Overview of Methodology used for Evaluation of the implementation of 2016-2017 Action plan under the 2016-2020 Migration Strategy of Georgia

Overview of Methodology used for Evaluation of the implementation of 2016-2017 Action plan under the 2016-2020 Migration Strategy of Georgia

Author

Natia Mestvirishvili	Researcher at ICMPD ENIGMMA Analytical Unit at the SCMI Secretariat in Georgia. Ms. Mestvirishivli's background is in psychology and social research. Before joining ICMPD/SCMI in 2016 Natia held Senior Researcher's position at CRRC Georgia and taught various courses in research design and data analysis at various Georgian universities.

Editors

Zurab Korganashvili	ENIGMMA 2 National Project Manager; Mr. Korganashvili's background is in law and the English language. He has more than ten years of experience of working for both state institutions and international organisations in the field of migration and trafficking in human beings in the South Caucasus region.
Violeta Wagner	ENIGMMA 2 Project Leader; Ms Wagner's background is in international law and she has more than ten years of practical experience working for state administrations in the area of migration and asylum. She has managed migration-related projects in Eastern Europe and the South Caucasus for ICMPD since 2011.

Table of Content

List of Acronyms, Abbreviations and Definitions

EU   European Union

EU-NATO   Office of the State Minister of Georgia on European and Euro-Atlantic Integration

ICMPD   International Centre for Migration Policy Development

MFA   Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia

MIA   Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia

MoES   Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia

MoESD   Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia

MoH   Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Affairs of Georgia

MoJ   Ministry of Justice of Georgia

MRA   Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from Occupied Territories, Accommodation and Refugees of Georgia

OSMDI   Office of the State Minister of Georgia on Diaspora Issues

POG   Prosecutor's Office of Georgia

PSDA   Public Service Development Agency

SCMI   State Commission on Migration Issues

SSS   State Security Service of Georgia

Introduction

2016-2020 Migration Strategy of Georgia[1] is the third strategic document outlining the migration policy of the country. Based on the concept elaborated by the Secretariat of the State Commission on Migration Issues (SCMI), the document was drafted by a Migration Strategy Working Group operating within the framework of the Commission in close cooperation with non-governmental sector and international organizations.[2]

The overall objective of the migration policy of Georgia is to to create, by 2020, a legislative and institutional environment that:

- ensures the state's enhanced approximation to EU;

- facilitates peaceful cohabitation of various religious, cultural and ethnic groups;

- protects migrants' rights and their successful integration into society;

- promotes reintegration of returned migrants and the usage of the positive economic and demographic aspects of migration for the development of the country; and

- increases legal migration opportunities for the citizens of Georgia.

The strategy is implemented according to the action plans elaborated for 2016-2017, 2018 and 2019. This document discusses methodology used for evaluation of 2016 and 2017 action plans. The same methodology will be used for evaluating 2018 (which is in progress) and 2019 action plans in order to ensure comparability of the results.

Monitoring and evaluation are the key components of the Migration strategy, therefore, it is one of the functions of the Secretariat of SCMI to monitor its implementation, as well as the implementation of the Action Plan. Furthermore, the monitoring and evaluation is included in the Strategy as a separate sub-chapter. According to the Strategy, the Secretariat requests responsible institutions to provide an update on the implementation progress on a quarterly basis. Based on the accumulated information, quarterly monitoring reports are drafted depicting the implementation of the activities stipulated under the action plan and achievement of the results by the responsible institutions within the reporting period.

Based on the analysis of the monitoring results, the Secretariat is obligated to prepare internal report on the implementation of the action plan annually and present it to the Commission for discussion. Annual evaluation of the action plan is conducted in January-April by the analytical unit of the Secretariat. Throughout the monitoring activity, the Analytical unit relies on the monitoring results, as well as on the interviews conducted with the relevant employees of the state institutions, and suggests recommendations for the future action plan.

This document provides detail description of the monitoring methodology used for evaluation of implementation of activities under each outcome of the strategy, i.e. it lists results, indicators, timelines, sources of funding, and designates responsible institutions. The strategy is mainly implemented by the state institutions within SCMI in close cooperation with the local non-governmental and partner international organizations.

The evaluation report of 2016 Action Plan was supported by the EU-funded "Enhancing Georgia's Migration Management" (ENIGMMA), while the evaluation report of 2017 action plan was developed within the framework of "Sustaining Migration Management in Georgia" (ENIGMMA 2) project. The

---

[1] http://migration.commission.ge/files/migration_strategy_2016-2020_eng_final_amended_08.2018.pdf
[2] The working group is comprised of the representatives of state institutions being the members of the Commission, government administration, Public Defender's Office, and Council of State Security and Crisis Management

evaluation of 2018 Action Plan, which is also supported by ENIGMMA 2, [3] is in progress now and will use the same methodology as previous evaluations did.

ENIGMMA project was implemented by ICMPD in cooperation with and through the coordination of SCMI, and supported the Government of Georgia in implementation of different migration related areas of the Visa Liberalisation Dialogue between the European Union (EU) and Georgia. ENIGMMA 2 builds broadly on the results of ENIGMMA project and runs from September 2017 through October 2020. Its main purpose is to further support EU-Georgia relations on the enhancement of mobility and people-to-people contacts, through assisting Georgian partners in assessing and evaluating the impact of the sustainable implementation of the Migration Strategy. This is carried out without prejudice to the Migration Strategy Action Plan and Evaluation Indicators document, and by ensuring efficient application of the provisions established by the Association Agreement between the European Union and Georgia and Association Agenda.

---

[3] The assistance in all projects implied hiring the Georgian high profile expert as a member of Secretariat's Analytical Unit, who runs evaluation in the frame defined by the SCMI and its Secretariat.

1.   Overview of the Action Plan

1.1. General overview of activities of the Action Plan

2016-2017 Action Plan elaborated to implement[4] 2016 – 2020 Migration Strategy of Georgia included 8 goals, 23 objectives, 134 sub-objectives, and 284 activities. The table presented bellow provides a detailed outline of the goals, objectives, sub-objectives, and activities distributed according to the objectives.

Table 1. Activities of 2016-2017 Action Plan and their distribution according to sub-objectives, objectives and goals [5]

Goals and Objectives	Sub-objectives	Activities
Goal I. Further expansion and improvement of legal migration opportunities	**18**	**32**
a. Improvement of the visa and residence policy	7	12
b. Facilitation and regulation of labour migration	4	6
c. Improvement of emigration recording	4 (5)	6
d. Promotion of the internationalisation of the educational sector	3 (4)	8
Goal II. Effective fight against illegal migration, trafficking in persons, and people smuggling	**23**	**62**
a. Improvement of the integrated management of Georgian State Border	5	9
b. Fight against illegal migration	9	26
c. Intensification of fight against trans-boundary and transnational organised crime	5	17
d. Implementation of readmission agreements and initiation of new agreements	4	10
Goal III. Further development of the legislative and institutional framework of the asylum system considering the integration needs	**14**	**30**
a. Improvement of the legislative framework	2	2

---

[4] The AP's for 2016-2020 strategy were divided into 4 phases: 2016-2017, 2018, 2019, 2020. All goals, objectives and sub-objectives are applied to all 4 phases.

[5] 9 sub-objectives of the Migration Strategy are not envisaged under 2016-2017 Action Plan. The figures given in the parenthesis indicate number of sub-objectives under each objective stipulated by the Strategy.

b. Institutional development of the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Accommodation and Refugees of Georgia	4	15
c. Facilitation of integration of refugee and humanitarian status holders	8 (9)	13
Goal IV. Improvement of the immigrant integration policy and fine-tuning of the reintegration programmes for migrants returned to Georgia	**13**	**25**
a. Promotion of the integration of immigrants	6	8
b. Reintegration of migrants returned to Georgia	7	17
Goal V. Channelling the economic and human resources of Georgian citizens residing abroad, diaspora representatives, and immigrants into the development of the country	**14**	**27**
a. Utilization of the potential of migration	3 (5)	7
b. Facilitation of circular migration	7	11
c. Mobilisation of diaspora and emigrants investment potential	4	9
Goal VI. Improvement of the migration policy planning and the means of data collection and analysis for informed decision-making	**17**	**46**
a. Improvement of migration policy coordination	9 (10)	26
b. Improvement of the data collection and analysis methods	5	10
c. Introduction and development of the practice of migration risk analysis and thematic studies	3	10
Goal VII. Raising the awareness of the population of Georgia, immigrants, refugees and humanitarian status holders, asylum seekers, as well as Georgian citizens residing abroad and the diaspora representatives on the key priorities defined by the Migration Strategy	**27**	**49**
a. Conduct public opinion surveys covering the five core directions outlined in the 2016-2020 Migration Strategy in order to assess the current situation and progress achieved in this regard.	1	2
b. Design and implement media campaigns in the five core directions outlined in the Situation Analysis, taking into account the defined priorities and guidelines.	4	9

c. Design and use in practice the regular communication mechanisms for the relevant state agencies to reach their target audiences	22 (24)	38
Goal VIII. Strengthening cooperation with partner countries and international organisations in compliance with the strategic objectives laid out in the document, and use the potential stemming from these partnerships for the further development of the migration policy	**8**	**13**
a. Deepen cooperation with partner countries and international organisations	8 (9)	13

The results of the Action Plan implementation are mostly measured using quantitative rather than qualitative indicators. Generally, existing evaluation indicators measure outputs, i.e. results that are achieved immediately after specific activities are implemented (e.g. workshops, sub-projects, products), rather than outcomes (mid-term effects which demonstrate changes produced by outputs) or impact (long-term effects of intervention).

Activities of the action plan are either single or periodic. Single activities are implemented only once throughout the reporting period (for example, adoption of the legislative act). Periodic or recurring activities, on the other hand, represented a series of related activities under one objective or sub-objective within the reporting period (for example, informational meetings with specific target groups).

Depending of the character of each activity, they sometimes have several timeframes since certain activities have several results to which they are directly linked. Multiple outputs are possible for both alone-standing and recurring activities; therefore, the reporting on the results is required for both years of the action plan. It is noteworthy that the majority of the activities (219) had at least one deadline of accomplishment in 2016.

1.2. Distribution of activities according to their implementation deadline, responsible institution and Strategy goals

Diagram 1 represents distribution of timeframe in 2016 and 2017. As the diagram shows, results and therefore, reporting for the majority of the activities are expected in quarter four of both years.

Diagram 1. Reporting timeframe for 2016-2017 activities
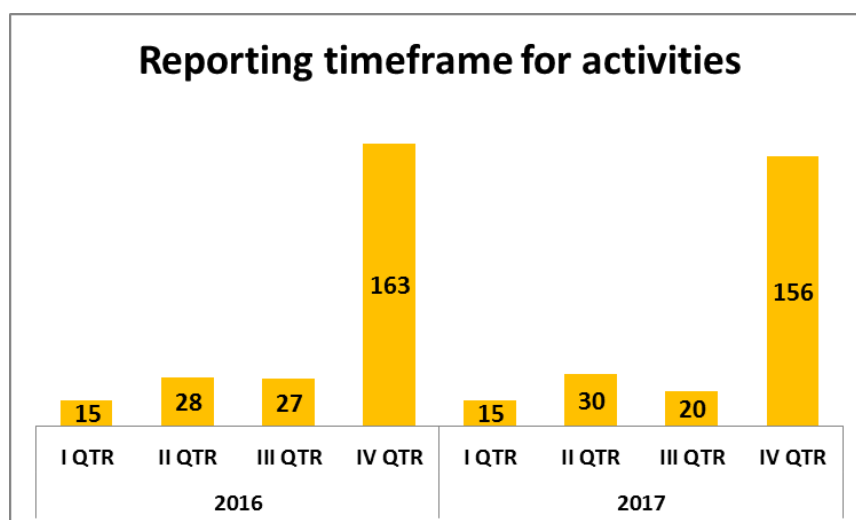
Each activity falls under the responsibility of an institution that commits to implement the activity, as well as to provide progress report and an overview of the achievements to the SCMI Secretariat. Diagram 2 represents distribution of the activities according to the responsible institutions. As seen from the diagram, majority of the activities should have been implemented by the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories[6], Accommodation and Refugees of Georgia (MRA), Public Service Development Agency (PSDA), and the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia (MIA).

Diagram 2. Distribution of 2016-2017 activities according to the responsible institutions
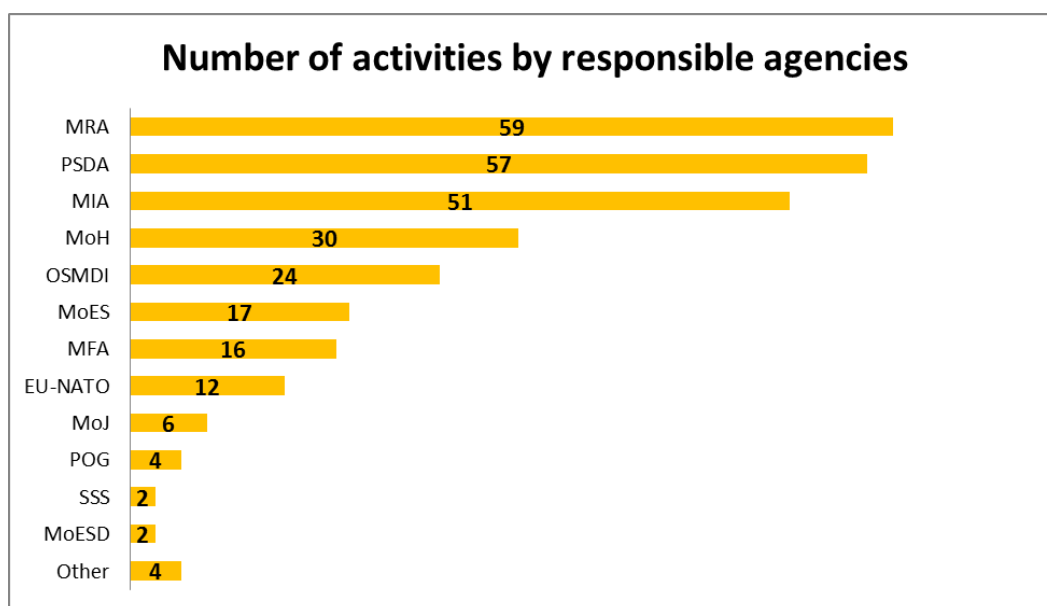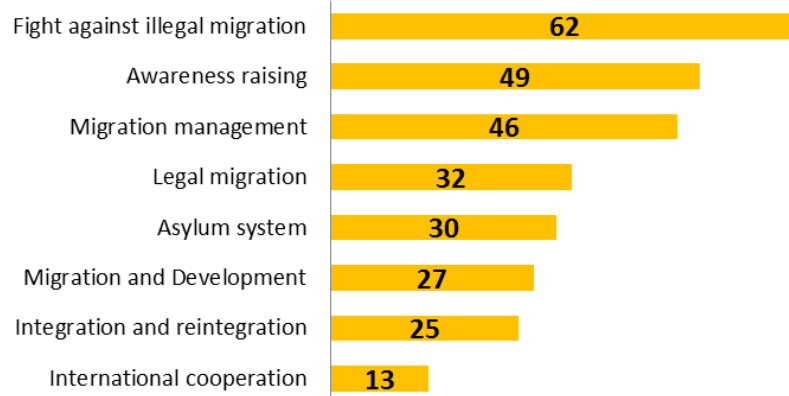

As for the distribution of the activities according to the goals of the Strategy, majority of the activities target combating illegal migration, followed by awareness raising and improvement of the migration management. Diagram 3 depicts distribution of the activities according to the migration policy goals established in the Strategy.

Diagram 3. Distribution of 2016-2017 Activities according to the Strategy Goals

---

[6] The Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Accommodation and Refugees was abolished in 2018, and its functions were distributed among three other institutions: the Ministry of Infrastructure and Regional Development, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and the Ministry of Labor, Health and Social Affairs. For more information see:
http://www.gov.ge/index.php?lang_id=ENG&sec_id=497&info_id=66743

Number of activities by strategy goals

Strategy goal	Number
Fight against illegal migration	62
Awareness raising	49
Migration management	46
Legal migration	32
Asylum system	30
Migration and Development	27
Integration and reintegration	25
International cooperation	13

2. Evaluation Objectives and Methodology

2.1. Evaluation Objectives and Goals

Evaluation of 2016-2020 Migration Strategy of Georgia and its Action Plan is established by the Strategy itself and represents a separate part of the document. The evaluation process assesses effectiveness of the activities stipulated by the Action Plan. In this regard, the evaluation of the strategy and the Action Plan are two independent processes looking at different indicators.

Action Plan is to be evaluated systematically in order to timely identify potential obstacles in the implementation process and to react to them accordingly. This allows the responsible institutions to consider those in the next year Action Plan. Generally, evaluation of the Action Plan does not aim at assessing the work of responsible institutions and/or employers. Annual evaluation of the Action Plan is a so-called process analysis that aims *to determine if the planned activities were implemented timely, precisely and whether those activities triggered tangible results, as well as to identify obstacles in implementation of the activities*.

As already mentioned above, this report summarizes the main features of the evaluation process of the 2016-2017 Action Plan activities.

In detail, the evaluation determines the following aspects of implementation:

- How **timely** the activities stipulated by the Action Plan are implemented;

- Whether the **expected results** stipulated under the Action Plan **are achieved** by the activities;

- What factors are **supporting or hindering** successful implementation of the activities.

The results of such type of evaluation are beneficial due to several reasons:

- They vividly show the outputs that are attained in each year;

- They efficiently reveal challenges and obstacles at the initial stage and allow to follow up on them timely for their eradication;

- On the basis of the critical analysis of the achievements and obstacles, they are transferred into recommendations in order to make the subsequent year's Action Plan more feasible and effective.

Finally, the accumulated results of the annual Action Plans evaluation and consequently produced recommendations will be used for a general evaluation of the Migration Strategy which, differently than evaluation of the Action Plans, will look not only at outputs, but also outcomes and impact whenever available.

2.2. Evaluation methods

2016 Action Plan was evaluated at the beginning of 2017. The evaluation was carried out based on the indicators set in the Action Plan using two main sources of data:

- **Quarterly monitoring (progress) reports of 2016** submitted by the institutions responsible for implementation of certain activities as well as complementary supporting documentation;

- **Qualitative interviews** conducted by the analytical unit researchers with the responsible employees of the relevant institutions.

2016-2017 Action Plan was evaluated at the beginning of 2018. Since 2016-2017 Plan is a single document, where the activities are not delineated for 2016 and 2017 and majority of the initiatives started in 2016, conducting evaluation only in 2017 would not have been logical and efficient. Therefore, report drafted in 2018 is the cumulative assessment of 2016-2017 Action Plan, however, it draws certain parallels with 2016 evaluation in order to show progress or regress of the
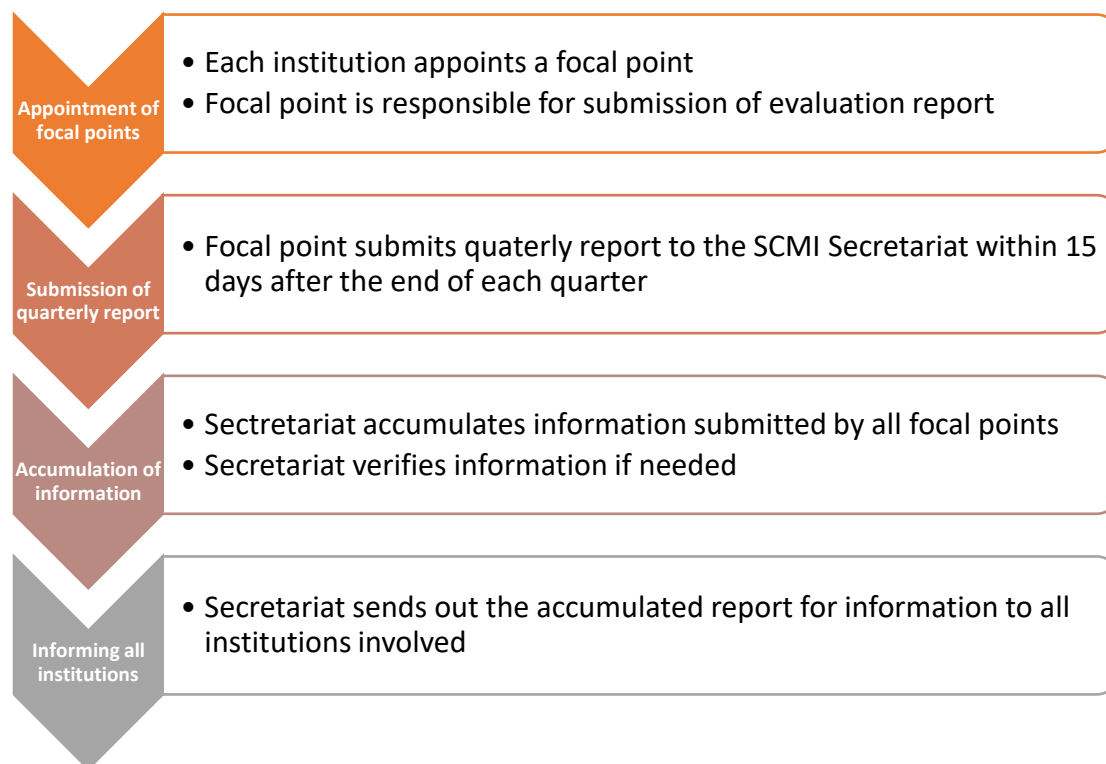
implementation throughout the last year of the respective Action Plan (2017). In addition, separate annual evaluation of the implementation of 2-years Action Plan allowed reacting accordingly by either mitigating risks of potential obstacles or by building on positive lessons learned.

2.2.1. Quarterly Monitoring Reports

According to the established procedure, an institution responsible for the implementation of the certain activities designates an official contact person who is fully informed about the responsibilities assumed by the institution under the Action Plan and is responsible for submitting quarterly implementation reports, as well as all the complementary supporting documentation to the Secretariat of SCMI. The aforementioned contact person submits report about the ongoing and completed activities to the Secretariat (through the developed electronic monitoring system of Action Plan implementation, see part 2.2.3 below for more information about the system) at the end of each quarter, more precisely - until the 15th of the following month. Quarterly report of the Action Plan implementation is presented in the format of a table. The responsible institution includes brief information (250-300 words) under the respective activity and indicates the source verifying and/or clarifying the implemented work. The source could be either public, or a closed document. In case of a closed document, it is not required to enclose to the report, however, the requisites of the aforementioned document will be indicated. Some examples of supporting documents include: List of trained (or certified) employees and training agenda for trainings, reports – for research, monitoring and evaluation activities, Memorandums of Understanding and agreements – for cooperation related activities and so on.

The Secretariat accumulates information submitted by different institutions, verifies the supporting documentation, and, if necessary, clarifies details. Consequently, the Secretariat sends joint quarterly report to all member institutions of SCMI for their information. Interviews with the representatives of the relevant institutions are used additionally to supplement information provided in the quarterly monitoring reports and to obtain more detailed information on each activity, as described below.

Graphic 1. Quarterly reporting system

Appointment of focal points	• Each institution appoints a focal point • Focal point is responsible for submission of evaluation report
Submission of quarterly report	• Focal point submits quaterly report to the SCMI Secretariat within 15 days after the end of each quarter
Accumulation of information	• Sectretariat accumulates information submitted by all focal points • Secretariat verifies information if needed
Informing all institutions	• Secretariat sends out the accumulated report for information to all institutions involved

2.2.2. Interviews

Interviews are not automatically used for all responsible institutions and activities of the Action Plan. Thus, for evaluation of the 2016 Action Plan implementation, interviews were conducted with the representatives of 7 out of 12 institutions during 9-15 March, 2017. Issues of discussion were sent to the institutions in advance for designating a competent person for interviews. Majority of the interviews were conducted with more than one representative of an institution. Each interview consisted of two parts:

- at the **first stage**, activities receiving less than 4 points (please see the analysis part below for more details) were discussed in order to double check/clarify information provided, to explore the reasons that caused missing the deadline or failure to implement activity or to discuss the implementation indicator.

- In the **second part** of the interview respondents provided their personal evaluation of 2016 Action Plan and provided recommendations, which they considered to be necessary to reflect in the Action Plans of the following years.

Taking into account the lessons learned of evaluation of 2016 Action Plan, at the end of 2017, an additional column was added to the Electronic Monitoring System of the Action Plan Implementation for the activities with challenging timeframe or indicators during the implementation phase. Since the representatives of the institutions were able to insert comments on the problematic activities in the column, and also since majority of 2016-2017 activities were already discussed during the interviews conducted in 2017, conducting additional interviews was no longer necessary in 2018. However, the possibility to conduct interviews in case of need for 2018 Action Plan evaluation remains: if the information provided by institutions is not sufficient the interviews will be conducted with the representatives of relevant agencies.

2.2.3. Electronic Monitoring System

Electronic monitoring and reporting system for Migration Strategy's Action Plans was established in 2016. It is based on the Microsoft SharePoint 2013 and is uploaded on the PSDA server. The System is developed, maintained and administered by the PSDA IT Unit and SCMI Secretariat and can be accessed only by the authorized users representing a governmental institution involved in the implementation of the Strategy. Each involved governmental institution is represented by two authorized users. Since the system is working online it is accessible for the authorized user from any place and time.

The Action Plan in the system can be filtered by the following components:

- Goals and objectives of the strategy

- Responsible institutions

- Deadlines of the activities (by quarters)

- Funding sources

- Status of the activity (has not started yet, ongoing, completed, completed with delay)

- Responsible persons from the institutions

These functions make the system very convenient not only for reporting but also for analysis.

As mentioned above, representatives of implementing institutions (users) enter quarterly reports in the system on the activities they are responsible for within a period of 15 days after the quarter ends. When the reporting period starts (i.e. after each three months), the System generates notification that is sent to the users' E-mails. A reminder is sent 3 days before the reporting deadline and once the 15-day reporting period ends, the user is restricted to make its contribution to the System.

Each user has access only to those activities that his/her institution is responsible for. The length of quarterly reports is restricted to 300 words on each activity. Users inform on the current status of the activity and if delay occurs they explain reasons for that. Together with presenting report on each activity, the verifying document (source) should be uploaded. 'Editing' mode is active within the 15-day period of reporting, and after that only 'viewing' mode is active.

Once the reporting period ends, the SCMI Secretariat double-checks the information provided and in case of finding any inconsistencies or finds the information insufficient, edits and corrects the provided reports after communication with the responsible institution. The Secretariat also defines the status for each activity in the system (has not started yet, ongoing, completed, completed with delay). Once all quarterly reports are finalized in the System, the SCMI Secretariat exports the report (accompanied by the Action Plan) to Excel format and sends to all involved institutions. The last quarterly report of each year combines all four quarterly reports, showing the full picture of the Action Plan implementation in dynamics.

After that the SCMI secretariat analyses the presented information according to the methodology described above and prepares annual evaluation report of Action Plan according to the methodology described in this and following chapter. The annual evaluation report evaluates the progress of implementation of the Action Plan (counterchecking the progress against the indicators) and in case the problems identified, puts forward relevant recommendations.

2.3. Analysis

After the review of the quarterly monitoring reports and enclosed documents, a scoring scheme was elaborated by the Analytical Unit that introduced numeric assessment of each activity, i.e. allocation of scores on the basis of analyzing quarterly reports and enclosed documentation. Each activity was evaluated on the scale of 0 to 4, as described in the table below.

Table 2. Score system for evaluation of implementation status of activities

Scale	Description
0	The implementation of the activity was not initiated, therefore, the result has not been achieved within the set timeframe
1	The result (or one of the results) has not been achieved within the set timeframe, though the implementation of the activity has been initiated
2	The result has been achieved after the set deadline. Moreover, 2 points were allocated to the activities with multiply results, when at least one deadline was missed
3	The result has been achieved within the set timeframe/timeframes, though relevant indicators (at least one indicator) cannot be verified by a source
4	The result has been achieved within the set timeframe and all the indicators can be verified by relevant sources

The scoring scheme was elaborated considering the content of data (i.e. Action Plan and quarterly reports) and functions of monitoring E-system. While elaborating this scheme the statuses of activities used for monitoring were considered, however, the scoring scheme used for evaluation is more detailed and takes into account indicators (for instance, score 3 and 4). Most importantly, evaluation report analyses these scores in relation with each goal, objective and sub-objective to identify most problematic directions in the given Action Plan.

Average score was calculated for each goal and objective by dividing sum of activity scores on the total number of the activitites. .

When interpreting the scores, it is important to realize that low score does not necessarily mean underperformance of the institution responsible for the implementation the given activity. On the contrary, it might have been caused by a drawback in the logic of the Action Plan. For example, score 3 means that the anticipated result has been achieved though indicator cannot be verified. This can be caused by the inability of the institution to provide the source of verification for the indicator, or in certain cases, indicators cannot be verified as they were set incorrectly. Similar cases were revealed and highlighted in the evaluation report in order to avoid them in the next Action Plan. Therefore, quantitative evaluation (based on scores) of the report should not be interpreted linearly: quantitative evaluation provides general picture, though subsequent analysis, presented in the present report, which is largely based on the interviews, is necessary to have a more accurate overview.

Information elicited from the interviews filled in and complemented the evaluation. Indicators were verified as a result of an interview in the majority of the cases, and subsequently, assessment score of the specific activity was increased. Therefore, the results of evaluation rely on and consider analysis of the quarterly reports, as well as the information elicited through the interviews.

All of above mentioned information, evaluation, lessons learned are transferred into recommendations and included in the final annual evaluation report.

2.4. Ethical Considerations and Limitations

Final evaluation methodology of the Migration Strategy of Georgia for 2016-2020 and the Action Plan was submitted to the SCMI member institutions in November 2016. Issues to be discussed during the interviews were sent to the institutions in advance, based on which they designated the person who is best informed about the relevant issues. The interview was conducted by an evaluator.

Since indicators and their source of verifications are not delineated in the 2016-2017 Action Plan, majority of the activities are evaluated through verifying the implementation of the activities by the institutions in the quarterly monitoring reports, without reviewing verifying documentation. Following the recommendation from 2016 Action Plan evaluation, currently (since 2018) the Action Plan format stipulates differentiation between an indicator and a source, which minimizes this limitation for the future evaluation.

Overview of Methodology used for Evaluation of the implementation of 2016-2017 Action plan under the 2016-2020 Migration Strategy of Georgia

Developed with the support of EU funded "Enhancing Georgia's Migration Management" (ENIGMMA) and "Sustaining Migration Management of Georgia" (ENIGMMA 2) projects

This document provides detail description of the monitoring methodology used for evaluation of implementation of activities under each outcome of the Migration Strategy of Georgia 2016 - 2020. Monitoring and evaluation are the key components of the Migration strategy, therefore, it is one of the functions of the Secretariat of State Commission on Migration Issues to monitor its implementation, as well as the implementation of the Action Plan.

ISO 9001:2008