

Russian-speaking Relocates in Georgia: Composition, Impact, Challenges and Opportunities

December 15, 2023

Radisson Blue Iveria Hotel

First Republic Square 1, Tbilisi

The Russian war of aggression against Ukraine also had far-reaching effects on Georgian society. After the outbreak of the war, Georgia has become one of the countries that proved to be attractive for the Russian-speaking relocates (mainly Russians and Belarusians) and their mass influx has created new realities in the country. Clearly visible are the distributional conflicts in urban areas with exponentially rising rents and land prices and the suspicion and fear in large segments of Georgian society. Distributional conflicts, widespread resentment, and lack of social integration of Russian migrants can lead to new cleavages and tensions with the Georgian majority in the short and medium term.

The conference aims to gain a better understanding of the migration of Russian speakers to Georgia and to discuss risks and opportunities for Georgian society. It will thus make an important contribution to a better understanding of this far-reaching development for Georgia. Together with our speakers and the interested audience, we will tackle the following questions during the conference:

- How is the socio-demographic composition of the Russian-speaking relocates in Georgia and which migration trends can we identify?
- What are the security, political and socio-economic implications of the migration for Georgia?
- What are critical challenges for the host-community and the émigrés and how to address them?
- What opportunities arise for Georgian society and for relocates and how can we make better use of them?

The conference is organized by the [Centre for Cultural Relations Caucasian House](#) and [Corridors – Dialogue through Cooperation](#) and supported by the German Federal Foreign Office within the #CivilSocietyCooperation.

09:30	Registration
10:00-10:10	<p>Welcome speech</p> <p>Levan Lortkifanidze, Chairman of the Board, Caucasian House Sebastian Relitz, Director Corridors – Dialogue through Cooperation</p>

10:10 – 11:30	Contemporary Migration Trends and Challenges for Georgia - Legal Overview, Impact on Policy and Economics (Moderator: Levan Lortkifanidze)
Inputs	<p>Ekaterina Chigaleichik – <i>Ethnographer and Anthropologist, Co-founder After24:</i> <i>What is the sociodemographic background of Russian-speaking relocates in Georgia and their current situation?</i></p> <p>Giorgi Gobronidze – Regional Security expert, Professor International Black Sea University: <i>What are the political and security related implications of Russian migration to Georgia?</i></p> <p>Nodar Kapanadze – Senior Researcher, Georgian Foundation of Strategic and International Studies (GFSIS): <i>What is are the economic and social implications of Russian migration to Georgia?</i></p>
11:30 – 12:00	Coffee-break
12:00 – 13:15	Challenges and Opportunities for Russian-speaking Migrants in Georgia (Moderator: Sebastian Relitz)
Inputs	<p>Mikhaeil Elizbarashvili - Project Coordinator Refugee Aid, Act for Transformation <i>Challenges for and approaches to support conscious objectors in Georgia?</i></p> <p>Darya Apakhonchich – Artist and Activist, Kids Bridge Tbilisi <i>What are the main challenges for Russian speaking relocates in Georgia and their vision for the future?</i></p>
13:15 – 13:30	Summarizing (Levan Lortkifanidze and Sebastian Relitz)
13:30	Lunch