

## Summary Report

### of Public Consultations on the draft Migration Strategy of Georgia for 2021-2030

As stated in the Policy Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Handbook, the policy document development cycle is an inclusive process, implying an active participation of stakeholders at each stage that significantly increases the degree of legitimacy of policy documents.

In terms of Georgia's 2021-2030 Migration Strategy, identifying stakeholders is a simple task at the first glance, given the specific area of the state policy and considering that this is the third strategic document of the country in this field. However, this is not the case in practice, since migration related challenges vary and expand from year to year, entailing changes in respective legislative and institutional framework, which in turn, generate new actors and target groups that are to be affected by the implementation of the strategy and vice versa. That is why the involvement and expertise of international and non-governmental partners as well as academic circles equipped with relevant knowledge is vitally important in the process of developing the state sectoral policy.

The process of elaboration of 2021-2030 Migration Strategy and related public consultations were conducted in accordance with the "Rules for Development, Monitoring and Evaluation of Policy Documents" adopted by the Governmental Ordinance #629 on December 20, 2019. Involvement of partner organizations of the State Commission on Migration Issues (SCMI / Commission) was ensured from the very outset of the strategy development. At the first phase, the partners (international and non-governmental organizations with consultancy status and relevant expert knowledge within the Commission), following the decision of the Migration Laboratory<sup>1</sup> (Working Group<sup>2</sup>), were presented with the Concept of 2021-2030 Migration Strategy of Georgia, which later (December 2019) was adopted by the Commission with participation of above-mentioned partner organizations. During the second phase (February 2020), the Migration Laboratory asked four authoritative international organizations<sup>3</sup> enjoying consultative status in the SCMI, to present their vision of situation analysis and migration related challenges. The extensive material provided by these organizations was used at large by the Migration Lab while working on the Strategy situation analysis and defining respective strategic objectives.

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<sup>1</sup> The SCMI Migration Laboratory (Laboratory) portfolio includes work on the strategy and its action plans, as well as brief and medium format migration profiles; coordination of activities in the field of "migration and development" and preparation of various analytical products. The Laboratory is composed of SCMI member agencies, as well as invited partner state agencies and international and non-governmental organizations with consultative status in the Commission, to which the Laboratory is referred for expertise when necessary.

<sup>2</sup> The SCMI Strategy Working Group gathered within the Laboratory, where international and non-governmental organizations with consultative status within the Commission and relevant expertise were represented alongside the Commission member state agencies.

<sup>3</sup> International Organization for Migration (IOM), International Center for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ). The document was sent to the EU Delegation to Georgia (EUD) and through them to the European Commission (EC) at the third phase, because as basis for the situation analysis from the EU side were considered the EC Visa Suspension Mechanism annual reports, as well as the national reports and relevant recommendations on the implementation of the EU-Georgia Association Agreement and its Agenda. Thus the consultations with EU were held from the second phase and ended in December 2020.

The third phase of the public consultations (October-November 2020) was more representative and inclusive. The draft Strategy prepared on the basis of prior consultations with international partners was translated into English in a parallel and expedited manner and circulated by e-mail among the above-mentioned international organizations, whose situation (problems) analysis were accordingly referred to in the process of the Strategy development. At the same time, to some extent this process was aimed at verifying their contribution. Along with sending the draft Strategy, an online meeting was held with involved partner organizations to discuss various document-specific issues (i.e. compliance of the Strategy with new policy planning requirements, specified in a government-approved new policy planning handbook, etc.) to ensure that the document architecture is well-understood by partners, thus making the further process of their involvement easier. Later on (November 2020) the draft Strategy was sent by e-mail to four non-governmental organizations<sup>4</sup> enjoying consultative status in the SCMI, as well as to the Office of the Public Defender, the Human Rights Secretariat of the Administration of Government of Georgia (including the Prime Minister's Advisor on Human Rights and Gender Equality) and Tbilisi State University<sup>5</sup>.

Together with the draft Strategy, the above-mentioned organizations were provided with a special spreadsheet (see Figure 1) to present the comments and recommendations under the thematic directions in a structured manner.

**Figure 1**

<b><i>Part of the Strategy</i></b>	<b><i>Partner Organizations' comments/recommendations</i></b> <i>(Comments/recommendations of the partner organizations should be concrete and in case of need relevant alternative formulations should be submitted)</i>	<b><i>SCMI Response</i></b> <i>(Substantiated positions of the relevant SCMI member agencies on the each comment/recommendation)</i>

During the third phase of the public consultations the partner organizations provided more than 110 recommendations and comments of various types and volumes to the draft Strategy.

All those recommendations / comments were discussed in detail within the SCMI Migration Lab and reasoned responses to each of them were produced respectively by the profile state agenc(ies)y, confirming at the same time acceptance, partial acceptance or non-acceptance of the recommendations to their author organizations. In addition, in order to objectively assess the results of the review of the recommendations / comments submitted by the partner organizations and their reflection in the Strategy, the criteria for granting the relevant statuses were elaborated (see Figure 2).

**Figure 2**

<b>Status</b>	<b>Criterion for defining the status</b>
<b>Reflected</b>	Rec. / comment of the partner organization has been reflected in the Strategy in the same form and content it was presented.

<sup>4</sup> Innovations and Reforms Center; Migration Center; Georgian Young Lawyers Association; Civic Development Agency. The submission of the document to these organizations at the third phase was conditioned by the main fact that their activities in the field of migration are mainly carried out with the help of international organizations and according to the priority thematic areas identified by / with them, to whom the Migration Laboratory addressed at the initial phase.

<sup>5</sup> Academic staff of the Joint Master's Program in Migration Management of Tbilisi State University (TSU) and the Georgian Institute of Public Affairs (GIPA) participated in the discussion of the draft Strategy submitted within the framework of the Memorandum of Understanding between TSU and SCMI).

<b>Partially Reflected</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amendments were made to the Strategy based on or resulted from the remark / comment made by partner organization although not in the same wording as presented;</li> <li>• Remark / comment made by partner organization has not been reflected in the Strategy but will be considered in the Action Plan.</li> </ul>
<b>Not Reflected</b>	No amendment / change has been made to the Strategy (also neither in the log frame or Action Plan).

It is important to note that the majority of the recommendations provided by the partner organizations **which were not taken into account, were mostly of a technical nature**<sup>6</sup> (often related to ambiguous interpretation of the translated text and / or terminology) and had already been reflected in various forms in the original, Georgian version of the Strategy and its logical framework. In addition to each recommendation / comment (including those considered), individual feedback was provided to each partner organization and a detailed and substantiated response structured in the form of the table, similar to the one shown above (Figure №1) was sent via email in both English and Georgian languages.

In accordance with the statuses granted on the basis of the criteria provided in Figure 2, the results of the consultations with the partner organizations on the final draft of the Migration Strategy have been summarized and is illustrated in Figure 3 below:

Figure 3



<sup>6</sup> Unlike the situation (problem) analysis.