

ETHNIC DIVERSITY OF GEORGIA: THE ROLE OF THE STATE IN DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT AND THE INTEGRATION OF ETHNIC MINORITIES

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Abstract. *This article seeks to realize an analyzing of the Georgia's way to Europe by its tendencies to harmonize the multiethnic landscape. Georgia is a diverse, multiethnic society of post-soviet States that has many common particularities inherited from the Soviet Union. Having characterized the emergence of political transformation in Georgia in the last years, the article goes to explore the ethnic policies and government strategies oriented to create a tolerant and democratic society related to its national minority that made politically closer to the European Union. For assuring a positive result it, have to improve the implication of the both parts. One side, the main goal of ethnic politics of state needs to be the protection of identity of that segment of the population and an equilibrate naturalization by accommodation in the community States, other side, the ethnic groups of the mast to wish to live wholly in the democratic States.*

Keywords: *ethnic politics, the integration of national minorities, minority communities, post-Soviet state etc.*

Introduction

Georgia is still the main States with ethnic diversity from the South Caucasia. For some states from the South Caucasia the effort to get independence from USSR generates a gradually worsen of interethnic relations. The main ideology, which was taken to establish statehood in the South Caucasia republics, was aggressive nationalism guided by the perestroika's reforms. After getting independence this situation has stopped the development of the new national States from the Eastern Europe and of national conception based on citizenship, the political leaders of the States were only concerned about, focusing exclusively upon the rights of national is holders.

In the period of the USSR's existence were created the ethnic autonomous units within the Union Republics. In the South Caucasus, they took the form of Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republics, Abkhazia, South Ossetia, Nakhichevan and the autonomous region of Nagorno-Karabakh³. As a result of the USSR collapse, in the States comprising geographically within these autonomous entities the civil wars have begun. It is about South Ossetia and Abkhazia, as well as inter-State conflicts between Armenia and Azerbaijan regarding the problems from Nagorno-Karabakh. The manifestation of such scenarios could be avoided at the level of national minorities who have not previously ordered such a statute of autonomy, even if at the time of the Soviet collapse they represented a substantial numerical population of the concerned States. Such an example can be considered, some such communities as well as Armenians and Azerbaijanis from

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³Eacaterine Metreveli et al., "States Approaches to National Integration in Georgia: Two Perspectives" (Central Asia-Caucasus Institute & Silk Road Studies Program, 200), 8.

Georgia or Iezghinii and Talyshii from Azerbaijan, which were not manifested rebel versus their central Governments, despite some strong ethnical movements existing at the level of these groups⁴.

As a multiethnic State, it goes on to describe the tense situation arising from that situation. The five minorities groups were exposed to a wide variety of conflict behavior types along its independence. Armed conflicts broke out in two areas from Abkhazia and South Ossetia, both of which are former autonomous republics in the USSR. Also in Javakheti and Adjara, the first of its was with autonomous status, and which were manifested by a high degree of tension situation at the level of relations with the central Government. Abkhazia, in fact, was considered the most unlikely, the breakaway region in the early 1980s, and all the more improbable as the one of de facto secession. Only 17% of the population of Abkhazia was Abkhaz (approximately 1.8% of the population of Georgia, 1989), and more than half of the population of this area were the Georgians ethnic. In spite of this ethnic mosaic of the Abkhazia demography, it became the scene of a serious conflict, which has at the moment a considerable impact on the establishment and strengthening of the Georgian State⁵.

The Dynamics of demographic structure and place of the national minorities in the demographic dimension of Georgian State

Georgia is a multi-ethnic State that is characterized by a rising dynamic of the minority population. Therefore, in the last two decades, this country has confronted with major transformations at the population level. First, there was the massive migration of the representations of ethnic minorities in the national Renaissance period and increasing the nationalist sentiment during the period of President Zviad Gamsakhurdia. On the other hand, it is about the effect of the two separatist conflicts, which have generated for category of persons internally displaced and determined a prompted massive migration of the population abroad. According to the 2002 census, Georgia has a population of 4.372 000 from among 248.900 are Armenians ethnic (5.7%), and 284.800 are Azerbaijanis ethnic (6.5%). The Armenians ethnic populate the compact region from Samtkhe-Javakheti, and the Azerbaijanis ethnic living in the region of Kvemo Kartli. Analysis of statistical data in 2002 should take account of the fact that they do not reflect the size of the population in the regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, because of the fact that the Georgian authorities do not control separatist regions.

If to compare census data from 1989 to 2002, we can observe a decrease of population with 1.293.000 people. The decrease of population is due in large part to the phenomenon of migration, particularly during the period of the Soviet collapse and national movement from Georgia. Many of those who left the country in this period were the ethnic minorities, in particular, the Russians, Ukrainians, Armenians and Greeks. During the period 1989-2002, the total number of minorities devaluated from 1 million up to 710 613 thousand. Therefore, if the decrease among the minorities population had reached 56% share, then the share of ethnic Georgians has fallen just 3%⁶.

⁴ Ibid., 14

⁵ Svante E. Cornell, *Autonomy and Conflict. Ethnoterritoriality and Separatism in the South Caucasus – Cases in Georgia* (Uppsala 2002) 173.

⁶ International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Human Rights Committee, *Consideration of the report presented by the States party under article 40 of the Covenant*, Third periodic report, (Georgia, November 7th, 2006).

According to the 13 administrative regions of Georgia, five of them are compact populated by the persons belonging to national minorities: Abkhazia, South Ossetia, Kvermo Kartli and Samtskhe-Javakheti, Kakheti. All of these five regions are cross-border territories, which are bordering with the origin ethnic States of the Georgia minorities. According to the latest census from 2002, we could note that Armenians ethnic represent approx. 55% of the population of Samtskhe-Javakheti, 94% in the District of Akhallalaki and 96% in Ninotsminda. District in Kvemo-Kkartli is populated in measure of 45% with Azerbaijanis ethnic. At the same time, the provinces Marneuli and Bolnisi are populated by Azerbaijanis in the ratio of 83% and 66% respectively⁷.

It is important to notice that there are representatives of other ethnic groups, who are living in Georgia, which have a dispersing way of location in the entire State. We can mention the Russians, Greeks, Kurds (yezidi), Assyrians, Jews, Ukrainians, as well as Armenians and Azerbaijanis⁸. These ethnic groups live, usually in closed communities, having a rather low contact with the State. Often such the issues as economic underdevelopment, marginalization of minority population put their representatives in situation to ask support from patron states such as Russia, Armenia or Azerbaijan.

The ethnic policy and minority-majority relationship in Georgia

According to the latest census the ethnic minorities in Georgia, represent 16% of the total population. The low degree of civic integration of this population segment considerably contributed to the intensification of the phenomenon of social and political isolation, especially for the ethnic groups who have a compact way of livable on the territory of Georgia. Undoubtedly, this phenomenon generates more problems at the level of State policy in relation with the society and all of its substrates.

Generally, primo, is endangered the dynamics of development and democratization of the State, because of a major goal of this country. From another aspect, the absence of civic integration policy generates and a double breaking from Moscow, both at the level of the relationship state-and minorities, thus and the intersociety relationship affecting the relationship between ethnic majority and titular holders. Preservation and cultivating civic/political identity among the representatives of national minorities is an important tool that comes to contribute to ensuring a stable development and building the democratic institutions of the State⁹. Therefore, Georgia in addition to the set of actions undertaken so far to capitalize on international experience in the field of minorities and to improve its institutional and legislative framework; as well as to apply the clear strategies of social, economic, cultural inclusion, and a good policy of its national minorities.

Analysis of the relevant normative acts in the field of the protection of ethnic minorities in Georgia, allow us to identify the main directions of regulators, as well as some of the inadequacies of the legal framework established in that State. We cannot consider a priori laws of Georgia as being discriminatory in relation to the national minorities. However, it does not establish the clear normative preventive conditions, in terms of the recognition of the rights and freedoms of ethnic minorities. Until now in Georgia there is a no law strictly devoted to regulating the status of national minorities and their rights. The general normative acts regarding the ethnic rights shall contain the

⁷ *Bazic Rezult of the First General Census of the Georgian Population* (Tbilisi: Georgian State Statistical Department, 2004)

⁸ Azit Mirzoev, "Ethnic Minorities in Georgia: current situation", *HDIM. NGO* 123 (8) (1 October 2008)

⁹ "Policy Analysis of Civil Integration of Ethnic Minorities in Georgia", *BTKK – Policy Research Group Ethnic Minorities Program* (Tbilisi, 2008), 6

Constitution and other normative acts with involving in various areas of social and political interest. Both the Committee on the Elimination of racial discrimination (BELIEVE), and the most important international bodies with interest in the subject of minorities in Georgia, have expressed the opinion that the state should adopt a law regarding the national minorities. As well as, is necessary a law on the status of languages that are spoken within regions, another area that the Georgian Government has avoided to include it in its legal spectrum¹⁰.

In 2005, the Parliament of Georgia ratified the "Framework Convention on the national minorities". In the resolution adopted by the Georgian Parliament on this international document was introduced a definition of national minorities. Thus, according to these resolutions the Georgian State recognize as a national minority, any group of people:

- whose members are citizens of Georgia,
- which differs from the majority of the population through its own ethnic, cultural and linguistic identity,
- living on the Georgian territory for a long time,
- which compact inhabit the Georgia's territory¹¹.

On April 2007 at the Council of Europe was presented the first report on the status of national minorities.

The confessional identity of the Georgia's minorities

Due to its geographical location, Georgia, over time, has been exposed to a vast cultural influence: classical, Byzantine, Persian, Turkish, and Russian. But the most important moment in the creation of its national identity for Georgia, was switching to Christianity in the 6th century AD. Still under the Soviet Policy regarding the nationalities, has led to the creation of autonomous regions in the territory of Georgia, namely-the Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia for Abkhazian minority, the autonomous region of Adjara for the Georgians Muslim origin and the South Ossetia region to the minorities with Ossetia origin.

The national groups from Georgia are often associated with certain religions, otherwise the picture is incomplete. The Armenians from Georgia are Gregorian (mostly), Catholics, Protestants and Russians Orthodox. A substantial number of Georgians are Muslims, Catholics, Protestants, and Orthodox (Georgian Orthodox). The Azerbaijanis are dividing into two religious groups, Sunni and Ziti¹². As well as around the world in contemporary Georgia, along with the traditional religious guidelines, the new religious streams begin actively to affirm. This process has objective premises because of some common social problems. After of the Soviet Union collapse and the former socialist camp break up in the new states the political and economic crisis has been accompanied by an acute spiritual crisis, which was manifested in destroying existing the value system. Therefore, a free field of activity appeared for the current and new religious organizations. An essential feature of these religious formations is that they are not focused on the ethnic

¹⁰ Ghia Nodia, "Ethnic-confessional groups and problems of civic integration in Georgia: Azeri, Javakheti Armenian and Muslim Meskhetian communities", *Caucasus Institute for Peace, Democracy and Development* (Tbilisi, 2000), 16

¹¹ "Resolution of Parliament of Georgia on Ratification of Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities", #1938-II (13 October, 2005)

¹² Steven Jones and Robert Parsons, "Georgia and the Georgians", *The nationalities question in the post-Soviet States*, ed. Smith, Granham (London-New York, 1996), 227

differences, on the contrary they deem unimportant, because for them there is no ethnic boundaries.

It should be noted that religion and nationalism in Georgia have an ambivalent relationship, notwithstanding of the rebounded religious feelings, the population did not always identify with the National Church. However, public opinion barometers are talking about a very high confidence in the Georgian national church, and in the person of Metropolitan Ilia. As in other former Soviet States, Georgian church is orthodox (about 2%), and this fact generates some discrepancies between the orientations of citizens here. Many of them dream about an European future, Georgia since 2003 giving start to the westernization of political system. The political conflicts with Russia on the subject of the separatist regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, influence than socio-political representations of Georgians towards neighbor Russia, in this regard the national church try to optimize these negative feelings through posts the equilibrated messages. The minority rights activists describe the Georgian Orthodox Church as the most powerful political party in the country¹³.

There are serious issues in the real mode regarding the ethnic minorities which representing the distinct religious groups of the Georgian Orthodox Church. For example, the Armenian community is faced with conflicts over the ownership of worship buildings. The historic right of ownership over the churches which were nationalized during the USSR is grounds for dispute between the Armenian Apostolic Church and the Georgian Orthodox Church. Referring to the general framework of the activity of religious organizations, the reports made by experts in the field of minorities describe a situation unfavorable versus freedom of religion in Georgia. The legal framework of Georgia denotes the absence of a law regarding the religious organizations. These legislative gaps create obstacles in activity of religious organizations, which are supposable direct or indirect discrimination in relation to other entities governed by public law. Thus, they have the virtue of the status of non-governmental organizations, which restricts certain rights, such as financial transactions or importation of religious articles¹⁴.

The official language and the repercussions on the linguistic framework of minority's rights in Georgia

How it would not be paradoxical, Soviet policy in comparison with other former Soviet republics prompted the Georgian identity to become more prominent in the some aspects. The so-called "korenizatsiya", phenomenon and the intense process of distribution and promotion of literature in the native language, has nurtured a generation more elevated, which was able to read in the Georgian language much better than its predecessors were. The language subject up to the present time, however, is highly politicized among representatives of political elite, but also in the Georgian society¹⁵.

According to the Constitution of Georgia, the only official language is Georgian. According to the census data, the 83.8% of the Georgian population are ethnic Georgians. This segment of the ethnic population is not representing, however, only those who speak the Georgian language. Thus, the svanii and the lazi mingrelii, speak other languages

¹³ "Shadow Report of the Georgian-Armenian NGO Yekir to the Human Rights Council", Accessed March 24, 2014. http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrc/docs/ngos/yekir_georgiafinal.doc

¹⁴ Mirzoev, 2

¹⁵ According to the "UNESCO Atlas on endangered languages of the world" there are about 80 000 speakers of the Svan language and 350 000 Mingrelian language speakers, and more Mingrelians already no longer speak the language.

kartveliene, distinct of the Georgian language. In order, to avoid disruption of the Georgian national unity, the Georgian linguists asserting that they are rather some dialects and not languages. Their recognition as politically separate languages would diminish the political unity of the Georgian nation¹⁶.

We must mention that Georgian Constitution may refer to language Abkhaz as an official language in Abkhazia. The Georgian and Abkhaz languages in language terms are the Caucasian languages. The Georgian language has the South Caucasian origin, while the Abkhaz along with the abaza, shapsug, cherkess, kabardina have the North Caucasian origin and are part of the chercheze language group. The linguistic factor was one of the reasons invoked by the Abkhaz group against the critical exponents of power in Tbilisi, riposting towards the trend of "georgenization" of Abkhazian by imposing the Georgian alphabet as the base of the language, as well as the establishment of Abkhazian language as the main tool of Georgian, still during the Stalinist era.

In a multiethnic region always occurs the issue regarding which language may be selected for communication. In the non-Georgians compact populated areas, priority shall be given to the Russian language, but not as a native language, but as a means of communication between the peoples of the former USSR, as well as the working language in administrative structures. After the new Constitution of the independent Georgia, the Georgian language was proclaimed as the State language and among the national minorities has occurred the messages on discrimination along ethnic lines. Along the time, characteristic of the language situation determinants in the early history of new Georgia, have not turned. Today, within ethnic regions the most used for the good practices is the Russian as a working language. It refers chiefly to compact regions populated by Greeks, Armenians, Azerbaijanis, Russians¹⁷.

The Governance from Tbilisi defines the linguistic gaps, as a substantial obstacle in integrating minorities, considering, in particular, the modest knowledge of Georgian powers language for the Azerbaijani and Armenian ethnic population, located in Kartli and Javakheti regions. According to the 2002 census, 31 % of national minorities' representatives declare that speak fluent in Georgian, compared to 19.5% in 1979. At the same time, according to statistical data, in the 2006, 83.1- % in the region Kvemo-Karthli do not possess Georgian language at all, and in the Samtskhe-Javakheti, the figure stands at 46.9%¹⁸.

Another aspect of the linguistic situation from Georgia is the role of the Russian language as a means of communication. The Russian language preserved the importance in social and political life of Georgia largely because of the overwhelming influence of the Soviet period. At the moment, there are approximately 85,000 of native speakers of the Russian language, and about half of the population still demonstrates competence in the knowledge of Russian language. There is, however, no compact region for the Russian-language speakers. At the same time, the Russian language is used informal at the administrative level of units inhabited by Armenians and Azerbaijanis. At the moment, through its policies, the Georgia Government tends to diminish the influence of the Russian language, and her role in the interethnic communication, and her place to be

¹⁶Jonathan Weatley, "The Status of Minority Languages in Georgia and the Relevance of Models from Other European States", *ECMI Working Paper#26* (March 2006), 23

¹⁷ *Polietnicheskaya Gruzija: XX vek [Multi-ethnic Georgia: 20th century]*. Fond Otkrytoye Obshchestvo (Gruzija 2004) [Fund for an Open Society - Georgia], 340

¹⁸ Jones, 233.; *Assessment Survey Report. National Integration and Tolerance in Georgia* (Tbilisi: UNAG, 2007)

picked up by the official State language, the Georgian. These attempts to power from Tbilisi are motivated by the idea that, despite the popularity of the Russian language among the minority population, however, any reason to protect regional languages or minority languages, are required to be balanced and to be carried out without being to the detriment of the official language¹⁹.

The language is an essential component of culture and arguably, it becomes one of the most essential values during the period of national Renaissance. On the one hand, it can be instrumented as a means of manipulating the political interests over the ethnic self-confidence. However, for the unity of a multicultural nation the one official language is a component that contributes to the forging of a national identity. The tendency of Governments to promote the proficient ethnic group of dominant language as a core in civic inclusion should be done through the incorporation of minority ethnic peculiarities in this national identity, in such a manner guaranteeing the rights of national minorities in the field of languages²⁰. Of course the ethnic integration policies must focus on amplifying the study and the use of the official language in regions populated by the minorities. Undoubtedly, these set of policies are controversial because they are promoted along with the protection of the minorities' rights the concerning of the ethnic languages. After the "rose revolution" have followed the reforms in the educational system, as important and significant commitments of the State in ensuring the integration of minorities.

We must analyze separately some of the State's actions from reforming education, which from the perspective of practice have a divergent impact at the society level. On the one hand, the linguistic policy has been secured through the new system of exams for access to university studies, and by eliminating the Russian sector from the University educational system. On the other hand, there have been stepping up the efforts in studying the language in the compact areas inhabited by the minorities, but without a good purpose²¹.

The newly created educational system has provided studying in minority languages for primary and secondary school step; as a result, this fact became a real impediment for the children of ethnic minorities to accede at the higher education. Very modest knowledge of the Georgian language makes them vulnerable to the competition for a place at any departments of the universities from Georgia. Some authors assert, that as a result of these ineffective integration policies, the education institutions here served rather as "schools for immigrants", given that a large portion of their graduates the opportunity to choose to continue their higher education in Armenia, Azarbaijan or Russia²².

In order to achieve a better study of the Georgian language at the secondary educational system, in the new legislation passed in 2005 has been stipulated that in all schools should be studied the Georgian language and literature, history of Georgia and geography, and other social sciences in the State language, starting from the 2010-2011 study. These provisions have served as clauses to strain relations between the center and regions. Up to the present, the study of the official language has not generated visible results among the national minorities. The situation is due to several inadequacies in the field of the reforms implementation. The most visible are:

- Insufficient funding,

¹⁹ Weatley, 24

²⁰ Metreveli et al., 14

²¹ Mirzoev, 2

²² Metreveli et al., 14

-lack of qualified teachers/who service in the State language to the minority regions (despite the government programs designed to attract teachers in these regions),
-the application of inadequate teaching methods,
-also, the lack of a communication medium extras school in the Georgian language at the children who study in the schools for minorities²³.

The civic and political participation of national minorities

The way how the ethnic minorities are included in the democratic process has a strong influence on interethnic relations and Relationship between the State and minorities. Speaking about the civic authentic participation of national minorities in Georgia we needs to note that is one minor, unimportant. Although data on the participation rate at the elections attests to the relative degree of voter turnout in the regions of compact minorities. Generally, this dimension of civic and political action is difficult to be cataloged as sufficient, taking into account the unprivileged situation, of the difficulties of access to information, arising from the need to take language courses, as well as the low degree of legal literacy.

In fact, the legal framework of Georgia does not provide any obvious barriers for the minorities in order to limit their right to participate at the public and political life of the country. At the same time, the legislation does not provide the development of special schemes relating to proportional electoral quotas, at the equilibrated representation of ethnic groups in public service or promotion of minorities ' representatives career. Article 6 of the Law of Georgia regarding the political associations of citizens, prohibits the creation of political parties in accordance with the territorial or regional principle. Even the beginning of this article it is argued such a provision aimed at preventing any separatist movements in the regions of Kvemo Kartli and Javakheti. The legislation in the field of local elections is not one for all, given that fact many public functions are supplemented not by direct elections, but through appointment by Parliament or President, in order to centralize power from 2005.

The electoral system regarding the ethno-cultural groups those cohabitees in the one State may be inclusively or exclusively. Georgia has a unicameral Parliament and a mixed electoral system. At the first sight, these peculiarities of the Georgian political system cannot be characterization as exclusively. However, the analysis of the profile of ethnic Georgian Parliament describes an unsatisfactory situation regarding this field. Thus, since 1995, when only 16 non-Georgians have been elected in a Parliament composed of 235 deputies, the ethnic representation went into decline. In 1999, there were 14 deputies, in 2004 were 8, and 2008, 6 deputies non-Georgians have managed to gain a parliamentary seat in a legislature made up of 150 deputies²⁴.

The integrating of national minorities-Government problems and strategies

The first steps of Georgia on the path to building institutional structures in the field of ethnic policy were made in the period of Government of Eduard Shevardnadze (1992-2003), the second President of independent Georgia. The first President of Georgia was Zviad Gamsakhurdia and he built his Government platform on the ethno nationalistic

²³ International Crisis Group., "Georgia's Armenian and Azeri Minorities, *Europe Report* 178, 22 (November 2006), 26-27, accessed March 13, 2014, http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/europe/178_georgia_s_armenian_and_azeri_minorities.pdf.

²⁴ Marta Foresti et al., *Review of international assistance to political party and party system development*, Case study report (Georgia, 2010), 13

issues, in that period no great effort has been made to create the institutions that would have meant to manage the ethnic diversity. This is due to both a lack of acute in this field experience, as well as the political context, historical period, which coincided with the governance of this political leader. On the contrary, ethnocentric policy promoted by Gamsakhurdia, and his rhetoric campaign deprived in the practical terms the national minorities' representatives of their right to vote, the territories populated by minorities being deeply politically isolated from the rest of the country²⁵.

After the rose revolution of November 2003, the Georgian Government launched a series of reforms at the legal and institutional level. A part of these reforms were directed to the process to take part of the Georgian civil society, which was directed to take the form of inclusion and the protection of national minorities. These transformations were considered to have priority in the consolidation of the State; the new Government established in Tbilisi made the first step in this direction. It failed to get control over Adjara region, but ultimately the issue followed the reintegration of South Ossetia region, culminating in the armed confrontation in 2008.

At the same time, the Government, in the subject of the image of national identity, has decided to promote the idea of a civic nation, based on nationality and loyalty to the minorities, the President Saakashvili pointing out at the public performances that all the ethnicities from Georgia are citizens-part of the Georgian nation. After the 2003, state administration has created the various bodies with powers regarding the national minorities' fields. The initial implementation of policies in the field of minorities was under the responsibility of the Minister of State for Civil Integration Issues, but later, due to some the structural reforms of Government Act of 2008 this area of responsibility goes under the Minister for Reintegration Issues. The emergence of an institution in the 2008 like the Counsel of Civil Integration and Tolerance under the umbrella of the President Administration and presidential Adviser on civic integration issues has obtained an important role. An important result of the institution's activity has been the creation of an important document- National Concept regarding Tolerance and Civil Integration, adopted on March 8, 2009. It has provided a detailed plan of action as a result of Georgia to achieve over five years²⁶.

Mira Sovakar, manager of projects made in the direction of the Caucasus, the NGO Conciliation Resources, said: "the Georgian Government has not been able to manage pluralism in his country in a constructive way. The minorities here still are perceived as guests and not full-fledged citizens. Therefore, guests are always welcome, but they are expected to adapt to the existing situation without criticism or discontent clamor"²⁷.

The media has an important role in the success of the minority's integration, along with legal, educational, languages tools. It aims are to provide access to information, but also to contribute to the construction of minority portrait, to form the real view of state citizens' regarding representations of minority communities. At the moment, the trend of media to operate only with the negative messages regarding any activities in the regions inhabited by the national minorities compactness decreased, being replaced by the positive character reports (for example, trying to emphasize the friendly visits of the President of the State in Kvemo Kartli during Ramadan). The negative portrayal of minorities is no

²⁵ Gorgi Sordi, "Institutions of Georgia for Governance on National Minorities: An Overview", (September, 2009), 11

²⁶ Sordi, 11

²⁷ "Basic Result of the First General Census of the Georgian Population", *Georgian State Statistical Department*, (Tbilisi, 2004), 2

longer powered by separatist conflicts in Abkhazia against the background and South Ossetia, thus being perceived the minorities as sources of instability and conflict. The integration of such minorities must be built on a friendly relationship between majority and minority, and reducing the social distance between these segments of this population²⁸. Referring to this issue, G. Nodia emphasizes that "it is not enough merely to contain them; must state find a way to integrate them and make them to want to become participants at the national project"²⁹. The political solutions with reference to the integration of national minorities emphasized the inherent difficulty in transposing the certain visions in the political practice.

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²⁸ Tobias Akerlund, "National Minorities and the Media Situation in Georgia", *ECMI Working Paper #52* (January 2012), 8

²⁹ Ghia Nodia, "Georgia: Dimensions of Insecurity", *Statehood and Security: Georgia after Rose Revolution* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 2005), 16

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Figure 1. Georgia and Moldova: comparative analysis of ethnic dimension

Georgia	Republic of Moldova
<i>Georgia and Moldova: common features:</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soviet past • States in transition to democracy • the European Vector of the political process • Member States of the Eastern Partnership-States of the association agreement with the EU • lumped ethnic States (Moldova, 22.2% share of national minorities; Georgia, 16.2% share of national minorities) • territorial conflicts with separatist tinge (Transnistria, Abkhazia and South Ossetia) • geopolitical influence in Russian 	
Managing ethnic diversity	
<i>Legislative instruments</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constitution of Georgia • There is not a dedicated law status and the rights of national minorities • The European Framework Convention for the protection of national minorities, signed in 1995 and ratified in 2005 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Constitution of The Republic Of Moldova • The law on the special status of Gagauz, 1995 • The law on the legal status of national minorities and organizations, 2001 • The design of the national policy of the Republic of Moldova, 2003 • The European Framework Convention for the protection of national minorities, signed in 1995 and ratified in 1996
<i>Institutional instruments</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Minister of State's Office concerning the resolution of conflicts, • Council for Civil Integration and Tolerance • The Council of national minorities (a permanent consultative structure) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department Of Interethnic Relations • Investigation Institute of Interethnic Academy of Sciences of Moldova; • Parliamentary Commission for human rights and Minorities National • Centre for human rights
<i>Language arrangements</i>	

<i>Official languages :</i>	<i>Official languages</i>
Georgian, Abkhaz language and Georgian in AR Abkhazia	Moldovan/Romanian: (the lack of a consensus on the name of the language) Russian-language of interethnic communication (a hybrid, that is placed between the State language and minority languages) Territorial Autonomy Gagauzia (three languages): Romanian, Russian, Gagauz
<i>Use of languages in the education system</i>	
Language studies in school must be Georgian, or Abkhaz language and Georgian in AR Abkhazia Citizens whose native language is not Georgian, have the right to education in the mother tongue full General The language of instruction in higher education system is Georgian, and in Abkhazia and Abkhazian	The State guarantees the right of persons belonging to national minorities at the pre-primary, primary, secondary (vocational and General), and in Romanian languages postgraduate, and Russian, and must create conditions for education in the mother tongue of ethnic minorities (Ukrainians, Gagauz, Bulgarian, etc.)

Source: Own construction based on research

Figure 2. Ethnic structure of the population of Georgia from 1989-2002.

Ethnic groups	1989		2002		Changes between 1989-2002
	thousands	%	thousands	%	
Georgians	3 784.4	70.1 real estate	3 661.2	83.8	-126.2
Abkhaz	95.9	1.1	3.5	0.1	-92.3
Ossetini	164.1	3	23.6	0.6	-126.0
Armenians	437.2	8.1	248.9	5.	-188.2
Russians	341.2	6.3	42.1	1.5	-273.5

Ukrainians	32.6	1.0	7.0	0.2	-45.4
Azeri	307.6	5.	284.8	6.5	-14.2
Greeks	100.3	1.2	9.4	0.3	-85.1
Jews	15.4	0.5	2.4	0.1	-13.0
Kurds	20.7	0.4	2.5	-	-19.1
Total population	5 400.8	100	4 371.5	100	-1 029

Source: <http://www.geostat.ge/>

Figure 2.1. Ethnic structure of the Republic of Moldova

1989	The main ethnic groups	2004
64.5%	Moldavians/Romanians	78%
8.6%	Ukrainians	8.4%
13.0%	Russians	5.9%
3.5%	Gagauz	4.4%
2.0%	Bulgarians	1.9%
1.5%	Jews	0.1%
1.6%	Other ethnic groups: Poles, Byelorussians, Azerbaijanis, Armenians, etc.	0.1%

Source: www.statistica.md

2.1.1. Regional and Minority Languages in Georgia

Language	The family of languages	Speakers	Number of native speakers	Populated region
Azeri	Azerbaijani subgroup, Turkic	Azeri	283,632	Districts of <i>Marneuli</i> , <i>Bolnisi</i> , <i>Dmanisi</i> (> 50% of the population). Districts of <i>Lagodekhi</i> , <i>Sagarejo</i> , <i>Gardabani</i> , <i>Telavi</i> (> 10%).
Armenian	the subgroup Thracian, Indo-European	Armenians	235,653	<i>Ninotsminda</i> , <i>Akhalkalaki</i> , (> 90%), <i>Tsalka</i> (> 50%). <i>Akhalsikhe</i> ,

(1) non-Georgians	16	6.8%	14	5.8%	8	5.3%	6	4%
Seats total no.	235		150		150		150	

Source: Marta Foresti et al., Review of international assistance to political party and party system development, Case study report (Georgia, 2010)

Figure 4.1. The representation of ethnic minorities in the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova^[2]

Ethnic Affiliation	legislature							
	1990-1994		1994-1998		1998-2001		2001-2005	
	Nr	%	Nr	%	Nr	%	Nr	%
Mahmoud/Romanian	270	71.2	91	70	99	84.6	79	63.7
Ukrainian	33	8.7	7	5.4	6	5.1	22	17.7
Russian	63	16.6	16	12.3	4	3.4	11	8.9
Gagauz	10	2.7	6	4.6	6	5.2	9	7.3
Others	1	0.3	5	3.9	2	1.7	3	2.4
Missing date	2	0.5	5	3.8	0	0	0	0
Total	379	100	130	100	117	100	124	100

Source: Gallagher M., Laver M. Mair P. Representative Government in Modern Europe. Boston: McGraw, 2006