues than was evident in the 2005 Communication on Migration and Development (European Commission, 2005). Earlier approaches tended to favour a one-size-fits-all approach and to reinforce certain generalised assumptions, whereas one of the key insights of recent empirical work in this field is that context matters. Owing to contextual variables, what works in one country is not likely to be a universally correct approach, and variations may be considerable. One of the strengths of the mobility partnership approach is that it provides a framework for this variability in that mobility partnerships are 'tailored to the specifics of each relevant third country, to the ambitions of the country concerned and of the EU' (European Commission, 2007, p. 3).

Given the recognition of variability within the EU's recent approach to this field (exemplified by the two European Commission's communications cited above (COM(2007) 248 and COM(2011) 743), a key contribution of this research is that it provides data that can be used to test the underlying assumptions central to the current approach. Seven key assumptions concerning the relationship between migration and human capital have been identified to test with our data, ranging from the very broad to the relatively specific.

1. *Temporary/circular migration has benefits which permanent migration does not*. This assumption is key to the entire brain gain thesis. It assumes that the potentially substantial benefits of migration can accrue to migrants who spend relatively short periods of time outside their home country and return on a regular basis, such as seasonal workers.

2. *The relationship between education and emigration is uncertain*. A variety of scenarios are discussed in the literature. In some cases, opportunities for emigration are an incentive to continued education in the home country. However, where emigration is primarily unskilled and provides opportunities to earn more money without a higher education level, it may have the effect of discouraging education and so lowering net levels of human capital.

3. *Migration has clear economic benefits for the country of origin, the country of destination and individual migrants*. This is the classic 'win, win, win' scenario largely responsible for the renewed optimism about the positive impact of migration on development. It is usually clear from aggregate data whether migration has a positive economic impact at a national level. Critics of migration typically focus on the high cost paid by individual migrants for relatively marginal economic gains.

4. *Migration leads to brain gain*. This is an extension of the first assumption. Does migration have a positive impact on levels of education, either by increasing the value of education in the home country or by providing opportunities for education and training abroad?

5. *Work experience abroad has certain benefits that are recognised in the labour market once migrants return home*. Migration provides certain economic benefits to migrants and their families, but it may be the case that such benefits can only be sustained by repeated migration — a finding that would undermine the value of circular migration. For circular migration to be an effective and sustainable strategy, the migration experience must be valued in the labour market of the country of origin, thereby enabling migrants to stop migrating when they wish.

6. *Reintegration assistance can play a positive role in successful return.* The premise is that state support may be needed to capture the full benefits of migration in certain cases. There are plenty of examples of reintegration programmes for returned migrants around the world, but only limited data is available on their effectiveness.

7. *Increasing the portability of social rights and benefits (pension rights, health care benefits etc.) will encourage circular migration.* Allowing migrants to claim the social benefits accrued in their country of destination when they have returned to their country of origin requires substantial levels of cooperation between the two countries. Cooperation is only likely to occur if both countries perceive advantages in the arrangement. It is assumed that migrants will see an advantage in such a system, but this is likely to depend on the form such systems take. Better understanding of migrants' awareness of systems of transnational social protection would help governments decide whether this should be a policy priority.

The evidence base for all of these assumptions is inconclusive. At best, it is clear that there is considerable variability across countries. The main aim of this research project was to collect data to understand how these crucial variables operate and to test these assumptions particularly in the context of Armenia and Georgia.

3. METHODOLOGY

The project involved two separate but related national surveys carried out in both Armenia and Georgia. The first targeted potential migrants and the second focused on returned migrants. The sampling techniques used in the potential migrant survey were designed to obtain a nationally representative cohort reflecting the key characteristics of the national population as a whole. All the interviews were conducted in Armenia and Georgia rather than in migrant destinations because the inclusion of other sites would have dramatically increased the cost and complexity of the field work. As a result, the returned migrant survey was not representative of all emigrants but inevitably skewed towards those present in their home country at the time the survey was done. Both surveys were based on detailed individual questionnaires designed to explore the relationship between migration, education, skills and employment.

The first survey targeted potential migrants, who were defined as citizens between the ages of 18 and 50 present in the country of origin at the time of the survey. A stratified random sample based on predefined frames was obtained to ensure broad geographic representation. In Armenia, the national electricity supply company's database of addresses was used as it had been updated in December 2011 and provided more accurate data than the national census. In Georgia, the 2002 census data was used to obtain the nationally representative sample. In both countries, only one individual was randomly selected from each household in the sample to complete the potential migrant questionnaire.

The second survey targeted returned migrants. These were defined as individuals who had left the country aged 18 or over, worked abroad continuously for at least three months, and returned no more than ten years previously. Given the specificity of this population, a random sample was not enough to find all returnees, and an additional snowball sampling method was used in the same geographical areas to complement the initial nationally representative sample. If one or more returned migrants were identified in a selected household, one returned migrant per household was interviewed using the appropriate questionnaire. If the randomly selected individual in the same household was a potential migrant, he or she was interviewed using the potential migrant questionnaire. Members of the randomly selected households were then asked about the presence of further returned migrants in the same neighbourhood, and additional returnees were included in a snowball fashion. In rare cases where an individual is both potential and returned migrant, return questionnaire was used but the answers were counted for both potential and returned migrant datasets.

These were large surveys involving a total of 8 000 respondents. In each country, the target was 2 600 interviews for the potential migrant survey and 1 400 interviews for the returned migrant survey. In Armenia, the survey involved 10 supervisors and 74 interviewers, and was conducted in December 2011 and January 2012. In Georgia, the field work took place in October and December 2011.

In addition to the surveys, substantial background research was undertaken by local teams in Armenia and Georgia. Desk research took the form of a comprehensive survey of existing statistical data, legislation and bilateral agreements relating to migration in the two countries. This was supplemented by expert interviews with government officials and representatives of relevant non-governmental organisations. The background material is presented in detail in the separate country reports, and the present report focuses on the comparison of the results of the survey data from both countries.

The survey data was analysed using the SPSS software package. The country reports present a detailed picture of the situation in each country based on the analyses produced by local teams with support from the ETF. As the main SPSS datasets include more than 250 variables for each survey, the presentation of data has necessarily been selective even in the detailed reports. This comparative report presents a descriptive analysis of the results by key variables across both countries in chapter 4

and then moves on to analyse key assumptions in chapter 5. The analysis of these hypotheses required the construction of several key composite indicators, involving a selection and weighting of sets of first level survey variables. In total, five composite indicators were developed for this analysis.

1. The *propensity to migrate indicator* was constructed using seven discrete variables from the potential migrant questionnaire: the likelihood of migration within six months; the likelihood of migration within two years; the ability to finance the move; the ability to speak the language of the most likely destination; the subjective assessment of whether the respondent possesses information about the most likely destination; possession of at least four of the six documents necessary for migration (passport, visa, work contract, work or residence permit, acceptance letter for study or training); and a subjective assessment of no difficulty obtaining the remaining documents. The following thresholds were used for the propensity to migrate indicator: (i) very unlikely (total score 0-2.5); (ii) quite unlikely (total score 3-5.5); (iii) quite likely (total score 6-8.5); and (iv) very likely (total score 9-11.5). Thus prospective migrants had to score at least 6 out of a maximum score of 11.5 on the propensity indicator in order to be considered ready to migrate.

2. The *social condition indicator* aggregates information about living conditions and basic household possessions obtained from a set of questions that was included in both the potential migrant and returned migrant questionnaires. It takes into account the number of people living in the household, the number of rooms in the house and the presence of a series of indicative facilities or items, such as piped drinking water, hot water, indoor flush toilet, modern heating system, colour TV, washing machine, computer, internet connection and car. The resulting indicator has a minimum value of 0 (the worst living conditions) and a maximum value of 2 (the best living conditions).

3. The *economic condition indicator* was also calculated for both questionnaires. It takes into account house and land ownership, overall household income from all sources (equalised monetary income), and the receipt of any remittances. The resulting indicator has a minimum value of 0 (the worst economic situation) and a maximum value of 4 (the best economic situation).

4. The *migration outcome indicator* brings together nine variables relating to the period of time spent abroad and aggregates different dimensions of a returnee's legal and work status abroad. The variables include career progression abroad, the fit between skill levels and the type of work abroad, work/ residence permit, fair treatment at work and any negative experiences (such as discrimination), the recognition of educational qualifications, skill development opportunities, periods of unemployment, remittances sent home, and legal status while abroad. Based on the scores, migration outcomes were classified as follows: (i) highly successful (total score 9 to 15); (ii) successful migration (total score 4 to 8); (iii) neither successful nor unsuccessful (score 1 to 3); (iv) unsuccessful (score -2 to 0); and (v) extremely unsuccessful (less than -2). Based on the scores, migration outcome is classified in one of five categories: (i) highly successful (score 9 to 15); (ii) successful (score 4 to 8); (iii) neither successful nor unsuccessful (score 1 to 3); (iv) unsuccessful (score -2 to 0); and (v) extremely unsuccessful (below -2).

5. The *return outcome indicator* focuses only on the migrants' experience after their return, assessing the impact of labour migration on different dimensions of post-return work and current economic status. It combines six variables from the returned migrant questionnaire: the savings brought back home, employment upon return, post-return opportunities for career progression, social benefits linked to migration, usefulness of migration to find a job at home and returnee's subjective assessment of the benefits of migration. Based on the total scores obtained, return outcomes were classified as: (i) highly successful (total score 9 to 12); (ii) successful (total

score 4 to 8); (iii) neither successful nor unsuccessful (score 1 to 3); (iv) unsuccessful (score -1 to 0); and (v) extremely unsuccessful (less than -1).

4. DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS[1]

This chapter provides a descriptive overview of the survey results illustrated by cross-tabulations of the data on ten important variables (gender, age, marital status, children, education, employment, workplace type, work type, work level, and destination). In addition the analysis compares the data from Armenia and Georgia and the results for the three broad groups surveyed: non-migrants, prospective migrants, and returned migrants. The data on non-migrants and prospective migrants is taken from the results of the potential migrants survey, in which the two subgroups are distinguished by the respondent's answer to the question 'Are you seriously considering moving abroad?': those who answered 'yes' are prospective migrants and those who answered 'no' are classified as non-migrants. The third group comprises the respondents who were interviewed using the returned migrant questionnaire because they met the criteria for returned migrants. The data on potential migrants were weighted to represent the population as a whole, but the data on returned migrants is unweighted because the sample was not representative.

4.1 Overview of survey sample

Non-migrants were the majority in both Armenia and Georgia (Table 4.1) and the percentage of respondents not seriously considering a move abroad was similar in both countries (64.2% in Armenia and 68.9% in Georgia). Those seriously considering working abroad were classified as prospective migrants (35.8% in Armenia and 31.1% in Georgia).

Table 4.1 Overview of sample

	Potential migrants					Returned migrants	
	Non-migrants		Prospective migrants		Total		
	N	%	N	%	N	N	%
Armenia	1737	64.2	892	35.8	2629	1395	100
Georgia	2031	68.9	852	31.1	2883	1401	100

The propensity to migrate indicator, which combined seven variables relating to the likelihood of migration, provides information on the actual readiness and ability of respondents to migrate. According to this indicator only 11.4% of potential migrants in Georgia and 12.6% in Armenia were ready and able to leave. There were more 'real migrants' among males in both countries. An analysis of propensity to migrate by education level showed that in Georgia more respondents in the group with low or medium levels of education were ready to leave, whereas in Armenia readiness and ability to leave was associated with medium and high levels of education.

4.2 Gender

The surveys reveal clear differences between men and women in the serious intention to move abroad. In both Armenia and Georgia, approximately 40% of men declared that they were seriously thinking of moving abroad, whereas only 30% of women in Armenia and 26% of women in Georgia

[1] All the numbers in tables and text are calculated based on the weighted dataset of the potential migrants. The results given in all tables refer to valid number of respondents (N) and their percentages (%), excluding missing responses ('no answer'/'refuse to answer').

reported a planned move abroad. The majority of returned migrants in both countries are men (87% in Armenia and 59% in Georgia).

Table 4.2 Respondents by gender in Armenia

	Men		Women		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Non-migrants	563	44.3	1174	55.7	1737	100
Prospective migrants	373	57.8	519	42.2	892	100
Returned migrants	1211	86.8	184	13.2	1395	100

Table 4.3 Respondents by gender in Georgia

	Men		Women		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Non-migrants	686	44.1	1345	55.9	2031	100
Prospective migrants	431	56.3	421	43.7	852	100
Returned migrants	831	59.3	570	40.7	1401	100

4.3 Age

Returned migrants might be expected to be a significantly older group, particularly as no upper age limit was specified in the definition of a returned migrant (potential migrants had to be under 50). In addition, although both surveys had a lower age limit of 18, the definition of a returned migrant specified a migration experience of at least three months, another factor that would tend to make this group older. The data fulfil this expectation, and the returned migrants were clearly older than both non-migrants and prospective migrants (Tables 4.4 and 4.5), with particularly dramatic differences in the youngest age group.

Clear age differences were also found between the non-migrant and prospective migrant groups in both Georgia and Armenia. In both countries almost 10% more prospective migrants than non-migrants fall into the 18 to 29 category. The groups are similarly spread in the 30 to 39 age group, but in the 49 to 50 age group the percentage of non-migrants is higher than that of prospective migrants. The fact that those who do not wish to travel abroad tend to be older than those who do is a finding in line with standard assumptions about migration ambitions.

Table 4.4 Respondents by age in Armenia

	18-29		30-39		40-50		51-59		60-69		Over 70	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Non-migrants	622	42.3	540	23.2	575	34.5	-	-	-	-	-	-
Prospective migrants	372	50.8	271	20.8	249	28.4	-	-	-	-	-	-
Returned migrants	354	25.4	483	34.7	528	37.9	28	2.0	0	0	0	0

Table 4.5 Respondents by age in Georgia

	20-29		30-39		40-50		51-59		60-69		Over 70	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Non-migrants	618	30.6	674	32.9	739	36.4	-	-	-	-	-	-
Prospective migrants	337	39.4	262	31.0	253	29.7	-	-	-	-	-	-
Returned migrants	268	19.1	386	27.6	474	33.8	191	13.6	70	5	12	0.9

4.4 Marital status

Expectations regarding the marital status of prospective migrants were also fulfilled. Prospective migrants are the least likely of the three groups to have been married: 10% less likely than either non-migrants or returned migrants in the case of Georgia, and a still substantial 7% less than non-migrants in Armenia (Tables 4.6 and 4.7). In both countries, returned migrants are the most likely to have been married: almost 65% of returned migrants were married in the case of Georgia. These marriage patterns reflect the relatively younger profile of prospective migrants and indicate that those with fewer ties to their home country are more likely to express a desire to travel abroad. The findings also suggest that married emigrants who have not been joined by their spouses in the country of destination are more likely to return.

Table 4.6 Respondents by marital status in Armenia

	Never married		Married/living together		Divorced/ separated		Widowed		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Non-migrants	517	33.6	1121	62.8	73	2.7	26	0.9	1737	100
Prospective migrants	318	40.9	520	55.8	36	2.1	18	1.2	892	100
Returned migrants	322	23.1	1018	73	38	2.7	17	1.2	1395	100

Table 4.7 Respondents by marital status in Georgia

	Never married		Married/living together		Divorced/ separated		Widowed		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Non-migrants	447	23.7	1444	69.8	87	4.2	53	2.3	2031	100
Prospective migrants	279	33.8	491	56.8	58	6.4	24	3.0	852	100
Returned migrants	290	20.7	906	64.7	131	9.4	74	5.3	1401	100

4.5 Children

The hypothesis that family ties diminish an individual's desire to emigrate is further supported by the data on children. Although a substantial majority of all three groups had children, there were clear differences. Returned migrants were most likely to be parents, with almost three-quarters in both countries reporting that they had children (Table 4.8). Once again, this suggests a degree of selectivity in the return process: migrants with children at home are more likely to return. Non-migrants are not far behind, and there is a substantial gap, almost 10% in Georgia, between non-migrants and prospective migrants. While some 60% of prospective migrants in both countries do have children, the proportion is lower than either of the other two groups.

Table 4.8 Respondents with and without children in Armenia and Georgia

	Armenia				Georgia			
	With children		Without children		With children		Without children	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Non-migrants	1 149	60.8	585	39.2	1 449	69.3	582	30.7
Prospective migrants	549	55.3	340	44.7	522	59.9	330	40.1
Returned migrants	1 003	72	391	28	1 028	73.4	373	26.6

4.6 Highest education level

Tables 4.9 and 4.10 present the data on the current highest level of education reported by the survey respondents in Armenia and Georgia, respectively. Significant differences between the two countries emerged in the relationship between education and migration. In Armenia, returned migrants are less likely than potential migrants to have completed post-secondary vocational or higher education. In Georgia, shares of post-secondary vocational education are almost identical across the three groups, returned migrants have a similar (albeit slightly higher) share of higher education than prospective migrants, and non-migrants have the largest share of higher education.

The factor common to the two countries is that it is the respondents with the highest levels of education who report that they are not considering emigration. This is very clear in Georgia, where 34.8% of non-migrants have completed higher education, as compared to 31.1% of returned migrants and 27.2% of prospective migrants. In Armenia, the percentage of higher education is similar in the non-migrant (30.8%) and prospective migrant (29.5%) groups and lower among returned migrants (24.4%). Given the high proportion of prospective migrants in the youngest age group, it is possible that more individuals in this group are still studying and therefore have not yet attained their highest level of education. There may also be a generational difference behind the lower education levels of returned migrants in Armenia, particularly with respect to higher education. No consistent overall pattern emerges in the relationship between education and migration.

Table 4.9 Respondents by education level in Armenia

	Primary and less		Lower secondary		Upper secondary general		Upper secondary vocational		Post-secondary vocational		Higher education		Post grad (PhD)	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Non-migrants	3	0.1	93.0	5.7	648	39.7	108	6.2	330	17.5	539	30.2	16	0.6
Prospective migrants	0	0.0	59.0	9.1	318	39.4	46.0	5.1	181	16.9	281	29.0	6.0	0.5
Returned migrants	11	0.8	156	11.3	549	39.8	119	8.6	208	15.1	318	23.1	18	1.3

Table 4.10 Respondents by education level in Georgia

	Primary and less		Lower secondary		Upper secondary general		Upper secondary vocational		Post-secondary vocational		Higher education		Post grad (PhD)	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Non-migrants	18	0.8	227	11.4	565	28.5	294	14.2	222	10.4	700	34.6	5	0.2
Prospective migrants	2	0.2	123	14.7	264	31.6	140	16.3	92	10.0	228	26.9	3	0.3
Returned migrants	4	0.3	23	1.6	549	39.2	252	18.0	138	9.9	420	30.0	15	1.1

The gender variation in education level is significant. Women are generally better educated than men; indeed, in Georgia women are much better educated than men. In Armenia, among potential migrants, the difference in higher education is only slight, with 31.0% of women reporting this level as against 29.6% of men. The difference is greater at post-secondary vocational, a level achieved by 20.8% of women and 13.6% of men. At other education levels the gender distribution is more even, except for lower secondary, which is the highest level completed for 10.5% of men but only 3.5% of women.

Table 4.11 Field of study by gender of potential migrants with vocational education and higher education in Armenia and Georgia (as defined by ISCED)

	Armenia				Georgia			
	Men		Women		Men		Women	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Education science and teaching	36	9.5	221	21.9	43	7.5	271	24.2
Humanities and arts	64	12.4	159	16.6	38	7.0	116	10.5
Social sciences, journalism and information, business or law	105	20.8	169	16.1	137	25.4	183	16.3
Science	71	15.2	128	11.8	41	7.7	94	8.5
Engineering, manufacturing, construction and architecture	88	17.6	71	7.6	137	24.1	91	7.9
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and veterinary	37	6.7	45	3.8	56	9.9	50	4.3
Health, welfare and social work	46	9.3	185	18.2	37	6.5	293	25.7
Services	43	8.6	38	4.0	69	11.8	27	2.6
Total	490	100	1016	100	558	100	1125	100

Gender differences are more pronounced in Georgia, where higher education is the highest level completed by 29.5% of men as compared to 35% of women. A larger proportion of women (11.9%) have also completed post-secondary vocational compared to men (8.4%). Conversely more men completed their education at the lower secondary and upper secondary general levels.

In addition to achieving higher levels of qualification, women also choose very different areas of study than men in both countries (Table 4.11). Women are three times more likely to have studied education and trained as teachers (21.9% vs. 9.5% in Armenia and 24.2% vs. 7.5% in Georgia). Women are also predominant in healthcare, welfare and social work. By contrast, men are much more likely to have studied engineering, manufacturing, construction and architecture (18% of men compared to 8% of women in Armenia and 24% of men compared to 8% of women in Georgia) as well as agriculture, forestry, fishing and veterinary science (6.7% of men vs. 3.8% of women in Armenia, and 9.9% of men vs. 4.3% of women in Georgia).

Table 4.12 Are you seriously considering moving abroad? Responses by gender and education level in Georgia and Armenia

	Georgia				Armenia			
	Men		Women		Men		Women	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Primary and less	0.3	0.6	0.2	1.0	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.1
Lower secondary	14.6	13.3	14.9	10.0	13.5	8.4	3.1	3.6
Upper secondary general	38.8	31.1	22.3	26.4	41.8	39.0	36.1	40.2
Upper secondary vocational	14.9	13.4	18.1	14.7	5.7	6.2	4.3	6.2
Post-secondary vocational	8.3	8.5	12.3	11.8	12.7	14.2	22.5	20.1
Higher education	23.1	33.1	31.7	35.7	25.8	31.5	33.4	29.1
PhD	0	0	0.7	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.7
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

There is also an interesting relationship between the comparative education levels of men and women and intention to migrate (Table 4.12). The overall trend for Armenia is that intention to migrate is more significant at the lower levels of education for men but at the higher levels for women. The Armenian data shows that 13.5% of men seriously considering migration have completed only lower secondary education or less, whereas this is true of only 3.1% of women who wish to migrate. At the opposite end of the scale, 33.4% of women who wish to migrate have higher education whereas this is true for only 25.8% of men in same group.

The picture for Georgia is not quite so clear, although a similar pattern is still apparent. The difference between men and women who wish to migrate is relatively small at the lower secondary level (14.9% of women compared to 14.6% for men), but more pronounced at the higher education level (31.7% of women and 23.1% of men). This inversion has a significant impact on the nature of the emigrant population and the type of employment obtained abroad.

4.7 Employment

The data on work and the workplace in the following four sections refer to the first job abroad of the returned migrants. For most of the returned migrants surveyed (1 033 out of 1 401 in Georgia and 1 184 out of 1 395 in Armenia), the first job abroad was also the one held longest.

The data in Table 4.13 regarding employment status differ slightly for potential and returned migrants: potential migrants were asked ‘Have you worked in the last seven days?’ whereas returnees were asked ‘Have you worked since your return?’ This difference obviously increased the likelihood of a positive response from returned migrants, and the data reflect this (Table 4.13).

Table 4.13 Overview of the employment status of respondents in Armenia and Georgia

	Armenia				Georgia			
	Yes worked		No work		Yes worked		No work	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Non-migrants	578	33.9	1159	66.1	542	27.9	1 489	72.1
Prospective migrants	**283**	31.1	609	68.9	208	25.0	644	75.0
Returned migrants	580	41.6	815	58.4	416	29.7	985	70.3

The data for both countries reveals very low employment across the board, with the lowest levels among prospective migrants, a group in unemployment or inactivity of more than 75% in Georgia and close to 70% in Armenia. Unemployment is obviously a major factor motivating prospective migrants. However, it must be emphasised that unemployment is still high even after return: 58.4% of returned migrants in Armenia and 70.3% of returned migrants in Georgia are unemployed or inactive.

Once again, gender is a factor in both Armenia and Georgia; unemployment has no significant effect on the desire to migrate among women, whereas unemployed men are more likely to express a desire to emigrate. Among potential migrants in Armenia, 27.3% of the women who expressed a desire to move abroad had worked in the previous seven days compared to 25.2% of those who were not considering emigration. In Georgia the distribution was even closer: 25.0% of prospective migrant women had worked in the previous seven days as compared to 23.5% of non-migrant women.

In contrast, while 25% of Georgian men (the same proportion as women) who were seriously thinking of moving abroad had been employed in the previous seven days, this percentage rose to 33.5% amongst non-migrant men, suggesting that employed men are less likely to want to emigrate than unemployed men. The pattern was similar in Armenia; 33.9% of non-migrants had worked in the previous seven days compared to 31.1% of prospective migrants. In both countries men were slightly more likely to have worked in the past seven days than women, but this difference cannot be explained solely by employment rates. It does appear that the desire to emigrate is more responsive to unemployment among men than among women.

4.8 Workplace type

Tables 4.14 and 4.15 reflect the data on the current or latest employment for potential migrants and for the first (usually longest) employment abroad for returned migrants. In both countries the profiles of non-migrants and prospective migrants are very similar, but that of returned migrants is different (Tables 4.14 and 4.15). A significant proportion of returned migrants (generally men) reported that they had worked in the construction sector while abroad: over half (52.5%) of all returnees surveyed in Armenia and about one-quarter in Georgia (26.6%).

Table 4.14 Respondents by workplace type in Armenia

		Non-migrants	Prospective migrants	Returned migrants
Agriculture	Number	78	39	13
	%	8.4	7.2	0.9
Manufacturing	Number	177	89	125
	%	16.1	14.2	9.1
Construction	Number	49	68	722
	%	5.7	16.5	52.5
Commerce	Number	136	84	158
	%	13.1	13	11.5
Petty trade	Number	38	17	36
	%	3	3.5	2.6
Hotels and restaurants	Number	24	14	38
	%	2.8	2.2	2.8
Domestic services	Number	2	8	20
	%	0.1	1.2	1.5
Public utilities	Number	65	35	23
	%	7	4.5	1.7
Public admin	Number	74	31	9
	%	6	3.7	0.7
Transport	Number	33	30	95
	%	3.9	6.5	6.9
ICT	Number	44	28	21
	%	4.3	5	1.5
Other	Number	366	169	115
	%	29.6	22.6	9.4

In Armenia, the next most common workplace abroad reported by returned migrants was in commerce (11.5%), an area in which both men and women are represented. In Georgia, 27.9% of returned migrants (mainly women) reported working in domestic and personal services. The remaining returnees were distributed across several sectors, including manufacturing, transport, repairs and hospitality in both countries, but virtually no returnees reported working in other sectors. In Armenia, for example, agriculture accounted for less than 1% of the employment abroad of returnees. However, this difference is not so apparent in Georgia.

Table 4.15 Respondents by workplace type in Georgia

		Non-migrants	Prospective migrants	Returned migrants
Agriculture	Number	32	27	74
	%	2.7	4.9	5.4
Manufacturing	Number	92	51	108
	%	7.5	8.8	7.9
Construction	Number	103	77	365
	%	9.8	14.9	26.6
Commerce	Number	97	40	78
	%	8.3	6.8	5.7
Petty trade	Number	100	51	105
	%	7.1	8	7.6
Hotels and restaurants	Number	46	23	76
	%	3.4	3.5	5.5
Domestic and personal services	Number	157	67	384
	%	12.1	10.9	27.9
Public utilities	Number	38	14	19
	%	3.6	2.7	1.4
Public Admin	Number	123	43	9
	%	10	7.2	0.7
Transport	Number	63	26	60
	%	6.1	4.6	4.4
ICT	Number	17	11	4
	%	1.3	2.1	0.3
Other	Number	382	150	92
	%	28.1	25.5	6.8

The fact that the proportion of returned migrants in the 'other' category is particularly low suggests that the employment profile of this group is less diverse than that of potential migrants.

Overall, the profile of prospective migrants is much closer to that of non-migrants than that of returned migrants, but there are notable exceptions in Armenia in the areas of construction and domestic services, where the share of employment of prospective migrants is more than double that of non-migrants and therefore closer to the profile of returned migrants. In other sectors, the workplace profile of prospective migrants falls somewhere between those of non-migrants and returned migrants. More detailed, qualitative research would be needed to fully understand this structure, but it is possible that

some of the barriers to working in certain sectors that affect returnees may also affect prospective migrants and that these factors could in turn provide a further explanation for the desire expressed by the latter to seek work abroad.

4.9 Work type

Tables 4.16 and 4.17 reflect the data on current or latest employment for potential migrants and the first (usually longest) employment abroad for returned migrants. Since a large percentage of the returned migrants were unemployed or inactive upon return (58.4% in Armenia and 70.3% in Georgia), this comparison more accurately reflects their employment experience, but it also means that the data do not reflect contrasting positions within the same labour market.

The return migrants surveyed in Armenia were far more likely to have been employed as casual labourers abroad and far less likely to be salaried workers than their counterparts who had not left the country. This reflects the lower level of protection enjoyed by migrant workers, and possibly a greater degree of freedom. By contrast, the returned migrants in Georgia were more likely to have been employed as salaried workers while abroad.

Table 4.16 Respondents by work type in Armenia

	Employer		Self-employed		Salaried worker		Casual worker		Family helper (paid/ unpaid)		Other	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Non-migrants	29	2.4	109	11.2	829	74.3	106	10.3	10	1.3	6.0	0.5
Prospective migrants	13	2.3	67	13.6	427	63.0	97	19.1	10	1.8	1.0	0.3
Returned migrants	36	2.6	107	7.7	617	44.5	600	43.3	20	1.5	5	0.4

Table 4.17 Respondents by work type in Georgia

	Employer		Self-employed		Salaried worker		Casual worker		Family helper (paid/ unpaid)		Other	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Non-migrants	36	3.3	80	6.8	1 099	87.0	35	2.9	0	0.0	0	0
Prospective migrants	19	3.0	43	7.8	501	86.2	17	3.0	0	0.0	0	0
Returned migrants	52	3.8	164	11.9	1 084	78.9	74	5.4	0	0	0	0

There is relatively little gender variation in work type. In Georgia, salaried work accounted for the majority of both men and women (71.4% and 89.8%, respectively). In Armenia salaried work was also the most common type of employment among women, accounting for 52.2% of all valid responses. A

high percentage of men were salaried employees or casual workers (43.4% and 45.6%, respectively), and 7% were self-employed.

4.10 Work level

The data in this section also refers to the current or latest employment of potential migrants but to employment abroad in the case of returnees (Tables 4.18 and 4.19). In both countries, returned migrants were less likely to have worked as professionals than the non-migrants and prospective migrants working in their country of origin. Returned migrants in Armenia had worked mainly as unskilled workers abroad, and those in Georgia as both skilled and unskilled workers. The work level of prospective migrants was more similar to that of non-migrants and usually fell between that of non-migrants and returned migrants. The total periods without work while abroad reported by returnees were similar in Georgia and Armenia (5.5 and 5.6 months on average, respectively).

Table 4.18 Respondents by work level in Armenia

	Professional		High management		Middle management		Skilled worker		Unskilled worker	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Non-migrants	257	20.6	32	3.0	112	10.7	338	31.1	343	34.6
Prospective migrants	133	18.0	18	2.9	51	7.9	213	34.6	193	36.5
Returned migrants	124	9.1	28	2.1	89	6.5	464	34.1	657	48.2

Table 4.19 Respondents by work level in Georgia[2]

	Professional		High management		Middle management		Skilled worker		Unskilled worker	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Non-migrants	567	43.8	17	1.5	9	0.7	514	42.1	143	11.9
Prospective migrants	233	39.8	3.0	0.5	6.0	1.0	248	42.5	90	16.2
Returned migrants	165	12.0	6	0.4	0	0	896	65.2	307	22.3

Gender differences in work level are relatively minor. In Georgia, the two most common categories for both men and women were professional and skilled employment. Among men, 33.3% were in professional and 46.3% in skilled employment; the distribution among women is the reverse, with 53.0% in professional and 37.5% in skilled jobs. In Armenia, there was a clearer gender differentiation in work level. Men were most likely to be unskilled workers (40.4%), skilled workers (34.4%) or professionals (14.6%). Women tended to fall into the same three categories, but the distribution was rather different; 29.9% were skilled workers, 26.4% professionals, and 28.5% unskilled workers. The apparently higher skills profile for women reflects their generally higher levels of education.

[2] Georgian data on work level have been re-codified according to the classification used in Armenia.

In addition, returnees' education levels prior to migration were analysed by the first job type abroad. There was scant correlation between the migrants' education level and the type of work they performed abroad (Table 4.20). Most migrants from both Armenia and Georgia worked abroad as skilled or unskilled workers, irrespective of their education level.

Table 4.20 Correlation between education levels of returnees and job type while abroad (%)

Job type	Education levels					
	Armenia			Georgia		
	Low	Medium	High	Low	Medium	High
Higher manager	0.6	1.9	3.2	0.0	0.1	1.3
Middle manager	3.6	6.0	9.6	0.0	0.0	0.0
Professional	3.0	6.8	18.9	3.4	9.0	19.8
Skilled worker	33.7	37.5	24.7	**75.9**	**67.3**	**59.3**
Unskilled worker	**59.2**	**47.8**	**43.6**	20.7	23.5	19.6

Returnees were also asked their subjective opinion of the correspondence between the longest job they held abroad and their education level. In Armenia, 28% of respondents considered that their job abroad was below their education level. This percentage rose dramatically among women (39%) and as the level of education increased (55% among the high-skilled). In Georgia, almost half of all returnees (48%) reported having had jobs below their education level. Similarly, the percentage rises dramatically as the level of education increases (69% among the high-skilled) and among women (61%).

4.11 Destination

Table 4.21 shows the most likely destinations for prospective migrants and the most significant destination for returned migrants. It can be assumed that in most cases the actual destinations of returnees reflect the migration realities of prospective migrants in both Armenia and Georgia more accurately than the aspirations of would-be migrants. Overall then, these data represent the contrast between the reality of migration possibilities and the uncertainty of prospective migrants' aspirations. It must be emphasised that visa constraints tend to affect migrant flows: Armenians do not need a visa to enter Russia while Georgians have needed a visa since 2000 owing to the deterioration of political relations between Georgia and Russia that culminated in a war over breakaway regions in 2008. Georgians do not, however, need a visa to enter Turkey, and this may explain the flows to that country.

In both Armenia and Georgia, the most frequent destinations for returned migrants are less popular among prospective migrants. The vast majority of Armenian migrants (85.1%) have returned from Russia, and although Russia is also the most commonly cited likely destination among prospective migrants, the proportion in this case falls to just below 60%. This pattern is even clearer in Georgia, which has a more diverse spread of destinations. Georgian returned migrants have most commonly spent time in Turkey (31.5%), Russia (29%) and Greece (12.7%) but the percentages of prospective Georgian migrants who cite these countries as their most likely destination are less than half the returnee figure in each case: Turkey (12.8%), Russia (11.5%) and Greece (5.0%).

Table 4.21 Main or most likely destination for returned and prospective migrants in Armenia and Georgia

Destination	Armenia				Georgia			
	Prospective migrants		Returned migrants		Prospective migrants		Returned migrants	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Russia	489	56.4	1161	85.2	88	11.5	406	29
USA	84	9.8	33	2.4	101	12.7	38	2.7
France	66	6.7	11	0.8	28	3.3	12	0.9
Germany	42	4.6	16	1.2	86	11.1	59	4.2
Canada	18	1.7	1	0.1	8	1.1	4	0.3
United Kingdom	14	1.6	1	0.1	26	3.5	21	1.5
Spain	12	1.6	5	0.4	17	2.3	17	1.2
Italy	11	1.0	4	0.3	92	11.6	20	1.4
Ukraine	8	0.9	25	1.8	28	3.5	60	4.3
Turkey	3	0.2	14	1	107	12.8	442	31.5
Greece	3	0.4	17	1.2	42	5.0	178	12.7
Azerbaijan	0	0	0	0	54	6.9	41	2.9
Israel	0	0	1	0.1	7	0.7	15	1.1
Other	75	8,4	73	5.3	24	3.5	88	6.3
Do not know	63	6.7	-	-	85	10.5	-	-
Total	888	100	1 362	100	793	100	1 401	100

In contrast, prospective migrants in both Armenia and Georgia are much more likely to express a preference for migrating to countries in Western Europe and North America in numbers far exceeding the proportion of migrants returning from those destinations. In both countries, the USA is the most popular choice for prospective migrants: 9.8% in Armenia and 12.7 in Georgia. However, only 2.4% of Armenian and 2.7% of Georgian returned migrants have lived in the USA. Together, the USA, Canada and five EU destinations (France, Germany, United Kingdom, Spain and Italy) account for about 30% of the most likely destinations cited by prospective Armenian migrants, compared to only 5% in the case of returned migrants in that country. In Georgia, the contrast is even clearer: almost half of all prospective migrants cite USA, Canada or one of the five EU countries as their most likely destination, but only 12.2% of Georgian returnees have actually lived in any of those seven countries.

The total EU share as a destination is low for both countries. In Georgia, 24% of migrants had returned from EU countries and 39% of prospective migrants cited the EU as a likely destination. In Armenia, EU countries were cited as a destination by only 7% of returnees as compared to 19% of prospective migrants, showing the increasing popularity of the EU as a destination.

These findings do not elucidate the reasons for the discrepancy between the destinations of returned migrants and the most likely destinations cited by prospective migrants, but there are two clear possibilities. First, the destinations of returned migrants do not reflect the destinations of all emigrants and this could be the sole explanation for the difference. Nevertheless, it seems likely that prospective migrants are expressing a natural preference for migrating to the wealthiest countries, where they expect to find better jobs. However, when faced with the realities of migration, many of them may find that it is actually much more difficult to reach these desirable destinations, and thus a larger proportion settle for the more common destinations of Russia, Turkey and Greece. In this case, the pattern reported by returnees may well be a reflection of the overall pattern of emigration. It is also possible that there is a more direct connection between the widespread negative experience in certain destinations amongst the populations of both Armenia and Georgia and a rejection of those destinations among prospective migrants. The data does not allow us to determine which of these hypotheses is accurate, but the second would reflect the recent perception of social networks at home and abroad as points of information and not simply poles of attraction.

Gender analysis of the data concerning destination indicates relatively minor but nonetheless significant differences between men and women. Armenian men travel overwhelmingly to Russia (87.2% of male returnees), but at 71.1% the proportion among women is significantly lower. Much larger proportions of women than men returned from Germany (3.3%), Greece (4.4%) and Poland (2.2%). In Georgia, the three most significant countries of migration for male returnees were Russia (36.0%), Turkey (27.4%) and Greece (8.7%). Georgian women went to the same three countries, but the order was different: Turkey (37.5%), Russia (18.8%) and Greece (18.6%). It is possible that the difference in the education levels of male and female migrants and the jobs available to migrants may explain these differences.

4.12 Reasons for migration and reasons for return

Table 4.22 Reasons for migration cited by returnees in Armenia and Georgia

	Armenia		Georgia	
	N	%	N	%
Have no job/cannot find job in home country	789	56.6	711	51.0
Unsatisfactory wage and career prospects in home country/better prospects abroad	229	16.4	447	32.0
To get education or training	12	0.9	75	5.4
To accompany/follow spouse and/or parents abroad or get married	36	2.5	57	4.1
To improve standard of living	119	8.5	19	1.4
To repay debts	52	3.7	17	1.2
To join relatives or friends abroad	39	2.8	8	0.6
To finance children's education or training	4	0.3	5	0.4
Inadequate social security system in home country	13	0.9	4	0.3
Fear of war/civil conflict/persecution	1	0.1	4	0.3
Other primarily negative reason related to home country (push factor)	51	3.6	8	0.6
Other primarily positive reason related to destination (pull factor)	9	0.6	1	0.1
Other/Do not know	41	2.9	39	2.8
Total	1 395	100	1 394	100

The reasons for migrating cited by returned migrants in both Armenia and Georgia were overwhelmingly economic (Table 4.22). More than half of respondents in both countries reported that the most important reason for going abroad was that they had no job in their home country or they wanted to find a job in the destination country. Migrants from Armenia were more precise about the

nature of this economic push factor, citing a desire to improve their standard of living (8.5%) or repay debts (3.7%) or else the inadequate social security system in Armenia (0.9%). These three factors were specified more frequently by Armenians than Georgians.

More Georgian than Armenian returnees reported that they had migrated to obtain further education or training (5.4% as against 0.9%) and more Armenians reported that they went to join family (2.8% compared to 0.6% in Georgia). Very few respondents cited classic development-related reasons for migration: only four migrants in Armenia and five in Georgia said that they had migrated to finance their children's education. Forced migration was similarly absent: only one person in Armenia and four in Georgia said that they had initially left because of fear of war, civil conflict or persecution.

Economic reasons for leaving also prevail in the group of prospective migrants, in which more than 80% of respondents cited the lack of a job, unsatisfactory wage and career prospects, or the need to improve living standards as the main reasons for migration. Only 4.5% of this group in Georgia and 3.7% in Armenia intended to get education or training abroad (Table 4.23).

Table 4.23 Reasons for migration cited by prospective migrants in Armenia and Georgia

	Armenia		Georgia	
	N	%	N	%
Have no job/cannot find job in home country	415	52.3	309	37.2
Unsatisfactory wage and career prospects in home country/better prospects abroad	153	16.1	74	8.9
To get education or training	26	3.7	36	4.5
To accompany/follow spouse and/or parents abroad or get married	5	0.4	17	2.4
To improve standard of living	144	14.7	346	41.4
To repay debts	0	0.0	1	0.1
To join relatives or friends abroad	51	4.0	7	0.8
To finance children's education or training	4	0.2	5	0.7
Inadequate social security system in home country	6	0.4	1	0.1
Fear of war/civil conflict/persecution	4	0.8	1	0.1
Other primarily negative reason related to home country (push factor)	45	4.0	14	1.7
Other primarily positive reason related to destination (pull factor)	16	1.7	0	0.0
Other/Do not know	23	1.7	15	2.1
Total	892	100	826	100

Unlike the reasons cited by returnees for migrating, the reasons cited for returning to their home country are generally much less economic and much more related to family and social networks (Table 4.24). Overwhelmingly, the most common reason reported for returning was that the returnee's parents or spouse wanted them to return or they themselves wanted to join their family in their home country. This was the reason given by 40.5% of returned migrants in Armenia and 36.0% in Georgia.

Economic factors for return were not, however, insignificant. Termination of work contract, low wages, expiration of work or residence permits, and the difficulty of finding a job collectively account for the

return of around one-third of Armenian and Georgian returning migrants. The balance within these groups is significantly different, with Armenian returnees more likely to cite termination of contracts and low wages and Georgian migrants more likely to face the lack of renewal of work or residence permits and the difficulty of finding a new job. This reflects differences between the usual destinations of these two groups of migrants.

Table 4.24 Reasons for return in Armenia and Georgia

	Armenia		Georgia	
	N	%	N	%
Parents/spouse wanted me to return or to join family	565	40.5	500	36.0
My work contract ended	169	12.1	55	4.0
Low income	118	8.5	35	2.5
Problems raising children	84	6.0	16	1.2
My residence/work permit expired	68	4.8	179	12.9
To get married here	61	4.4	29	2.1
Bad health, old, exhausted	32	2.3	66	4.8
I could not find a job	8	0.6	133	9.6
I was deported/I was illegal and could not stay longer	3	0.2	78	5.6
Saved enough money	2	0.1	10	0.7
To start a business after return	1	0.1	1	0.1
Fear of war/civil conflict/persecution	0	0	37	2.7
Homesick	0	0	120	8.6
Other positive aspects of home	35	2.5	26	1.9
Other primarily negative aspects of destination	53	3.8	10	0.7
Other/Do not know	196	14.0	93	7.0
Total	1 395	100	1 388	100

4.13 Circularity: duration and frequency of migrations

Differences between Armenian and Georgian migration patterns are apparent (Table 4.25). The evidence reported by returnees shows that repeat migration is much more frequent in Armenia than in Georgia. The questionnaire provided space to record details of a maximum of eight migrations, and 70 respondents in Armenia filled in all eight sections. In Georgia, the highest number of migrations reported by a respondent was six. Overall, 41% of Armenian returnees and 23% of Georgian returnees migrated more than once, indicating a certain degree of circularity.

Table 4.25 Frequency and duration of migration in Armenia and Georgia

	Armenia		Georgia	
Frequency of migrations	Frequency	Mean duration (months)	Frequency	Mean duration (months)
1	1 395	21.1	1 401	36.1
2	566	13.5	320	18.2
3	325	10.9	128	11.7
4	209	10.4	51	12.8
5	147	10.1	27	10.9
6	111	8.4	14	5.4
7	88	8.4	-	-
8	70	8.5	-	-

Migrants from Georgia, however, tended to stay abroad longer. The mean duration of the first migration based on data from all the returnees surveyed was almost twice as long for Georgians as for Armenians (36.1 months vs. 21.1 months). Moreover, more frequent migrations lead to shorter stays, an important indication of circularity. In fact, 68% of Armenian returnees and 48% of Georgian returnees intend to migrate again in the future. These results suggest that migrations of just over a year are more likely to lead to frequent circular movements.

5. ANALYSIS OF ASSUMPTIONS

This chapter considers in turn each of the seven assumptions introduced in chapter 2 and examines cross-tabulations of relevant data to identify key associations. Various possible approaches could be used to test several of the assumptions, but given the limited space only one test has been used to test each hypothesis.

5.1 Temporary/circular migration has benefits which permanent migration does not

The assumption that circular migration has benefits not offered by permanent migration was tested by comparing the migration outcome indicator and the total time spent abroad. As explained in chapter 3, the migration outcome indicator aggregates variables related to the benefits of migration for individual migrants, rather than its impact on either the destination country or country of origin. If circular migration is to be attractive to individual migrants, these benefits should accrue relatively rapidly.

Table 5.1 Migration outcome by time spent abroad in Armenia

		Less than 1 year		1-5 years		6-10 years		11-20 years		More than 20 years	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Migrant outcome indicator	Highly unsuccessful	0	0	1	0.2	2	2.0	1	2.7	0	0.0
	Unsuccessful	8	1.9	13	2.0	5	5.0	3	8.1	0	0.0
	Neither	140	32.4	188	29.5	23	23.0	9	24.3	1	33.3
	Successful	283	65.5	430	67.5	67	67.0	24	64.9	2	66.7
	Highly successful	1	0.2	5	0.8	3	3.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
	Total	432	100	637	100	100	100	37	100	3	100

The Armenian data (Table 5.1) provides some support for the assumption. The percentage of unsuccessful migrations increases with time: only 1.9% of migrations of less than a year were classified as unsuccessful compared to 8.1% of migrations lasting between 11 and 20 years. However, while 65.5% of short-term migrations (those lasting less than one year) were classified as successful, this figure is almost identical to the percentage of successful migrations lasting between 11 and 20 years. Thus, no clear pattern emerges from the data.

Table 5.2 Migration outcome by time spent abroad in Georgia

		Less than 1 year		1-5 years		6-10 years		11-20 years		More than 20 years	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Migrant outcome indicator	Highly unsuccessful	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.7	3	3.0	0	0.0
	Unsuccessful	17	3.9	34	5.7	9	6.3	4	4.0	1	10.0
	Neither	200	45.4	246	41.1	43	30.1	23	23.2	2	20.0
	Successful	224	50.8	315	52.6	88	61.5	67	67.7	7	70.0
	Highly successful	0	0.0	4	0.7	2	1.4	2	2.0	0	0.0
	Total	441	100	599	100	143	100	99	100	12	100

Unfortunately for the clarity of any conclusions about this assumption, the Georgian data reveals exactly the opposite pattern. The proportion of migrations of a year or less classified as successful is 50.8% and the success rate rises as the duration lengthens, reaching 70% for migrations longer than 20 years. The proportion of unsuccessful migrations remains relatively low, 3.9% for very short migrations rising to 10% for migrations of more than 20 years. Thus, while the picture is clear for each country, no universal pattern emerges.

Recent research evidence appears to indicate that the nature of the impact of migrations varies with certain country-specific factors. To elucidate the exact nature of these factors would require more detailed qualitative research. It may be that migrants from Georgia take longer to benefit from migration as they do not use social networks in the same way. The relatively recent history of the Georgian diaspora is in sharp contrast with the long and well-established Armenian diaspora. Armenian migrants tend to travel to areas with existing Armenian populations, the most obvious example being Russia, but also some other countries such the USA and France. It is well established that social networks reduce the cost of migration and allow migrants to capitalise more quickly.

5.2 The relationship between education and emigration is uncertain

Is there a unidirectional relationship between education and migration, with a higher probability that either higher educated or lower educated individuals will be more likely to migrate? Or is the relationship more complex, multidirectional and therefore uncertain? To test the assumption that the relationship is uncertain the highest level of education completed before migration was compared to the length of time spent abroad (as reported on the returned migrant questionnaire). The assumption is that former education level of migrants influence the duration of migration abroad.

Section 4.6 showed a relationship between migration and education, with returned migrants emerging as the least educated of the three groups. There are certainly possible explanations for this finding, particularly the fact that returnees are older and consequently were educated at a time when higher education was less common. Even so, this association raises the concern that a causal relationship may be involved and that migrants choose to migrate because they lack the education and skills to succeed in the domestic labour market. The implication of such a conclusion would be that migration is self-perpetuating and it would therefore undermine the conclusions drawn in section 5.1 (at least in the case of Armenia) about the value of circular migration.

However, a more positive relationship between migration and education is suggested by the data described in section 4.12. Education was cited as the main reason for migration by 5.4% of returnees in Georgia but only 0.9% in Armenia. The situation changes slightly in the group of prospective migrants, in which 4.5% of Georgians and 3.7% of Armenians cited education as the main reason for migration. The dominant motive for emigration is more economic in Armenia, and this is perhaps better reflected in the frequent, short-term, circular movements from Armenia. Furthermore, when asked whether they actually studied abroad or received any formal training, 10% of Georgians and 6% of Armenians confirmed the education or training received.

Table 5.3 Highest education level by time spent abroad in Armenia

	Primary and less		Lower secondary		Upper secondary general		Upper secondary vocational		Post-secondary vocational		Higher education		Post grad (PhD)		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Less than 1 year	2	0.4	57	11.7	221	45.5	35	7.2	59	12.1	109	22.4	3	0.6	486	100
1-5 years	3	0.4	90	12.1	307	41.3	70	9.4	108	14.5	162	21.8	4	0.5	744	100
6-10 years	0	0.0	12	10.0	46	38.3	15	12.5	18	15.0	29	24.2	0	0.0	120	100
11-20 years	2	4.9	4	9.8	10	24.4	4	9.8	8	19.5	13	31.7	0	0.0	41	100
More than 20 years	0	0	1	25	2	50	0	0	1	25	0	0	0	0	4	100

The general trend that emerges from the Armenia data (Table 5.3) is that the group that spent the longest time abroad (11-20 years) is also the one with the highest education level. The exception is at the primary and less than primary level, the highest education level achieved by 4.9% of group that spent long time abroad, compared to less than 0.5% for those who spent less than one year. This finding may only reflect the age of the migrants who have spent more time abroad; they may have

passed through the education system at a time when secondary education was less common than it is today. Apart from this anomaly, the returnees who spent 11 to 20 years abroad are much more likely to have completed post-secondary and higher education, and this likelihood decreases for groups who have spent less time abroad.

The data from Georgia presents a rather more uncertain picture (Table 5.4). There is no clear correlation between length of time spent abroad and the highest level of education completed before migration. Nevertheless, as in the case of Armenia, those who have spent a long period abroad (11-20 years) were most likely to have completed higher education before leaving (34.9%). This suggests at least that migration is not the choice of those with less education than the population as a whole, and that migrants with less education are not condemned to continue migrating because their education levels shut them out of the job market. This analysis supports the assumption that the relationship between education and migration is uncertain and therefore a concern that any policy intervention must be attentive to, but it presents a more reassuring picture than the one that emerges from section 4.6 on the relationship between education levels and migration.

Table 5.4 Highest education level by time spent abroad in Georgia

	Primary and less		Lower secondary		Upper secondary general		Upper secondary vocational		Post-secondary vocational		Higher education		Post grad (PhD)		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Less than 1 year	3	0.6	13	2.8	236	50.3	78	16.6	36	7.7	103	22.0	0.0	0.0	469	100
1-5 years	0	0.0	6	0.9	245	37.3	113	17.2	74	11.3	214	32.6	5.0	0.8	657	100
6-10 years	1	0.6	1	0.6	47	30.5	40	26.0	19	12.3	44	28.6	2.0	1.3	154	100
11-20 years	2	1.8	3	2.8	34	31.2	16	14.7	16	14.7	38	34.9	0.0	0.0	109	100
More than 20 years	1	8.3	0	0.0	5	41.7	2	16.7	1	8.3	3	25.0	0.0	0.0	12	100

5.3 Migration has clear economic benefits for the country of origin, the country of destination and individual migrants

The economic benefits of migration for the country of origin and country of destination are better evaluated from aggregate data sources, although the ETF findings do provide information on the extent of remittance transfers, which are substantial. Indeed, some 64% of Georgian returnees regularly sent remittances to their families (EUR 261 per month on average) and 76% of Armenian returnees sent money home while they were abroad (EUR 360 per month on average). The contribution of remittances to the economies of both countries remains quite significant, and this income is probably helping some families to rise above the poverty line.

To analyse the more long-term impact, however, we have chosen to test this assumption by comparing the economic condition indicator for returned migrants with the same indicator for potential migrants (non-migrants and prospective migrants). As explained in chapter 3, this indicator takes into account overall household income[3], land and house ownership and is expressed as a score ranging from 0 (worst situation) to 4 (best situation). The results are inconclusive (Table 5.5). Both in Georgia and Armenia, there is no visible economic difference between households without migrants and the households with returning migrants.

[3] The same income threshold calculated for potential migrants was used for the calculation of the economic conditions index for returning migrants.

Table 5.5 Economic condition by household and presence of a migrant in Armenia and Georgia

	Armenia		Georgia	
	Households with no migration experience	Households with returned migrant	Households with no migration experience	Households with returned migrant
Economic condition indicator	2.1	2.1	2.0	2.1

The result confirms that while most households with migrants benefit from the immediate impact of migration, mainly through remittances, they do not manage to use the migration experience and savings to achieve a sustainable improvement in living standards upon their return. Owing to unfavourable labour market conditions at home and a lack of institutional support, they are unable to convert their migration experiences abroad into a significant premium on the domestic labour market. This poor outcome is also linked to the unproductive use of remittances and/or savings upon return in that the income is typically used to cover day-to-day expenses and consumption rather than being invested in education or entrepreneurial activities.

In summary, the survey results do not fully support widely held perceptions about the sustainable economic benefits of migration that lead significant numbers of people in both countries to seek work abroad.

5.4 Migration leads to brain gain

There are a number of possible ways to test this assumption since brain gain refers to a range of practices and outcomes. The most obvious test is whether migrants are receiving education or training in the country of destination, and the survey data provides an opportunity to examine that question. As mentioned earlier, 10% of Georgian returnees and 6% of Armenian returnees studied and/or attended formal training abroad. Moreover, when returnees who had worked since their return were asked about the most helpful experience and the skills they had gained abroad, they cited vocational and technical skills, language skills, skills related to work ethics and culture, social skills, and entrepreneurial skills (Table 5.6).

Table 5.6 Most helpful skills acquired abroad by migrants from Armenia and Georgia (%)

Country	Vocational and technical skills	Language skills	Work ethics & culture	Social skills	Entrepre-neurial skills	Other
Armenia	69	18	5	1.7	4	2
Georgia	48	25	12	7.5	7	1

A less well known but potentially more significant impact of migration on levels of human capital relates to how remittances are spent. The ways people use remittances has traditionally been criticised by development economists because this money is typically used to finance consumption, a practice not considered productive in development terms. In this context education would be seen as a productive expenditure, but it rarely figures among the uses of remittances reported by families of migrants.

Table 5.7 Use of remittances for education in Armenia and Georgia

	Armenia				Georgia			
	Yes		No		Yes		No	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Use of remittances for education of children	6	0.6	1 042	99.4	126	14.2	761	85.8
Use of remittances for education of others	87	8.3	961	91.7	19	2.1	868	97.9

Data from this study suggests that both Armenia and Georgia offer positive examples of the potential for this aspect of brain gain (Table 5.7). Of course, investment in education still falls far short of the money spent on consumption, but the percentages recorded in this survey are higher than those previously reported in comparable studies. Respondents were asked whether they had used remittances for the education of their children or others. The question required a simple 'yes' or 'no' answer because asking for levels of expenditure would have been too complicated and unreliable. In Armenia, 0.6% of the respondents who had sent home remittances reported that the money was used for the education of children and 8.3% of the same group said that it had been spent on the education of others. In Georgia, these percentages were 14% for the education of children and 2.1% for the education of others.

At first sight these percentages may appear to be relatively small, but education nonetheless figures quite high in the overall list of expenditures. In Georgia, it is one of the highest percentages after living expenses (mentioned by 97.0% of retuned migrants), but comparable with the purchase of durable goods (cited as a use of remittances by 15.4%), and healthcare expenses (13.9%) and ahead of buying property (3.8%). Financing a business activity is the only other use of remittances considered positive from the standpoint of development, and only 0.5% of respondents reported this use of remittances. In Armenia, living expenses was also the most frequently cited use of remittances (95.7%), followed by buying property (15.4%), and healthcare expenses (11.8%). Education came fourth, far ahead of business investment (0.2%). These findings provide important information on the use of remittances and serve to correct the assumption that this income is always spent on consumption and housing. Likewise, the data offers a significant new example of brain gain in the context of migration.

5.5 Work experience abroad has certain benefits that are recognised in the labour market once migrants return home

The success of circular migration depends on the development of positive links between work experience abroad and reintegration into the labour market on return. The migration outcome and return outcome indicators were developed to test the assumption that such links exist. As explained in chapter 3, the migration outcome is assessed on the basis of migrant's work and living experience abroad, while the return outcome is based on migrant's experience since return including the benefits of migration in domestic labour market. The test of this assumption is therefore a comparison between the migration outcome indicator and the return outcome indicator to ascertain whether successful migration leads to successful return.

Table 5.8 Return outcome by migration outcome in Armenia

Migration outcome indicator	Return outcome indicator: Highly unsuccessful	Unsuccessful	Neither	Successful	Highly successful	Total
Highly unsuccessful	0	0	3	0	0	3
Unsuccessful	0	0	6	15	0	21
Neither	0	8	123	126	0	257
Successful	0	8	234	346	7	595
Highly successful	0	0	0	5	0	5
Total	0	16	366	492	7	881

The data from Armenia clearly show a positive relationship between successful migration and successful return (Table 5.8). The vast majority of migrations considered successful led to highly successful or successful returns, with only eight unsuccessful or highly unsuccessful returns out of 595 migrations. The picture in Georgia is similar, but the association is less pronounced (Table 5.9). Once again, the results provide support for the importance of contextual variables in proving this assumption.

Table 5.9 Migration outcome by return outcome in Georgia

Migration outcome indicator	Return outcome indicator: Highly unsuccessful	Unsuccessful	Neither	Successful	Highly successful	Total
Highly unsuccessful	0	2	1	0	0	3
Unsuccessful	0	7	28	22	0	57
Neither	0	38	210	189	1	438
Successful	0	38	244	267	6	555
Highly successful	0	0	1	2	0	3
Total	0	85	484	480	7	1 056

A closer look at the sub-variables of the return outcome indicator shows that the percentage of migrants who have worked after return is not very high: only 42% of returnees in Armenia and 30% of returnees in Georgia have worked since their return. However, this rate is similar to or even slightly higher than that of the potential migrants. The fact that the employment rate of returnees is similar before and after migration appears to be linked to the sluggish labour markets in their home countries. The most common type of work after return has been wage employment, followed by self-employment.

One positive outcome is the presence of a small group of employers and self-employed people among the active returnees: 8.4% in Armenia and 6.2% in Georgia (data referring to the returnees' main job since return). Furthermore, 32% of those who have worked upon return in Armenia and 42% of such respondents in Georgia found their experience abroad helpful in finding a job back home (Table 5.10). Also, almost 50% of such respondents in Armenia and almost 70% in Georgia use or have used this experience in their daily work. This suggests that migration can be helpful and that new skills can be acquired and used if returnees are able reintegrate into the labour market at home.

Table 5.10 Usefulness of the migration experience in finding a job and use of acquired skills in Armenia and Georgia (%)

Experience abroad helpful in finding a better job at home	Armenia	Georgia
Yes	32.4	41.8
No	67.6	58.2
Experience abroad used in daily work at home	**out of those who found a job upon return**	
Yes	46.2	67.5
No	53.8	32.5

5.6 Reintegration assistance can play a positive role in successful return

The role of reintegration schemes is widely discussed and it is clear that they can offer returning migrants vital support in certain circumstances. A return outcome indicator based on survey data could be used to test the assumption that such schemes can play a positive role in the reintegration of returnees. However, the results of these two surveys revealed such a low awareness of return support that the test was considered invalid in these cases. In Georgia, 98.2% of the 1 401 returned migrants interviewed were unaware of official support for returnees and only one had benefited from such a scheme. The picture in Armenia was similar: 98.8% of the Armenian returnees were completely unaware of any such reintegration schemes and none of those interviewed had benefited from such support. Before the value of reintegration assistance can be properly tested, these schemes will have to be much more widespread.

The difficulty most often reported by returning migrants in both countries was in finding work (45% in Armenia and 52.9% in Georgia). The implication of this finding is that assistance in finding employment is the most urgent priority. It is, in fact, the only significant priority because the vast majority of returning migrants reported no difficulty at all after return. The second most reported difficulty after finding work was reintegration, which was problematic for only 0.6% of migrants in Georgia and 1.4% in Armenia.

This picture can be complemented by similar information on the use of pre-departure training among the returnees. In most cases, no such training is available or migrants are unaware of the existence of such programmes. Only 2% of returnees in Armenia and 6% in Georgia received any pre-departure training. However, when asked whether they would take advantage of such programmes, 30% of prospective migrants in Armenia and 40% in Georgia expressed an interest in receiving such training (more women than men).

5.7 Increasing the portability of social rights and benefits will encourage circular migration

As with reintegration assistance, systems for the transfer of social rights (such as pension rights, health care benefits etc.) are probably more widely discussed than implemented. Nevertheless, in these two surveys a significant number of respondents reported experience of such portability so that the resulting data can be used to test whether or not they promote successful return, which in turn encourage more circular migration. The assumption was tested by comparing the return outcome indicator with the social security rights transferred from abroad. The data on social security coverage from abroad were collected in the survey with a simple yes or no answer.

Table 5.11 Return outcome by the transferred social security coverage in Armenia and Georgia

		Armenia				Georgia			
		With social coverage		No social rights		With social coverage		No social rights	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Return outcome	Highly successful	2	6.3	5	0.5	0	0	7	0.6
	Successful	25	78.1	535	55.0	28	70.0	478	43.9
	Neither	5	15.6	411	42.3	12	30.0	514	47.2
	Unsuccessful	0	0	21	2.2	0	0	91	8.3
	Highly unsuccessful	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Total	32	100	972	100	40	100	1090	100

The results in Table 5.11 provide very strong support for the link between transfer of social security from abroad and successful return, which will certainly encourage circularity. The majority of respondents in Armenia and Georgia who reported that they had been able to transfer social rights also reported successful or highly successful returns. The overall number of individuals who had been able to transfer rights was relatively small, but the clear association observed provides strong evidence for the value of such portability and encouragement to those who are negotiating for the extension of the transferability of social rights.

However, it must be emphasised that the social security coverage of the returnees while working abroad was extremely low (2% in Armenia and 3% in Georgia). This phenomenon is closely linked to the fact that migrants tend to find irregular work in the informal sector, but as seen in Table 5.12, the proportion of returnees who reported having social security abroad is much lower than that of migrants who had some kind of regular status abroad (work permit and/or residence permit), which was low for both countries (altogether, a third for Armenia and a quarter in the case of Georgia).

Table 5.12 Status while working abroad of migrants from Armenia and Georgia (%)

Status while working abroad	Armenia	Georgia
Had work permit	20	5
Had residence permit	12	21
Had social security coverage	2	3
Had work contract	14	14

6. POLICY CONCLUSIONS

The aim of this report was to examine the relationship between migration and human capital using data from an ETF project designed to test a number of assumptions that inform the EU's policy in this area. The data came from large scale questionnaire surveys on more than 500 variables of potential and return migration in Armenia and Georgia, two countries that depend heavily on migration. This report has only covered fewer than 50 variables so there is clearly much more work that can be done in the analysis of these results.

Following a theoretical overview and an account of the methodology, the report presents a descriptive analysis of key results of these two surveys. Results are discussed separately for the three groups defined by the survey: non-migrants, that is, respondents who reported that they were not seriously considering moving abroad; prospective migrants, who reported that they were seriously considering migration; and returned migrants, who had previously spent at least three months abroad.

The migration surveys provide a great deal of information on the migrants' situation and only a small part could be analysed and presented here. Although the survey results primarily consist of data and numbers, they ultimately afford us a greater understanding of the socio-economic context and circumstances of the individuals who migrate in search of work and income. For example, the results reveal that prospective migrants tend to be younger, more often men than women, and typically have a mid-level education (upper secondary general or vocational), although university graduates account for a considerable percentage in both countries. In the group of prospective migrants, women tend to have higher education levels than men. On the other hand, returning migrants tend to be middle-aged men with families and a mid-level education (upper secondary general followed by vocational education).

In all the variables discussed it was clear that prospective migrants had fewer family ties at home than non-migrants: they were less likely to be married, less likely to have children and less likely to be employed (although unemployment was high in all three groups). Prospective migrants who were employed reported working in less desirable sectors of the economy and having only casual work, giving them more incentive to leave. Reasons for migration were all economic (lack of jobs, low living standards, unsatisfactory wage and career prospects), while reasons for return were typically family-related. Overall, the desire expressed by prospective migrants to leave the country is understandable in view of the findings. Survey results show that 36% of the 18 to 50 age group in Armenia and 31% in Georgia intend to migrate, but the percentages decrease to 12.6% and 11.4%, respectively, when controlled for actual ability to migrate.

There were significant differences between the two countries in the profiles of migrants. Although migrants from both countries report economic reasons as the most main reason for migration, the data for Georgia is more diverse, with more migrants reporting education as a factor in their decision to leave. Likewise, there is greater diversity in the Georgian sample in both the most likely destination cited by prospective migrants and the actual destinations of returned migrants. The majority of Armenians migrate to Russia (85%), whereas Georgian migrants travel to a much greater range of destinations—most significantly Turkey, Russia and Greece, but also to the USA and Western Europe. While the EU share as an actual destination is low (7% in Armenia and 24% in Georgia), the percentage of prospective migrants citing it as a likely destination is higher. The most desired destinations are as follows: Russia, the USA and France for Armenians; and Turkey, the USA and Italy for Georgians.

This diversity of destinations is clearly influenced by the pattern and nature of migrations from the two countries. Migration from Armenia appears to be significantly more circular in nature: returnees commonly reported multiple migrations (quite a few Armenian respondents reported details of the maximum eight migrations provided for by the survey form). In Georgia, by contrast, migrations lasted longer (more than twice as long for the first migration) and were less numerous. Overall, 41% of Armenians and 23% of Georgians migrated more than once, and the tendency to repeat was high: 68% of returnees in Armenia and 48% in Georgia plan to emigrate again.

The report also highlighted the significant gender differences between prospective and non-migrants. Although unemployment had a significant positive effect on the desire to migrate among men, this was not the case among women. In both Armenia and Georgia, women who had worked in the seven days prior to the interview were no less likely to be seriously considering a move abroad than women who had not.

Men and women migrants also had very different educational profiles. In Armenia, the relationship between education, gender and the desire to migrate is particularly clear. In the group of prospective migrants, the men were more likely to be less educated (lower secondary and upper secondary general) whereas the women had much higher levels of education (post-secondary vocational and higher education). The same is true to a slightly lesser extent in Georgia. This difference reflects the fact that, overall, women were more likely to be better educated than men. Women were also represented in very different educational sectors – to some extent reflecting the traditional gender divisions in education also found elsewhere in the world. They were significantly over represented in the fields of education and teacher training, humanities and arts, and healthcare and welfare. Men were more numerous in engineering, manufacturing, architecture, agriculture, forestry and fishing.

The report also contains interesting details on the skills dimension of migration. Although most migrants do not intend to study or receive training abroad, 10% of Georgians and 6% of Armenians did attend formal education or training. Furthermore, migrants report other helpful experiences and skills gained abroad in the following order: vocational/technical skills, language skills, work ethics and culture, entrepreneurial skills, and social skills. Nonetheless, the work most often performed abroad by migrants from both countries was in construction, commerce and domestic services, and most migrants worked as skilled or unskilled workers, irrespective of their education level. Skill mismatch increases with education (42% of high-skilled Armenians and 49% of high-skilled Georgians worked in as unskilled jobs) and is certainly higher for women.

Finally, prospective migrants, especially women, expressed a high interest in pre-departure training (30-40%), but very little training was in fact received by migrants (6% in Georgia, 2% in Armenia). Awareness of return support schemes is also very limited among returnees (1-2%) and actual participation is miniscule. Portability of social rights improves migrants' return outcomes. The fact that only 42% of migrants in Armenia and 30% in Georgia had work after their return and the very low index of entrepreneurial activity is a reflection of the unfavourable local labour market conditions and insufficient support they receive because the employment status of returned migrants is similar to that of the nationally representative group of potential migrants.

The report then turned to the analysis of the seven assumptions introduced in chapter 2.

1. **Temporary/circular migration has benefits which permanent migration does not**

   The Armenian data provided partial support for this assumption, whereas the Georgian data presented exactly the opposite pattern. This discrepancy would suggest that the nature of the impact of migration varies with certain country-specific factors, which require more detailed qualitative research. Given the importance of social networks, however, the long and well-

established character of the Armenian diaspora compared to the relatively recent history of the Georgian diaspora may explain the better outcomes achieved in the short-term by Armenian migrants.

2. **The relationship between education and emigration is uncertain**

   For a minority, education can be one of the reasons for migration, but returned migrants emerged as the least educated group. The group with most education spent the longest time abroad, especially in Armenia. The results from both countries highlight the uncertainty of the relationship between education and migration and undermine the hypothesis that an association exists between low education and longer migration.

3. **Migration has clear economic benefits for the country of origin, the country of destination and individual migrants**

   This widely held assumption was not fully supported by this research. Remittances and savings certainly help families in the short-term but are not generally used productively to change the household's living standards in a sustainable long-term manner. Thus, the economic benefits of migration are transitory and this is probably due to the difficult economic and labour market conditions in these two countries.

4. **Migration leads to brain gain**

   The test of this assumption focused on the acquisition of new skills and experiences and the use of remittances. Although only a small minority, some returnees (more in Georgia than Armenia) studied or attended training while abroad. However, many migrants learned new skills and experiences in the destination country, including vocational skills and languages in addition to social and cultural skills. Another interesting pattern found in both countries was that remittance money was used by some migrants to finance education, suggesting a new factor that should be taken into account when evaluating overall brain gain.

5. **Work experience abroad has certain benefits that are recognised in the labour market once migrants return home**

   Once again, the Armenia data offered strong evidence in support of this assumption, demonstrating very clear link between successful migration and successful return. The picture in Georgia was similar. Although a sluggish labour market and insufficient institutional support reduces migrants' success on return, some active returnees said that their migration experience helped them to find a job at home and reported that they were using the experience gained abroad in their daily work. This finding suggests that migration can be helpful if returnees can integrate into the labour market at home.

6. **Reintegration assistance can play a positive role in successful return**

   Awareness of reintegration assistance was almost non-existent amongst returned migrants in both countries and awareness of pre-departure support schemes was similarly low. The difficulty most often reported by returnees was entering the labour market, which suggests that support in finding work should be a priority in reintegration schemes

7. **Increasing the portability of social rights and benefits will encourage circular migration**

   Although the numbers are small, returnees who had been able to transfer social rights also reported successful or highly successful returns. The test found very strong support for this association in both Armenia and Georgia and although portability is not very common, efforts

should be made to establish systems that would develop the necessary links and support the practice.

The research provided unqualified support for assumptions 2, 4 and 7. The Armenian data provided partial support for assumptions 1 and 5, but the Georgian data relating to these two assumptions was unclear or contradictory. Greater development of reintegration schemes is needed before assumption 6 can be tested.

Nevertheless, this report has highlighted some important areas of new information uncovered by these surveys. These results have important implications for the study of the relationship between migration and human capital. There appears to be a strong relationship between destination and motivation for migration, highlighted by the distinctions between Armenian and Georgian returned migrants. The survey has also highlighted an interesting gendered relationship between education and migration, in that it is the more educated women and less educated men who most often express a desire to migrate.

In terms of policy implications, the survey findings suggest the need for greater emphasis on the employment and skills dimension of migration to achieve better migration and return outcomes. Policies should be aimed at creating a better framework that will ensure that migration is beneficial for the migrant as well as for the countries of origin and destination. They should also focus on protecting the rights of migrants, and ensuring that their skills are utilized effectively in the receiving country and when they return home. In this regard, the following specific policy measures are proposed.

- Better information should be made available about job vacancies abroad to help reduce the skills mismatch in destination countries; this can be achieved by strengthening cross-national placement services (e.g. extending EURES).
- Pre-departure training should be made more readily available, with a focus on appropriate language training, vocational qualifications and information about available institutional pathways for finding employment abroad (employment offices etc.).
- An open and accessible system for the recognition and validation of migrants' skills and qualifications in destination countries is needed to improve the match between jobs and the skills of migrants. This is especially important for women. Qualifications recognition systems are gradually being put in place in EU Member States, but are largely lacking in CIS countries.
- Returning migrants need to be helped to use their skills more effectively upon their return, and the proportion of remittances and migrants' savings used for education and entrepreneurial activity needs to be increased. Relevant instruments include the validation of prior learning abroad, improved and tailor-made placement services for migrants, and support for entrepreneurs and business start-ups, including incentives for turning remittances into entrepreneurial opportunity.
- Efforts to strengthen legal migration must pay attention to the motives for migration and for return and focus on developing legal ways for migrants to move back and forth easily between the home and destination country.
- Information on the necessary documentation for legal migration and legal employment and on the rights of migrants in the destination countries should be provided in cooperation with these countries and made easily accessible to potential migrants. Bilateral agreements between sending and receiving countries are also a useful tool for improving the compatibility of benefit schemes and the portability of social benefits.

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
ETF	European Training Foundation
EU	European Union
EURES	European Job Mobility Portal
GDP	Gross domestic product
ISCED	International Standard Classification of Education
ILO	International Labour Organisation
USA	United States of America
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

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