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The impacts and consequences of the war in Ukraine on Georgia due to the large influx of migrants from Russia

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SANTRAUKA

Iš esmės yra dviejų tipų žmonių migracija, ty priverstinė migracija arba perkėlimas ir planuojama arba pageidaujama migracija. Migracijos turi daug priežasčių, pasekmių ir pasekmių. Migracijos, susijusios su vietiniu, tarptautiniu nestabilumu, kurį sukelia karai ir konfliktai tarp dviejų ar daugiau šalių, yra tie, kuriuos reikia greitai ir tiksliai išspręsti. Vienas iš tokių atvejų yra Rusijos ir Ukrainos karas bei jo neigiami padariniai ir pasekmės visame pasaulyje ir gretimoms šalims, tokioms kaip Gruzija.

Nuo karo pradžios Gruzija tapo ta šalimi, į kurią vis dar migruoja rusai, siekdami išvengti Rusijai įvestų sankcijų, karinės mobilizacijos, žemo pragyvenimo lygio, ieškoti socialinės ir ekonominės naudos gyventi ir kurti verslą Gruzijoje. Nepaisant to, Gruzijos sieną kirto daugiau nei 1,5 mln. Rusijos piliečių, o nuo 2022 m. nuolat gyvenančių Gruzijoje – daugiau nei 120 tūkst. Taigi, nepaisant Gruzijos BVP augimo iki 9,3% per metus, vietos bendruomenėse kyla daugiau problemų dėl rusų migrantų. Žodžiu, pragyvenimo lygis mažėja, o kainos už viską ženkliai didėja, priešingai nei darbo užmokestis.

Tyrimo tikslas – nustatyti visas neigiamas Rusijos migrantų įtakos gruzinų ekonominei veiklai, socialinei nuotaikai ir kasdieniniams pokyčiams formas bei valdžios sprendimų neefektyvumą valdant rusų migrantų srautus. Šiam tikslui pasiekti pirmiausia atliekami gilūs literatūros tyrimai, o vėliau interviu su 10 vietinių gruzinų, įvairaus amžiaus, lyties, socialinės ir finansinės padėties. Šiuo darbu siekiama apibrėžti ir parodyti skirtumus bei panašumus tarp išvadų iš interviu ir literatūros apžvalgų bei pridėti naujų įžvalgų.

Analizė ir interviu rezultatai rodo empirinius įrodymus ir duomenis, susijusius su Rusijos migrantų poveikiu vietos gyventojams Gruzijoje. Šie duomenys padeda nustatyti tinkamas ir vertingas rekomendacijas dėl veiksmų.

Raktiniai žodžiai: migracijos dinamika, Rusijos ir Ukrainos karas, socialiniai ir ekonominiai padariniai, socialinė sanglauda, politinės pasekmės, politikos rekomendacijos.

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SUMMARY

There are mainly two types of human migration, namely, forced migration or displacement and planned or wished migration. Migrations have many reasons, effects, and consequences. Migrations related to local, internation instabilities caused by wars and conflicts between two or more countries are those which require solutions quickly and precisely. One of the instances is the Russia-Ukraine war and its negative effects and consequences globally and on nearby countries like Georgia.

Since the beginning of the war, Georgia has become the country where Russians are still migrating to avoid imposed sanctions on Russia, military mobilization, and low living standards there, and look for socio-economic benefits to live and establish businesses in Georgia. Nevertheless, the number of Russian citizens who crossed the border of Georgia is more than 1,5 million people, and those who have been living in Georgia permanently since 2022 are more than 120,000 people. Hence, despite the growth of the Georgian GDP to 9,3% in a year, there are more issues in local communities caused by Russian migrants. To wit, the living standards are decreasing, while prices for everything are significantly increasing in contrast to wages and salaries.

The objective of the research is to determine all negative forms of influences of Russian migrants on the economic activities, social mood, and daily-life changes of Georgians, and the ineffectiveness of governmental decisions on managing the flow of Russian migrants. To achieve this goal, deeply elaborated literature research is first conducted, and then, interviews are carried out with 10 local Georgians of various ages, genders, social and financial backgrounds. This work aims to define and demonstrate differences and similarities between findings from the interviews and literary reviews and add new insights.

The analysis and the outcomes of the interviews show empirical evidence and data in the contexts of the Russian migrants' impacts on locals in Georgia. This data contributes to ascertaining relevant and valuable recommendations for action.

Keywords: migration dynamics, the Russia-Ukraine war, socio-economic impacts, social cohesion, political implications, policy recommendations.

INTRODUCTION

One of the major worldwide issues is the migration of people due to local or international conflicts that rise from minor misunderstandings to tremendous war actions, which has just a few advantages and tons of disadvantages and hazards for societies. Some people find migrants beneficial for the growth of the economy of a country and consider them as a cheap human source for labor work, whilst others are concerned about migrants' hidden intentions related to the conscious or unconscious deterioration of the national identity of hosting people, the danger of some illegal acts or forming terroristic groups (Crocker, 2015). Notwithstanding, solid reasons for migration can vary from personal preferences or necessities to forced ones related to wars or natural disasters (Bhagwati 2003, 99). Meanwhile, due to the war in Ukraine, the Russian government and its people attempt to accomplish their disproportionately aggressive expansionist foreign policy objectives through a conspicuous exemplar of leveraging migration as a tool, particularly in Georgia. Consequently, this thesis directs significant attention towards the migration of Russians to Georgia, where the ramifications of such influx bear intricate socio-political and economic implications.

Relevance of the topic. After Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, pressing and pertinent issues have emerged due to the consecutive massive immigrations and particularly migrations of Russian citizens, who were trying to escape serving in the military, looking for the shelter in neighbouring countries, one of which is Georgia (Kucera, 2024). The admission of Russian citizens has become a potential problem for several hosting countries in various aspects, ranging from social and financial to the unrest of locals' well-being. As a result, many restrictions were imposed on the admission of Russian citizens to avoid mass strikes and fatal social unrest, which could have ended with the coup. However, regardless of these situations appearing in Georgia, Georgian authorities have not taken any special measures to regulate this process (Meduza, 2023). Public sentiments are clearly related to the Russian occupation and the feeling that the entry of Russian citizens into the country can become a challenge for Georgia's security due to the wars related to the Russian invasion into Georgia in 1992 and 2008 (Kelly, 2022). In May 2023, air traffic with Russia was restored, which made it even easier for Russian citizens to travel to Georgia. Against that background, it is likely that the growing trend of Russian citizens entering Georgia will continue. The situation is tense and makes even more threatening by the fact that Russian citizens feel completely comfortable in Georgia, simultaneously Russian immigrants are allowed to establish various businesses and occupy numerous positions in the social sector freely the same as locals, which frightens the Georgian population by emphasizing the fact that 20% of Georgia is still occupied by Russia.

The problem of the research addressed in this thesis is in what way the increased migration of Russian citizens due to the war in Ukraine has affected social, industrial, and political spheres of

Georgia.

The questions of the research. What are the influences and consequences of the Russian migrants on Georgian socioeconomic, political, and daily life aspects? What are the recommendations as a possible solution for locals and governmental authorities towards appearing issues caused by the massive migrants of Russian citizens to Georgia?

The object of the research is to detect forms of influences of Russian migrants on the economic activities, social mood, and daily-life changes of Georgians, and the ineffectiveness of governmental decisions on managing the flow of Russian immigrants.

The aim of the paper is to investigate and analyze impacts of increased number of Russian migrants on locals from various social classes, in term of their financial, moral and material wellbeing, political and industrial aspects of Georgia.

To reach the **aim** the following **objectives** were set:

- Examine the Global Migration Dynamics and Analyze Migration Patterns, including the case of Georgia.
- Assess Socioeconomic Impacts on Various Social Classes Generally and in Georgia.
- Examine Political Ramifications and Identify Ineffectiveness in the Governmental Management Generally and in Georgia.
- Understand Public sentiments and Social Cohesion Generally and in Georgia.
- Provide Policy Recommendations.

In the first part of the paper, the theoretical foundation is divided into two main parts related to migration generally and migration of Russians to Georgia specifically and outlined accordingly. The first section explores the fundamental causes, impacts, and consequences of migration on welcoming countries' economic, social, industrial, and political aspects, including changes in the level of locals' prosperity. Moreover, some tactics are elaborated which are implemented by the governmental authorities so as to avoid possible negative influences of migrants on all governmental and non-governmental sectors, and of course, avoid mass uneasiness and strikes. The second part of the theoretical research will be explicitly based on Russians' migration dynamics in Georgia due to the war in Ukraine. Appropriately, distinct causes, effects, and consequences on various social classes, governmental and non-governmental sectors, as well as industrial sectors are included and comprehensively described.

The second part of the paper elaborates on the analytical components of the main topic. Drawing upon the theoretical research, interview questions are formed to collect empirical experience

data of local Georgians on the impact of increased Russian migration to Georgia during the Russia-Ukraine war. Accumulated data is synthesized and analyzed to provide comprehensive insights into the socioeconomic, political, and cultural influences and implications of this migration flow. Additionally, personal recommendations for the policymakers are listed, comprising my empirical outcomes and interpretations, as grounded on the best theoretical studies throughout the world as well as practical studies via interviews with local Georgians in Tbilisi, Kutaisi, and Batumi.

Research methods. This study utilizes the qualitative method for data collection and analysis via online and offline interviews with local Georgians of big cities, ranging from teenagers and adolescents to mid-aged and aged people from various social classes to be able to gain various and extensive responses that cover all aspects of Georgians' daily lives. The methodology encompasses literature review from articles, journal, official websites, and interviews for building the list of relevant, applicable, and intriguing questions, whilst primary data is collected via interviews accordingly. This approach provides the access to valuable information into the empirical experience of locals attributed to the coexisting with Russian migrants.

Information sources. Literary sources from the database of the Vytautas Magnus University database, online sources such as GoogleScholar, ResearchGate, Scribbr, ScienceDirect, and other topic-related online websites are used to develop the theoretical part. Various information is used to set up the questionnaire for the interview questions. Thus, in addition to literature resources, existing expert interviews and surveys on this topic are used as best as possible. Meanwhile, professional assistance contributed to building more qualitative and topic-oriented interview questions, who is a journalist living in Tbilisi and who is our family friend. The interview questions were checked by pretesting them with a journalist and his colleagues, as well as with some of my relatives who are currently working in the mass media industry in order to correct and fix gaps.

The main concepts of the thesis:

Asylum Seeker – it is a person who usually must leave his/her motherland, an origin country, due to persecution or threats to their lives and well-being, and they regularly look for international protection in other countries.

Burden-Sharing – it is when an individual or a group of people, in the case of the thesis it is about a country, suffer most due to unexpected circumstances, so they ask for help from other individuals or groups of people (in our case other countries) to lighten a burden by sharing responsibilities.

Economic Migration – it is when an individual or a group of people decide to leave their homes or permanent living places in a search for better employment opportunities, higher wages, or economic stability.

Environmental Migration – it is when an individual or a group of people decide to leave their homes or permanent living places due to natural disasters, climate change, environmental degradation, or resource scarcity.

Forced Migration – it is when an individual or a group of people are forced to leave their homes or permanent living places owing to local or international conflicts, persecutions, environmental disasters, or human right violations in order to save their lives and escape hazards.

Migration Policies – the set of law, regulations, and measures imposed by a government or a governmental institution to mitigate the flow of migrants and people crossing the borders of a country. It embodies such activities as visa requirement, immigration quotas, refugee procedures, and deportation policies (Wiederkehr et al., 2022).

Planned Migration – it is when an individual or a group of people intentionally leave their homes or permanent living places owing to various personal reasons related to economic opportunities, social benefits, family reunification, education, or faith-based reasons.

Political Backlash – it is the indicator of the strong negative reaction, usually disagreement or dissatisfaction, towards governmental actions or policies, leading to political strikes among opposition parties, interest groups and the general public.

Political Migration – it is when an individual or a group of people decide to leave their homes or permanent living places in a search for political freedom, democracy, or political refuge due to persecution, discrimination, or human right violations.

Refugee – it is a person who usually left his/her motherland, an origin country, due to such risks of harm in the motherland as wars, conflicts, human right violations, or persecution.

Social Migration – it is when an individual or a group of people decide to leave their homes or permanent living places in a search for social benefits, better living conditions, cultural ties, or family reunification.

Trauma-Informed Care – it is a type of an individual approach usually used towards migrants and refugees, who have experiences violence, displacement, or abuse, to recognize and heal the impacts of trauma.

Xenophobia – it is commonly used to define emotions of dread, distrust, or hostility directed towards immigrants, foreigners, or unfamiliar people, as well as it usually results as a form of discrimination, abnormal and humiliating attitudes and behaviours.

1. THEORETICAL ANALYSIS OF MIGRATION DYNAMICS

1.1. Migration Generally: Causes, Effects, and Consequences on Various Social Classes and Industrial Sectors.

Over thousand years of the history of mankind, people never settled in one place for long. Changing the place of living was related to two different forms of migration, namely, forced migration and displacement or planned and wished migration. As it is said by folks, "A fish seeks where water is deeper, while a human seeks where a place is better". So, what have been the main trends in and drivers of international migrations over the last century? Are borders "largely beyond control" (Bhagwati 2003, 99), or are governments generally effective enough in regulating migration? Such questions arise more frequently than any others in governmental and international meetings as if they go to the core of contemporary debates throughout the world. In wealthier countries, immigration related to low-skilled workers and asylum seekers is considered as an issue that requires in need of strict control, whilst in second and third-world countries immigration carries enormous issues in contrast to wealthy countries. So, a huge number of migration policies are integrated into governmental and international sectors in order to slow down, and preferably totally take control over uncontrolled migration, however, the effectiveness of migration policies has been highly contested (Castles, 2004).

1.1.1. Reasons for Migration Generally

International migration has its own general causes and consequences which are common worldwide and not associated with a specific region or country. Numerous analytical centres around the world have been trying to understand and explain reasons for migration and leaving their homelands by risking their own lives and the well-being of their loved ones. In this part of the thesis, different reasons for migration are elaborated as well as triggers that are related to them.

There are four main reasons of migration globally, regardless of the origin country or destination country of a migrant, his/her gender, age, social and financial statues. In accordance with the popularity of types of migration, they are listed and explained below:

1. One of the main factors of migration is related to economic ones such as the wage differences between an origin country and a destination country, when an individual or the whole family needs to diversify the family's access to financial capital, as well as demand to increase and stabilize the financial condition of the family. Nevertheless, when choosing a specific country to

migrate to, economic factors can be accustomed to by political and social conditions in that destination country and constrain their migration or raise the cost of this migration (Fitzgerald, Leblang, & Teets, 2014).

2. The second conspicuous factor is strongly associated with the belief that conditions abroad will provide political benefits not available in the homeland and is related to political factors. To be more accurate, the political environment in the origin country can be unfriendly or hazardous to an individual or a group of people who oppose the regime when the origin country's governmental authorities use a mechanism with which they manage potential political challengers by encouraging their exit (Hirschman, 1978).
3. The third factor is derived from the lack of social benefits not available in the homeland, to wit, higher living standards, better quality of public services, and overall sense of physical security, gradually growing the number of dissatisfied individuals who plan to migrate to better places (Dustmann & Okatenko, 2014). This factor can be paraphrased as the land of hopes and dreams, where the availability of public transport and access to better education and living facilities can be used daily.
4. The last main factor for migration, which is important and directly attributable to the main topic of the thesis, is political and social unrest caused by wars, conflicts, and partially natural disasters, compelling millions of people to be displaced from their motherlands (Brunarska & Ivlevs, 2023).

Nevertheless, there are more reasons for migration that are not in the list above. Some more factors that influence people's decision to migrate are associated with the area of origin, area of destination, intervening obstacles, and personal ones.

1.1.2. Effects and Possible Consequences of Migration due to a War on Hosting Countries Generally

Global forced migration rates are the highest since World War II. This statement can be supported by the latest reports of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) that declare levels of forced migration that have not been seen before in more than six decades (IOM, 2016). Another report made by the Global Trends Report from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR, 2018) demonstrates that the number of forced migrants in 2017 exceeded 60 million people, which is equal to the number of the population of the UK. These crises are the result of wars in Syria, Afghanistan, Ukraine, Iraq, and such African countries as Sinegal, Ethiopia, and Eritrea, where wars have created an extraordinary strength to global displacement issues, so refugee crises are not the concern of European countries anymore (Tsegay, 2023). None of the countries win

in case of wars, neither those that fight nor those who host refugees and migrants. In this part of the literary research, several effects and possible consequences will be explained.

Significant effects and consequences can be seen on various aspects of welcoming countries' social, economic, and political views due to the migrants running away from a war. Here are some potential effects and consequences:

1. ***Constraints on Resources.*** Some governmental and non-governmental sectors may be overloaded with big, unexpected numbers of migrants who are people as well and feel a need for such services as housing, healthcare, education, and social services. This abrupt influx of migrants can become the reason for the overburden of these service sectors and lead to their partial collapse when neither locals nor migrants can use these services (Becker & Ferrara, 2019). Consequences are specific for each above-mentioned service sector, namely, the price of rent for flats and houses rises exponentially, making it not affordable for locals. The healthcare system is usually subsidized by the government so extra financing is required to be able to equip all medical centres and hospitals with necessary items to be able to serve all patients. Moreover, after realizing that the war is not about to end soon, hosting countries' governmental authorities usually issue a decree related to opening some extra classes at schools, and groups at universities for refugees. Other service areas are overloaded as well with the high level of demand on them, while the number of servants stays the same, causing the increase of prices for services.

2. ***Social Cohesion and Integration Challenges.*** Integration of migrants is another effect of the war causing difficulties and challenges for hosting countries. Differences between migrants' and locals' cultural backgrounds, languages, and religions usually lead to some sort of tensions and misunderstandings. As an aftereffect, the level of discrimination, xenophobia, and social unrest booms (Sameed & Faris, 2020). Hosting countries usually reinforce existing policies and regulations towards migrants, which are already powerful and to some extent harmful for migrants. Such actions are reflected in the loss of cultural identity, language, and traditions of migrants in order to be able to adapt to new places, rules, and regulations. As a result, cultural integration of sooner generations passes easier and less painful due to openness and acceptance they have towards new cultures.

3. ***Labor Market Dynamics.*** Due to the large number of migrants in host countries, another sector called ed "labor" is under the impact. People who have lost everything and barely escaped the war areas and feel a need for earning to be able to provide for themselves and their families look for any kind of job even if it is paid much less in comparison with locals. So, as a result, migrants compete with locals for jobs, leading to a higher rate of unemployment, salary depression, and

exploitation of cheap human labor. In contrast, host countries can avoid such negative scenarios in case of using professional tactics by implementing new laws and regulations to keep both migrants and locals busy with work and worthy wages. Then, the economy of the host countries may start blooming thanks to filling labor shortages in certain sectors and boosting productivity (Helms & Leblang, 2019).

4. ***Security Concerns.*** Although forced migrants are running away from the war, and those who started it, namely, terrorists, there is a fear of both migrants and host countries on the presence of some militants or terrorists among the refugee population, which is the reason for strict rules and policies towards all refugees. Moreover, migrants themselves fear criminal extortion and kidnapping on the route to their destination place (Crocker, 2015). The worst possible scenario, in case of non-genuine security, and strict laws and regulations, host countries may encounter terroristic attacks and social unrest of locals, leading to more conflicts between migrants and locals.

5. ***Political Backlash and Polarization.*** The fact that all people have different, and sometimes contradictory, viewpoints about everything, some various incompatible fractions may form within host countries due to large numbers of migrants. Anti-immigrant sentiments may rise, leading to the formation of different populistic movements and enforcement of mandatory and immediate integration of restrictive immigration policies (Wiederkehr et al., 2022). This can have such consequences as social and political unrest. strikes of workers from some sectors suffering more from migrants, and ultimately end up with the change of governmental authorities and leading governmental parties. This is never good for any governmental or non-governmental sectors of the host countries and future bright prospects.

6. ***Humanitarian Responsibilities.*** Hosting countries, once they agree to accept some exact number of migrants who are trying to escape the war, have some responsibilities in the form of humanitarian aid for these needy people. There are international human rights and basic human principles of solidarity that host countries are supposed to follow by providing protection, assistance, and support for migrants. Of course, in most cases, the United Organization of Nations, UNICEF, and other unities that have huge power and finance allocate some amount of money to host countries for their expenses on migrants and extra bonuses for their willingness to accept (Ahairwe & Bisong, 2022). However, due to uncertainties related to the longevity of wars, and other rising global issues that require attention and money, host countries commence spending their own money from the governmental financial resources, and ultimately end up with a partial or complete stop of supporting and financing migrants for meeting basic life needs. Then, as we

know already from previous effects and their consequences, social and political unrest from the side of migrants, discrimination, and violation of human rights can be seen.

7. ***Long-term Economic Impacts.*** The consequences of this effect can vary from positive to negative, depending on strategies and tactics that governmental authorities of host countries integrate into their societies due to the huge number of migrants of the war. To be more precise, migrants'' skills, academic levels, willingness to integrate into the labor market, and governmental policies that control this flow and direct migrants to those sectors that suffer from the lack of workers can have a positive economic impact in the long run. In case of ignorance of such issues as the huge number of migrants in host countries and reliance only on external financing to sustain merely migrants, earlier or later it will end up with allocating money from the governmental financial savings and loss of control over the flow of finance.

8. ***Regional Stability.*** Migration that appeared as a result of the war usually has a broader impact on the whole region and its stability, not only on countries that fight and host migrants but all of the neighbouring counties as well. The social fabric of the entire region can be torn into pieces, having consequences in the forms of mutual disrespect, creating new tensions and affecting logistics, separation, and use of water, simply exacerbating existing conflicts. The only solution can be the professional work of diplomacy of all involved countries in this war either directly or circumlocutorily (Stability Challenges and Opportunities Regarding the Russo-Ukrainian War, n.d.).

Dimensions such as social, political, and security can be under the effects and consequences of the migration caused by war. Prioritizing human rights, humanitarian responsibilities, protection, assistance, promoting social cohesion, and possibilities for the integration of forced migrants from the side of host countries that implement comprehensive and coordinated approaches can lead to painless and beneficial results for both sides.

1.1.3. Strategies Used to Avoid Negative Effects and Consequences of Migration due to a War on Host Countries

Various strategies can be implemented at different levels to minimize such negative effects and consequences of migration as a threat to the national security, identity, and the social and cultural homogeneity on host countries due to a war. The following strategies described below can be used by host countries to mitigate adverse influences of migration, turn them into positive ones, and be able to have control over them. Here are some crucial tactics that range from national, regional to

international ones:

1. ***International Cooperation and Burden-Sharing.*** This strategy depends on the decision of at least several countries, so it is more international rather than a national tactic. In other words, it requires attempts and agreements of several countries to reach international cooperation and burden-sharing -sharing by distributing responsibilities between each country. For instance, a country with adjacent territory to the country that is involved in the war and from which the flow of migrants comes can be temporarily as a shelter for refugees and become a host country. Meanwhile, the rest of regional countries take responsibility for the supply of food and water, fuel, techniques, medical and first aid kit equipment, medication, and provision. This can involve coordinating among countries, international organizations, and NGOs for reaching better equitable sharing of the migrants' burden (Dowd & McAdam, 2017).

2. ***Early Warning and Conflict Prevention.*** According to UNICEF, being aware of the local, national, regional, and international mood of people adjusting to countries, and investigating early warning systems may contribute significantly to the prevention of conflicts and wars. This assists in its turn to ads the root causes of war and forced migration of people before escalation commences. The likelihood of war and its effects, and consequences can be accomplished by managing political, economic, and social misunderstanding between countries on time (Conflict Prevention, Early Warning and Security, 2024).

3. ***Humanitarian Assistance and Protection.*** By providing access to basic needs for migrants such as access to shelter, water, food, healthcare, education, and legal support can be a guarantee for host countries that things will not go out of control. It means that allocating sufficient resources for humanitarian assistance and protection of refugees, especially from violation, exploitation, and discrimination can lead to positive consequences related to gained trust of migrants and their willingness to pay back (Abeytia et al., 2023).

4. ***Integration and Social Cohesion.*** Physical responsibility-sharing is when hosting countries provide different ways for refugees to voluntary repatriation, local integration, or resettlement. When it comes to the integration of migrants into local societies, finding mutual understanding, respect, and solidarity between locals and forced migrants is important and can be reached through language and cultural orientation programs, community engagement activities, and efforts to cut with the root such things as discrimination and xenophobia. However, Hurwitz has elaborated the admission and integration of migrants into the local communities as the least popular approach among host countries, since they better provide migrants with humanitarian visas, work and study permits, as well as family reunification just to get rid of permanent heavy burden of receiving and

protecting refugees. Moreover, wealthy countries prefer more financing refugees and migrants to accepting them in their lands.

5. ***Labor Market Integration and Skills Development.*** The negative impacts on host countries' economies can be prevented by early and in-time actions towards supporting the labor market for migrants, directing the flow of workers to those sectors where the deficiency of the workforce is sensed significantly. Notwithstanding, before letting migrants work in those sectors, their skills, language capabilities, and physical abilities to work need to be checked, and in case of necessity, trainings, skills development programs, job matching services, and control over the fair distribution of workplaces among locals and migrants should be integrated (Dowd & McAdam, 2017).

6. ***Legal and Policy Frameworks.*** Two types of policy frameworks can be implemented by governmental authorities of host countries to either restrict the entrance of asylum seekers and forced migrants or develop and integrate appropriate legal policy frameworks to let them stay, work, and study. In the first case, host countries can be illustrated in the political arena in all their negative faces, and probably involving cooling of relations with friendly countries. Meantime, developing asylum procedures, refugee resettlement programs, and anti-discrimination legislation can be involved with being financed and supported by other countries and international unions (Dowd & McAdam, 2017).

7. ***Community Engagement and Participation.*** I find this strategy quite vital for governmental authorities of hosting countries to develop mutual understanding and decision-making by engaging local communities, namely, involving them in making decisions related to either accepting or rejecting migrants, in case of accepting, involving in planning and implementation policies and programs so as to avoid mass strikes, social and political unrest within host countries. Some approaches can be used specifically to reach a balance between decisions made by governmental authorities and local communities via setting up forums, advisory groups, and activities for dialogues and consultations (How Public Policies Affect Migration Flows, 2016).

8. ***Trauma-Informed Care and Mental Health Support.*** It is a known fact that people running away from a war, leaving their properties, and homeland suffer from mental d, especially children and teenagers. As a consequence, forced migrants are incredibly resilient, trauma and stress can result in their poor health throughout their lives. However, host countries can establish special programs related to recognizing and addressing the psychological and mental trauma of migrants and refugees in order to improve the overall mental health of these people, and accordingly avoid any forms of unexpected strikes and unrest caused by migrants, namely, due to their unstable

psychological and mental health conditions (Miller et al., 2019)

Thanks to implementing these strategies, challenges and negative effects can be better mitigated related to migrants and refugees running from a war, as well as instead, maximize positive outcomes for host countries by their presence.

1.2. Migration of Russians to Georgia due to the Russia-Ukraine War

Migration Dynamics: Causes, Effects, and Consequences on Various Social Classes and Governmental/Industrial Sectors. The war in Ukraine has caused millions of people from the country to move to various countries in Europe. Despite this fact, there are also many Russians who have attempted to leave their own country due to the half-scale mobilization of men to military groups to fight with Ukrainians. Apart from that many other reasons have been seen for the mass migration of Russians to neighbouring countries such as Georgia, Kazakhstan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, and more. In this part of the thesis, migration patterns will be elaborated in detail, including and mostly highlighting the effects, and consequences of Russian migrants to Georgia.

The migration caused by the war in Ukraine that started on 24th February 2023 is one of the most unexpected and dramatic since WWII. A huge number of Ukrainians were forced to leave their homes and motherland to survive the threats of the war, and the European Union was the first to help evacuate them from hazardous zones. According to this, the legal basis of the protection scheme was opened and has been still used to promote shelter for refugees in the territory of the EU. This legal basis of the scheme is interpreted in this way "All EU states are part of the scheme with the exception of Denmark which because of particularities in its constitutional position in the EU opened a parallel national scheme rather than join the EU scheme", and was adopted in 2001, on Temporary Protection which was implemented but never used till the Russian invasion to Ukraine (Council Directive, 2001). Within the first year after the beginning of the war, more than 8 millions of Ukrainians, including people who had legal stay documents in Ukraine, were recorded across Europe according to UNHCR (Situation Ukraine Refugee Situation, n.d.).

Meanwhile, Ukrainians and others, who were forced to leave their homes in Ukraine due to the war, took their way of migration to Georgia as well, which in its turn welcomed them with all respect and good attitude, since the beginning of the war, Georgians have been supporting Ukrainians by financing needy ones, providing with provisions, going to mass demonstrations throughout the country, and some Georgians have even joined voluntary battalion groups fighting against Russia (Maidanik, 2023). At the same time, 3 months later, mass migration of Russians to Georgia started,

and if the main reasons are briefly highlighted, they range from trying to escape the first half-scale mobilization and sooner full-scale one and generally being involved in military actions to the reasons related to the personal well-being, seeking for better places to live and grow children with better social and political atmospheres, and finding better places for running businesses, because Russia is the most sanctioned country in the world from the beginning of the invasion.

1.2.1. Russians' Migration to Georgia

Before the patterns of Russians' migration to Georgia are elaborated in much deeper detail, some facts are quite vital to be mentioned in order to understand why Ukrainians are much more welcomed as refugees and migrants in Georgia than Russians. That is the reason why, we need to glance back at 2008 and 1992, when Russia attacked Georgia, bringing death, collapse, and occupation of 2 big regions such as Abkhazia and South Ossetia, which are internationally recognized territories of Georgia. This occupation, alongside the establishment of military bases in these 2 regions and ongoing presence of Russian troops, has filed hate and hostility towards Russians among Georgians. The social, political, and economic sectors of Georgia had a big crisis due to the loss of territory and forced displacement of thousands of people strengthening hate and anti-Russian mood. Sooner, Russia declared the independence of these 2 regions and took them under its control, and up to nowadays everything has stayed unchanged regarding these territories (Kelly, 2022).

Shortly after the Russian invasion of Ukraine, a huge number of Russians commenced leaving their motherland and moving toward Georgia due to imposed sanctions, politically unacceptable dissenting opinions, and the fear of prison and prosecution. Two of the main reasons for choosing Georgia is that Russians can enter Georgia and stay there a year without a visa, and the fact that they are adjacent countries. The first mass wave of Russians' migration to Georgia was from March to June of 2022, when 277,698 Russian citizens, 74,385 Ukrainian citizens, and 54,147 Belarusian citizens entered Georgia, according to the Ministry of Internal Affairs' monthly data. In contrast to the same period of 3 months in 2021, in 2022, the number of Russians entering Georgia increased by 49,505. However, by the end of July 2022, the number of Russians reached 320,000 and approximately half of them did not leave the country by the end of the year. Regardless of the fact the number of Russian migrants was more than 10% of the origin population of Georgia, Georgian governmental authorities did not impose any laws or migration policies to control that flow which caused a lot of damage to many sectors of the country in the following months and years. Despite this, when all European countries integrated new laws and regulations that prohibited Russians from entering their territory, as well as cancelled all air connections with Russia, Georgian governmental

authorities opened the air for Russian aircrafts and even doubled the number of charter flights (□□□□□□□□ □□ □□□□□□□□□? (□□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□□□□□□ - 2022 □□□□□-ო ვ ნ ო ხ ო), n.d.).

The second wave of Russians' migration to Georgia started after the announcement on September 22, 2022, related to the half-scale military mobilization in order to protect newly occupied territories in Ukraine. An extrapolation of data from Georgia's Interior Ministry, which tracks admissions and exits by nationality, indicates that by the end of 2022, around 110,000 Russians have relocated to Georgia. The two biggest towns, Tbilisi and Batumi, a resort town by the Black Sea, saw a concentration of the new Russian immigrants, and in some areas of those cities, it became usual to hear more Russian spoken on the streets than Georgian. However, more than 30,000 Russians left Georgia by the beginning of 2023, while more than 15,000 of them submitted documents to get the Georgian residentship (Kucera, 2024). Since the beginning of 2023, the number of Russian migrants dropped significantly, and according to the explanatory card of the bill, 120,000 Russian citizens remain in Georgia, being the reason for the increased prices of rent and scarcity of well-paid jobs for locals (□□□□□□□□□, 2023).

No changes in migration policies in Georgia. Since the beginning of the migration waves from Russia, no special laws or migration policies were imposed by the Georgian government. This fact, in its turn, brought massive strikes in Tbilisi and Batumi, where the number of Russian migrants has overtaken the number of residents. Initially, negative Georgians' relationships with Russians due to tragic situations happened in 1992 and 2008, 90 % of the Georgian population identifies Russia as the country that poses the greatest political threat, and 83% see Russia as an economic threat according to the International Republican Institute poll in April 2022 (Public Opinion Survey Residents of Georgia | International Republican Institute, 2022). As a result, 66% of Georgians support the idea of a visa regime for Russian citizens according to a 2022 poll by the International Democratic Institute, however, no changes have been by now.

When it comes to the approaches used to the situation related to the Russians' migration to Georgia from the perspective of the Georgian governmental authorities, they stay immovable and contradictory to the local population's insights. The leading Georgian Dream Party and its president Salome Zourabichvili are concerned about the uncontrolled flow of Russian migrants, no imposed special migration policies for Russians, and continuous direct flight between Russia and Georgia, including such activities of Russian migrants as building businesses or relocating them from Russia to Georgia due to sanctions, especially in spheres like education and healthcare. Meanwhile, the Georgian Parliament and its head, Shalva Papuashvili, the Georgian Minister Irakli Kobakhidze

describe no migration policies towards Russian migrants as their desire to avoid additional issues for the government and society, and oppositely, see this process as a new economic opportunity, the flow of required specialists in such fields as IT, education, and healthcare, highlighting the fact that Georgia is known for its hospitality and capability to provide equal human rights for all before the law, and no necessity to cancel direct flights between Russia and Georgia (Georgian President Salome Zourabichvili Criticizes Government for Appeasing Russia and Drifting Away From Europe — Meduza, 2023). Meanwhile, some direct measures were suggested by another political party Lelo, which highlighted the need for special migration policies such as short-term visas at the border, requiring written acknowledgment of Russian occupation and Georgia's territorial integrity towards Russian migrants in order to control their flows, sort out individuals who pass the border to provide better safety and security of society. Also, the idea of the country paying or by other words "occupation tax" which was suggested to be used for Russian migrants by the largest opposition party the United National Movement in the size of 1000 Lari, which equals 350 American Dollars (The Impact of Russian Migration in Georgia | ISPI, 2023). However, neither the idea of short-term visas nor "occupation tax" was imposed by the leading governmental Georgian Dream Party.

1.2.2. Effects and Consequences of Migration to Georgia

In this part of the thesis, the impacts, and consequences of Russians' migration to Georgia are elaborated in more detail derived from official statistics and surveys conducted by independent parties. Immediate effects and corollaries on various aspects of Georgian society, economy, culture, and politics are explained below, embodying those effects and consequences which last up to now. Here influences and their results are:

1. ***Demographic Shifts.*** Due to the huge numbers of Russian migrants highlighted in part of thesis 1.2.1., tensions and adjustments within local communities in Tbilisi, Kutaisi, and Batumi have been caused, leading to mass demonstrations against Russian migrants. The number of Russian citizens entering the territory of Georgia has reached 1,5 million by now since the beginning of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. The consequences of such demographic shifts were obviously visible in overloaded service areas such as healthcare, education, and public services. Moreover, some more implications were seen in cultural practices and language usage, when in the above-mentioned cities, you could hear more Russian language than Georgian spoken by people in the streets (Kakachia & Kandelaki, 2022).

2. ***Economic Impacts.*** Inflation, the surge of real estate and rent prices, products and services, low

wages and salaries, more Georgia's economic dependence on Russia, and the growth of GDP by 9,3%, all are the immediate effects of Russian migrants and Russia on the economic condition of Georgia. Let's start with the fact that Georgia received three times more income in 2022 from Russia in contrast to 2021, reaching 3,6 billion US dollars and leading to a GDP growth of 9,3 by the end of 2022. This all happened due to several factors, namely, approximately 15,000 Russian companies were registered in Georgia, 6 times more than in 2021, 95% of which are individual enterprises, showing the fact that Russian migrants plan to settle in Georgia. Another factor is strongly derived from the significant increase of exports from Georgia to Russia from 300 million USD to 653, shifted by 55,2%. The third factor is associated with the import of petroleum, which increased 5 times more and reached 482 million USD, electricity, which increased by 46%, wheat and flour that picked at 97% of the consumption in Georgia. The next factor is related to the increased number of visitors which caused a huge cash flow in the service sectors, including the bank field, where more than 60,000 Russian citizens opened bank accounts and deposited more than 2,8 billion GEL that equals 1,046 billion USD. And lastly, close to 29 million USD was invested into the real estate sector in Georgia by Russians (□□□□□□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□: □□□□□□-□□□□□□□□□ □□□□, n.d.). Notwithstanding, regardless of the huge economic growth of Georgian GDP and flows of money, the living standards dropped significantly, while prices rocketed like never before due to the inflation rate and increased demand for everything. In one year, the prices of food and non-alcoholic beverages surged by 16,8%, prices for transport increased by 8,2%, communal bills related to electricity, housing, water, and gas increased by 15,4%, hotel services, the average check price in cafes and restaurants increased by 15,9%, household items, goods, and furniture by 16%, beauty and care by 9,6%, education and healthcare services by 9%, and lastly entertainment and culture by 6,2%. The rent price increased by 25-30% in cities such as Tbilisi, Kutaisi, and Batumi. Meanwhile, in comparison with the rise of prices on everything, salaries, and wages increased only by 5% only, causing the scarcity of money among the mid and law classes of the Georgian population, leading to the increase of the population that lives below the absolute poverty line, namely, 17,1% (□□□□□□□□□, □□□□□□ □□□□□□□ □□□□□□ □□ □□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□□□ – 2022 □□□□ □□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□□, n.d.).

3. ***Cultural Exchange.*** Although Georgia and Russia have adjusting borders, the cultural backgrounds of the Caucasian Republic and Russia are totally distinct and have just a few similarities. There are threats related to Russian propaganda among locals, the use of soft power, and language integration due to already existing facts that Russian citizens owning and living in flats in Batumi demanded that chairpersons of those buildings must provide information in

Russian, so locals see this demand as the first stage of the threat of Russian becoming a dominant language once again. Another case is related to the opening of new Russian-language schools in Batumi and Tbilisi with illegal curriculums and study syllabi based on Russian propaganda, causing great controversy and deep investigations conducted by the Ministry of Education. The next case happened in Tbilisi and Batumi where Georgian pupils saw flags of Russia and the so-called Republic of Abkhazia on school walls. Regardless of the territorial closeness of Georgia to Russia, Georgian youth is closer to Europe mentally and its standards thanks to being educated in European Universities, and a significant cultural shock that the young Georgian generation experiences watching Russia's attach on Ukraine, as well as consequences of the war in their country (Kakachia & Kandelaki, 2022).

4. ***Political Sensitivities and Dynamics.*** There was a separation among Georgian politicians who had contradictory insights and approaches to Russia and Russian migrants. Georgian opposition parties and policy experts suggested that some undercover operatives may brainwash migrant communities and use them as a Russian soft power and rise into military aggression like it was in 2008. Giorgi Noniashvili, a member of the European Georgian opposition party, advised the code of behaviour called "maintain a cold distance" when Georgians are not supposed to speak with Russian migrants unless they speak Georgian, with no smile and support. After not warm welcome demonstrated by Georgians and opposition parties, the provocative statement was made by the Deputy Chair of the Federation Council Committee on Foreign Affairs of Russia, Andrey Klimov, saying that Adjara, the Georgian city, may follow the example of Abkhazia and South Ossetia (Kakachia & Kandelaki, 2022). Regardless of all these, the chairman of the leading governmental party in Georgia, Georgian Dream, Irakli Kobakhidze, in reaction to what he called an ethnic discrimination campaign against Russians, he even promised to strengthen anti-discrimination laws to support Russian migrants in Georgia. With official government clearance and cooperation with Russian authorities, Georgian Airways resumed direct flights between Moscow and Tbilisi in April 2023, paving the door for further Russian immigration into the nation (Chumburidze, 2024).

5. ***Social Integration Dynamics. Cultural influence and Identity.*** Even though 2 years passed since the first wave of Russian migrants to Georgia, there are still plenty of social barriers, language barriers, discrimination, and marginalization of Russians based on their national identity, and political viewpoints. Around 25% of Russian migrants living in Georgia report facing discrimination, either from local people or institutions, although a quarter of them either already speak Georgian or learn it nowadays. The rate of unemployment among Russian migrants is quite low due to more than 21,000 enterprises opened in Georgia by Russian citizens up to now, so they

hire their compatriots. Despite the instability and discrimination, Russian migrants are adapting to new places, showing signs of integration into the Georgian society (Sergeeva & Kamalov, 2024).

6. ***Economic Integration.*** Russian migrants in Georgia are actively occupying the vast majority part of private businesses and employment in the IT sector. According to the latest data, two-thirds of Russian migrants have found employment within a couple of months after their arrival. As mentioned before, more than 21,000 new businesses were launched in Georgia by Russian citizens, being able to be employed and employ other compatriots (Sergeeva & Kamalov, 2024).

While some Georgians, Georgian politicians from the opposition, and the president see growing Russian citizen movement as a sign of economic and social unrest, other Georgian politicians sees it as a chance for economic growth. However, the country may confront long-term problems owing to socioeconomic, demographic, cultural, and national security issues. As disregarding their advice might result in a reduction in Western support, prolonging the process of joining the EU, and an increase in Russian influence, the administration needs to take into account the criticism leveled at its strategic approached and causing more dependence on Russia and its economy.

2. DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

2.1. Research Methodology

The research approach is presented in this part of the thesis that consists of an emphasis on the study topic, objectives, methodologies, and data gathering strategies. By targeting locals in Georgia of different ages, namely, there are 3 groups of people in whom I am interested, teenagers, adolescents and middle-aged people, and aged people from 3 different social groups, regarding their income, to wit, those who live below the poverty level, those who are considered as a middle class, and prosperous wealthy ones, the interviews are conducted either online or in person. The purpose of the interviews is to learn more about impacts and consequences of Russian migrants on Georgians daily lives and to find out similarities and differences with official information illustrated and elaborated in the theoretical part of the thesis concerning influences and outcomes of the influx of Russian migrant to Georgia. Moreover, derived from the theoretical and analytical parts, relevant and specific personal suggestions are shared to diminish negative effects of this migration flows and attempt to transform them into positive or at least controlled ones.

Method. In the initial phase, through interviews conducted online and offline, interviewees are asked about how Russian migration has affected their communities and way of life, including how the economy, labor market, social integration, and cultural interchange have changed. Questions related to government administration, the advantages and disadvantages of Russian migration, and potential future ramifications for Georgia are embodies in the list of questions as well. This is vital to gaining comprehensively developed answers which cover all aspects of interviewees' lives in Georgia, while coexisting with Russian migrants, so that we can suggest compatible strategies and tactics to be able to manage the flow of migrants and their negative impacts on locals.

The limitation of the research is the complication to reach out potential interviewees who know English, also time constraints due to the limited time available for data collection, analysis, and reporting may restrain the depth and thoroughness of the analytical research, especially overlooking significant insights and leading to a possible low level of reliability and validity of the findings.

The object of the research is to find out, first of all, if the information gathered and demonstrated in the literature review, which is based on official articles, webpages, and interviews, is compatible and has parallels with the finding from the interviews conducted, as well as provide valuable and issue-related information and suggestions to be able to take the control over the flow of Russian migration and its negative impacts on Georgia.

The aim of the research is to derive recommendations for actions for Georgians from various social classes and ages regarding solving negative effects and consequences of Russian migration since 2022 entrenched from the interview outcomes.

Objectives of the research are:

1. Create research design and approach;
2. Compile the interview questions from already existing resources, pretest and explain why exactly following questions are chosen;
3. Choose data collection techniques, and clarify reasons for altering them;
4. Conduct qualitative research based in the prepared methodology;
5. Present and analyze research outcomes and contribute necessary recommendations.

2.1.1. Interview Preparation

This part of the thesis deals with the preparation of the interview that will be conducted with local Georgians. The interview serves as a source of first-hand information that will contribute significantly to build a comprehensive notion of the precise types of effects and consequences evolved due to the massive migration of Russian citizens, including finding some unique and never ever before mentioned information in any other resources regarding the Russians' migration to Georgia. Open-ended questions are used in the interview. Such type of questions gives the interviewee more freedom to talk about the topics of the choice related to asked questions. Only distinction among questions can be made between factual and opinion questions. In contrast, there are close-ended questions as well, which are, for example, use classic forms of answers like "Yes" or "No". The type of the interview is more information-centred to gain as much information as possible. Here local Georgians share their feelings, insights, warries, hopes, expectations, and experience related to coexisting with Russian migrants for the last 2 years. Meanwhile, as a matter of the fact to be noted, the interviewer, namely I, can lead the conversation back to the problem or question under investigation to get versatile answers so that accurate and tactic interruptions are allowed (Pfeiffer, 2018).

2.1.2. Question Categories and Description

In the following, the different questions are divided into categories/characteristics. These serve in the context of the operationalization as well as the evaluation for a clear representation and classification of the interview questions. In the following paragraph, the questions are only indicated in the numbering. The exact question can be talked from the collected operationalization part below. Here are 4 main categories:

1. ***Demographics.*** In the following, there is only one question, which plays the role of the introductory question to the interview, that provides information about the interviewees. This question is not related to the topic but includes data on age, occupation, social class, and geographic location, so that I can segment interviewees into different groups and corresponding social classes.

2. ***Impact on Daily Life and Community.*** This category embodies 3 questions which provide insights regarding the influence of Russian migrants on Georgians' daily lives to understand to what extend Georgians are irritated or contented due to the presence of Russian citizens for the last 2 years.

3. ***Interactions and Perception of Russian migrants.*** This category consists of 3 questions and is essential to understanding how and in what ways Georgians interact with Russian migrants, as well as the form of the perception commonly spread among locals towards Russians. Also, this category highlights approaches used to communicate, and how well both sides handle conflicts or enmity, steps to solve negative situations and prevent future repetitive occurrences.

4. ***Economic and Policy Implications.*** This category includes 3 questions and is important to understand the economic and policy implications of Russian migration especially for understanding locals' mood towards long-term planning and decision-making. Thanks to this category of questions, suggestions can be drawn based on answers so that Georgian locals can develop ways to optimize benefits and minimize risks by utilizing the study's insightful analysis of prospective migration opportunities and challenges.

2.1.3. Operationalization. Step by Step Interview Framework

The following interview guide was created for a personal interview of Georgian citizens and other locals in Georgia. The guide is built thanks to AI derived from the specific requirements to stay on topic and reach the interview goal.

Introduction:

- Welcome part
- Introduction and background (of the chosen topic "Effects and Consequences of Russian migrants in Georgia" and introduction generally)
- Short introduction of the problem and the goal

- Short description of the interview process
- Privacy agreement

In this part of the operationalization, all questions are listed and explained the importance of being included in the list to reach the primary goal of the interview. The first *"Question 1: What is your occupation, and the city of living? And what social class do you belong to?"* is important to gather personal information of potential interviewees, and it plays the role of the introductory question. *"Question 2: Can you tell me about how your daily life has changed in recent years, particularly in relation to the presence of Russian migrants in Georgia?"* is important for gaining insights regarding daily life changes due to the impacts of Russian migration on individual routines, activities, and overall lifestyle in Georgia. *"Question 3: How do you perceive the impact of increased Russian migration on your community or neighbourhood?"* is included in the list of questions to see to what extent Georgian communities are affected by the presence of Russian migrants there. *"Question 4: Have you noticed any changes in the local economy or job market as a result of the influx of Russian migrants?"* highlights economic observations regarding the local economy and job market to notice positive and negative changes, including employment opportunities, business activities, and income distribution. *"Question 5: In what ways, if any, do you interact with Russian migrants in your daily life?"* explores interaction patterns with Russian migrants, revealing the extent of their social integration and exchange with each other. *"Question 6: How do you feel about the cultural exchange and diversity brought by Russian migrants to Georgia?"* is important to assess locals' feelings towards cultural, language, social exchanges happening due to Russian migrants. *"Question 7: Have you experienced any challenges or tensions in your interactions with Russian migrants or within your community due to their presence?"* is important to find out existing and possible tensions and challenges in interaction of locals with Russians, possible social irritation, discrimination, or conflict. *"Question 8: How do you evaluate the effectiveness of the governmental authorities and their political activities in terms of solving negative effects and their consequences on locals caused by recent massive migrations of Russian citizens?"* investigates to what extent Georgian governmental and local bodies understand the level of seriousness of the problems rising every day due to hundred thousands of Russian migrants and their willingness to support locals by actions not just promises and words. *"Question 9: What are your personal thoughts or feelings about the historical relationship between Russia and Georgia, and how does it influence your perception of Russian migrants?"* is quite significant to understanding Russia and Georgia from a historical perspective, and understanding how Russian migrants are viewed and their place in the Georgian community. Ultimately, *"Question 10: Is there anything else you would like to share about how the presence of Russian migrants has influenced your life or your community?"* assists in summing up

the flow of insights, ideas, feelings, worries, and experiences of our interviewees in regard to Russian migrants, allowing interviewees to share additional thoughts, providing an opportunity to gain unique information.

Conclusion:

- Summary of what has been said about
- Outlook
- Farewell

2.1.4. Pretest of the Interview Before Inscription

A pretest is a recommended intermediate step after the interview questions have been completed and before it is published. By running the interview with a few potential interviewees or checking them with professional journalists and those who are related to the mass media industry, is important to see gaps for improvement, since problems and unclearness of some questions of the survey can be identified and fixed accordingly. Thanks to our family friend a journalist, who is a journalist in the Georgian TV and has some background knowledge and empirical experience to evaluate the quality of the interview questions, approaches used to break the ice with interviewees and be able to reach the hidden core insights through secondary thoughts of respondents, we were able to build questions as best as we could. Meanwhile, after the correction of questions, I run it with a couple of my relatives, who are currently employed by the Central Television of Tbilisi, and derived from their comments, all questions are topic related and contribute to reaching the goal of the interview, so no more corrections have been done since that moment.

3. DATA ANALYSIS

This part of the work deals with the description and consequent evaluation of the interview results. The interview results are intended to provide additional insight into the effects and ramifications of Russian migration on Georgians' day-to-day existence. Additionally, the interviews are meant to reveal any discrepancies or parallels with official data that is expounded upon and depicted in the thesis' theoretical section with regard to the influences and results of the Russian migrant wave into Georgia.

Analysis of interview results in the form of the transcripts. Some of the interviewees could not speak English and used their mother tongue to answer 10 questions which can be found in the Annexe. The following are responses of 10 Georgians currently living in Tbilisi, Kutaisi, and Batumi. The answers are analyzed, elaborated and grouped derived from the thesis objectives such as assessing socioeconomic impacts on various social classes in Georgia, examining political ramifications and identifying ineffectiveness in the governmental management in Georgia, and understanding public sentiments and social cohesion in Georgia to be able to cover all integral parts for reaching the goal of the thesis.

From the answers on the ***first question***, we aquire some important information related to the demographics as it has been planned at the beginning of the interview preparation, Georgians of different ages from high-school students to retired ones and different social classes are included in the interview process to be able to gather insights, feelings, worries, and ideas of local Georgians from various groups concerning the huge number of Russian migrants since 2022. To be more precise, there are 2 high school students, 3 university students which belong to the group of teenagers, 3 university students who belong to the group of the adolescents, 3 mid-aged working people and 2 more retired elderly ones. Mid-aged people and elderly ones mostly belong to the mid and upper social classes, while students consider themselves as a low or upper low class, including 1 of them whose family belongs to the upper class.

3.1. Socioeconomic Impacts on Social Classes. Georgian Prospective

From the answers, we can see how locals' daily lives have changed since the beginning of the massive migration of Russia citizens, Here, in order to elaborate interviewees' answers, grouping can be used and implemented for the versatilely developed analysis of all answers, namely, young respondents, and middle-aged and aged respondents. Let's start according to the gradual scale of aging.

- Young Respondents (Teenagers and Adolescents):

- Due to daily interactions with Russian migrant peers, who either study at universities or schools, they feel discomfort and tension;

Interviewee N1, a university student: "Wow, I cannot say much here about this but there is a kind of tension among my groupmates, since some of them are Russian migrants. There is a divide between us and them, and personally it makes me feel uncomfortable."

- Some young Georgians feel insecure and anxious when they meet or see Russian migrants in public areas due to their abnormal behaviour;

Interviewee N2, a high-school student: "There is not any form of direct impact of Russian migrants in my life, but when I hear them and see how irresponsibly they act as if they owned everything, it makes me nervous, and I feel insecure while walking alone."

- Some students, who are close to graduate, feel insecure about job opportunities and resources due to the huge number of Russian migrants who are adapting to Georgia fast and plan to stay for long, so that Georgian students feel frustration and a form of voicelessness in their own community.

Interviewee N3, a university student: "Honestly, it has been tough. With the increasing number of Russian migrants, competition for resources has intensified. Jobs are harder to come by, and there is a sense of frustration among the locals. It feels like our voices are not being heard when we were going to meetings against their presence in Georgia in 2022, and that is disheartening."

- Middle-aged respondents:
  - Also, middle-aged people, regardless of work experience, suffer from finding a good paid jobs and a high level of competition due to the massive migration of Russians;
  - Many of them complain about irresponsible and unacceptable codes of conduct demonstrated by Russian migrants towards service industries and locals who work there;
  - Some of them are worried about increasing prices on products, rent, and living expenses caused by the grown demand on everything since the appearance of Russian migrants.

Interviewee N5, a bank manager: "5th interviewee's response: It is like walking on a wire cable, you know? One wrong step and everything could come crashing down. Before, Tbilisi felt like a temple, but now it is like we are constantly on edge, waiting for something to happen because of Russian migrants and the Russian government."

Interviewee N8, a bus driver: "As a bus driver, I meet them daily. Some of them are really good people who are looking for a better place for themselves and their families, but there are some

who support Putin but hide in Georgia. Sometimes, they say something that pisses me off and crazy debates start and by the end of the day I feel empty and stressed because of them."

- Aged Respondents:
    - They still remember the time when Russians and Georgians were living in more peace and prosperity before Russia invaded Georgia in 1992 and 2008;

Interviewee N6, a retired English teacher: "I remember the time when we were living well and peacefully with each other but since 1992 and 2008 life has become quite complicated with Russians. My life has changed. After all, I have to manage my budget ahead because everything is super expensive since Russian migrants came to Georgia."

    - Older Georgian generation is concerned about unstoppably increasing prices on everything, so they have to manage their budget properly in order not to starve by the end of the month;
    - Older people feel uncomfortable in their cities and neighbourhoods due to the increased number of Russian migrants who create the tense in atmosphere.

Interviewee N10, a retired engineer: "You know, Kutaisi used to be this small, friendly town where everyone was acquainted with one another. Now, though, it feels as if I have woken up somewhere else. The entire atmosphere has changed and is no longer the same. It feels like something is out of balance with all these Russian immigrants. It seems like we are all attempting to make our way through this chaos."

When it comes to the analysis of the question which highlights changes in the local economy and job market for diverse social classes, as we can see, all Georgian people, regardless of age, gender, social class, and economic growth, have struggles related to their personal and economic conditions caused by Russian migrants. Here are the groups describing interviewees' perceptions and experiences:

- **Difficulties with living expenses.** All interviewees noted the fact that they started living worse due to the increased prices for everything, ranging from the rent for students to food and medications for older people. Despite indicators of economic growth, the rising cost of living in big cities makes it difficult to make ends meet.

Interviewee N1: "Yes, of course there are changes in the local economy and they are not positive unfortunately. Even though the Georgian economy shows good indicators, living expenses are so high as never before. As a student, I barely make ends and started asking my family to support me although I have a part-time job."

Interviewee N6: "Honey, I am so old to read what is happening with the local economy, have

no idea about news, but as a pensioner I can say that everything is super expensive, so I have to write every Lari that I spend in order not to be without money by the end of the month."

- **Negative perception of economic impact.** Some interviewees blame Russian migrants for increased prices and cost of living, highlighting the fact that since 2022, most of available social services became unavailable due to increased demand on them and prices accordingly.

Interviewee N4: " As I heard in some mass media sources as if the Georgian economy is as strong as never before, but in reality, if we evaluate from the prospective of people's living conditions, everything is so bad as never before. High inflation and low salaries made me to switch from half-time to full-time at work to be able to cover my basic needs."

- **High inflation and low salaries.** Regardless of the high growth rate of GDP in Georgia, salaries and wages stay similar to numbers shown in 2022, causing all above mentioned issues to local people. This illustrates a sad but realistic disconnect between economic indicators and real experiences of local Georgians.

Interviewee N9: " Generally, as I see on news, we have a good economic tendency for the growth, while in fact, everything grows apart from salaries and wages, since they are plus minus the same as 2 years ago. Thanks to my parents' financial support I can feel comfortable, or otherwise I would be in trouble."

- **Positive changes for some.** Not only negative but also positive sides are there for some people whose salaries increased like the bank manager's due to the flow of money and investments brought by Russian migrant to Georgia.

Interviewee N5: "I see some positive changes since the economy of Georgia is better now due to investments, huge deposits, and cash flows caused by Russian migrants. Also, as the bank manager, my salary increased significantly so I can say that not everything is so bad."

- **Struggles of pensioners.** There are two aged interviewees who are retired and heavily rely on their pensions, which are low and not compatible with real prices for utilities bills, food and medical expenses. They feel the burden of rising prices and limited financial resources.

Interviewee N10: "Nor good changes, everything is expensive, and pension is not enough anymore. News says that the Georgian economy is constantly growing since 2022, since Russian migrant came, but I do not trust this information, because if it was true, my pension would be enough."

3.2. Political Ramifications and Governmental Effectiveness

There are 2 questions concerning the political implications and effectiveness of political figures, and their decisions towards the huge influx of Russian migrants to Georgia. Thanks to the question which directly asks interviewees about their thoughts regarding the effectiveness of the governmental authorities and their political activities in terms of solving negative effects and consequences on locals caused by recent massive migrations of Russian citizens. As we can see, the majority of locals are dissatisfied and frustrated regarding the effectiveness of the Georgian government in working out the formed and negatively affecting challenges posed by Russian migrants. There are such statements as "no imposed migration policies to control these Russian migrations", and "no actions to protect locals' interests".

Interviewee N1: "Honestly, locals feel a little frustrated, including me as well, when it comes to the effectiveness of the Georgian government, because every governmental authority says that they support only locals and strongly disagree with the current situation of Russian migration, but nobody does anything exactly to control it."

Interviewee N3: "Governmental effectiveness to solve problems related to Russian migrants? I think they never really thought about this, since there are even more Russian citizens living, operating their businesses, and affecting local enterprises and cohesion in community, while authorities have done nothing to either stop them or help locals who are suffering the most."

Some of interviewees highlighted the unconformity between what the governmental authorities promise and what exactly they do, namely, nothing what has been promised. Also, there are some insights related to the urgent need for the government to demonstrate its commitment and effectiveness and take real steps to solve the concerns of the local population.

Interviewee N6: "I think early or later, the Georgian government must show its effectiveness in order to avoid massive nation strike and unrest, unless this leading party wants to sit on the chair of power. However, it is sad to say but locals just swallow and wait for better time, while the government shows its irresponsibility and egoism of some exact people, who are afraid to do anything, just want everything keep maintaining until it stops benefiting them."

Meanwhile, even though the government does several mere steps to address negative impacts of Russian migrants on locals' lives and socio-economic stability, there is still a huge demand for proactive moves and improvements.

Interviewee N5: "I think that it is a quite delicate topic that requires a better understanding of the governmental position. It depends on what is called effective for every Georgian, and for me, they are effective as much as they can be, since if they restrict Russian migrants to get into the country,

they may provoke the Russian government for some undesirable actions such as economic restrictions towards Georgia or even another occupation."

Interviewee N9: "I think that some kinds of effectiveness we can see, I mean there are some local rules in my neighbourhood that prices of flat rent are not the same for Georgians as for Russian migrants, also I know my friend who is ill and needs to visit doctors every week, so once the number of Migrants increased."

The answers to the question concerning interviewees' thoughts or feelings about the historical relationship between Russia and Georgia, and how it influences their perception of Russian migrants. Thanks to all answers above, we can one more time prove to what extend the literature part is supported by the analytical part of the thesis based on real life experience of Georgian people, while coexisting with a lot of Russian migrants. It is quite obvious that everyone is aware of what Russia did to Georgia, so all of interviewees have direct or indirect traumas, losses, and conflicts with Russian people and its government.

Interviewee N1: "I remember well 2008 when I was a child and everyone was crying around due to the loss of their loved ones in the war with Russia, which occupied our lands. I know that those who came today to Georgia, trying to escape Putin's regime, once supported and applauded him. So, I personally perceive Russians like occupants."

Interviewee N3: In 2008, when I was a kid, we were living close to the Russian border, and it is like it was just yesterday when Russian soldiers started shooting us and using bombs. I lost my brother that day and I will never forgive Russian what they did to us, to me and my family."

Many of interviewees suffered from Russians' invasions to Georgia in 1992 and 2008, when a few of interviewees lost their loved ones in the Russia-Georgia wars. These facts contribute to perceiving Russians as occupiers and threats to Georgia and its people. We can see skepticism regarding the true intentions of Russian migrants, considering them as agents or something like that who want to hurt Georgian people. The past experience of Russian influences on Georgia keeps Georgians awake and conscious.

Interviewee N6: "I would not like to remember how Russia attacked us first in 1992 and took Ossetia, then in 2008 killed thousands of Georgians and took Abkhazia. I remember only death and poverty when I glanced back at our history when it was somehow connected to Russia. I think I will always keep in mind all this before letting any Russian closer to me."

Interviewee N8: "I am quite old to remember a lot, and I can say that nothing is forgotten, and nobody is forgiven. I lost many friends in the Russia-Georgia wars in both 1992 and 2008. I see the danger in the presence of all these Russian migrants and I will never be able to feel bad about the situation in which they are."

3.3. Public Sentiments and Social Cohesion

This part is also directly related to the objectives of the thesis, so there are questions built to know how locals feel about Russian migrants within their neighbourhoods and community generally. So, let's commence elaborating and analyzing answers for the question that asks interviewees about how they perceive the impact of increased Russian migration on their community or neighbourhood. Derived from the answers, we can see that generally people are not satisfied with changes happening due to the Russian migrants either they are specifically related to something or abstract related to the inner feelings. Here is the grouping of the issues:

- **Tension and stress in the community.** Some local people experience discomfort and tension while coexisting with Russian migrants, and it is caused either due to direct factors like Russian migrants' misbehaviour or by some feelings and concerns.

Interviewee N5: "I can feel that the atmosphere of my community is being affected by this uncomfortable circumstance related to the presence of Russian migrants, which makes the stability seem quite temporary. The locals are hoping for a better future and hope that things do not become worse."

- **Economic impact.** Locals of all ages feel the necessity for more money to be able to provide themselves with the same living standards they used to have before Russian migrants, causing the surge of prices and tougher competitiveness level to get a good job.

Interviewee N3: "Our town has been greatly impacted by the increased Russian migration, which has raised competition for jobs. Because our voices aren't being heard, the locals feel dissatisfied and ignored. They are struggling to make ends meet in their own town as a result of these circumstances caused by Russian migrants."

- **Cultural change.** It is when locals notice more people speaking in Russian in the streets, and sometimes it seems that there are more Russian speaking people than Georgian.

Interviewee N7: "There is nothing much to say, to be honest, about Russian migrants, just they are much more than used to be in the past, and most of them are young couples with small children. I can just notice that I hear more Russian language and announcements on this language."

- **Conflicts and misunderstandings.** Georgians working in the service industries started getting into conflicts with Russians more than ever before due to either mere things or things that touch and hurt Georgians like humiliation or misconduct.

Interviewee N4: "As a part-time server, I have seen how entitled and demanding Russian migrants can be, wanting special treatment even when it is not required. This attitude annoys me for reasons other than linguistic problems."

- **Local infrastructure and life quality.** Some Georgians noticed decreasing living standards and exacerbating local infrastructure due to increased prices and countless Russian cars parked everywhere.

Interviewee N10: "I can say that a lot of them came to the part of the city where I live, so there are much more cars parked in the back yard of the building, so no place to play for children and for old people like me no place to pass these cars and walk."

Meanwhile, the analyses of the question that lightens the truth in what ways, if any, interviewees interact with Russian migrants in their daily lives. Outcomes reached by running this question, we can see that interviewees' answers related to interactions between Georgians and Russian migrants and their tendencies are similar to the information elaborated in the literary part of this thesis. To wit, most of the interviewees have regular encounters with Russian migrants, and mostly they are inevitable due to their huge numbers. According to the interview questions' results, Georgians mostly communicate with Russian migrants at work, school, and their neighbourhoods. And Russian migrants in the most cases act obnoxious and hostile regardless of Georgians' good manners.

Interviewee N1: "I interact with them daily, during my studies at the university, or when I am walking outside, I can encounter them"

Interviewee N3: "I do interact with many of them daily because of my work, where I work as a waiter. Also, there are several of them at my university. At work I see many of them and mostly they are rude and impolite, while at the university they are super silent and less communicative, maybe because of the language barrier."

There are problems in their interactions related to the language barriers as well. Some of the respondents have to interact with Russian migrants in professional encounters, and here again, they are unhappy to communicate with them due to their bad behaviour and impolite manners.

Interviewee N5: "Yes, I do. At work, there are clients of the bank and most of them are Russian migrants who have active accounts in our bank. They come for consultations usually and we have just bank topic-related conversations and demand me to speak Russian. Cannot say that I feel some sort of anger towards them but cannot say that happy to communicate with them as well."

Meanwhile, younger Georgian respondents struggle to interact with them as well due to the fact that their peer Russian migrants are either isolated from others by their own wishes or have to

due to their poisonous tongues. The general picture is so when almost any form of integration with Russian migrants regardless of their ages and social status makes locals feel uncomfortable and insecure.

Interviewee N2: ": There are several of them in my class, and we communicate sometimes during the lunch time or while completing group tasks together. Sometimes they ask to accompany them to somewhere for example to shops when they want to buy something for their study but cannot speak and explain in Georgian. There are 3 of them, and only one of them is quite rude and aggressive when topics of our conversations come to the wrong things that Russia is doing towards Ukraine and Georgia."

Another important factor is related to the cultural exchange and diversity brought by Russian migrants and locals' feelings towards such exchanges in Georgia. After a deep analysis of the given answers, I can confirm that local Georgians' feelings, experiences, and insights are parallel to those notions explained in the literature part of the thesis. I mean that there is unacceptance between Georgians and Russian migrants in all aspects of their lives, ranging from political, and historical to cultural ones. The way how Russians are allowed to act in Georgia makes respondents feel undecided and insecure about preserving Georgian culture from any form of Russian attempts at integration. Concerns around language dynamics also exist, namely, some middle-aged and aged interviewees reported feeling under pressure to learn or use Russian, which reminds them of the Soviet Union. Many people have negative opinions about the conduct and attitudes of Russian migrants, characterizing them as impolite, narrow-minded, and incompatible with Georgian ideals. In addition, historical background and soft power considerations are mentioned, linking Russian culture to bad experiences and highlighting the necessity of blocking its effect. In order to preserve the integrity of Georgian culture, some responses obviously oppose Russian cultural interchange, denying the diversity that results from Russian influence.

After realizing that locals mostly feel stressed and end up with tensions of different forms, the next question asks interviewees' challenges and tensions in their interactions with Russian migrants in their neighbourhoods. Derived from the answers provided by interviewees, I can highlight here that there are a lot of challenges and tensions in local Georgians' interactions with Russian migrants. Due to cultural differences, various languages, and outlooks, we can see miscommunication and disrespect in a variety of situations mostly demonstrated by Russian migrants.

Interviewee N3: " Yes, a lot of tensions between me and Russian migrants because of their bad behaviour, impolite, and sometimes humiliating words when they are drunk. So, sometime me and my waiter colleagues have to throw such clients from the restaurant to avoid mess and other clients' bad experience eating in our restaurant."

Georgian community lives and dynamics are messed up by Russians' misbehaviour and noise disruptions. Situations are exacerbated when some Russian migrants feel entitled and superior, leading to various conflicts. Some locals feel uncomfortable and try avoiding some individuals at work while serving. Various worldview among young Russian migrants and their Georgian peers lead to misunderstandings and separations into groups based on the ethnicity or nationality. Also, Russian migrants mistreat elderly people and talk impolitely with them, which is not allowed in Georgia. These samples of our interviewees show how difficult integration is and even impossible.

Interviewee N5: "Absolutely yes, they are quite complicated people with distinguishing insights about everything. I am not talking about political viewpoints, but simple approaches used for completing university tasks are different from each other. To be clearer, we usually plan fist the list of actions and set deadlines to complete gradually like every normal person, but they ignore everything and try to complete it somehow on the last day and beg others to help them."

The last question investigates any unspoken things by interviewees that they would like to speak out about that may cover any aspect of their lives, ranging from daily and social to political ones thus it asks them to share anything else they would like to share about how the presence of Russian migrants has influenced their life or their community. In summary of the answers for the last question's analysis, they said that there is nothing special to add, just the fact that they want stability, a better financial state, and safety.

Interviewee N5: "I believe that I expressed my main concerns. Briefly saying, their presence has made us more wary, impacting our sense of security and trust."

Interviewee N8: "I think I said all. Thanks a lot for revealing such important topic and questions, hope they will be useful for your thesis and listeners."

The interview information gained thanks to local Georgians of different ages and social classes is quite like confirmed information by news articles, and professional insights which have already been demonstrated and deeply elaborated in the theoretical part of the thesis. We can see the same effects and consequences on interviewed local Georgians' living standards and empirical experiences of interacting or perceiving Russian migrants as in the following part of thesis 1.2.2., where demographic shifts, economic negative impacts, negative and to some extent forced cultural exchange, and political sensitivity and dynamics towards Russian migrants are explained in detail based on official statistics and data.

3.4. Personal Recommendations for Action

The following paragraph of the thesis sets out the recommendations for further action. The

aim of this paper is to develop a recommendation for the improvement of Georgians' lives, having better living standards, reaching less stress and discomfort caused by Russian migrants, minimizing negative impact of Russian migrant on locals in Georgia, and mainly suggesting steps to follow for both ordinary Georgians and political figures for attaining long-term economic and territorial independence from the Kremlin and Russian Migrants. In addition, some insights will be suggested from the following section of the thesis, namely, 1.1.3.

Suggestions for local Georgians. Being a Georgian girl, who also knows how unsecure and irritating to coexist with Russian migrants derived from my personal empirical experience and deep analysis of interviewees' answers, here are some personal and professional suggestions:

1. **Cultural Awareness.** Locals should have increased awareness of the potential challenges caused by Russian migrants, regarding each neighbourhood in each city, which informs them about various situations happening when Russian migrants either misbehave, hurt someone, humiliate, demand something having no rights on it, or help locals, which usually never happened. It should be done via some voluntary groups of people who collect all this information and spread it to the masses, keep people updated, and suggest some strategies to protect locals' interests and well-being when there are several hundred thousand Russian migrants.
2. **Organized Campaign and Movement.** Some influential locals are supposed to form some locally organized campaigns that will work on empowering locals' rights and interests and prioritizing them more than Russian migrants in all aspects of good living standards, ranging from priorities of being hired at work with no issues in competition with Russian migrants to lower rents, not the same like for Russian migrants. Such forms of injustice towards people from the mid and low classes should be controlled by local authorities as well.
3. **Strengthen Social Cohesion.** Each community in Tbilisi, Kutaisi, and Batumi is to have strong social cohesion, when some networks are built to be able to support needy ones and those who suffered significantly due to the huge number of Russian migrants like local students, who cannot afford renting a place due to its unreal and super high prices, while dormitories are full. Such networks should concentrate on minors who have no voice and influence even to attract someone's attention on them in order to withstand external pressure and support social harmony.
4. **Economic Empowerment.** This suggests that locals should be shouting louder about the economic instability and insecurity caused by Russian migrants through movements, social media sources, and demonstrations so local and governmental authorities will not

have any other variants apart from working and solving problems related to high prices and low salaries. Also, local businesses may allocate some percentage of their income to promoting support for economically vulnerable Georgians who are the first under the attack of negative impacts caused by Russian migrants.

5. **Specified Assistance.** Although most of Georgians see Russian migrants as a threat for their social and economic well-being, as well as Kremlin's soft power to manipulate Georgian government, there are a few Russian migrants who deeply from their hearts disagree with the Russian government's decisions and political prospectives, those Russian migrants who support Ukrainians and Georgians, join various demonstrations and are not afraid to tell the truth to the world. Such Russian migrants need specified assistance from the locals' side in order to protect them and assist them to turn other Russian migrants' mind into the right and justice way. Such migrants should be helped integrate into Georgian communities and gain good benefits for keeping on the track of the justice and honesty.

Suggestions for Georgian Governmental Authorities. Due to the fact that local Georgians are constrained in term of their capabilities to control or change something in the country scale, Government should be involved in the action as well to prevent all negative effects and consequences of Russian migrants, please local people's demands and requests in various spheres, ranging from their personal socio-economic well-being to the governmental security and prosperity. Here are some recommendations for Georgian governmental and local bodies who are in charge of governing the country, as well as providing its great future:

1. **Protective Policies.** Political figures should be much braver than now and support their own people, Georgians. They need to legislate and integrate some laws, regulations, and policies aimed at the interests, mental and material well-beings of local communities when there are a lot of negative tendencies related to all aspects of Georgia and Georgian people due to the influx of the Russian migration. These measures should be targeted specifically on these migrants to be able to minimize their negative effects and consequences of such coexisting and regulate migrant behaviour and prevent exploitation of the local resources.
2. **Border Security.** Special migration policies are supposed to be implemented and border security strengthened in order to control the flow of migrants, their origins, and mainly their purposes to visit Georgia. Improvements can range from much more qualitative border security approaches used on places to new technologies that assist to sort out visitors and analyzes their backgrounds, find out any things related to them which may potentially cause an issue for Georgia and its communities.

3. **Diplomatic decisiveness.** Georgian diplomatic representatives and other individuals related to the diplomatic ministry are strongly supposed to if not must assert Georgia's sovereignty and national interests in various diplomatic engagements with Russia and other neighbouring countries and stay strong and confident against any threats and fears. The territorial integrity of Georgia is not the topic to discuss for Russian occupants and their government, so Georgian government must use not only soft but also harsh power to show intentions of Georgian people.
4. **Resource Allocation.** Some fundings should be established by the Georgian government to support the private sector and ordinary locals in terms of socio-economic well-being. Fundings should also be allocated for the infrastructure development, social services, and support local community by managing negative effects and consequences caused by Russian migrants. Employment rate should be controlled, and locals should be prioritized over Russian migrants for being employed in such sectors as IT, engineering, and public services, since there are more Russian migrants are more being hired by international companies and organizations than Georgians.
5. **Community Engagement.** Governmental and local authorities should allow locals to be fully engaged in decision-making processes related to migration policies and many other situations which require the involvement of local communities, when their voices are heard and taken into account for implementing right and mutually beneficial decisions. This approach may also contribute to finding the cohesion between local opposition and governing parties in Tbilisi, as well as preventing social unrest.
6. **Early Warning Systems.** Government should be awake, not sleepy like in the situation related to the massive migration of Russians. Georgian government should be aware of everything happening around the worlds, especially what is happening next to them, so that they can oversee probable negative impacts and consequences on them, react in time to minimize any socio-economic risks and threats to Georgian community as well.

DISCUSSION PART

For the analysis of the literature research, the term "Migration" was explained in detail in the first step to gain a versatile understanding of the situation which Georgia is in nowadays, a migration situation related to the Russian citizens, and to classify the current state of the research. The definition and significance of migration generally, especially migration caused due to a war, were elaborated in term of their reasons, effects and consequences, regardless of the governmental organizational structure and origin, local peoples' ages, genders, and social classes (Bhagwati 2003, 99). One of the research's most important findings is the list of effects and possible consequences of migration such as constrains on resources, social cohesion and integration challenges, labor market dynamics, security concerns, political backlash and polarization, humanitarian responsibilities, long-term economic impacts, and regional stability caused by a war on host countries' social, economic, and political aspects, apart from several general reasons for the migrations explained in more details before. Nevertheless, strategies used worldwide to avoid negative effects and consequences of migration due to a war on welcoming countries are listed as well derived from multiple sources and articles, where authors elaborate tactics used by some countries during the 20th century and recent years to either minimize such negative impacts or even turn them into positive ones (Becker & Ferrara, 2019). There are such tactics used as international cooperation and burden-sharing, early warning and conflict prevention, humanitarian assistance and protection, integration and social cohesion, labor market integration and skills development, legal and policy frameworks, community engagement and participation, as well as trauma-informed care and mental health support (Miller et al., 2019). So that, all possible and commonly spread influences, consequences, and prevention strategies are disclosed in the literary research's first part of the thesis. Meanwhile, thanks to this theoretical research and analysis, some questions are developed for the interview, namely, *"Question 4: Have you noticed any changes in the local economy or job market as a result of the influx of Russian migrants?"* is derived from such above-mentioned effect and consequences, from one of the most important finding, the labor market dynamics and long-term economic impacts. *"Question 6: How do you feel about the cultural exchange and diversity brought by Russian migrants to Georgia?"*, and *"Question 7: Have you experienced any challenges or tensions in your interactions with Russian migrants or within your community due to their presence?"* are built and based on such effects and consequences as social cohesion and integration challenges, as well as regional stability. *"Question 8: How do you evaluate the effectiveness of the governmental authorities and their political activities in terms of solving negative effects and their consequences on locals caused by recent massive migrations of Russian citizens?"* is associated with such effects and consequences as political backlash and polarization.

In the second part of the literature research, the point is strongly associated with effects, consequences of the huge Russian migration to Georgia caused by the Russia-Ukraine war. Influences of unexpected and unwelcomed migration dynamics on Georgia's various social classes and governmental as well as industrial sectors are defined and clarified in more detail. For example, I found out that around 1,5 million Russian citizens by now, namely, since the beginning of the Russian invasion to Ukraine, have crossed the Georgian border either by car and on foot or by air (Kakachia & Kandelaki, 2022). So that, the following question was formed *"Question 3: How do you perceive the impact of increased Russian migration on your community or neighbourhood?".* Meanwhile, specific impacts and consequences of Russian migration on Georgia are revealed, illustrated, and sorted out into the groups such as demographic shifts, economic impacts, cultural exchange, political sensitivity and dynamics, social integration dynamics, and economic integrations. Due to the fact that official statistics which demonstrate that more than 120,000 Russian citizens are living since 2022 in such Georgian cities mainly as Tbilisi, Batumi, and Kutaisi, the next question is developed *"Question 5: In what ways, if any, do you interact with Russian migrants in your daily life?"*. Additionally, there is some information highlighting the historical relationship between these 2 countries, where Russia constantly tries to occupy Georgia and turn it into another autonomous republic like the Republic of Dagestan or Tatarstan, and Russia occupied 20% of Georgia in 1992 and 2008, the following question was built *"Question 9: What are your personal thoughts or feelings about the historical relationship between Russia and Georgia, and how does it influence your perception of Russian migrants?"*. It is important to know and understand why exactly these, or any other questions are included in the interview, to wit, to gain more accurate and topic related outcomes to solve the problem related with finding most optimal, effective recommendations for action.

When it comes to the analysis of the interviews conducted with local Georgians of different ages, ranging from teenagers and adolescents to mid-aged and aged people, description of the results from the demographic categories are demonstrated to visualize all interviewees' ages, empirical experiences, and personal economic conditions. The rest of 9 questions out of 10 are dedicated to determining effects and consequences of Russian migrants on local Georgians' lives. According to the analysis of the interview outcomes, adolescents and middle-aged people are encountering financial challenges with finding well-paid jobs and growing living expenses, while younger generation feel unease with tension in their communications and cultural exchanges with Russian teenage migrants. The level of worries about the social, cultural, and economic instabilities caused by Russian migrants is very high among interviewees. They complain about how badly the government has been handling the issues caused by these migrants since 2022. And it is important to note that thanks to the question related to the historical relationship of these two countries, we could

understand and feel why locals unwelcome Russian migrants, to wit, due to historical traumas formed during Russian invasions to Georgia. All things considered, the research analysis emphasizes the intricate dynamics at work and the demand for sophisticated strategies to deal with the issues raised by Russian migration in Georgia.

CONCLUSION

This bachelor thesis investigates general migration patterns, their forms, effects, and consequences on host countries specifically in order to demonstrate through deeply elaborated theoretical and comprehensively analyzed analytical parts, first of all, caused issues, impacts, and consequences on Georgia and Georgian people by the uncontrolled and massive migration of Russian citizens due to the Russia-Ukraine war. Second of all, via empirical data collection, experience, and outcomes, the research investigation leads to recommendations for action for local Georgians and Georgian Governmental Authorities for the improvement of Georgians' lives, having better living standards, reaching less stress and discomfort caused by Russian migrants, minimizing negative impact of Russian migrant on locals in Georgia, and mainly suggesting steps to follow for both ordinary Georgians and political figures for attaining long-term economic and territorial independence from the Kremlin and Russian Migrants. Said results can be discussed in relation to the objectives of the study.

1. There are four main migration dynamics in the world related to the economic, conspicuous, social, as well as political factors. Meanwhile, when we elaborated on the effects and consequences of migration due to a war on hosting countries, eight various impacts have been revealed such as constraints on resources, social cohesion and integration challenges, labor market dynamics, security concerns, political backlash and polarization, humanitarian responsibilities, long-term economic impacts, and regional stability. Nevertheless, there are several strategies as well that can and should be used by all countries around the world to be able to oversee and be well prepared for possible influxes of migrants from adjacent countries.

2. Derived from the literature research part and data analysis, it became quite clear that no matter what social class an individual belongs to, an influx of migrants does not leave you with no scar, so ranging from low class families, who are the most under the negative effects, to highest class families, who still suffer as well, locals feel stress, instability, insecurity, and less promising future for their kids and themselves. It can be caused either by material matters such as low salaries and high prices on everything or moral instability caused by stress and feeling insecure.

3. As we can see, analytical data is similar to what is described in the theoretical part concerning the ineffectiveness of the governmental authorities in solving the negative effects and consequences of Russian migrants on local communities and their residents. To be more precise, none of the special migration regulatory policies have been imposed since 2022 towards managing the uncontrolled migration of Russian citizens to Georgia. Also, instead of supporting local businesses and low-income families with some social and economic benefits gained after a huge rise of the Georgian GDP to 9,6%, small and mid-sized enterprises suffer the most due to the huge number of new enterprises established by recent Russian migrants in Georgia, whilst locals feel scarcity of the

salaries and wages which increased by mare approximately 8% a year at the same time when inflation reaches around 20-25% depending on the industrial and social sectors.\

4. When it comes to understanding public sentiments and social cohesion in Georgia by locals towards recent Russian migrants, we need to pay attention to things that are similarly explained in both theoretical and analytical parts, namely, the wars between Russia and Georgian, and their consequences as the form of the occupation of South Ossetia and Abkhazia. Many Georgians lost their friends or family members during these wars so locals cannot accept the new form of the Kremlin's soft power through some migrants, which gradually may rise to direct threats and manipulations. Even though locals attempt to coexist with these new Russian migrants, they face impolite and sometimes rude attitudes towards themselves even being locals. To sum up here, according to official statistics' outcomes, more than 65% of Georgian see Russian migrants as a threat and 70% of them want Russian migrants to leave their country.

5. When it comes to recommendations for action, there are two types of them regarding the target audiences, namely, one of them is considered to be local Georgians who are supposed to use them for minimizing risks, negative effects, and consequences caused by Russian migrants. These suggestions are about increased cultural awareness to protect locals' interests and well-being, organized campaigns and movements to prioritize locals' rights and interests concerning employment competition and housing rents, strengthened social cohesion to support mostly affected locals by Russian migrants' presence, economic empowerment to support physically and economically vulnerable locals, and specified assistant for those Russian migrants who support locals' standpoints and against Putin's regime. Meanwhile, the second target audience for recommendations for action is governmental and local authorities. There are such suggestions as protective policies to minimize the negative impacts of Russian migrants on local communities, border security to control the flow of the migrants and their intentions to pass the border, diplomatic decisiveness to demonstrate the strong position of the independent country and protect its people and interests against any forms of threats coming from Russia, resource allocation to support affected and vulnerable private sector, infrastructure development, and social services. Also, there are two more suggestions such as community engagement to involve locals in making decisions and taking locals' insights, demands, and requests seriously into consideration while making decisions, as well as early warning systems are suggested to stay awake and proactive in monitoring global events, and these especially happening nearby. Notwithstanding, despite literature research and analytical research based on conducting interviews on the topic of the Russian migrants' impacts on Georgia and its population, including effects and consequences, this topic requires further research and analysis, since the migration of Russians has not ended yet due to the fact the Russia-Ukraine was is still continuing. So,

recommendations are applicable for now but for being as effective as they are now, research must be continuously developed and improved.

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ANNEXES

Annex 1

Primary data of questions in English/Georgian

Question 1: *What is your occupation, and the city of living? And what social class do you belong to?*

კითხვა 1: რა არის თქვენი პროფესია და საცხოვრებელი ქალაქი? და რომელს ოციალურ კლასს მიეკუთვნებით?

Question 2: *Can you tell me about how your daily life has changed in recent years, particularly in relation to the presence of Russian migrants in Georgia?*

კითხვა 2: შეგიძლათ მითხრათ, როგორ შეიცვალა თქვენი ყოველდღიური ცხოვრება ბოლო წლებში, განსაკუთრებით საქართველოში რუსი მიგრანტების ყოფნასთან დაკავშირებით?

Question 3: *How do you perceive the impact of increased Russian migration on your community or neighbourhood?*

კითხვა 3: როგორ აღიქვამთ გაზრდილ რუსულ მიგრაციის გავლენას თქვენს თემზე ან სამეზობლოზე?

Question 4: *Have you noticed any changes in the local economy or job market as a result of the influx of Russian migrants?*

კითხვა 4: შენიშნეთ თუ არა რაიმე ცვლილება ადგილობრივ ეკონომიკაში ან სამუშაო ბაზარზე რუსი მიგრანტების შემოდინების შედეგად?

Question 5: *In what ways, if any, do you interact with Russian migrants in your daily life?*

კითხვა 5: რა გზებით გაქვთ ურთიერთობა რუს მიგრანტებთან თქვენს ყოველდღიურ ცხოვრებაში?

Question 6: *How do you feel about the cultural exchange and diversity brought by Russian migrants to Georgia?*

კითხვა 6: როგორ ფიქრობთ რუსი მიგრანტების მიერ საქართველოში შემოტანილ კულტურულ გაცვლსა და

მრავალფეროვნებაზე?

Question 7: *Have you experienced any challenges or tensions in your interactions with Russian migrants or within your community due to their presence?*

კითხვა 7: განგიცდიათ თუ არა რაიმე გამოწვევა ან დაძაბულობა რუს მიგრანტებთან ურთიერთობაში ან თქვენს საზოგადოებაში მათი ყოფნის გამო?

Question 8: *How do you evaluate the effectiveness of the governmental authorities and their political activities in terms of solving negative effects and their consequences on locals caused by recent massive migrations of Russian citizens?*

კითხვა 8: როგორ აფასებთ სამთავრობო ხელისუფლებისა და მათი პოლიტიკური საქმიანობის ეფექტურობას რუსეთის მოქალაქეების ბოლოდროინდელი მასიური მიგრაციით გამოწვეული უარყოფითი ეფექტებისა და ადგილობრივებზე მათი შედეგების გადაჭრის თვალსაზრისით?

Question 9: *What are your personal thoughts or feelings about the historical relationship between Russia and Georgia, and how does it influence your perception of Russian migrants?*

კითხვა 9: როგორია თქვენი პირადი აზრები ან გრძნობები რუსეთსა და საქართველოს შორის ისტორიულურთიერთობაზე და რა გავლენას ახდენს ეს თქვენს აღქმაზე რუსი მიგრანტების შესახებ?

Question 10: *Is there anything else you would like to share about how the presence of Russian migrants has influenced your life or your community?*

კითხვა 10: არის კიდევ რაიმე, რისი გაგებაც გსურთ იმის შესახებ, თუ როგორ იმოქმედა რუსი მიგრანტების არსებობამ თქვენს ცხოვრებაზე ან თქვენს საზოგადოებაზე?