

ACADEMIC PAPER

GENDER IMPACT ASSESSMENT
OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION
SUPPORT AND SELF-EMPLOYMENT
SUPPORT GRANT PROGRAMMES



DECEMBER 2021
UN WOMEN

The publication was prepared by the ISET Policy Institute in the framework of the project “Accelerating Implementation of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda in Georgia”, generously funded by the Conflict, Stability and Security Fund of the British Government. The content of this publication does not reflect the official opinion of UN Women, or Conflict, Stability and Security Fund of the British Government. Responsibility for the information and views expressed herein lies entirely with the authors.

© 2021 UN Women

ACADEMIC PAPER

GENDER IMPACT ASSESSMENT
OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION
SUPPORT AND SELF-EMPLOYMENT
SUPPORT GRANT PROGRAMMES



DECEMBER 2021
UN WOMEN

Authors:

Norberto Pignatti
Maka Chitanava
Mariam Lobjanidze
Erekle Shubitidze
Guram Lobzhanidze



TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS	4
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	5
CHAPTER 1: CONTEXT OF THE GIA	7
Part 1: Background information	8
1.1. Methodology	9
1.2. Importance of IDPs' and ecomigrants' socioeconomic integration and improving their livelihoods by creating employment prospects	13
1.3. Goals of Georgian IDP and ecomigrant support policies, with respect to gender equality	27
1.4. Programmes managed by the Internally Displaced Persons, Ecomigrants and Livelihood Agency, from a gender perspective	32
Part 2: Descriptions of the selected programmes	37
Part 3: Gender relevance of the selected programmes	42
CHAPTER 2: GENDER ANALYSIS OF THE PROGRAMMES: VOCATIONAL EDUCATION SUPPORT AND SELF-EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT GRANT PROGRAMMES FOR IDPS AND ECOMIGRANTS	44
Part 4.1: Gender analysis of the programmes: Quantitative analysis	45
4.1.1. Quantitative analysis of the vocational education support programme for IDPs and ecomigrants	45
4.1.2. Quantitative analysis of the self-employment support grant programme for IDPs and ecomigrants	53
Part 4.2: Gender analysis of the programmes: Qualitative analysis	63
4.2.1. Results of interviews with beneficiaries of the vocational education support programme for IDPs and ecomigrants and representatives of vocational educational institutions	63
4.2.2. Results of interviews with beneficiaries of the self-employment support grant programme for IDPs and ecomigrants	70
Part 5: Identified gender-specific challenges	78
CHAPTER 3: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMENDATIONS	80
Part 6: Summary of findings	81
Part 7: Recommendations to improve the selected programmes in terms of gender equality	86
ANNEXES	88
ANNEX 1. SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS' GUIDE	89
ANNEX 2. TYPES OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAMMES AND THEIR PREREQUISITES	94
ANNEX 3. CRITERIA FOR LONG-TERM RESETTLEMENT OF IDPS AND ECOMIGRANTS	95
ANNEX 4. REQUESTED FUNDING OF APPLICANTS AND BENEFICIARIES, BY REGION	96
REFERENCES	100

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
EU	European Union
GEL	Georgian Lari
Geostat	National Statistics Office of Georgia
GIA	Gender Impact Assessment
ID	Identity Document
IDMC	Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
ILO	International Labour Organization
LEPL	Legal Entity of Public Law
LFS	Labour Force Survey
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MES	Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia
MoESD	Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
TSA	Targeted Social Assistance
UN	United Nations
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Gender Impact Assessment (GIA) of the vocational education support programme for IDPs and ecomigrants and the self-employment support grant programme was conducted by the ISET Policy Institute (ISET-PI) within the UN Women project “Accelerating Implementation of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda in Georgia”, generously funded by the Conflict, Stability and Security Fund of the British Government. This study represents an ex-post GIA of the programmes implemented by the LEPL Internally Displaced Persons, Ecomigrants and Livelihood Agency at the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Labour, Health and Social Affairs of Georgia.

The goal of the vocational education support programme is to promote the socioeconomic integration of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and ecomigrants¹ and improve their living conditions by creating employment prospects, and it aims to do so by promoting the vocational education of IDPs and ecomigrants in order to increase their competitiveness in the labour market. As for the self-employment support grant programme, its main goal is to promote the socioeconomic integration of IDPs and ecomigrants and improve their living conditions by creating a self-employment perspective; the programme also aims to promote vocational education among IDPs and ecomigrants.

The GIA team analysed the overall impacts of the programmes along several dimensions. After a thorough analysis, several insights were drawn:

- The selected programmes view participants as a **homogenous group**, there are **no gender quotas or gender-specific criteria**, and the Agency does not deliberately encourage the participation of specific gender groups. Hence, both programmes are considered gender-neutral.
- The vocational education support programme **is achieving** its specific objective of supporting vocational education among the target audience, as transportation is a significant obstacle for this group. As for another general goal of the programme—supporting the social and economic integration of IDPs and ecomigrants

and improvement of their living conditions by providing employment opportunities—due to the complexity of it, a single programme cannot be enough to reach it. Achieving this goal depends on numerous factors, the majority of which is not under the influence of the Agency.

- The self-employment support grant programme **is achieving** its main goal of promoting the socioeconomic integration of its participants and improves their living conditions by creating better employment prospects. However, the programme **does not seem to be efficient in promoting vocational education among IDPs and ecomigrants**.

Overall, the programmes were assessed successfully in terms of their fulfilment of the key objectives. However, in the case of the self-employment support grant programme, there is room for improvement. Goals could be more gender sensitive, taking into consideration existing gender differences and the special needs of women and men. To identify such special needs, the GIA team looked at the demographic profile of IDPs and ecomigrants in general. The overall **education level of IDPs and non-IDPs is not statistically different**. However, despite the fact that IDPs enjoy a similar level of education as the rest of society, **their labour market performance is worse**. Therefore, **IDPs are more vulnerable, especially female IDPs, and face more obstacles to receiving comparable remuneration**. Moreover, **unemployment is higher** in the case of IDPs (especially for adult and young males).

1 The term ‘ecomigrant’ is used throughout this report as an abbreviation for ‘ecological migrant’ or ‘environmental

migrant’, meaning those affected and displaced by natural disasters.

The GIA team has also identified gender-specific challenges that are not only specific to these programmes per se but also can be extended to the other livelihood supporting programmes as well. The gender-disaggregated impact of the programmes could be summarized as follows:

- The number of applicants to the vocational education support programme seems to be **evenly distributed** in terms of gender. The background distribution, however, is hugely in favour of men—who predominate among those receiving vocational education—so we can conclude that females tend to be more active in terms of applying for the programme.
- The financing rate is **gender balanced** in each region and across time.
- According to the qualitative study, females are more likely **not to be able to afford** transportation, so the programme's impact on them is **positive**.
- Due to a new government decree, there is an increase in the number of socially disadvantaged applicants in the programme, as the programme became an exception so that any subsidy received through it will not affect the social score of socially disadvantaged IDPs. The share of socially disadvantaged beneficiaries out of all beneficiaries is almost identical to the total share of socially disadvantaged persons out of the entire IDP population, once again underlying the **unbiased** nature of the programme.
- The financing rate of the self-employment support grant programme is lower in the regions compared to Tbilisi (in the case of both genders), and the difference is more significant in the case of females. The number of male versus female applicants to the self-employment support grant programme is similar in Tbilisi; however, **significantly more males apply for the programme outside Tbilisi**. These numbers could indicate that females residing outside the capital face additional barriers while competing in this programme. For example, such barriers could include limited transportation and/or the lack of a transport system that reaches the application drop-off location, childcare responsibilities (for example, due to the lack of kindergartens), and other home responsibilities, all of which are more prevalent in the regions

compared to the capital. There is no additional information available to aid in identifying specific barriers.

- Overall financing rates (i.e. the share of financed individuals out of all applicants) are more or less balanced, once again underlying the neutral approach of the Agency when selecting the beneficiaries. If, however, the financing rates are analysed at the geographic level, we can see that **females** in Tbilisi have a **higher probability** of being financed than males, while the picture in the other regions is the **opposite**.
- In general, there is a tendency for some professions to be attributed to a specific gender and defined as feminine or masculine. It turns out that 'male professions' have a **higher probability of being financed** (which means that there is a higher share of financed applicants among males than females) in the scope of the self-employment support grant programme due to their specific characteristics, such as market coverage, mobility, etc.
- The analysis revealed that the target group of the selected programmes has **very limited access to financial resources** and is considered one of the most vulnerable groups in society. This problem is more severe for women, as in the absence of professional equipment, female beneficiaries mostly do manual work and do not have the opportunity to borrow or rent the needed professional equipment, unlike their male counterparts.
- According to the qualitative study, both programmes have a beneficial impact on women's perception of the 'value' they gain in society, while males mostly claim that programmes have no impact on their social status.

To sum up, although not by explicit design (as they are both designed to be gender-neutral), both programmes contribute to gender equality and address key gender needs. The qualitative and quantitative findings suggest that the programmes' contribution towards gender equality would strengthen if the Agency were to take the following actions: enhance the programmes' gender sensitivity; address existing gender norms in all communications; and organize data collection, analysis and evidence-based policymaking from a gender perspective.

CONTEXT OF THE GIA

The background consists of a solid blue upper half and a solid red lower half. A large, white, semi-transparent arrow shape points upwards from the bottom center towards the top right. The text 'CONTEXT OF THE GIA' is centered horizontally in the blue area, underlined.

PART 1: BACKGROUND

INFORMATION

The social-economic integration of internally displaced persons (IDPs) from occupied territories and ecomigrant families, and improving their living standards, is one of the key priority areas of the Government of Georgia. In 2020, approximately **286,554 individuals (8 per cent of the Georgian population) had IDP status, and 324 ecomigrant families** received support from the LEPL Internally Displaced Persons, Ecomigrants and Livelihood Agency (hereinafter the Agency) that operates under the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Labour, Health and Social Affairs of Georgia. The Agency is responsible for IDPs and ecomigrants and takes care of their resettlement and improving their socioeconomic conditions.

Georgia's IDPs have been displaced primarily during waves of armed conflict—from 1992 to 1993 in Abkhazia, and in 2008, due to the conflict with Russia—while its ecomigrants have been displaced due to natural disasters. As IDPs and ecomigrants have been displaced mostly away from their homes, they **suffer from inadequate housing and face barriers to employment and education** (UNHCR, 2009; IDMC, 2020a; Loughna, 2015). Despite the fact that internally displaced people formally have the same rights and access to education and that on average they are not less educated than other members of Georgian society, they still have worse labour market outcomes; they are about **11.6 percentage points more likely to be unemployed compared to non-IDPs** with similar individual characteristics (Torosyan, Pignatti and Obrizan, 2018). They also **earn lower salaries**, even after they have been living in a specific locality for more than five years (Torosyan, Pignatti and Obrizan, 2018). IDPs belong to a vulnerable group of Georgian

society, and it is important to guarantee them equal opportunities for employment by removing barriers that hinder their social-economic integration.

The Gender Impact Assessment (GIA) of two IDP and ecomigrant livelihood programmes— (1) the **vocational education support programme** and (2) the **self-employment support grant programme**— was initiated by the Agency and conducted in the scope of the UN Women project “Accelerating Implementation of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda in Georgia”, funded by the Conflict, Stability and Security Fund of the British Government. The main goal of these programmes is **to promote the socioeconomic integration of IDPs and ecomigrants and improve their living conditions**. By means of these programmes, the Agency ensures that self-employment perspectives for IDPs are created and, at the same time, that vocational education is promoted. Within the scope of this GIA, a thorough analysis of these programmes was conducted to evaluate whether these programmes contribute to gender equality or, on the contrary, are associated with gender inequalities in terms of participation, access to resources, rights, gender norms and values. Moreover, one of the aims of the study was to identify the potential contribution of these programmes towards the achievement of gender equality and provide recommendations for improvements. The comprehensive analysis of the programmes and the identification of gender equality gaps allowed the GIA team to identify ways of incorporating the different needs of females and males, increasing the programmes' gender-transformative power, and more effectively achieving the socioeconomic integration of IDPs and improving their educational and labour market outcomes.

1.1.

METHODOLOGY

The aim of this GIA is to support the Agency in incorporating a gender perspective into livelihood programmes for IDPs and ecomigrants, taking into account the different needs, characteristics and behaviours of the target population. In an ideal scenario, a GIA is conducted at an early stage in the decision-making process in order for existing gender differences and needs to be acknowledged and addressed right from the start of the programme. This is not the case for the current GIA, however, as the assessed livelihood programmes were set up well before the GIA methodology started being utilized as a policymaking support tool in Georgia. Nevertheless, it was decided, together with the Agency and relevant stakeholders, that conducting a GIA on ongoing programmes would be beneficial in terms of supporting the Agency by both identifying gaps and highlighting areas of policy and programme design that could be further improved.

The GIA of the vocational education support programme and self-employment support grant programme for IDPs and ecomigrants intends to highlight key questions for relevant stakeholders to help them see the impact of each programme in terms of its success vis-à-vis the integration of gender equality and gender mainstreaming at each stage of the programme's design, implementation and evaluation processes. Consequently, this GIA attempts to assess the degree of success in integrating the gender dimension and promoting gender equality within the programmes, including specifically within the following processes:

- Defining issues and goals:
 - Defining what the programmes are trying to achieve in terms of overall gender equality (both within the programmes and within the overarching strategies)
 - Understanding different gender-specific needs and constraints
 - Assessing the level of the programmes' ability to contribute to gender equality
- Collecting data:
 - Gathering gender-, age- and disability-disaggregated statistics on a country and regional level
 - Consulting experts, as well as regularly soliciting feedback from women and men beneficiaries (as well as rejected candidates) of the programmes
- Developing a broader set of recommendations tailored to the needs of different subgroups of beneficiaries, particularly along the gender dimension:
 - Determining the impact/implications for different subgroups of beneficiaries
 - Identifying constraints to gender equality and potential opportunities for the enhancement of gender equality within the programme
 - Removing stereotyped perceptions and proposing transformative actions
- Communicating and providing assistance during and after the application process:
 - Analysing the effectiveness of information-sharing channels and how to improve it
 - Using inclusive language
 - Ensuring that key areas of gender inequality are addressed while communicating
 - Providing assistance with the application process
 - Offering feedback to potentially eligible candidates who were rejected (including advice about how to improve their application)
- Monitoring and evaluation:
 - Monitoring the gender impact of these programmes
 - Developing gender-specific indicators
 - Examining the differential impacts on different subgroups of beneficiaries
 - Identifying obstacles to the achievement of equal opportunities and outcomes
 - Learning lessons regarding gender mainstreaming in the programmes/sector
 - Identifying and disseminating best practices

The GIA study was conducted from July to November 2021 and was undertaken in different phases, described below.

a) Preparatory work – During this phase, the GIA team conducted an initial meeting with representatives from UN Women and the Agency. The aim of this meeting was to present the GIA concept to the Agency and to identify a relevant programme to assess. During this phase, the GIA team received programme descriptions and application forms for the following five livelihood programmes implemented by the Agency: self-employment support grant programme, vocational education support programme, economic agent support programme, greenhouse farming assistance programme and programme for the integration of IDPs and ecomigrants who own a house. After screening the documents provided, the GIA team, in consultation with the Agency and UN Women representatives, decided to choose two interrelated programmes (which are linked to vocational education) and conduct the GIA on them. The chosen programmes are the vocational education support programme and the self-employment support grant programme for IDPs and ecomigrants. The main criterion for selection was the relatively higher number of beneficiaries, which would allow for a solid and representative gender analysis.

b) Desk research – The second phase involved desk research to gather information on the vulnerabilities of internally displaced persons and ecomigrants, with a focus on the gender dimensions of such vulnerabilities and the potential gender-transformative power of vocational education in general and of similar programmes. Additionally, during this phase, all background data about the programmes were provided by the Agency, and the gender relevance of the selected programmes was assessed. It is noteworthy that all of the data used in the quantitative analysis part of the GIA are dated back to September 2021. International experience and its relevance to Georgia was studied based on relevant literature and journal articles related to IDPs and ecomigrants, their educational attainments and their labour market outcomes. Furthermore, to understand the official national strategic goals

and objectives regarding displacement and gender equality, all of Georgia's major strategic and policy documents were reviewed.

c) Qualitative and quantitative research – The GIA team used desk research, analyses of secondary data, in-depth interviews, stakeholder consultations and the combined results of the qualitative and quantitative research methods during this stage.

In terms of quantitative analysis, the GIA team used the following main sources of information:

- Data about selected programmes provided by the Agency, which included data about selected beneficiaries and rejected applicants: These data were used to conduct a gender analysis of the programme beneficiaries according to their professions and the amount of financing. In the case of rejected applicants, data were analysed by the reason(s) for the rejection and by the gender-disaggregated rejection rates.
- Data provided by the Agency on the following: the number of IDPs and ecomigrants, the programmes' budgets (planned and actual spending) and the number of IDPs and ecomigrants enrolled in vocational education over the years.
- Data from the National Statistics Office of Georgia (Geostat): Labour Force Survey (LFS) data and vocational education statistics (number of institutions over the years, by regional and general enrolment rates).
- Data from the Social Service Agency: the number of IDPs receiving Targeted Social Assistance (TSA) and IDP allowance.

In terms of qualitative analysis, the GIA team conducted several online meetings with the representatives of the Agency and phone interviews with the vocational institution representatives. The aim of these stakeholder consultations was to identify the specificities of the programmes, their implementation and the related challenges. A total of five semi-structured phone interviews were conducted with the representatives of the vocational institutions, specifically those institutions with the highest number of vocational education support programme beneficiary students.

As for the programmes' beneficiaries, the GIA team initially planned to conduct a survey. However, during the testing process of the questionnaires (which was conducted on 5 and 6 October 2021), it was decided to move to semi-structured interviews as it became clear that they would be a better way to evaluate the impact of the programmes. The unique circumstances of the individual beneficiaries are extremely different, and understanding their needs, constraints and how they affect the impact of the programmes requires deeper and more flexible interaction and communication, which is not achievable through the administration of a standardized survey questionnaire. Thus, the GIA team prepared semi-structured interview guidelines including all relevant topics, later updated on the basis of the outcomes of the pilot interviews. It is noteworthy that all of these interviews were conducted by GIA team members, which ensured uniformity in the approach and allowed for conducting a more precise assessment and drawing more reliable conclusions. During the period 7–19 October, a total of 18 semi-structured phone interviews (with 10 females and 8 males) were conducted with beneficiaries of the self-employment support grant programme and 20 semi-structured phone interviews (with 10 females and 10 males) with beneficiaries of the vocational education support programme. Interviews with rejected candidates were conducted during the period 3–5 November; a total of 17 semi-structured phone interviews (with nine females and eight males) were conducted. The GIA team noticed that, after several interviews (approximately 10), answer patterns started to repeat and that conducting additional interviews was adding little to the analysis. Consequently, after reaching about 20 interviews, it was decided that the number of conducted interviews was sufficient. Guidelines to the semi-structured interviews are presented in Annex 1.

d) Gender impact and equality assessment – All information gathered during previous stages was analysed through a gender lens and compiled into the report.

The GIA was conducted using the following criteria: (1) norms and values – identifying gender roles, division of labour, attitudes and behaviours of women and men, inequalities in the value attached to men and women, existing gender stereotypes; (2) participation – gender composition of programme beneficiaries, representation of women and men in decision-making positions; (3) resources – distribution of crucial resources (time, information, financial resources, economic power, training, etc.); and (4) rights – existing gender discrimination. In the next stage, the weighting of the gender impacts took place,² and changes to improve the gender impact of the selected programmes were identified and recommended.

The study has had some limitations. These limitations were partly due to the specific nature of the problem at hand, the characteristics of the population of interest, and—more broadly—the lack of data and studies aimed at assessing the social-economic conditions of IDPs and ecomigrants. To a relevant extent, the analysis was affected by the fact that gender assessments and relevant gender mainstreaming tools are still new to the country. It is noteworthy that due to the limitations described below, the programmes were naturally less gender sensitive.

Specifically, significant limitations were due to the following:

- Due to the very low number of ecomigrants in the selected programmes, conducting a gender analysis selectively on this group was impossible.
- The vocational education support programme data do not include data on the amount of transportation costs reimbursed to participants. The Agency kindly offered to provide these missing data matching the accounting data with the database, but due to the large amount of effort required from the Agency representatives, the GIA team decided to opt for aggregate transferred amounts.

2 This step is about beginning the process of prioritizing the impacts—weighting the gender impact to frame recommendations and prioritizing them based on the signifi-

cance of positive or negative impacts and the probability of their occurrence.

- It was not possible to conduct a proper counterfactual analysis in the case of the self-employment support grant programme. The 'counterfactual analysis', in this case, means measuring what would have happened to beneficiaries in the absence of the intervention; the impact could then be estimated by comparing the outcomes of two groups as observed under the intervention: those who became beneficiaries of the programme and those who applied but were denied a grant. Even though the Agency stores information about applicants who were denied a grant within the scope of these programmes, and the GIA team conducted interviews with them, the information obtained from these interviews was not sufficient to conduct a proper counterfactual analysis. During the testing stage, when the questionnaire was designed to assess the situation of the rejected candidates in every dimension of interest, the rejected applicants either refused to answer or quit in the middle of the interview. Consequently, the research team decided to modify the interview guide and focus on only one major dimension: candidates' employment status and changes in their financial and economic situation. Additional questions were asked to explore whether participants were well informed about the reason(s) for their rejection, as well as their attitudes and behaviours after their rejection. As a result, it was impossible for the GIA team to match the accepted candidates with 'identical' rejected ones, thereby making it impossible to establish a cause-and-effect link between the interventions and outcomes of the programme, as well as producing a quantitative analysis of the impact of the programme. As in the case of the vocational education support programme, the rejection rate was very low, and due to the significant cost in terms of time and resources (especially compared to the expected benefits in terms of additional information gained), the GIA team decided not to opt for a counterfactual analysis.
- The economic shocks brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic complicate the assessment of programmes as it becomes hard to separate the impact of the shock from the overall impact of the programme, especially when it is already impossible to conduct a proper counterfactual analysis.
- IDPs are underrepresented in the LFS, which gives a snapshot of the general socioeconomic characteristics and working conditions of IDPs in the country. As IDPs are underrepresented in the survey, one should take into consideration that an analysis based on LFS data might not provide a precise picture about Georgian IDPs.
- There are limited or no examples of gender goals/outcomes within strategic planning cycles. This is particularly true for gender equality among IDPs and ecomigrants, in addition to the non-existence of relevant frameworks that could guide gender work when dealing with this particular group. The study pointed out the need for more attention to the gender dimension of programmes and more gender expertise in the public policy institutions, with specific thematic knowledge needed for this specific group.
- There is limited gender expertise about the socioeconomic outcomes and vulnerability of IDPs and ecomigrants. The limited number of studies conducted on this subject, the low demand for gender-disaggregated data from academia as well as from public institutions, and the overall low level of expertise meant that this GIA was not as in-depth as it would have been had all of the above conditions, including this one, been in place.

1.2.

IMPORTANCE OF IDPS' AND ECOMIGRANTS' SOCIOECONOMIC INTEGRATION AND IMPROVING THEIR LIVELIHOODS BY CREATING EMPLOYMENT PROSPECTS

IDPs and ecomigrants usually represent one of the most vulnerable groups in society, and particular attention should be paid to their integration into society and into economic life. To analyse the degree of vulnerability of IDPs and ecomigrants in Georgia, the GIA team analysed their demographic profile, their educational and labour market outcomes and the extent to which these characteristics differ from the outcomes of other members of Georgian society, using all publicly available data sources. The overview of these general differences and the identification of potential gender gaps are important to understand whether the focus of the state support programmes targeting these groups is set well and in what ways these programmes could be improved.

Demographic profile: IDPs and ecomigrant families

a) Demographic profile of IDPs

In 2020, a total of 286,554 IDPs were living in Georgia, which corresponds to 8 per cent of the country's total population. Specifically, 47 per cent of the IDPs are males, and 53 per cent are females. The gender distribution of the IDPs is quite similar to the gender distribution of the Georgian population (48 per cent males and 52 per cent females).

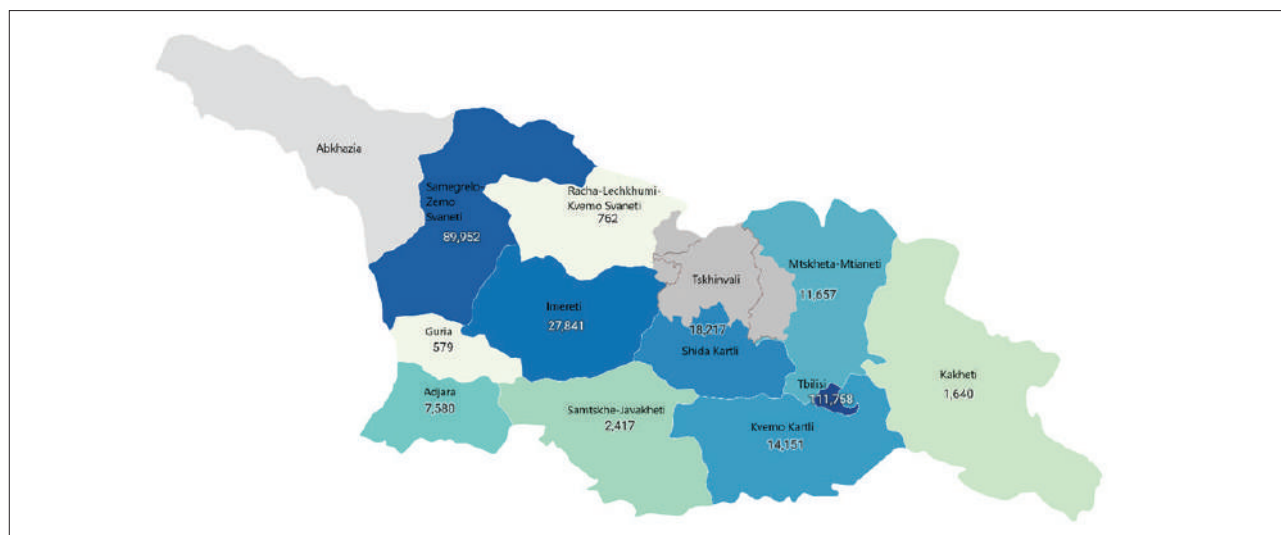
The IDPs currently residing in Georgia belong to two major groups (State Commission on Migration Issues, 2019):

1. The first caseload of IDPs who were forcefully displaced in the period 1991–1993 as a result of the conflict in the occupied Georgian regions of Abkhazia and the Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia
2. The second caseload of IDPs from the same regions, displaced as a result of the 2008 Russian-Georgian War

The number of IDPs from Abkhazia is almost ten times larger than that of IDPs from the Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia. As for the ecomigrants, in recent years, their largest numbers were registered in 2017 (State Commission on Migration Issues, 2019).

Most IDPs are residing in the capital Tbilisi or in the regions along the administrative boundary lines. According to data from 2020, 39 per cent of IDPs were concentrated in Tbilisi, 31 per cent in Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti, 10 per cent in Imereti and 6 per cent in Shida Kartli (Figure 1). There is no major gender difference in the IDP population when their regional distribution is concerned.

Figure 1:
Number of IDPs, by region, 2020

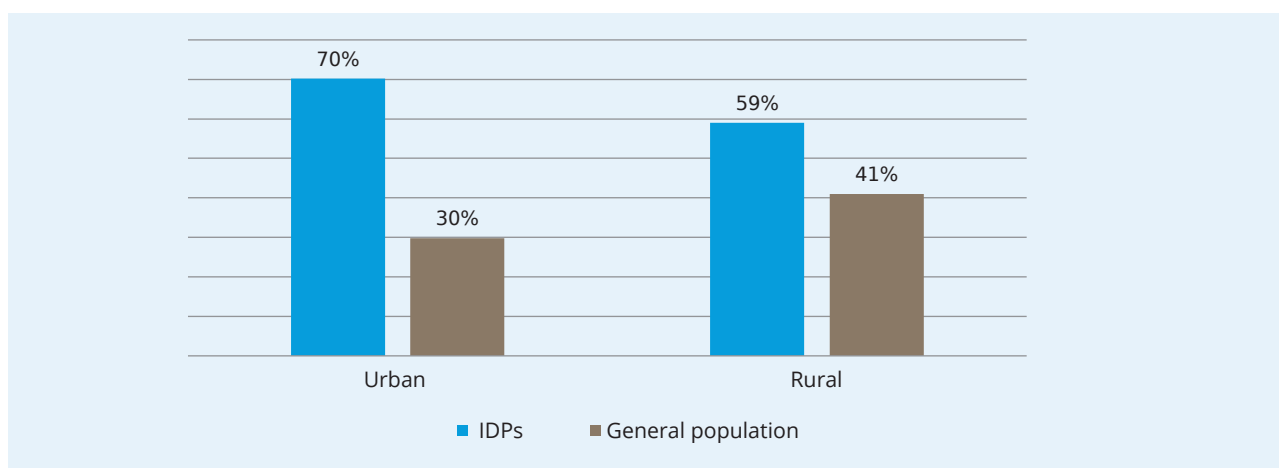


Source: Data provided by the Agency.

IDPs differ significantly from the general population with regard to the settlement type they reside in. According to 2020 data, 59 per cent of the total Georgian population lived in urban areas, while the

same figure for IDPs is 70 per cent (Figure 2).³ Thus, the share of the urban population among IDPs is significantly above the national average.

Figure 2:
Distribution of IDPs and the general population, by settlement type, 2020



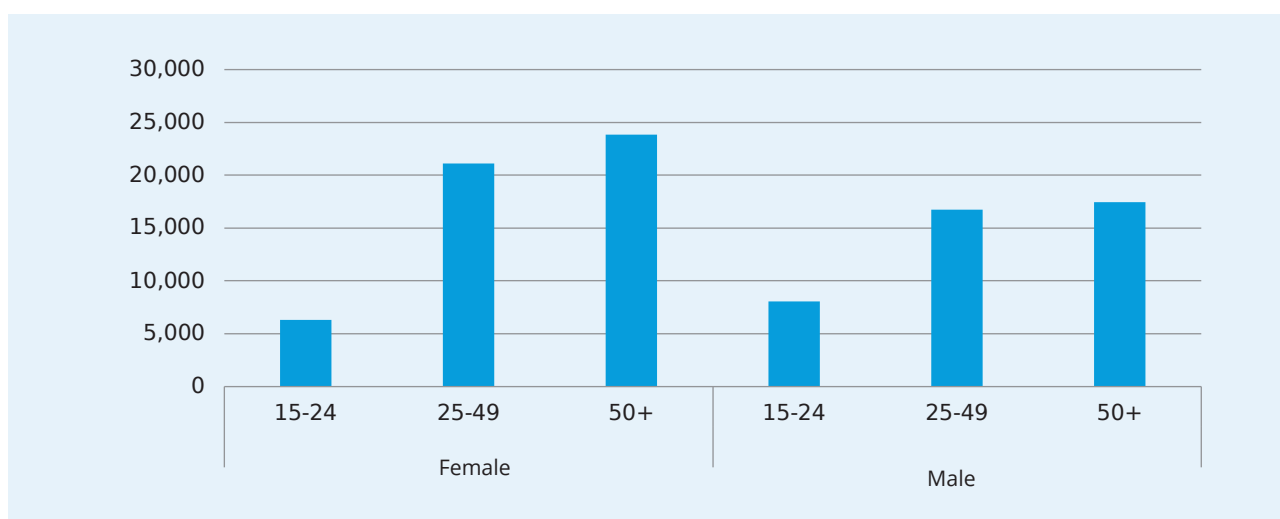
Source: Geostat and authors' calculations based on the 2020 LFS by Geostat.

3 Source: Geostat.

IDPs do not differ from the general population if analysed by age group. Analysing the working-age population (15+) of IDPs⁴ shows that 15 per cent of IDPs are youth (the 15–24 age group⁵), 40 per cent belong to the 25–49 age group, and the remaining 44 per cent are over 49 years of age (Figure 3). For the total Georgian population, there is a similar age distribution among the working-age population, with 14 per cent youth, 42 per cent aged 25–49 and 43 per cent over 49 years of age. Analysing the age distribution of IDPs by gender, it is observable that there are more females in the 25–49 and over-49 age groups (56 per cent and 58 per cent of females, respectively) compared to males, and males are

relatively overrepresented in the youth category (56 per cent of males). The age distribution of IDPs by gender broadly matches the distribution among the total Georgian population,⁶ in the over-49 age group and among the youth. The only real difference emerging is that females constitute less than half of the general population in the 25–49 age group, while the share of IDP women in this age group is 56 per cent. The data provided below are only descriptive and can provide some insights about the current situation in the country. The conclusions based on these data will be provided in the quantitative analysis section below (see Part 4.1).

Figure 3:
Number of IDPs, by gender and age group, 2020



Source: Authors' calculations based on the 2020 LFS by Geostat.

4 The main source of the analysis is the 2020 Labour Force Survey (LFS), carried out by Geostat. The LFS only covers the population over the age of 15. This is the reason why the current study is restricted to 15+.

5 The GIA team used the same age group for youth as it is defined by the World Bank.

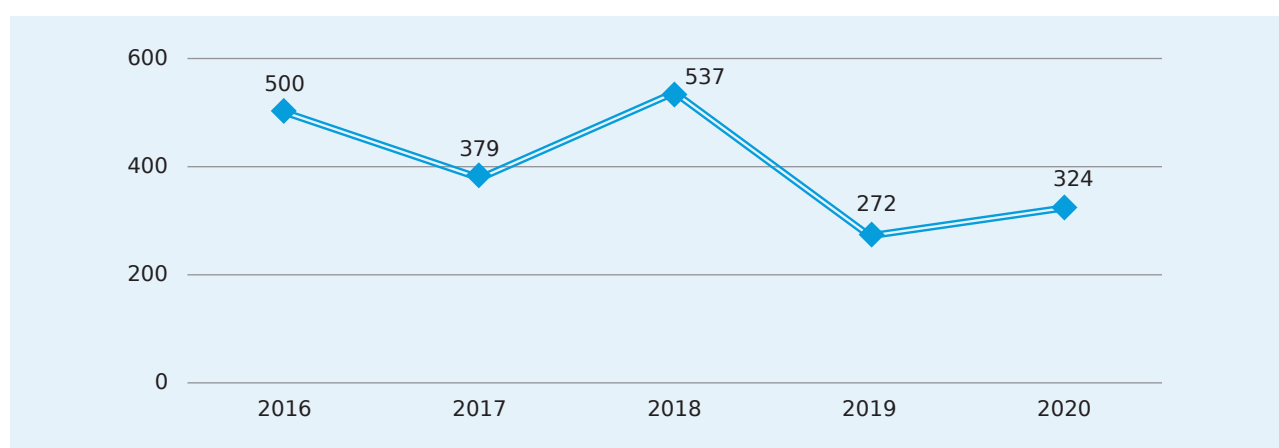
6 Source: Geostat.

b) Demographic profile of ecomigrants

More than 2,000 ecomigrant families were provided with housing either directly or through financial or other kinds of support from the State during the years 2016–2020. In 2020, the number of satisfied ecomigrant families amounted to 324 (Figure 4). The term ‘satisfied ecomigrants families’ (hereinafter ecomigrant families) means families who are provided with either direct housing or financial or other kinds

of support from the State because their houses were destroyed by natural disasters or there was a high probability for any natural disaster to occur (e.g. landslides, mudslides, rockfalls, snow avalanches, etc., except for earthquakes and volcanoes).⁷ Most ecomigrant families in Georgia come from Adjara, Guria and Imereti (36 per cent, 26 per cent and 19 per cent, respectively).

Figure 4:
Number of satisfied ecomigrant families, 2016–2020



Source: Data provided by the Agency.

However, it should be mentioned that the number of annually resettled ecomigrants is significantly lower than the annual numbers of registered ones. A significantly higher number of families consider themselves as ecomigrants. However, only a small portion of them is granted the status of ecomigrants, as they, in most cases, do not satisfy the points' criteria introduced by the State (for example, they might have an alternative house where there is no threat to their lives). For example, in 2020, 5,659 families perceived themselves as ecomigrants and applied for support.

Vocational education among IDPs and ecomigrants

As this GIA is focusing on programmes that aim to promote vocational education, the GIA team decided to analyse the number of IDPs and ecomigrants who entered vocational education centres in 2020. Table 1 shows that a total of 324 IDPs and 23 ecomigrants entered vocational education centres (3.4 per cent and 0.2 per cent of the total number of students who entered vocational education institutions, respectively) in 2020. Most of the IDPs

7 Order No. 1206 of the Minister of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Accommodation and Refugees of Georgia, issued 17 June 2014.

Available at <https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/2374000?publication=0>.

and ecomigrants who start attending vocational education programmes are males (60 per cent and 57 per cent, respectively). This might not be surprising because males are overrepresented in the

youth category (both among the general population and among IDPs), which is the age group most likely to be receiving education.

Table 1:
Gender distribution of IDPs and ecomigrants who entered vocational education centres, by gender, 2020

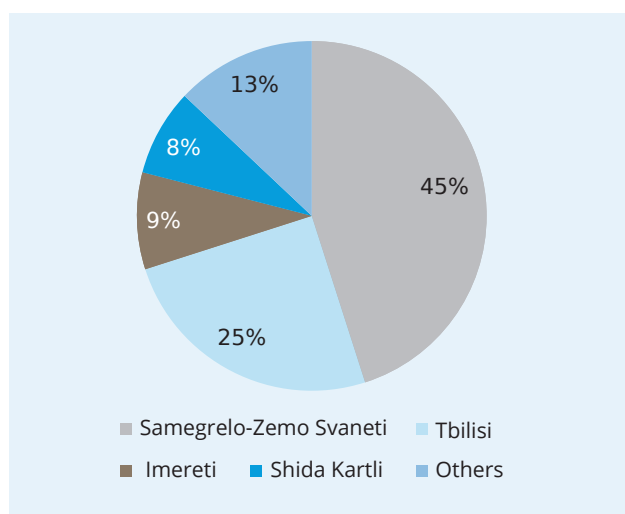
	Number of IDPs	Number of ecomigrants	Total number of students	Share of IDPs	Share of ecomigrants	Share of the total number of students
Female	129	10	4,685	40%	43%	50%
Male	195	13	4,714	60%	57%	50%
Total	324	23	9,399			

Source: Authors' calculations based on data provided by the Agency.

As for the regional distribution, most IDPs are obtaining their vocational education in Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti (45 per cent) and Tbilisi (25 per cent),

which coincides with the location of IDP settlements (Figure 5). These regions include the settlements where the highest number of IDPs are living.

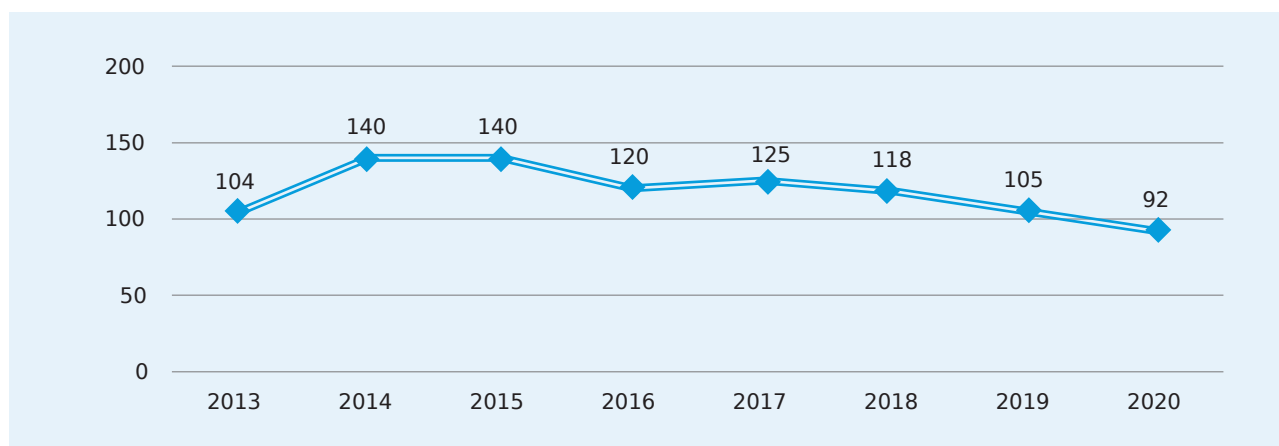
Figure 5:
Regional distribution of IDPs who entered vocational education centres, 2020



Source: Authors' calculations based on data provided by the Agency.

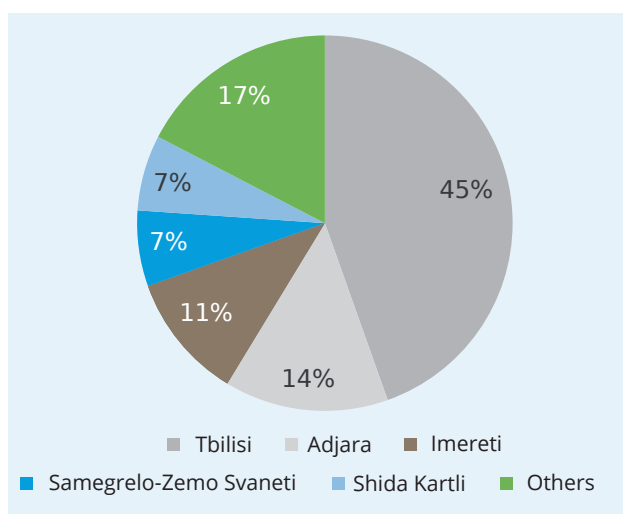
The number of vocational education centres in Georgia has been declining over time (Figure 6). In 2020, 92 private and public vocational institutions were functioning, of which 45 per cent were located in Tbilisi, 14 per cent in Adjara and 11 per cent in Imereti (Figure 7).

Figure 6:
Number of vocational education centres, 2013–2020



Source: Authors' calculations based on Geostat data.

Figure 7:
Distribution of access to vocational educational centres, by region, 2020



Source: Authors' calculations based on Geostat data.

Educational attainment of IDPs

As the number of ecomigrants is very low, statistical surveys conducted by Geostat cannot be used to estimate their educational and labour market attainments. This is the reason why the information in this and the following two sections is only about IDPs.

Table 2 presents a comparison between the educational attainments of IDPs and non-IDPs in 2020. According to the data, in terms of education, IDPs and non-IDPs have similar outcomes. Approximately 30 per cent of IDPs and non-IDPs had attained a bachelor's degree or equivalent or an even higher-level degree. Moreover, approximately 50 per cent of IDPs and non-IDPs had attained a general education, while about 20 per cent had attended vocational institutions. According to the data, therefore, IDPs do not have lower educational attainments than other members of Georgian society. This suggests that IDPs have similar conditions and opportunities to receive education as the rest of the population.

A similar relationship can be observed when comparing the educational attainments of IDPs and the rest of the population by gender (Table 2). For example, female IDPs and non-IDPs (as well as

male IDPs and non-IDPs) have similar educational outcomes. In addition, female IDPs are more likely to attain higher education (33 per cent) than male IDPs (26 per cent). A similar relationship is observed among non-IDPs too (31 per cent of females versus 28 per cent of males). However, the difference is higher in the case of IDPs—a 7 percentage point difference between females and males—versus non-IDPs—a 3 percentage point difference between the genders.

Overall, it could be concluded that in Georgia, most individuals either prefer to attain a general education or higher education, instead of receiving vocational education. As the share of people attaining vocational institutions is low, there might be room to attract more people (both IDPs and non-IDPs) who only have a general education to attain vocational education degrees (and skills) and increase their competitiveness in the labour market.

Table 2:
Distribution of educational attainments for IDPs and non-IDPs, by gender, 2020

	IDPs	Non-IDPs
Females		
Less than primary education	1%	2%
General education	43%	45%
Vocational education	23%	22%
Higher education	33%	31%
Males		
Less than primary education	1%	2%
General education	55%	53%
Vocational education	18%	17%
Higher education	26%	28%
Both genders		
Less than primary education	1%	2%
General education	49%	48%
Vocational education	21%	20%
Higher education	30%	30%

Source: Authors' calculations based on the 2020 LFS by Geostat.

Labour market outcomes for IDPs

While IDPs do not differ from the rest of the Georgian population with regard to their educational attainments, they do appear different if the labour market is considered.

IDPs are more affected by unemployment, and male IDPs are the ones who suffer the most in this regard. Unemployment is a problem across Georgian society as a whole. According to latest

figures, unemployment⁸ was 18.5 per cent in 2020. Internally displaced persons suffer even more from unemployment than other members of Georgian society, as the unemployment rate for IDPs appears to be 22 per cent, compared to 18 per cent for non-IDPs. Further investigation reveals that male IDPs have higher unemployment rates compared to their female counterparts (a difference of 11 percentage points). A similar pattern is visible for non-IDPs, albeit with a lower magnitude—only a 4-percentage point difference (Table 3).

8 Source: Geostat.

While the employment rate for female IDPs is comparable with that of their non-IDP counterparts (33 per cent and 34 per cent, respectively), the difference is significant for male IDPs, which makes them even more vulnerable (44 per cent for IDPs and 50 per cent for non-IDPs). In general, the employment rate of IDPs is 3 percentage points lower than that of others. However, this difference changes when the gender dimension is taken into consideration. It shrinks for females and widens for males (1 and 6 percentage points, respectively).

IDPs have a slightly lower labour force participation rate than the rest of the Georgian population (49 per cent compared to 51 per cent), and this pattern is similar if gender is taken into account. For male IDPs, the labour force participation rate is 60 per cent, while for females, it is equal to 39 per cent. It is noteworthy that the labour force participation rate in Georgia lags behind the world average, so there is a need for improvement. According to the World Bank, in 2019, the labour force participation of males and females was 74.3 per cent and 47.3 per cent, respectively.⁹

Table 3:
Labour market statistics for IDPs and non-IDPs, 2020

	Employment rate	Unemployment rate	Labour force participation rate
IDPs			
Females	33%	16%	39%
Males	44%	27%	60%
Both genders	38%	22%	49%
Non-IDPs			
Females	34%	16%	40%
Males	50%	20%	62%
Both genders	41%	18%	51%

Source: Authors' calculations based on the 2020 LFS by Geostat.

Apart from general labour market characteristics, the GIA team investigated labour market outcomes for youth (the 15–24 age group), as they are one of the main target audiences for the vocational education support and self-employment support grant programmes. **Young IDPs exhibit higher rates of unemployment, lower rates of employment and lower labour market participation rates compared to non-IDP members of society** (Table 4). The unemployment rate of male IDPs in this age group in 2020 was 53 per cent, and for females this indicator was 40 per cent. The year 2020 was unique due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and one might suspect that these high unemployment numbers

were driven by the lockdowns and economic shocks. However, this pattern of higher youth unemployment and, especially, high unemployment for IDPs was observable in previous years too.

What is most striking, looking at the labour market outcomes by gender, is that **female IDPs tend to have substantially better labour market outcomes compared to male IDPs in the same age group, contrary to what happens among non-IDPs**. Female IDPs have a higher employment rate, a significantly lower unemployment rate, and a slightly higher labour market participation rate, compared to their male counterparts (Table 4). This result is

9 Source: World Bank, Gender Equality Data & Statistics.

different from the outcomes of non-IDPs and the world population overall, as in the case of both these categories, the employment and labour force participation rates of young males are higher than the respective outcome for the females.¹⁰ To sum

up, labour market outcomes are worst for young members of Georgian society, especially for male IDPs, who appear to be the most vulnerable group in this regard.

Table 4:
Labour market statistics for IDPs and non-IDPs aged 15–24, 2020

	Employment rate	Unemployment rate	Labour force participation rate
IDPs			
Females	20%	40%	33%
Males	15%	53%	32%
Both genders	17%	47%	33%
Non-IDPs			
Females	16%	38%	26%
Males	26%	40%	42%
Both genders	21%	39%	35%

Source: Authors' calculations based on the 2020 LFS by Geostat.

To conclude, labour market statistics show that despite the fact that IDPs enjoy the same educational attainments as other members of society, they still exhibit worse labour market outcomes. Hence, there is room for improvement to integrate them into society and improve their living conditions by removing barriers, creating employment opportunities and ensuring better labour market outcomes and conditions.

Earnings of IDPs

The GIA team analysed the earnings of IDPs using Labour Force Survey 2020 data.¹¹ The percentage of IDPs stating that they have earnings less than GEL 200 (which is close to the subsistence minimum wage¹²)

was 38 per cent. More than half (61 per cent) of the IDPs claim that their earnings are between GEL 200 and GEL 1,000 (GEL 1,000 is close to average earnings in Georgia¹³). Only 1 per cent of IDPs report that their earnings are above GEL 1,000. This distribution is not too far from the distribution of earnings for the whole population. Specifically, 30 per cent of non-IDPs have net earnings below GEL 200, 67 per cent are receiving earnings between GEL 200 and GEL 1,000, and 3 per cent of non-IDPs state that they have net earnings above GEL 1,000. Basically, a larger share of IDPs reports earnings below the subsistence level, and a smaller share of IDPs receives wages above GEL 1,000. Therefore, IDPs seem to be more vulnerable compared to other employed people.

10 According to the World Bank, in 2019, the labour force participation of young males was 49.1 per cent; and in the case of females, it was 32.7 per cent. The unemployment rate of young males and females was 14.8 per cent and 17.1 per cent, respectively, while the employment rate was 42.3 per cent in the case of males and 28.5 per cent in the case of females. Source: World Bank, Gender Equality Data & Statistics.

11 In 2020, only 46 per cent of the respondents who are employed refused to answer the question about monthly

earnings. Consequently, while it cannot be claimed that the analysis of IDPs' earnings data allows for a representative picture of the earnings of Georgian IDPs, it still provides very useful estimates. Source: Authors' calculations based on 2020 LFS by Geostat.

12 The subsistence minimum for average consumers was GEL 170 in 2020. Source: Geostat.

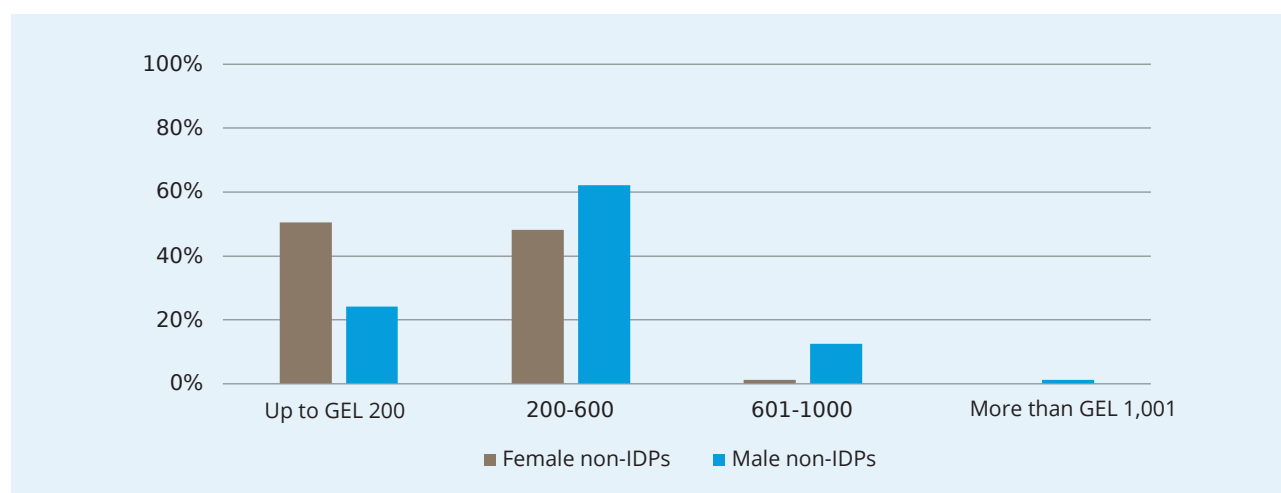
13 The average monthly nominal earning of formal employees was GEL 1,227 in 2020. Source: Geostat.

Figure 8 makes it obvious that the issue of low earnings is even more severe for female IDPs.¹⁴ This is partially expected, as the gender wage gap is pervasive and persistent in Georgia. According to UN Women, the gender pay gap (raw and unadjusted) in Georgia was estimated at 17.7 per cent in 2017, while the adjusted gender pay gap was estimated at 24.8 per cent (UN Women, 2020). According to the 2020 LFS carried out by Geostat, 51 per cent of female IDPs report earning wages that are below the subsistence minimum, 48 per cent earn wages between GEL 200 and GEL 600, and only 1 per cent earn between GEL 600 and GEL 1,000. No woman reports earnings above GEL 1,000. The same analysis for males shows that 24 per cent of male IDPs earn wages below the subsistence minimum, 62 per cent earn wages between GEL 200 and GEL 600, 13 per cent between GEL 600 and GEL 1,000, and 1 per cent above the average wage. The corresponding figures for non-IDPs (Figure 9) indicate substantially higher earnings, with the gap between non-IDP women and IDP women being particularly high.

These statistics make it clear that on average, IDPs are more vulnerable than other members of Georgian society and, in addition, female IDPs face more difficulties with receiving proper remuneration.

It is worth mentioning that the earnings estimated from LFS data are likely to be underestimated. Therefore, the GIA team's estimates of individual earnings are likely to be conservative. These indicators might not represent valid criteria for defining a fair remuneration rate for IDPs because of the high number of missing values and concerns about self-selection (with the most vulnerable IDPs under the TSA—13 per cent of IDPs were TSA recipients in 2020¹⁵—being less likely to report their remuneration). In addition, according to the Social Service Agency, 78 per cent of IDPs receive an additional IDP allowance equal to GEL 45 monthly. This again highlights their vulnerability: if their taxable income is more than GEL 1,250, they will not be eligible to receive this allowance.¹⁶

Figure 8:
Distribution of net earnings for IDPs, by gender, 2020



Source: Authors' calculations based on the 2020 LFS by Geostat.

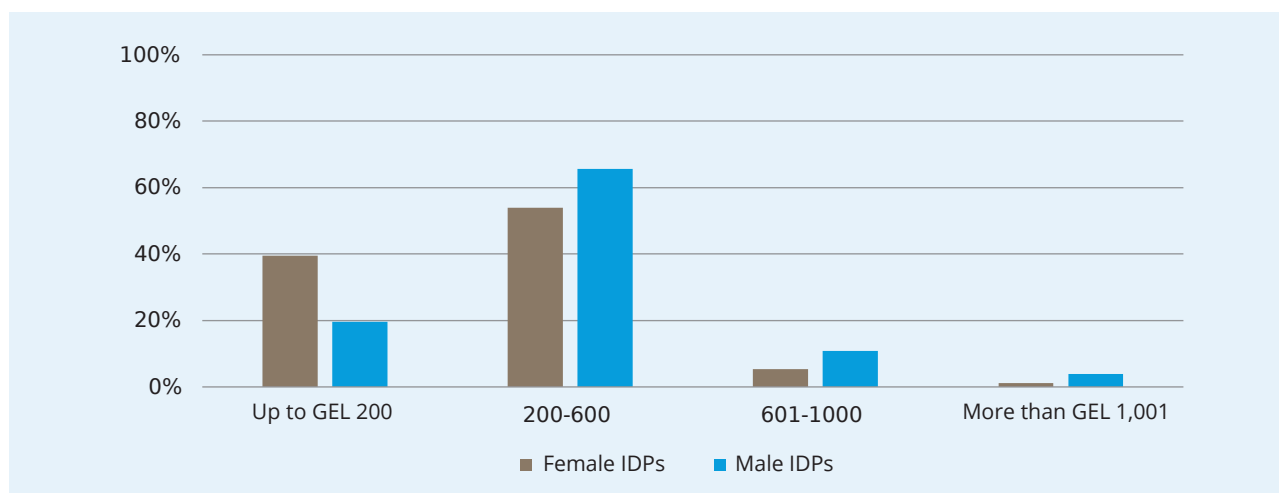
14 The gender wage gap is the difference between the hourly wages earned by men and women in the labour market, expressed as a percentage of men's wage. This raw gap does not take into account the characteristics of the individuals used in the comparison, most notably education.

When these are considered, the gap becomes "adjusted". Source: UN Women, 2020.

15 Source: Social Service Agency.

16 Available at <https://matsne.gov.ge/en/document/view/2244506?publication=1>.

Figure 9:
Distribution of net earnings for non-IDPs, by gender, 2020



Source: Authors' calculations based on the 2020 LFS by Geostat.

The labour market outcomes of IDPs show that it is indeed possible to make the case for support programmes promoting vocational education, creating employment opportunities and ensuring better labour market outcomes for IDPs and ecomigrants, leading to better social-economic integration. After having established the importance of better integrating IDPs and ecomigrants into society and improving their living conditions, the next logical step is to identify and assess the barriers that restrict their access to better labour market outcomes, as well as how removing such barriers could be expected to impact gender equality in Georgia. The following sections are indeed an attempt to set the context as well as to depict trends in order to assess the potential of integrating IDPs and ecomigrants

and, in particular, how livelihood programmes for these groups—such as the vocational education support programme and the self-employment support grant programme—facilitate the integration of IDPs into society and whether (and if yes, how) these programmes improve the gender situation of IDPs and ecomigrants in Georgia.

General and gender-specific vocational education challenges in Georgia

Vocational education in Georgia is provided by private and state vocational schools, colleges and educational institutions. These particular programmes are diverse and are placed on levels 2–5 of the National Qualifications Framework.¹⁷ The

17 The level of qualifications represents an element of difficulty of a qualification in the qualification framework. It combines the generalized learning outcomes, described with 'knowledge and understanding' (which implies a result of assimilation of information, facts, principles, theories, theoretical methods and practical methods linked with the learning or activity field), 'skill' (the ability to fulfil a specific task and use knowledge necessary for problem-solving) and/or with 'responsibility and autonomy'. There are eight levels of qualifications in the National Qualifications Framework of Georgia (source: <https://eqe.ge/res/20191007105945NQFofGeorgia.pdf>):
Level 1. Basic general knowledge, which creates the foundation for social development, further learning and for

completing simple daily tasks. Identification and interpretation of basic principles and facts.
Level 2. Basic knowledge of study and/or activity field and its understanding.
Level 3. Knowing and understanding general facts, principles, processes, methods and general concepts characteristic to the field of study and/or work.
Level 4. Wide knowledge of the study and/or work field based on factual terms and theoretical foundations and its understanding.
Level 5. Multifaceted, specialized, theoretical and practical knowledge of the study and/or work field (following full general education) and understanding one's own abilities (boundaries).

duration of vocational education programmes varies from one to three years. The types of vocational education programmes and their prerequisites are provided in Annex 2.

General challenges

According to Georgian cultural tradition, vocational education is accompanied by **low public prestige**, which is partly due to the country's Soviet past (Tsurtsunia-Zurabashvili, 2019). These cultural stereotypes remain one of the main barriers to the development of the vocational education system in modern Georgia. Studies show that vocational education is not considered as a desirable career path. There is a myth that vocational education leads graduates to a low social status, self-employment or low-paying jobs. For the most part, employers do not trust the qualifications issued by vocational education institutions (Tsurtsunia-Zurabashvili, 2019). The Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia (MES) carries out activities to promote vocational education (such as organizing national competitions, participating in international competitions, holding a vocational education festival, hosting exhibitions and promoting the web portal www.vet.ge via an advertising campaign) hoping that the attitude of the population and stakeholders towards vocational education will change for the better, but it is a slow process (MES, 2017).

The **low employment rate of vocational education graduates** is another major issue in Georgia. According to a tracer study¹⁸ for vocational education, the overall employment rate of the class of 2019's graduates was 49 per cent, according to 2020 data (ACT, 2020). According to ACT, one of the strongest

and most influential variables that caused the drop in employment, compared to the employment rate for the class of 2018 in 2019 (62 per cent), was the pandemic.

Another issue highlighted in the tracer studies (for the years 2015–2020) is the following: **the percentage of hired employed graduates working in professions directly or partly related to their specialities is quite volatile across the years and fluctuates between 48 and 66 per cent.**¹⁹ According to the 2020 tracer study, 49.1 per cent of the class of 2019's hired graduates were not employed within their specialities, while for 13.4 per cent, the activity was only partially related to their specialty; only 37.6 per cent of the hired graduates found employment that was directly related to their vocational education specialty (ACT, 2020). Unfortunately, these studies do not provide gender-disaggregated data on this specific indicator.

Several steps were taken to increase employment opportunities and solve employment-related problems for vocational institution students. Since 2016, the Ministry of Education and Science has introduced work-based/dual programmes, where an educational institution and a company share the responsibility for student preparation by ensuring that 50 per cent or more of the learning outcomes are achieved in a real work environment—at the company.²⁰ It is noteworthy that the majority of the dual programme graduates were hired by the same companies in which they had the practical part of their education (MES, 2019). As a result of the Ministry's effort, the overall employment rate of this programme's graduates was rising before

Level 6. Wide knowledge (following full general education) of the study and/or work field, which includes critical analysis of theories and principles and some latest aspects of knowledge.

Level 7. Deep, systemic knowledge of the study and/or work field and its critical understanding, which includes some latest achievements of the field of study and/or work and creates the foundation for innovations and development of new original ideas.

Level 8. Knowledge based on latest achievements of the field of study and/or work, which allows extension of ex-

isting knowledge or usage of innovative methods, including in multifaceted or interdisciplinary context. Systemic and critical understanding of the field of study or work.

18 Since 2014, with the initiative of the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia, an annual study of vocational education graduates who finished their studies within the preceding year is conducted.

19 Source: Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia. Tracer studies of 2015–2020. Available at <https://mes.gov.ge/content.php?id=5962&lang=geo>.

20 Source: <https://mes.gov.ge/content.php?id=7163&lang=geo>.

the pandemic—56.2 per cent, 60 per cent and 62 per cent of employment among the 2016, 2017 and 2018 graduates, respectively, from vocational institutions.²¹ Regardless of this positive trend, 62 per cent of graduate employment still means that there is room and a need for further improvement.

Despite several activities to increase the **quality of vocational education**, such as improving the quality of teachers in vocational education, it still remains a challenge in Georgia (MES, 2019). According to the Report on the Implementation of the 2019 Education Action Plan of the Unified Strategy for Education and Science (2017–2021), Georgia’s quality assurance approach should be closer to the European experience (MES, 2019). Studies conducted by the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia (MoESD) on the construction and tourism industry, however, show that employers’ trust level towards professional education institutions is low. According to the results of the Survey of Labour Market Demands in the Construction Industry, in 2019, **only 27 per cent of the respondents (i.e. employers in the construction sector) evaluated the quality of vocational schools positively, 41 per cent considered it average, and 4 per cent evaluated it negatively. Moreover, 18 per cent completely trusted the knowledge obtained in vocational schools, 54 per cent trusted it more or less, and 2 per cent did not trust it** (MoESD, 2019). A similar study for the tourism sector, conducted in 2018, reported similar results: **30 per cent of the respondents (i.e. employers in the tourism sector) evaluated the quality of vocational schools positively, 38 per cent considered it average, and 4 per cent evaluated it negatively. Moreover, 23 per cent completely trusted the knowledge obtained in vocational schools, 46 per cent trusted it more or less, and 3 per cent did not trust it** (MoESD, 2018). In both studies, the percentage of respondents who did not provide an answer to these questions was high (25–30 per cent).

Gender-specific challenges

The 2019 study “Availability of Vocational Education for Women’s Economic Empowerment”, conducted in the scope of a thematic inquiry of the Gender Equality Council under the Parliament of Georgia, discusses gender-related challenges in vocational education. Although this study concludes that vocational education is **equally accessible to all social groups**, it also notes that it is essential to consider the **gender gap** at the planning, implementation and evaluation stages. In particular, **it is necessary to study the different needs of women and men, to recognize systemic inequality and to take into account the professional segregation that occurs in the labour market** (Tsurtsunia-Zurabashvili, 2019). As there were not any major gender mainstreaming initiatives in this field during the past two years, we can suspect that these gender-related challenges might still be present in vocational education.

The main obstacle for women in terms of access to vocational education and training is the **lack of vocational education institutions**. The distance between schools and residential areas is still a particular problem for women who do not live in cities. The **lack of developed municipal transport coupled with a relatively higher level of poverty** in rural areas²² creates additional obstacles to attending vocational education (Tsurtsunia-Zurabashvili, 2019).

The infrastructure of education institutions poses another barrier for women seeking vocational education. In particular, many vocational institutions do not have a dormitory, a children’s room or a cafeteria (Tsurtsunia-Zurabashvili, 2019). In addition, school hours for the lower grades and kindergartens are not favourable for women seeking a profession. Parents of children under the age of 2 are in a particularly difficult situation because children cannot be admitted to kindergarten until after they are 2 years old.

21 Source: Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia. Tracer studies of 2015–2020. Available at <https://mes.gov.ge/content.php?id=5962&lang=geo>.

22 According to Geostat, in 2020, 27.5 per cent of the rural population was under the absolute poverty line, compared to 17.1 per cent of the urban population.

Moreover, there are other barriers that exclude—in particular—women from vocational education; they apply to IDPs as well. For example, established **stereotypes in Georgian society that men are the main breadwinners in the family undermine the importance of skills and the opportunities for women to earn a living** (Tsurtsunia-Zurabashvili, 2019). Gender stereotypes about so-called female and male professions also prevent many women from choosing professions that are in demand in the labour market (Tsurtsunia-Zurabashvili, 2019). As a result, women choose professions that are more acceptable to them, which are usually low-paying (Tsurtsunia-Zurabashvili, 2019). In addition, women's employment and professional development opportunities are significantly hampered by traditional societal attitudes (Association of Young Economists of Georgia, 2014). According to the research done by ACT (2013), Georgian society is characterized by a certain family hierarchy and subordination between family members, which is based on stereotypical, traditional and, in many cases, patriarchal perceptions of the roles of women and men. One such notion, which can fundamentally be considered for a Georgian family, concerns the role of the man as the main breadwinner.

Other barriers that keep women from vocational education include the following (Tsurtsunia-Zurabashvili, 2019):

- a) **Lack of information** – Information on vocational education opportunities is not widely available. Because of this, women—especially those living in small towns and non-urban settlements—are experiencing a lack of information.
- b) **Low employment prospects and a gender gap** – In all, 46.7 per cent of women who graduated from vocational institutions in 2019 were employed in 2020; the same figure for men was 51.1 per cent, a 4.4 percentage point difference (ACT, 2020). The employment gap among 2018 graduates was more dramatic: 70 per cent of males were employed, compared to 54 per cent of employed female graduates, a 16-percentage point difference. Among 2017 graduates, the difference is 9 percentage points (64 per cent of males and 55 per cent of females were employed); and among 2016 graduates, 11.4 percentage points (61.1 per cent of males and 49.7 per cent of females were employed). According to these data, women experience worse employment prospects after completing their courses, which might increase the risk that they refrain from enrolling in a vocational education programme (Tsurtsunia-Zurabashvili, 2019).

1.3

GOALS OF GEORGIAN IDP AND ECOMIGRANT SUPPORT POLICIES, WITH RESPECT TO GENDER EQUALITY

Given the importance of including IDPs and ecomigrants in Georgia's social and economic development, the GIA team has used international and national development frameworks as a background against which to assess the impact of the state programmes, particularly their gender relevance.

Gender inequality is a key dimension to consider when internal displacement, educational attainment or labour market outcomes are concerned. The importance of gender equality is mentioned in most of the strategic and legal documents regarding IDPs and ecomigrants and/or vocational education, thus pointing to the Government's recognition of the importance of addressing inequalities identified in relevant sectors through a gender lens. As shown in the following section, while the international normative framework is very comprehensive, however, the national framework still seems to be deficient. The review of the national strategic documents regarding IDPs, ecomigrants and/or vocational education provided below showed that, most of the time, **gender equality is only mentioned in isolated parts and without any particular context**. Most of the documents do not explicitly state that gender equality is important specifically during the implementation of programmes targeting IDPs, or ecomigrants, as well as the programmes supporting vocational education. There is big room for improvement for the national framework to guide the work on gender equality. Although there has been a visible effort to highlight gender issues in different sectors, **the simple inclusion of generic gender references is just not enough**.

Below, we review both the national and international documents that constitute the national and international framework within which programmes to support IDPs are developed.

International context

UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (1998)²³ – These guidelines represent the basis of the international framework on internal displacement. This document sets out IDPs' rights and States' obligations towards their displaced populations. In particular, it identifies the rights and guarantees relevant to the protection of persons from forced displacement and to their protection and assistance during displacement, as well as during their return or resettlement and reintegration. These principles acknowledge the existing gender inequality dimension in displacement and state that specific efforts should be made to address the needs of displaced women and girls to ensure their full and equal access to health, education and other services.

Special attention is devoted to the right to education for internally displaced people, especially for women and girls (Principle 23).

“Special efforts should be made to ensure the full and equal participation of women and girls in educational programmes.”

“Education and training facilities shall be made available to internally displaced persons, in particular adolescents and women, whether or not living in camps, as soon as conditions permit.”

23 Available at <https://www.unhcr.org/protection/idps/43ce1cff2/guiding-principles-internal-displacement.html>.

The Guiding Principles are not legally binding, but they have been incorporated into numerous national frameworks, including the Georgian one.

1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action – This comprehensive document lists the problems associated with gender inequality and sets different strategies to overcome them. Among these strategies, the problems of internally displaced women are also highlighted. The document states that compared to other women, internally displaced and refugee women face additional obstacles to their advancement (Chapter 4, paragraph 46).²⁴ The document highlights that one of the actions to be taken by the Governments is to:

“Introduce measures to integrate or reintegrate women living in poverty and socially marginalized women into productive employment and the economic mainstream; ensure that internally displaced women have full access to economic opportunities and that the qualifications and skills of immigrant and refugee women are recognized.”²⁵

Here, the need for vocational education is not directly stated, but the passage “full access to economic opportunities and that the qualifications and skills [...] are recognized” clearly demands engaging internally displaced women in vocational education and professional development equally with men as well.

Paragraph 226 of the document gives a general overview of the differences between internally displaced men and women and states that displaced women might need a different type of international protection compared to men, and those women might face the risk of human rights abuse.²⁶

Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development – This very important international document acknowledges that

internal displacement is a development as well as a humanitarian concern. The aim of leaving no one behind and achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is only possible if decision-making covers all population groups and their needs. While the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are broad and may not always explicitly highlight internally displaced people or ecomigrants, they cover these particular groups as well.

SDG 1 – End Poverty in All its Forms Everywhere

– This goal determines that all poor and vulnerable groups of people should have equal rights to access resources for their economic activity and basic services, as well as appropriate technology:

“1.4 By 2030, ensure that all men and women, in particular the poor and the vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services, ownership and control over land and other forms of property, inheritance, natural resources, appropriate new technology and financial services, including microfinance.”²⁷

Clearly, fighting against poverty should include all of the groups whose incomes are exceptionally low. Internally displaced persons are those who had to leave their homes due to various reasons, including wars, conflicts, natural disasters, etc. Therefore, it is highly likely that most of the displaced persons struggle to self-realize in their new habitat, and most often they fall into the category of poor people. Having an agenda targeting these people is extremely important to reach the leading SDG, the aim of which is to end poverty once and for all.

SDG 4 – Ensure Inclusive and Equitable Quality Education and Promote Lifelong Learning opportunities for all

– This goal emphasizes the significance of all-inclusive education at all levels in the process of sustainable development. The targets mention the importance of all forms of education,

24 Available at <https://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/pdf/BDPfA%20E.pdf>.

25 Ibid., paragraph 58 (l).

26 Available at <https://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/pdf/BDPfA%20E.pdf>.

27 Available at <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/21252030%20Agenda%20for%20Sustainable%20Development%20web.pdf>.

including vocational education. Target 4.5 clearly states that Member States should:

“By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations.”²⁸

The classification of vulnerable groups can differ across countries. In the case of Georgia, internally displaced people and ecomigrants clearly fall into this group.

SDG 5 – Achieve Gender Equality and Empower All Women and Girls – Gender equality is one of the priorities of the United Nations. SDG Target 5.1 briefly summarizes the attitude of the UN to gender equality: “End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere.”²⁹ Although fighting gender discrimination among IDPs, or among those who go through vocational training, is not directly mentioned, it is obvious that the broad nature of this target assumes that there is no exception to the case for gender equality and that countries should pursue it in every possible dimension.

International Labour Organization (ILO) C117 - Social Policy (Basic Aims and Standards) Convention, 1962 (No. 117) – This Convention was ratified by Georgia in October 1997. The main goal of the Convention is to frame the general rules for developing well-being and social progress within the member countries. Article 14 of the document emphasizes possible cases of discrimination while trying to reach such social progress and urges Member States to abolish all forms of it:

“1. It shall be an aim of policy to abolish all discrimination among workers on grounds of race, colour, sex, belief, tribal association or

trade union affiliation in respect of--

- (a) Labour legislation and agreements which shall afford equitable economic treatment to all those lawfully resident or working in the country;*
- (b) Admission to public or private employment;*
- (c) Conditions of engagement and promotion;*
- (d) Opportunities for vocational training;”³⁰*

This is one of the few documents in which possible sex-based discrimination during vocational training programmes is mentioned. Therefore, it is an important piece of legislation as it urges its member countries (which includes Georgia) to abolish all forms of gender discrimination in this area. Thus, conducting GIAs on these programmes is relevant because it must be checked whether each programme’s outcomes follow the international legal responsibilities that Georgia faces.

Council of Europe Action Plan for Georgia 2020–2023 – This document stresses the importance of gender equality in the development process and mentions that Georgia is falling back in the 2017 Gender Gap Report in terms of women’s political empowerment. According to the Action Plan:

“Internally displaced persons and young people still have limited access to decision-making processes and unequal access to services at [the] local level.”³¹

As the problem of unequal access to services for the internally displaced persons is mentioned together with the need for gender equality and gender mainstreaming, we can assume that the gender dimension should also be a part of the Action Plan tackling the needs of internally displaced persons. However, the same problem persists here as well: no specific note mentions gender equality with regard to IDPs or vocational training. Most of the documents only roughly mention the need for equality.

28 Available at <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/21252030%20Agenda%20for%20Sustainable%20Development%20web.pdf>.

29 Available at <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/21252030%20Agenda%20for%20Sustainable%20Development%20web.pdf>.

30 Available at https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=ORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO:12100:P12100_INSTRUMENT_ID:312262:NO.

31 Available at <https://rm.coe.int/council-of-europe-action-plan-for-georgia-2020-2023/16809c3f62>.

EU-Georgia Association Agreement – The fourteenth chapter of the EU-Georgia Association Agreement focuses on employment, social policy and equal opportunities, and it highlights the importance of gender equality in reaching poverty reduction, social inclusion and sustainable development.³²

According to Article 359 of the EU-Georgia Association Agreement, the parties are planning to cooperate in the field of education and training, with the article citing vocational education as one of the areas in which this cooperation will take place. According to this article, the cooperation will take into consideration the best EU practices.³³ Moreover, it is stated that gender equality should be reached in the process of poverty reduction and social inclusion, both of which are the goals of the programmes targeting IDPs.

National context

Law of Georgia on Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories of Georgia (No. 1982-II S, 2014) – In 2014, a new law on IDPs entered into force in Georgia. This law formulates the general framework regarding their and the Government's relations, protects IDPs from being evicted from premises of which they are legally in possession, states that all IDPs should receive an equal allowance, introduces a simplified procedure for granting IDP status, recognizes IDPs' right to restitution of property, and redefines the concept of family in order to respect the right to family unity. According to Article 3 of the document, the Government is obliged to:

“a) Ensure the protection of the rights of an IDP during the period of being an IDP; b) facilitate the integration of an IDP at the place of his/her registration; c) facilitate the solution of problems of an IDP.”³⁴

Moreover, the document clearly states that its mandate is not discriminatory and that all IDPs are equal when regarding this law:

“It shall be prohibited to discriminate against IDPs when they exercise their rights and freedoms, for the reason that they are IDPs, as well as irrespective of their race, skin colour, language, sex, religion, political and other views, national, ethnic or social origin, property or social status, and a place of residence.”³⁵

Together with the broad obligations that the Government has, Article 16 also describes more specific duties that the public sector has with regard to IDPs:

“The Ministry and other state institutions, within the powers granted to them by the legislation of Georgia, shall assist an IDP to exercise his/her rights, namely: a) assist an IDP to get employed, taking into account his/her profession and qualification”.

Providing the IDPs with the necessary tools for their profession can be considered as an act that supports this minority in the process of finding a decent job that fits their professional education, and it also facilitates their integration into the labour market. As all forms of discrimination are prohibited according to Article 7, this document also obliges government programmes to make sure that gender equality principles are met while taking care of the needs of IDPs.

Government Programme 2021–2024 toward Building a European State

– The programme determines the key directions of work for the Georgian Government in the coming years. The programme underlines the importance of the relationship with the IDPs and lists the safe and honourable return of IDPs and refugees as one of its key priorities.³⁶ The document also mentions ecomigrants and states that it is planned to improve the living conditions of 1,200 ecomigrant families in the coming years.³⁷

This very broad document, of course, emphasizes the importance of education for the overall development

32 Available at [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/en/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:22014A0830\(02\)](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/en/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:22014A0830(02)).

33 Ibid.

34 Available at <https://matsne.gov.ge/en/document/download/2244506/1/en/pdf>.

35 Ibid., Article 7.

of the country. Specifically, for the scope of the research, the following phrase was important:

“Access to vocational education and training/retraining programs will be enhanced, and mechanisms will be developed for identifying vulnerable groups outside vocational education and engaging them in vocational education.”³⁸

Finally, the document also clarifies that gender equality is extremely important for development and that “measures will be taken to strengthen gender equality in every area of social life.”³⁹ The combination of these two concerns gives us a reason to claim that supporting IDPs and ecomigrants (both falling into vulnerable groups) in vocational education, together with meeting gender equality standards (which should be strengthened in **every area** of social life), should be the goal of the Government for the coming years.

2019–2020 Action Plan for Implementation of the IDP State Strategy – The first thing that needs to be mentioned is that the Action Plan is not limited to its time frame (2019–2020) and that its actions can be spanned over the coming years as the document is of a permanent nature and determines the long-term goals of the Government.

According to the Action Plan, one of the main priorities of the Georgian Government is to improve the socioeconomic conditions of the internally displaced persons (Article 1.6).⁴⁰

According to Article 2.2.6 of the Action Plan, it is the priority to ensure that IDPs have access to necessary resources that will allow them to realize their full potential, become financially independent from the Government and develop both economically and socially.⁴¹ Supporting the IDPs with vocational education with the tools and resources necessary for their professional activity is a step towards their eventual financial independence.

Vocational Education and Training Development Strategy for 2013–2020

– The Vocational Education and Training Development Strategy for 2013–2020 lists the main priorities in this direction, with the second priority mentioning the need for the inclusion of minor groups of the population, especially the vulnerable part:

“establishment of effective funding mechanisms enabling the achievement of excellence through both public and private sector institutions based on competitiveness; ensure full participation supporting access to a wide range of key [vocational education and training] programmes for the children of disadvantaged communities and vulnerable groups (students with disability and learning difficulties, ethnic minorities, IDPs, prisoners, probationers, host communities/remote communities etc.)”⁴²

The strategy also underlines its all-inclusive nature and embodies the fundamental principles of gender equality. It notices that everyone—regardless their social status, geographical location, gender, or physical or mental condition—will have access to vocational education facilities and resources.⁴³ Consequently, IDPs and ecomigrants who are supported through these programmes should not face gender-based obstacles while chasing towards social inclusion.

The strategic national documents are in need of the comprehensive inclusion of a gender analysis. Without fully integrating gender analysis into all stages of policymaking, and in particular into the action plans and budgets of responsible ministries and institutions, any significant development in gender mainstreaming and addressing/closing gender gaps will not be achieved.

36 Available at http://gov.ge/files/41_78149_280277_GP.pdf.

37 Ibid.

38 Ibid.

39 Ibid.

40 Available at http://gov.ge/files/495_69712_967817_2566.pdf.

41 Ibid.

42 Available at https://www.mes.gov.ge/uploads/12.%20VET%20Strategy%202013-20_EN.pdf.

43 Ibid.

1.4

PROGRAMMES MANAGED BY THE INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS, ECOMIGRANTS AND LIVELIHOOD AGENCY, FROM A GENDER PERSPECTIVE

Currently, the Agency, which operates under the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Labour, Health and Social Affairs of Georgia, is responsible for IDPs and ecomigrants, takes care of their resettlement and works towards improving their socioeconomic conditions. Before the creation of the Agency in 2019, the Ministry of Refugees and Accommodation of Georgia⁴⁴ was responsible for the state policy on refugees and asylum seekers, IDPs, repatriates, disaster victims and their resettlement, as well as migration control in the country. The Ministry of Refugees and Accommodation of Georgia was founded in 1996 and functioned until 2018, when the Ministry was abolished, and its responsibilities transferred to other ministries. The resettlement component was transferred to the Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure, the migration component to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and the social component to the Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Affairs. In parallel, from 2014 to 2019, the Livelihood Agency was responsible for improving the socioeconomic situation of IDPs and promoting their integration, and it functioned under the Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Affairs. In 2019, the Livelihood Agency was abolished, and the LEPL Internally Displaced Persons, Ecomigrants and Livelihood Agency was established.

The main goal of the Agency is **to implement the state policy towards internally displaced persons and persons affected by natural disasters and subject to displacement (ecomigrants) and to contribute to the improvement of**

their socioeconomic conditions—for example, through the creation of livelihoods, among other objectives.

The functions and responsibilities of the Agency regarding IDPs and ecomigrants are stated in the following way:⁴⁵

- a) Make a decision on granting, terminating, seizing and restoring the status of an IDP, and produce the relevant documentation and databases provided by law
- b) Determine the fact of ecomigrant damage, and produce the relevant documentation
- c) Carry out all legal actions to provide living space for IDPs and ecomigrants, including the purchase of real estate in accordance with the rules established by law, and produce the relevant documentation
- d) Organize emergency assistance and temporary accommodation to IDPs
- e) Participate in the process of administering the monthly IDP allowance in accordance with the rules established by law
- f) Register and declare real estate owned by individuals in the occupied territories of Georgia in accordance with the law
- g) Produce and administer a unified database(s) of IDPs and ecomigrants
- h) Within the scope of its competence, implement rehabilitation measures for IDP resettlement facilities in accordance with the law
- i) Within the scope of its competence, participate

44 In 2010, the name of the ministry was changed to the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied

Territories, Accommodation and Refugees of Georgia.
45 Source: <https://idp.gov.ge/en/about-us/>.

in the preparation of draft regulatory acts regarding the issues attributed to the Board of the Agency

- j) Promote the improvement of the socioeconomic conditions of IDPs and ecomigrants through the creation of livelihoods in accordance with the legislation of Georgia, including the relevant legal acts of the Government of Georgia
- k) Develop, implement and evaluate targeted projects and programmes, as well as find and manage the necessary financial resources for the implementation of projects and programmes, in order to improve the socioeconomic situation of IDPs and ecomigrants and facilitate their integration
- l) Participate in the development and implementation of livelihood projects and programmes tailored to the needs of IDPs and ecomigrants
- m) Issue grants to ensure access to livelihoods in accordance with the legislation of Georgia for the socioeconomic integration of IDPs
- n) Promote the involvement of IDPs and ecomigrants in state programmes, and inform them about the projects and programmes of state institutions and international or local non-governmental organizations aimed at supporting livelihoods
- o) Encourage the involvement of IDPs and ecomigrants in education and training courses
- p) Within the scope of its competence, develop and adopt individual administrative-legal acts necessary for the activities of the Agency
- q) Establish relations with donor, international and/or local organizations, and develop and implement joint projects in the field of activity of the Agency
- r) Review citizens' applications, complaints and proposals on issues within the authority of the Agency, and make relevant decisions
- s) Exercise other functions and authorities granted by the legislation of Georgia

Looking at the functions and main aim of the Agency shows that, while formulating the main directions in which the Agency is supposed to operate, the policymakers did not consider a gender lens. While **the description of the functions is quite general and it is acceptable not to explicitly mention the gender perspective in all points listed above, there is clearly room to make the Agency's functions more inclusive and gender sensitive.**⁴⁶ For example, all of the above-listed functions from 'j' to 'o' could be strengthened from a gender perspective and made more inclusive by acknowledging the potential gender differences in the respective areas and the need to tailor functions to the gender needs. Highlighting the gender perspective in the functions of the Agency and transforming them into gender-sensitive ones could contribute to strengthening gender equality in the context of IDPs and ecomigrants and even increase the overall impact of the actions carried forward by the Agency. It needs to be mentioned that the Agency is operating under principles that prohibit any form of discrimination.⁴⁷ However, the existence of such principles is a necessary but insufficient condition under which to implement proactive, gender-inclusive policy.

One of the functions of the Agency is to implement **targeted programmes and projects** tailored to the needs of IDPs and ecomigrants in order to provide them with accommodation and livelihoods. In this regard, the Agency is working in the following three main dimensions:

- a) Long-term resettlement of IDP families
- b) Resettlement projects for ecomigrant families
- c) Livelihood programmes for IDPs and ecomigrants

Long-term resettlement of IDP families

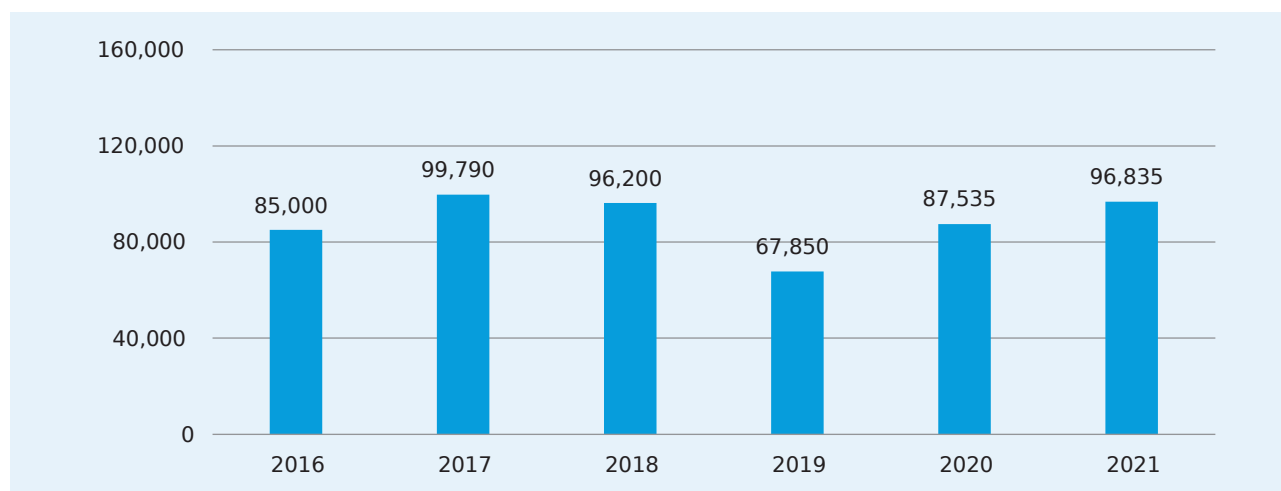
The Agency provides housing to IDP families in accordance with the **criteria for IDPs' long-term accommodation**. These criteria were developed in 2013 (amendments to these criteria take place

46 Gender sensitivity is the aim of understanding and taking account of the societal and cultural factors involved in gender-based exclusion and discrimination in the most diverse spheres of public and private life. Source: European Institute for Gender Equality. Available at <https://eige.europa.eu/thesaurus/terms/1218>.

47 Order No. 01-109/n of the Minister of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Labour, Health and Social Affairs of Georgia, issued 31 October 2019, "On approval of the Statute of the Legal Entity of Public Law - IDP, Ecomigrant and Livelihood Agency".

Figure 10:

Budget of the programmes directed to IDPs and ecomigrants in Georgia (thousands of GEL)



Source: Ministry of Finance.

The two programmes that are the focus of this GIA represent a tiny share of the total budget dedicated to IDPs and ecomigrants, varying from 0.07 to 0.26 per cent. These programmes are under the umbrella of the third direction of the Agency: livelihood programmes. Figures 11 and 12 below present the approved budget and actual spending of the vocational education support programme and the self-employment support grant programme, respectively. It is easy to see that in all years, the approved budget was significantly higher than actual spending. There are different reasons for underutilizing the assigned funds:

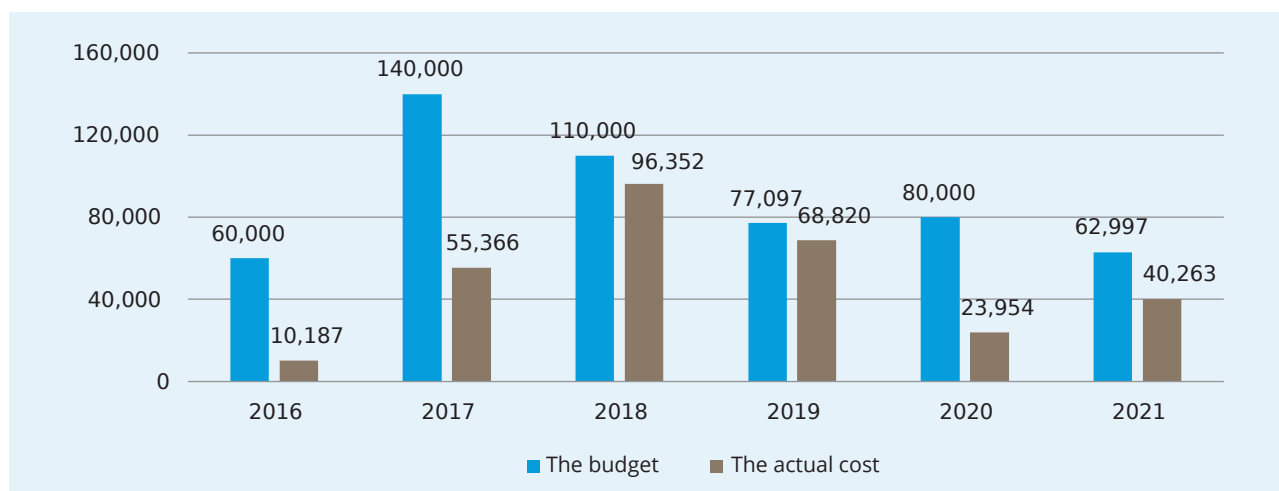
a) In the case of the vocational education support programme, the money is reimbursed to students depending on their attendance. According to the Agency representative, underspending in the first year (2016) can be attributed to the fact that this programme was piloted during this year and started later in the fall (while the budget was allocated for the whole year); there was also a low level of awareness of the programme among the target audience. The gap in consecutive years is explained by the fact that local municipalities started to introduce some discounts to vocational college students.

For example, in Zugdidi Municipality, such students are paying 50 per cent of the transport fee, while vocational education students in Tbilisi are paying 10 tetri in the subway (out of 50 tetri), and 20 tetri in other municipal transport systems (out of 50 tetri). Thus, the Agency did not have to reimburse the whole amount of the transport costs, only the part actually paid by students. These discounts could not be envisaged by the Agency in advance (in the beginning of the financial year) and were causing underutilization. As for 2020, as vocational education institutions moved online, there was no need to reimburse transport costs. The remaining funds are typically utilized by other programmes.

b) As for the self-employment support grant programme, the approved budget includes the maximum amount of money that the beneficiaries may request. However, in reality, sometimes beneficiaries request a lower amount. Moreover, the Agency buys the tools through tenders, and they have the possibility of spending less money than the standard market price. The 2021 actual expenditures are up to 27 September and do not represent the real picture for that year.

Figure 11:

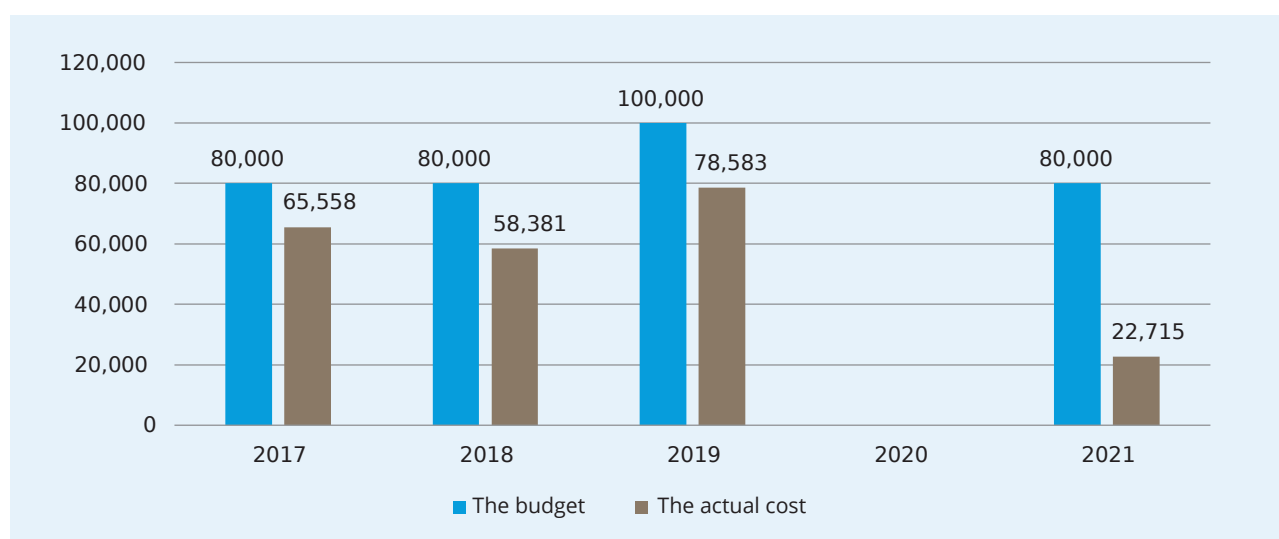
Total budget and actual cost of the vocational education support programme for IDPs and ecomigrants (GEL)



Source: Livelihood Agency (years 2016–2018); Internally Displaced Persons, Ecomigrants and Livelihood Agency (years 2019–2021).

Figure 12:

Total budget and actual cost of the self-employment support grant programme (GEL)



Source: Livelihood Agency (years 2016–2018); Internally Displaced Persons, Ecomigrants and Livelihood Agency (years 2019–2021).

Note: The IDPs' and ecomigrants' self-employment support grant programme started in 2017; in 2020, the project was not implemented due to the pandemic lockdown. The 2021 actual cost represents spending up to 27 September 2021.

Overall, looking at Agency programmes from a gender perspective reveals the following: (a) the criteria for resettlement programmes for IDPs and ecomigrants are quite broad and consider existing

gender vulnerabilities; and (b) as for livelihood programmes, they are open to all citizens, do not have gender quotas and do not envisage a separate budget for women.

PART 2: DESCRIPTIONS OF THE SELECTED PROGRAMMES

Vocational education support programme for IDPs and ecomigrants

Active since the year 2016, this programme envisages financing the travel expenses from the place of residence to the educational institution for IDPs and ecomigrants enrolled in a state vocational education institution. The idea behind the programme is to encourage IDPs and ecomigrants to master the professions that are more in demand in the labour market. Initially, the programme was also financing students' rent; however, this component was withdrawn in 2017 due to low demand. Moreover, during that time, the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Accommodation and Refugees of Georgia was also subsidizing apartment rents, so there was no need to duplicate this service.

The goal of the programme is to promote the socioeconomic integration of IDPs and improve their living conditions by creating employment prospects, and it aims to do so by promoting the vocational education of IDPs and ecomigrants and by financing students' transportation in order to increase their competitiveness in the labour market. While this goal is general and does not envisage any gender dimension, it focuses on the area—transportation—that is one of the highlighted gender-specific challenges for vocational education in Georgia (see section 1.2, under 'General and gender-specific vocational education challenges in Georgia'). It has to be mentioned that the programme descriptions over the years did not discuss the existing gender gaps and challenges in vocational education faced by IDPs and ecomigrants. The words 'woman' or 'man' do not even appear while discussing the rationale for the intervention. Background analysis is conducted on a general level.

This programme reimburses beneficiaries' actual transport costs. During the first year, the programme was targeted only to socially disadvantaged IDPs. It has been extended to all IDPs since 2017. In 2020, ecomigrants also became eligible. Until the year 2020, socially disadvantaged IDP students were reimbursed up to a maximum of GEL 150 monthly as, otherwise, according to existing regulations, a higher transferred amount into their bank accounts would affect their social allowance and score. Accordingly, if a student was a recipient of Targeted Social Assistance (TSA) and, based on his/her attendance data, transport costs exceeded GEL 150, then at the beneficiary's request, he/she was reimbursed GEL 150 only. The Agency representatives were well aware of the problem and were lobbying for amendments to the government decree regulating the issue. Finally, in May 2020, the relevant amendment was made, and the vocational education support programme was included in the list of exceptions by government decree.⁵¹ As a result, the amount transferred through the programme no longer affects the social score and allowance.

The application period depends on the start dates of the vocational education centres, determined by the Ministry of Education and Science. Usually, the application period is open twice a year, in the spring and in autumn, approximately during the same periods every year, although no exact dates are specified. In 2021, the application period was announced only once, in autumn, due to the pandemic. Once the Agency announces the opening of a call for the programme, the deadline for applications is defined and cannot be less than one month. The interested IDP and ecomigrant must submit the completed application within the terms indicated in the call, together with the accompanying documentation:

51 Amendment No. 332 of 28 May 2020 to Resolution No. 126 of 24 April 2010.

- Copy of the applicant’s ID/passport
- Certificate from the educational institution, indicating the year of enrolment and the exact date of completion of studies
- Bank account details
- Document confirming the disability, in the case of disabled persons

The livelihood department of the Agency processes the submitted applications no later than 45 calendar days after the deadline for applications. At the processing stage, the relevant department verifies the routes and tariffs indicated in the application according to the tariffs approved by the service provider/municipality in the respective administrative unit. The department reviews the submitted applications and determines their compliance with the programme eligibility criteria. Afterwards, the department monitors applicants who meet the eligibility criteria. The purpose of monitoring is to verify the information provided in the application. After the monitoring, the processed

applications, together with the monitoring reports, are submitted to the commission established by the individual administrative legal act of the Director of the Agency within the framework of the programme. The commission evaluates the application together with the monitoring reports and makes a decision on whether to approve the application. The requested amount is double-checked with the respective municipality representatives responsible for local transport and, in addition, if necessary, with the local transport companies during the monitoring stage. If the requested amount differs from the actual confirmed costs, the student is reimbursed according to the true costs. As discussed above, the Agency considers whether any municipal-level discounts are in place for vocational students and reimburses the remaining amount accordingly.

The eligibility criteria for the vocational education support programme were changing over the years. All of them were and are gender-neutral.

Figure 13:

Criteria for financing beneficiaries’ travel expenses in the scope of the vocational education support programme

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
1	Must be registered in the database of the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons, Accommodation and Refugees of Georgia and have the active status of an IDP					Since the end of 2020, the programme has been extended to ecomigrants in addition to IDPs
2	Must be registered in the united database of socially vulnerable families of the LEPL – Social Service Agency	In 2017, the programme was extended to all IDPs, it did not matter whether they had socially vulnerable status				
3	Must be studying in a state vocational education institution					
4	Must be enrolled in a state vocational education institution in 2016	Must be enrolled in a state vocational education institution in 2017	Must be enrolled in a state vocational education institution in 2018	Must be enrolled in a state vocational education institution in 2019	Must be enrolled in a state vocational education institution in 2020	Must be enrolled in a state vocational education institution in 2021
5	The distance between the beneficiary’s residence and the education institution must be more than 2 km and less than 60 km	In 2017, the upper bound for distance between the beneficiary’s residence and school (60 km) was removed			From 2020, the minimum distance (2 km) was reduced to 1 km	

Figure 14:

Criteria for rent eligibility in the scope of the vocational education support programme

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
1	The actual and/or legal address of the applicant and the address of the state vocational education institution should not be in the same city	From 2017 only the transportation costs were reimbursed, and the rental criteria was removed				
2	In case of rent, the distance between the applicant's actual and/or legal address of the state vocational education institution should be more than 60 km					

The information channels used by the Agency to promote the programme are the following: SMS to target groups (i.e. IDPs and ecomigrants who have entered vocational education centres) and vocational education administration. Before the pandemic, the Agency was also conducting face-to-face meetings in IDP compact settlements and was providing information about all of its programmes. According to the Agency representatives, occasionally they were also holding meetings with IDP pupils above grade 9. However, all face-to-face meetings are currently suspended. In November and December 2021 with the help of vocational education centres, the Agency conducted online and face-to-face meetings in all facilities where an IDP and/or ecomigrant was enrolled.

Self-employment support grant programme for IDPs and ecomigrants

The programme envisages promoting the self-employment of IDPs and ecomigrants—specifically those who graduated between the 2012/13 and 2020/21 academic years from a vocational education institution and/or are graduates of a vocational training programme recognized by the State during the same years—by providing them with professional tools and equipment.

The goals of the programme are (a) to promote the socioeconomic integration of IDPs and ecomigrants and improve their living conditions by creating a self-employment perspective; and (b) to promote vocational education among IDPs and ecomigrants. As in the case of the vocational education support programme, these goals are **general. However, they target employment by profession**—another

challenge of vocational education in Georgia. Unlike the previous programme, here the goals could be gender sensitive, highlighting the lower labour force participation of females and improving their living conditions. As in the previous case, while presenting the programme rationale, there is no discussion nor mentioning of existing gender gaps in the labour market.

Currently, the programme finances a maximum of three items, each worth no less than GEL 150. The maximum requested budget per participant amounts to GEL 2,000. The features of the programme were changing over the years, mainly to reduce barriers for the applicants. In particular:

- Until 2019, the maximum requested amount was GEL 1,600. In 2019, the cap increased to GEL 2,000.
- Until 2019, the programme also allowed group applications of up to three applicants, along with individual applications. In the case of group applications, the funding was provided for each applicant (with a maximum amount of GEL 1,600 per group member). The group applications were assessed individually during the initial stage, and later an average score was derived. In 2019, changes were made, and the group application option was eliminated; now, only individual applications are eligible for funding.
- In addition, originally, applicants were asked to provide three invoices per requested tool. Providing three invoices was quite challenging for the applicants, so based on the feedback of monitoring this process, the Agency decided to reduce the number of required invoices to one in 2018.

- Until 2018, the number of items requested was not limited, and the minimum requested amount was not set. As a result, applicants were requesting many different items with very low prices, which created a heavy procedural burden on the Agency, as purchasing each item is related with specific procedures (i.e. announcing tenders). In addition, the likelihood that the requested item was not actually related to the applicant's profession was quite high in this case. In 2018, the Agency set the maximum number of required tools to three and the minimum price per item to GEL 150.
- Optionally, documentation proving the applicant's vulnerability, in the case of socially disadvantaged or disabled persons, single parents or if the family lost the breadwinner.

The period for receiving the application for the self-employment support grant programme is open once per year, approximately during the same period, but as in the case of the previous programme, **no exact date is specified**. During the implementation of the programme, the deadline for receiving applications is defined and cannot be less than one month after the announcement. The interested IDP or ecomigrant must submit the completed application together with the accompanying documentation before the deadline. The accompanying documentation is as follows:

- Copy of the applicant's ID/passport.
- Document that proves the qualification of the profession, e.g. a certificate or diploma from a vocational education institution indicating the profession and the date of completion of the studies.
- Invoice issued within the deadline for receiving grant applications for all work tools requested to be purchased with the submitted grant application. The invoice should include the characteristics, model and value of the work tool.

The application for the grant should be signed by the applicant. Submitting applications online is also possible with electronic signatures.⁵² The submitted grant application is verified by the Agency and reviewed by the grant commission established under the programme. After an initial screening, applicants were requested to be present at interviews with the commission members; however, in 2021, these interviews were not conducted due to COVID-19 restrictions. The Agency has a pool of experts in the field of the defined professions eligible for the programme.⁵³ During the interview, a relevant expert and an Agency representative are meeting with the applicant.

All applicants are notified about the final decision. In the case of a positive decision, the Agency representatives call each successful applicant. In the case of a negative decision, the Agency sends an official letter and SMS in which the decision is provided together with the reasons for the rejection. The rejected applicant can appeal the decision.

The Agency monitors the programme at least once, after the beneficiaries are provided with their requested tools. The aim of this monitoring is to check whether the beneficiary is using the granted tools for his/her profession; to examine the impact of the programme on the recipient's socioeconomic status; and to check whether the recipient is obeying the contract (e.g. he/she cannot sell the granted items during the period specified in the contract).

The eligibility criteria for the self-employment support grant programme were changing over the years (Figure 15).

52 Based on the interviews with the Agency representatives, submitting e-applications is quite simple—the applicants can scan or take a photo of the documents and send it. However, according to the Agency representatives, online

applications are not filled in correctly and require further double-checking with the applicants.

53 This list of eligible professions is updated periodically by the Agency and covers all vocational education professions in the country.

Figure 15:
Eligibility criteria for the self-employment support grant programme

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
1	The applicant must be an IDP with active status				Since the end of 2020, the programme has been extended to ecomigrants in addition to IDPs
2	The applicant must be a graduate of the 2016-2017 academic year of a state vocational education institution	The applicant must be a graduate of the 2015-2018 academic year of a state vocational education institution and/or a certified beneficiary of job seeking training and qualification improvement state programme of LEPL Social Service Agency of the same year	The applicant must be a graduate of the 2015-2019 academic year of a state vocational education institution and/or a certified beneficiary of job seeking training and qualification improvement state programme of LEPL Social Service Agency of the same year	The applicant must be a graduate of the 2013-2020 academic year of a state vocational education institution and/or a certified beneficiary of job seeking training and qualification improvement state programme of LEPL Social Service Agency of the same year	The applicant must be a graduate of the 2013-2021 academic year of a state vocational education institution and/or a certified beneficiary of job seeking training and qualification improvement state programme of LEPL Social Service Agency of the same year
3	Must have completed one of the professional programmes defined by the Agency				
4	The grant application is submitted within the set deadline, should be signed and completed, and all required documentation should be attached				

The information about the programme is distributed to potential beneficiaries (e.g. graduates of vocational institutions, IDPs and ecomigrants in general) via

SMS, leaflets, face-to-face meetings and other announcements.

PART 3: GENDER RELEVANCE OF THE SELECTED PROGRAMMES

Displacement reinforces pre-existing gender inequality and socioeconomic disadvantages. International evidence shows that

“women often face greater challenges than men in securing a decent livelihood in displacement, with repercussions on their ability to find shelter and security and to access education and healthcare. They also tend to be less able to make their voices heard or participate in decisions on matters that affect them. They are often more likely to flee in the face of conflict, violence, disasters and climate change, and are therefore at greater risk of displacement” (IDMC, 2020b).

The vocational education support and self-employment support grant programmes for IDPs and ecomigrants target exactly the above-mentioned fields of access to education and securing of a decent livelihood of the target population by supporting their self-employment, which makes the assessment of the programmes' gender impact very important and relevant for policymakers. These programmes are targeting spheres that, according to international literature, are usually subjected to gender inequalities in the event of displacement.

While analysing the programmes, one should always consider that conflicts, displacement and related challenges affect people in different ways because of different gender roles, preferences and vulnerabilities. They cause traumatic, stressful and difficult experiences, which can depend on the gender of the person affected. In the early 1990s, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and other key institutions working on forced displacement started to pay more attention to gender issues and started to include gender dimensions into their programmes. The GIA of the selected livelihood programmes for IDPs and ecomigrants will facilitate gender mainstreaming and will ensure that a gender

dimension is incorporated into the programmes. Moreover, experience and knowledge acquired in this GIA will have an indirect impact on the Agency's other programmes too by highlighting existing gender inequalities and needs.

The literature review during the gender relevance analysis showed that in the programmes targeting the displaced population, usually the following gender differences are in place:

- Conflicts affect women and men in different ways (Uvarova and Yasenovskaya, 2020). **Men are the principal actors of war**, and they therefore bear the brunt of its direct consequences—the probability of dying for men is very high during conflicts compared to females.

“Women are victims and survivors of displacement and uprooting in the first place as widows of rural violence, heads of household suddenly expelled toward the cities; in the second place as spouses, when the effects of violence and uprooting and the necessities of survival touch them differently from men” (Meertens and Stoller, 2001).

- **Pre-existing gender inequalities and discrimination can magnify the effects of conflict** on women and girls, and the feminization of poverty often reduces women's ability to cope with these effects (Uvarova and Yasenovskaya, 2020).
- The **lack of access to information, resources and services** (usually faced by women because of gender stereotypes, inequality and cultural constraints) can make some women and girls more vulnerable in cases of forced migration and natural disasters (Uvarova and Yasenovskaya, 2020).
- There is an **increased risk of sex violence, exploitation and trafficking**. As the majority

of IDPs and refugees are women and children, during the conflict and right afterwards, the risk of sexual violence, exploitation and trafficking is increased (IDMC, 2020b).

- Displacement means the **breaking of social ties and fabric**. The loss of social support systems and community solidarity makes IDPs more vulnerable, especially in countries where such ties are important and bonding social capital plays an important role. This may affect peoples' labour market outcomes and the level of their employability (Benjamin, 1998). Women usually face a greater loss of social identity than men, as they are less mobile and have less social and political experience compared to men.

Based on the above-mentioned key gender dimensions of internal displacement, it is easy to identify directions that researchers have to explore while analysing the gender relevance of the state programmes supporting education and self-employment. The lack of access to information, resources and services, the breaking of social ties and fabric, and the intensified gender norms and stereotypes would affect the labour market outcomes of displaced people and would hinder their socioeconomic integration into society. Consequently, the selected programmes, if the above-mentioned gender aspects are well considered during implementation, have the potential to reduce existing gender inequalities.

Previous studies conducted in Georgia point to this difference in labour market outcomes between IDPs and the general population. These studies convey the main point that IDPs in Georgia are disadvantaged

once labour market outcomes are concerned. A 2018 study, based on the Integrated Household Survey data from 2004 to 2016, shows that the labour market outcomes of IDPs are much worse than those of local residents (Torosyan, Pignatti and Obrizan, 2018). In particular:

- IDPs are 3.9–11.2 percentage points less likely to be in the labour force, depending on the period and duration of their IDP status.
- IDPs are up to 11.6 percentage points more likely to be unemployed, sometimes even after 25 years of forced displacement.
- IDPs residing in a locality for more than five years receive persistently lower wages than local residents with similar characteristics, with the gap widening over time, reaching some 16 percentage points in the latest period under analysis.

Earlier studies also pointed to the fact that IDPs are particularly affected by unemployment. A 2013 study found that IDPs faced much longer spells of unemployment and that women were affected more than men (IDMC, 2012).

A review of the international and national literature shows that gender is indeed an important aspect to consider while designing and implementing programmes supporting internally displaced populations. Such programmes have a great potential to improve the livelihoods of the target population and facilitate their integration into society; this could not be done if existing gender needs are not well addressed.

GENDER ANALYSIS OF THE
PROGRAMMES: VOCATIONAL
EDUCATION SUPPORT AND
SELF-EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT
GRANT PROGRAMMES FOR
IDPS AND ECOMIGRANTS

PART 4.1: GENDER ANALYSIS OF THE PROGRAMMES: QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

The following subchapter provides the results of the quantitative analysis of the Agency's data on the selected programmes. The Agency collects information about the applicants and beneficiaries

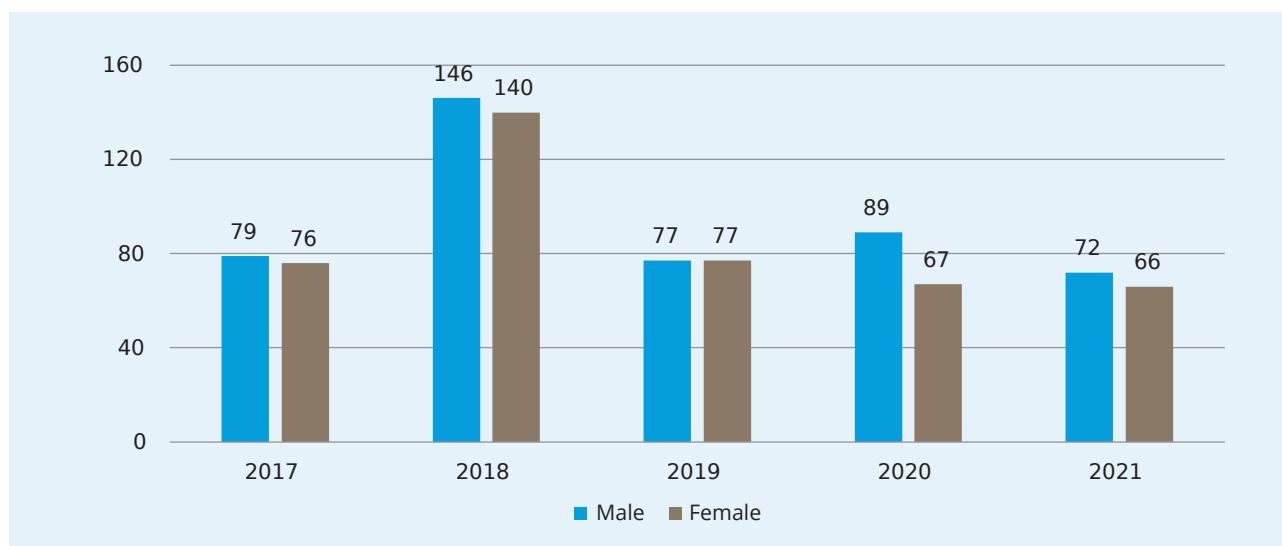
of both programmes, including data on their gender, place of residence, application year and some programme-related characteristics.

4.1.1. **Quantitative analysis of the vocational education support programme for IDPs and ecomigrants**

The vocational education support programme for IDPs and ecomigrants aims to reimburse costs associated with transportation incurred by vocational

education students. In total, between 2017 and 2021, the programme had 889 beneficiaries, of whom 463 were males and 426 were females (52 per cent and 48 per cent, respectively). The programme is ongoing. The distribution of female and male beneficiaries across the years is provided below (Figure 16).

Figure 16:
Total number of beneficiaries of the vocational education support programme for IDPs and ecomigrants



Source: Data provided by the Agency.

The Agency data about the programme beneficiaries do not include data about individual-level funding. The Agency could have provided data on individual funding, by disaggregating the overall funding and then matching the payments to each individual.

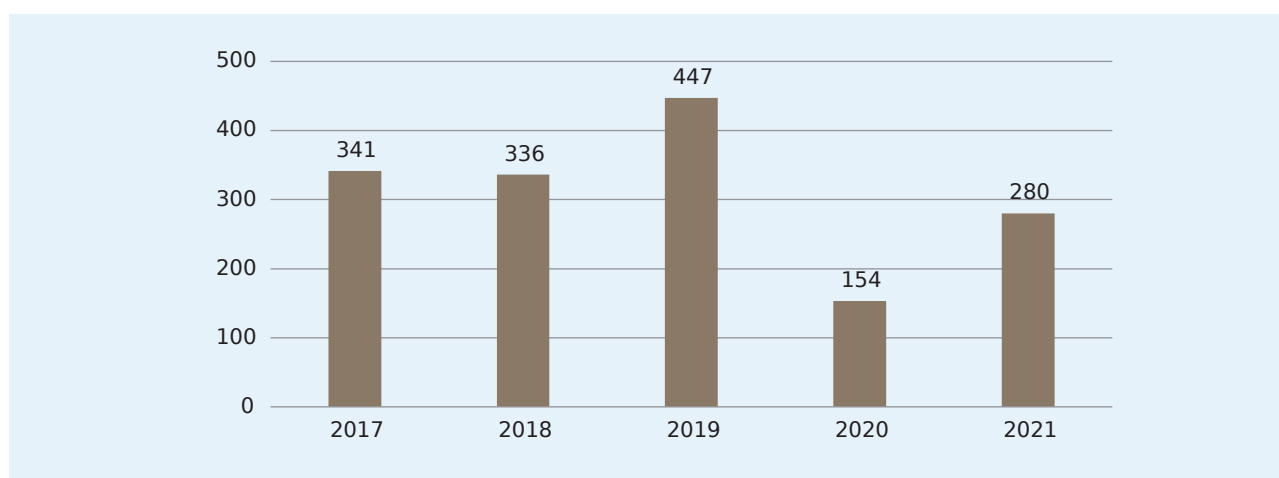
However, as this disaggregation would have required a lot of time and resources without expecting to add much value (as transport costs do not differ significantly across regions), the GIA team decided to utilize the average amount of money spent on

a beneficiary instead in the analysis. During the first year, the programme envisaged financing transportation costs and rent. However, as the GIA team did not have individual-level data on rent funds and the number of such beneficiaries was very low, the team decided not to include rent into the analysis and instead focus only on transportation costs. For the future, the GIA team suggests that individual-level funding data be recorded, to allow for a more rigorous and detailed analysis.

The average spending analysis shows that the highest average yearly payments were disbursed in

2019 at GEL 447 per year, which amounts to about GEL 45 per month (if redistributed over 10 months of study). The years 2020 and 2021 were characterized by lower funding, as there were several lockdowns during which, in different periods, both the educational centres and transportation system were closed—and during which the learning process was moving to online delivery (Figure 17). As vocational education students enjoy different transportation support schemes in some municipalities, the average transportation cost reimbursed by the Agency is not a good representation of the total cost of transportation.

Figure 17: Average yearly funding of a beneficiary per year (vocational education support programme for IDPs and eco-migrants) (GEL)



Source: Authors' calculations based on data provided by the Agency.

To have a more nuanced analysis of the programme's gender impact, the GIA team divided applicant IDPs into three major regional groups: Tbilisi, Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti and other regions. This division was motivated by the fact that most IDPs in Georgia are concentrated in Tbilisi and Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti. There is no third region that is as densely populated by IDPs as these two. According to the data about this programme, during the period 2017–2021, 42 per cent of applicants to the programme were from the Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti region, 29 per cent from Tbilisi and 29 per cent from the rest of Georgia

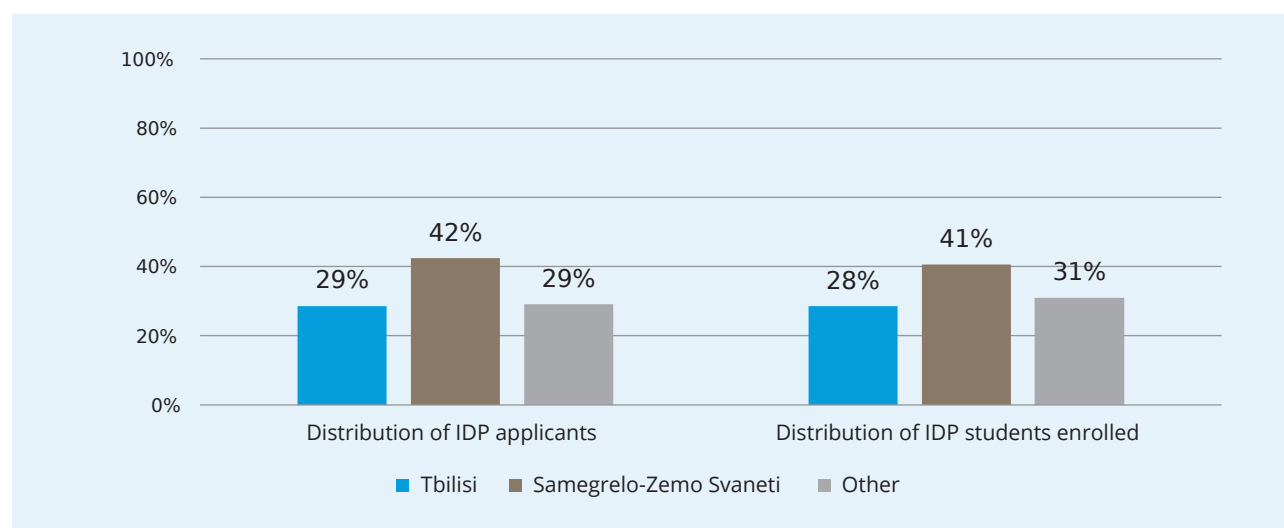
(Figure 18). Interestingly, the distribution of applicants across regions mimics the actual distribution of IDP students in vocational education in 2019 and 2020. It is noteworthy that the geographic distribution of beneficiaries is exactly the same as the distribution of applicants (42 per cent from Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti, 29 per cent from Tbilisi and 29 per cent from other regions). Moreover, according to the vocational education data obtained from the Agency, in 2019 and 2020, 41 per cent of IDP students started vocational education programmes in Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti, 28 per cent in Tbilisi and 31 per cent in other regions

of Georgia (Figure 18). **The consistency between the distribution of applicants, the distribution of beneficiaries and the distribution of enrolled IDP students might suggest that there is no self-selection bias—on a geographical basis—in**

applying to the vocational education support programme of the Agency, implying that the entire target population has an equal chance and opportunity to apply.

Figure 18:

Share of programme applicants based on their place of residence, 2017–2021 (vocational education support programme for IDPs and ecomigrants); and distribution of IDP students enrolled in vocational education across regions, 2019–2020



Source: Authors' calculations based on data provided by the Agency.

Note: The number of ecomigrant individuals in the LFS is extremely low, so it is impossible to consider them separately. Moreover, the ecomigrant beneficiaries of the vocational education support programme are also very few compared to the IDPs, and their inclusion does not change the overall picture.

The distribution of the programme applicants by gender was more balanced in the first three years (2017–2019); however, since 2020, the share of males has slightly increased (Figure 19). The lower number of applications from females in 2020 (although the gap in 2021 appears to be narrower) can be attributed to the pandemic. There are several reasons for the reduced share of female applicants. The two main ones might be (1) the increase in care duties for women, such as those associated with the closure of kindergartens and schools; and (2) men's higher propensity to risk, including the exposure risk to COVID-19. Overall, when observing IDP student

enrolment in vocational education, it appears that male IDPs do historically tend to enter vocational education facilities more than female IDPs. For example, in 2019 and 2020, 61 per cent of those who started studying were male, while the share of women who entered vocational education programmes was around 39–40 per cent over the same period.⁵⁴

What is interesting is that **the distribution of applicants to the programme is characterized by a larger share of women, compared to the actual distribution of enrolled students (regardless of whether or not they apply for the vocational**

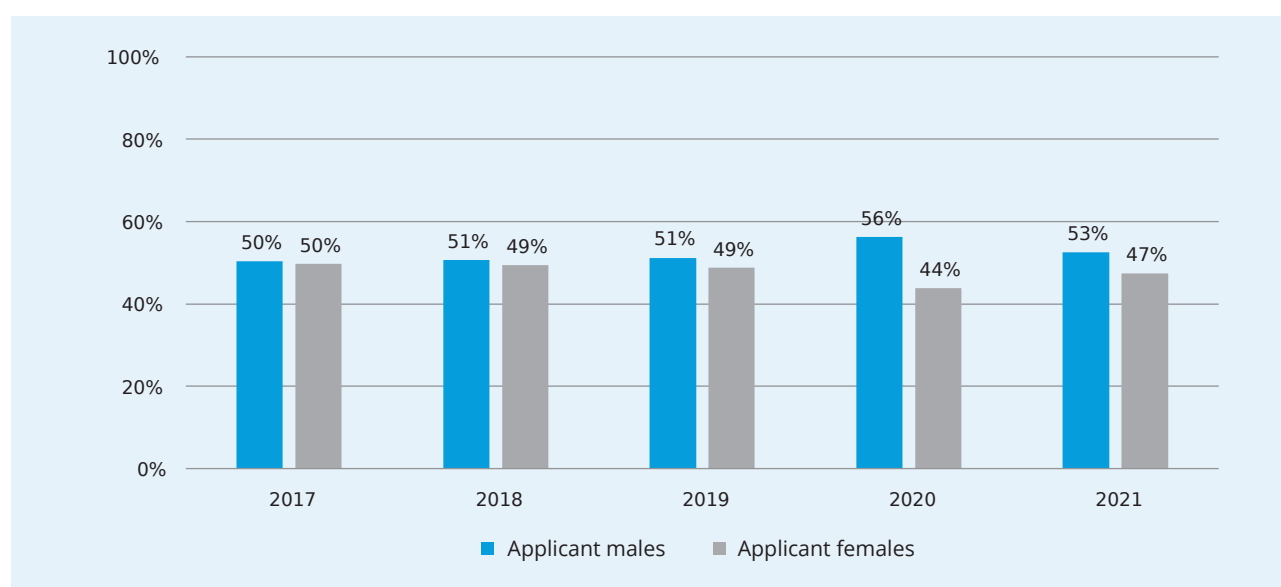
54 Source: Data provided by the Agency.

education support programme for IDPs and ecomigrants). Considering that—as will be shown later—almost all applicants got funded (both men and women), **this result indicates that the programme’s impact towards women is positive, as they apply to the programme at a higher rate; and as the results of the qualitative interviews**

show, women have more constraints to cover transportation costs. This result highlights the contribution of this particular programme towards closing the gender gap in vocational training enrolment and providing more equal opportunities for male and female students.

Figure 19:

Distribution of applicants across the years (vocational education support programme for IDPs and ecomigrants)



Source: Authors’ calculations based on data provided by the Agency.

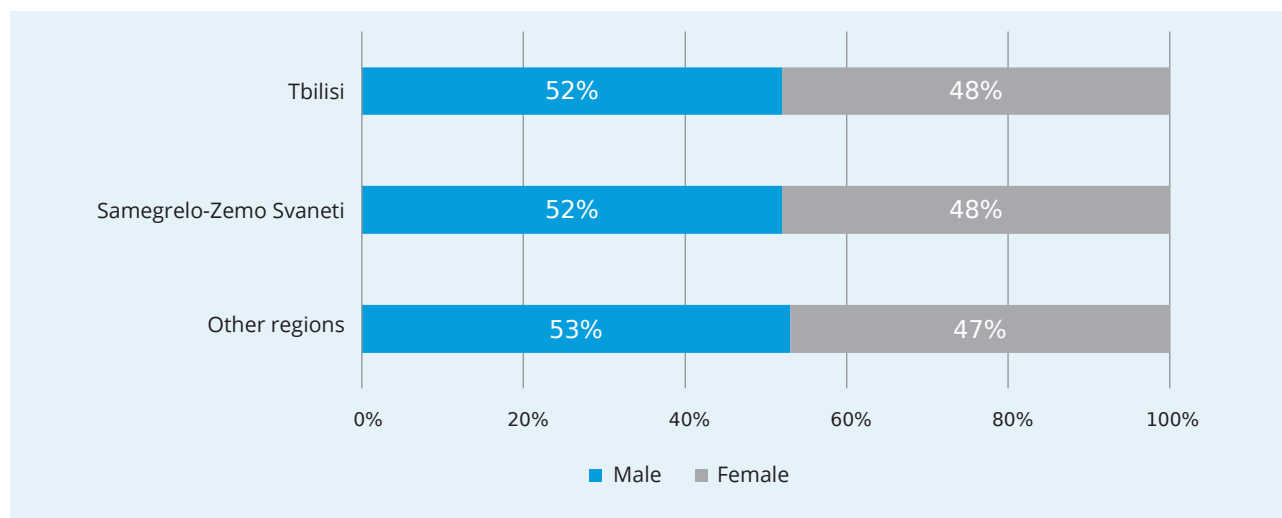
These gender patterns are maintained if the data are analysed by region. In Tbilisi, Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti and other regions, the applicants are almost equally distributed among the two gender categories: in Tbilisi and Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti, 52 per cent of the applicants were males, while in other regions, 53 per cent of the applicants were males (Figure 20). Keeping in mind that men enrol

in vocational education programmes at a higher rate than women, the small gender difference in the number of applicants can be attributed to the initial uneven distribution of potential beneficiaries,⁵⁵ and there is no evident self-selection bias in favour of men. In fact, there might be a self-selection bias in favour of women.

55 By potential beneficiaries, we are referring to IDPs who are active students in vocational education centres.

Figure 20:

Distribution of applicants in different regions, 2017–2021 (vocational education support programme for IDPs and ecomigrants)



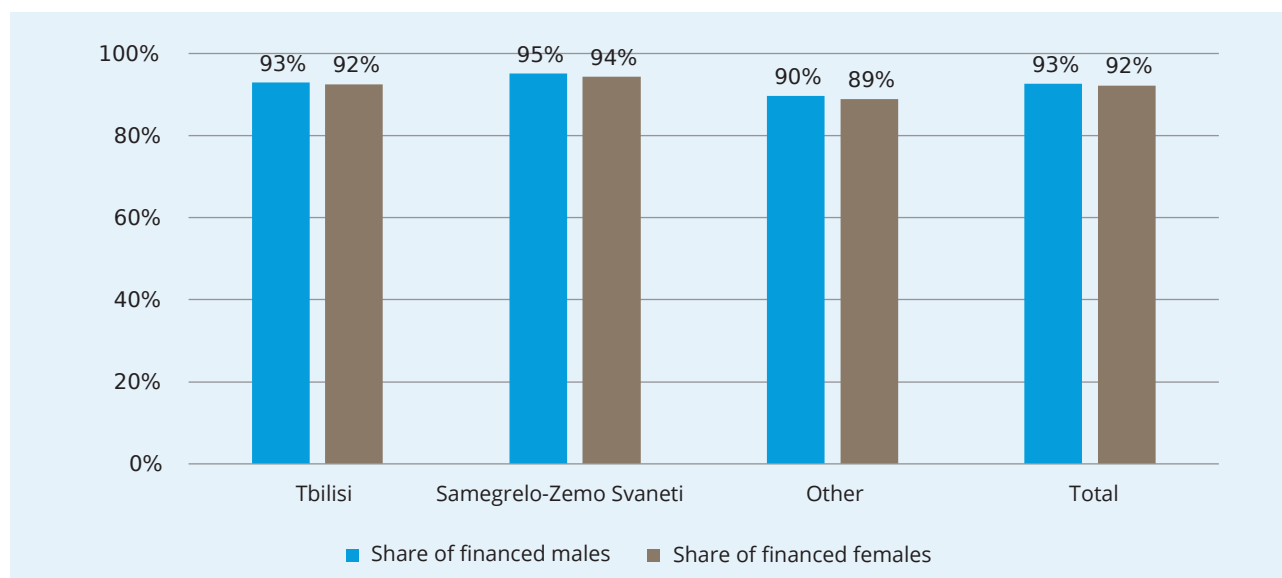
Source: Authors' calculations based on data provided by the Agency.

The programme is exceptionally generous in terms of **financing the applicants**. Almost everywhere, more than 90 per cent of the applicants got financed, and this is true for both genders. The GIA team analysed the financing rates by gender to find out whether there was any significant difference in favouring any particular gender and whether some selection bias exists from the Agency's side. **Results show that the programme is gender-neutral in all regions, as the difference between the proportions of male and female beneficiaries (i.e. the applicants who got financed) in different regions is insignificant** (Figure 21) and is consistent with application patterns. All of the applicants who met the criteria

of the programme were financed. The Agency data enabled us to track the reasons for denial in almost 50 per cent of rejections. According to the data, only a small share of applicants was rejected, and the most common reason for rejection was the lack of required documents. Some applicants lacked crucial documents to participate, some could not provide the detailed route from their place of residence to the education facility, some simply did not respond to phone calls and could not be contacted, and some did not provide their bank account information. The impression is that, if the documentation was properly provided, an applicant would be financed by the programme.

Figure 21:

Share of financed applicants across regions, 2017–2021 (vocational education support programme for IDPs and ecomigrants)



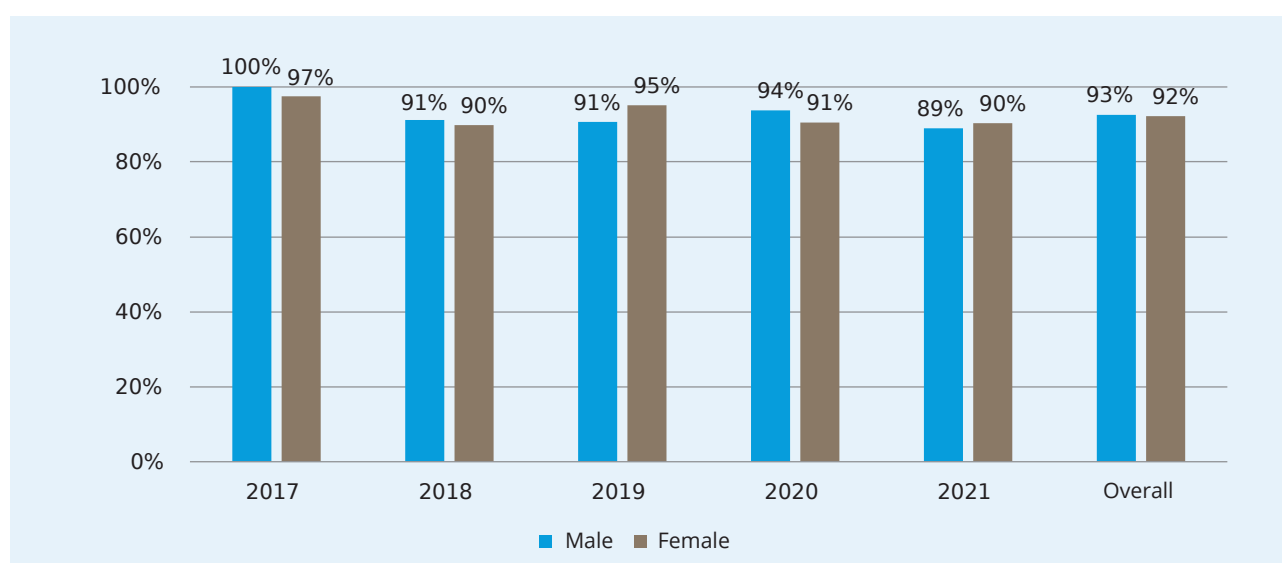
Source: Authors' calculations based on data provided by the Agency.

Even when looking at gender differences across the years, the variance in the proportion of financed people in the two gender groups seems insignificant; in some years, more males are financed, and in other

instances—more females. The overall funding rate in the programme is 93 per cent for the males and 92 per cent for the females (Figure 22).

Figure 22:

Share of financed applicants in different years, by gender (vocational education support programme for IDPs and ecomigrants)



Source: Authors' calculations based on data provided by the Agency.

In addition to this general-level analysis, the GIA team analysed a subgroup of socially disadvantaged beneficiaries. Of the programme's total 889 beneficiaries, 189 are recipients of the TSA, which represents 21 per cent of the total. Of the male beneficiaries, 19 per cent are socially disadvantaged, while in the case of the females, this number goes up to 23 per cent (Figure 23). The GIA team analysed the distribution of socially disadvantaged beneficiaries by gender in every year and found that in three years out of five, females were a higher share of the socially disadvantaged people among the beneficiaries. Overall, it seems that there is a slight majority of females in the subgroup of socially disadvantaged beneficiaries (52 per cent of socially disadvantaged beneficiaries are female). This is consistent with the general distribution of IDPs who are getting the TSA in the data provided by the Agency. Also in this case, a majority of females is observable; in 2019, 2020 and the first nine months of 2021 of the IDPs getting the TSA, 54 per cent were females and 46 per cent were males. So, the slight majority of women in this segment can be explained by the underlying distribution of the population of socially disadvantaged IDPs. Interestingly, the distribution (54 per cent and 46 per cent) is stable across both time and geography (the distribution is almost identical in Tbilisi, in Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti and in other regions, as well).

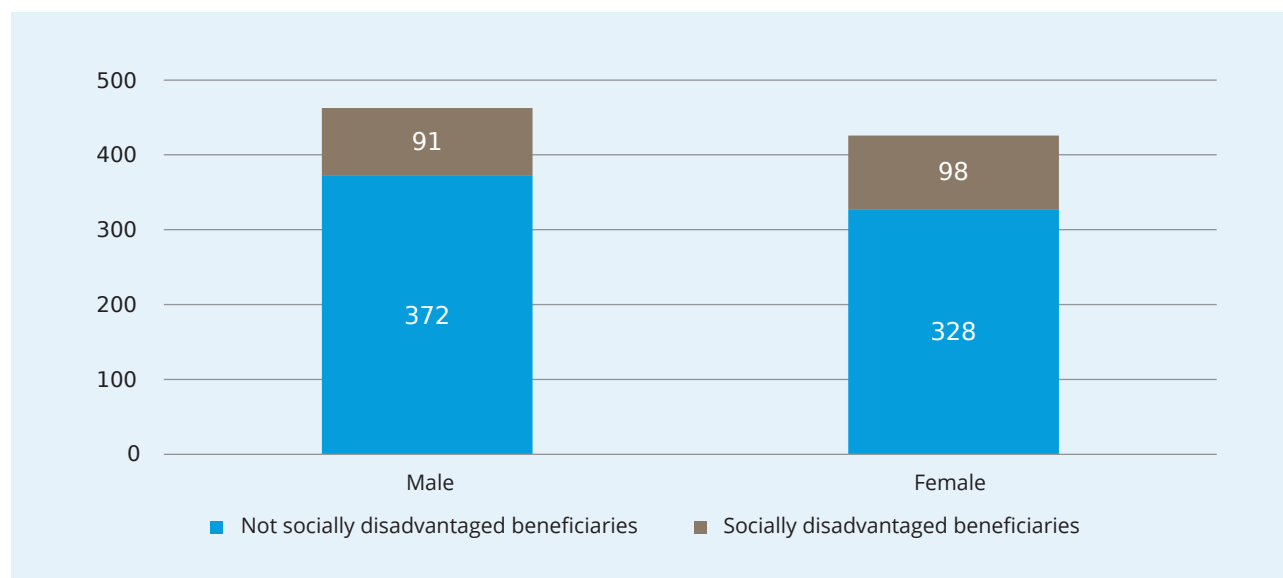
It is important to note that 2021 demonstrates the highest share of socially disadvantaged people among the beneficiaries for both genders, 28 per cent and 30 per cent for males and females, respectively (Figure 24). This highlights again the importance of this programme for supporting the most vulnerable group of students, even more

so in periods of economic crisis. The increased share of socially disadvantaged applicants and beneficiaries is also likely due to amendment No. 332 of 28 May 2020 to Resolution No. 126 of 24 April 2010 of the Government of Georgia (discussed above). During the first years of the programme, socially disadvantaged beneficiaries were getting a monthly payment of GEL 150 at most. According to the Agency representatives, many socially disadvantaged individuals were careful when applying for the programme as they were scared that this financial benefit would affect their social status and they would lose their TSA. After the 2020 amendments, funding that the socially disadvantaged individual gets from the vocational education support programme for IDPs and ecomigrants was classified as an exception and therefore would not affect beneficiaries' social status. Therefore, it is not a surprise that there have been more socially disadvantaged beneficiaries recently.

The GIA team decided to analyse the financing rates of socially disadvantaged applicants by gender, to identify whether/how these rates were different from general financing rates. The GIA team found no large differences between the genders except for the years 2018 and 2019. In 2018, more socially disadvantaged males were financed (100 per cent of males versus 88 per cent of females), while in 2019, more females were financed (94 per cent of females versus 69 per cent of males). The remaining years show perfect gender balance. The overall funding rate for IDPs classified as socially disadvantaged is identical to the aggregate shares for the programme (93 per cent of males and 92 per cent of females were financed) (Figure 25).

Figure 23:

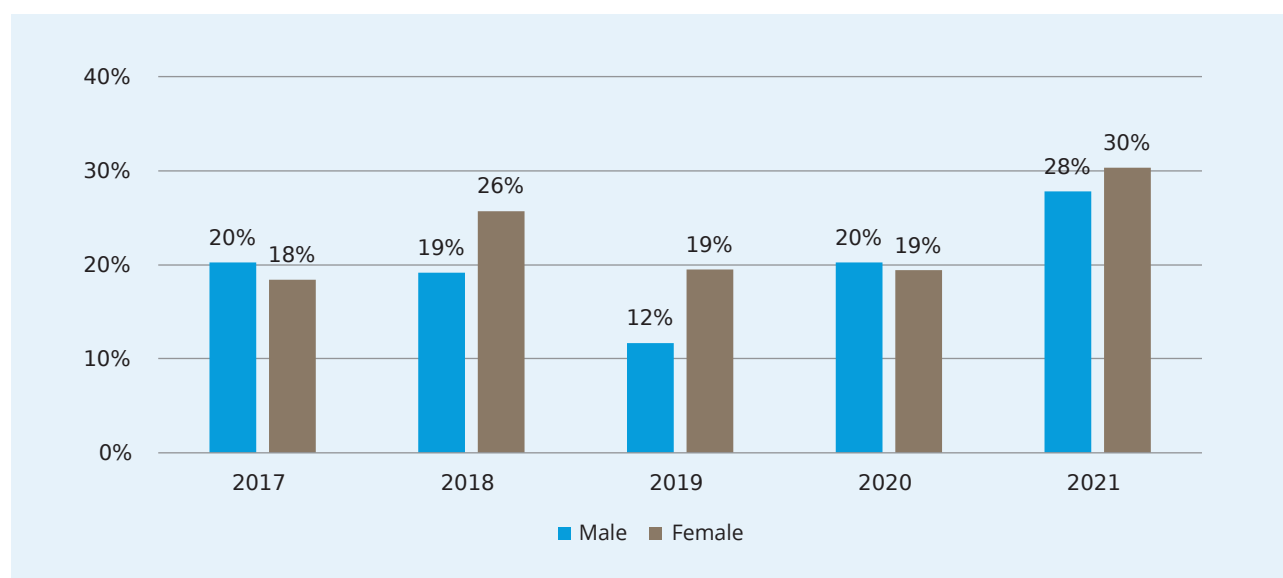
Number of socially disadvantaged beneficiaries, by gender, 2017–2021 (vocational education support programme for IDPs and ecomigrants)



Source: Authors' calculations based on data provided by the Agency.

Figure 24:

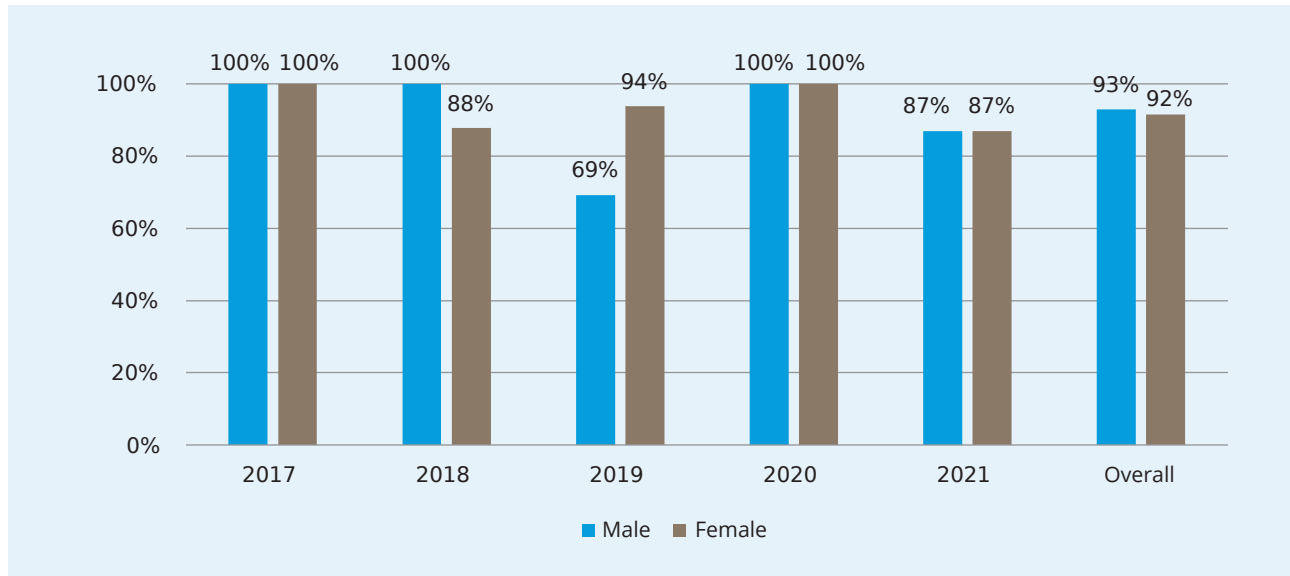
Share of socially disadvantaged individuals among the beneficiaries (vocational education support programme for IDPs and ecomigrants)



Source: Authors' calculations based on data provided by the Agency.

Figure 25:

Share of financed beneficiaries in the socially disadvantaged group (vocational education support programme for IDPs and ecomigrants)



Source: Authors' calculations based on data provided by the Agency.

4.1.2. Quantitative analysis of the self-employment support grant programme for IDPs and ecomigrants

The goal of the self-employment support grant programme for IDPs and ecomigrants is to equip them with the necessary tools for their professional development and, thus, foster their socioeconomic integration into society by encouraging self-employment. IDPs and ecomigrants who finish their vocational education programme may apply for the tools that are important for their self-employment. The maximum number of tools that can be purchased is three, and the maximum requested funding limit per individual beneficiary is GEL 2,000.⁵⁶

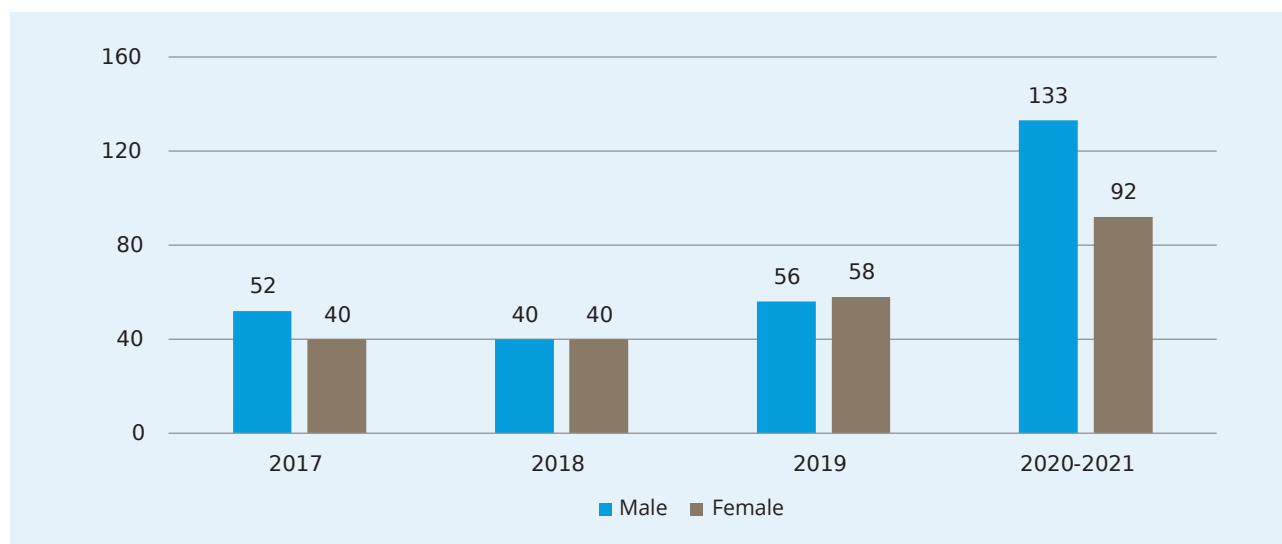
In the first three years of the programme (2017–2019), applicants were more or less gender balanced, with only a slight majority being male applicants (Figure 26). On average, 52 per cent of applicants were male, and 48 per cent of applicants were female over the period. Project funding was cancelled in 2020 due to the pandemic; therefore, all applications from 2020 were considered in 2021 together with the 2021 applicants. Based on this fact, the analysis presents the applicants of these years together. During 2020 and 2021, the gender composition changed significantly, with the share of males applying to the programme increasing noticeably. Male applications to the programme in 2020 and 2021 comprised 59 per cent of all applicants (Figure 26).

56 However, if the price of a piece of equipment increases during the period when the Agency is purchasing it, the

Agency will fund the final price, which might exceed GEL 2,000.

Figure 26:

Total number of applicants, by gender, 2017–2021 (self-employment support grant programme)



Source: Authors' calculations based on data provided by the Agency.

Note: In 2020, the programme was suspended, and applicants who applied in 2020 entered the contest in 2021.

The next part will be dedicated to an analysis of the trends at the regional level. Like with the vocational education support programme for IDPs and ecomigrants, in order to have a more nuanced analysis of the programme, the GIA team divided the applicants into three different groups (Tbilisi, Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti and other regions) and summarized the gender-disaggregated statistics from these three subgroups. While the shares of male and female applicants are quite close in Tbilisi (52 per cent of applicants were male and 48 per cent were female), for the regions outside Tbilisi, the difference between genders is larger (59 per cent and 57 per cent of applicants were males in Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti and other regions, respectively) (Figure 27). According to the data provided by the Agency, 91 per cent of applicants to the programme graduated from the vocational education centres in the period between 2015 and 2020. Due to the unavailability of information on the ages of the applicants, the GIA team could not draw further conclusions.

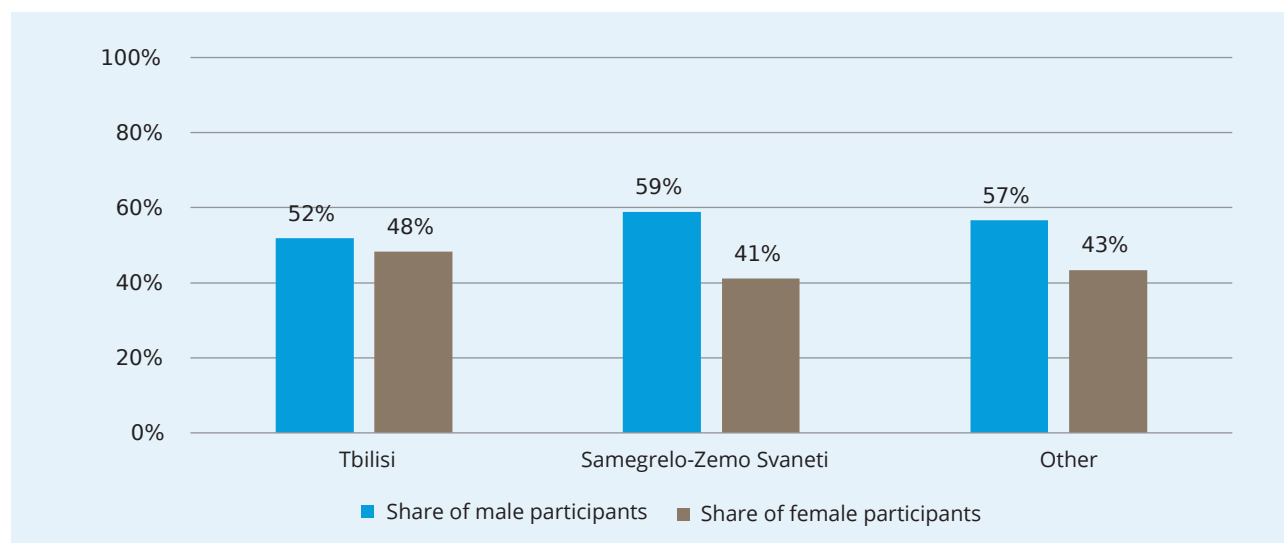
Although the shares of applicants look just mildly imbalanced in favour of men, which would be in line with the higher share of young IDPs enrolling in vocational education centres in recent years (61 per cent males and 39 per cent females, in 2019 and 2020),⁵⁷ the situation appears potentially more problematic considering that the data from Geostat's LFS show that out of all IDP graduates with vocational education, 61 per cent are female.⁵⁸ In general, given that there are more women than men who can be potential beneficiaries of the programme (because there are likely more women than men in the age groups who are eligible to apply for this type of support), the fact that more men apply suggests the need for **additional investigation to understand the reasons why females appear to apply at a lower rate than males. These reasons have to be identified and addressed if the programme is to become more inclusive and promote gender equality.** It seems that additional effort is needed from the Agency to attract female applicants, particularly from outside Tbilisi and—possibly— including women who graduated several years ago.

57 Source: Data provided by the Agency.

58 The educational outcomes of the population aged 15+. Data source: Geostat, LFS 2020.

Figure 27:

Gender distribution of applicants in three different regional groups (self-employment support grant programme)



Source: Authors' calculations based on data provided by the Agency.

The share of financed individuals by gender is not overly unbalanced. Overall, 39 per cent of males and 35 per cent of females got funded through the self-employment support grant programme (2017–2021). **A clear outlier is the 2020–2021 period. During 2020 and 2021, the share of funded applicants declined dramatically, with only 28 per cent of males and only 14 per cent of females being financed—thus, the gap reached 14 percentage points, with male applicants twice as likely to be funded.** The results from 2021 are actually responsible for the average gap of 4 percentage points (Figure 28).

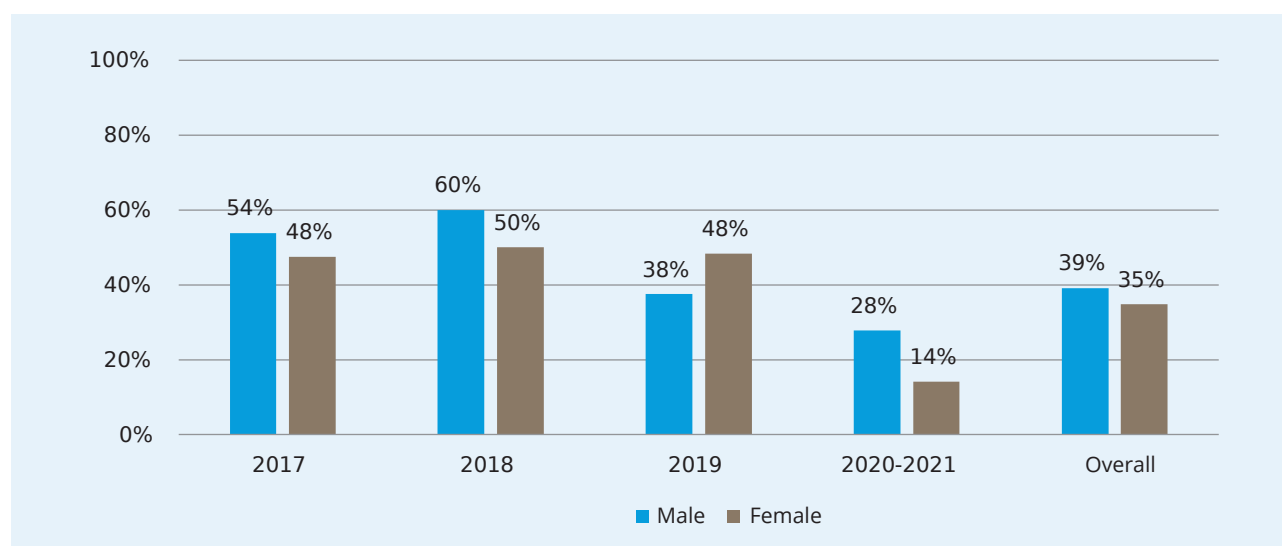
On a general level, it is important to investigate the reasons for the drop in the overall share of funded applicants. We see two possible explanations for the

decreasing shares of funded applications in 2021: (a) the Agency faced a fixed budget over the years and, naturally, could not maintain a constant funding rate when the number of applications increased; and/or (b) over time, the quality of applications decreased (leading to an increased rejection rate) because most stronger candidates might have already applied to the programme in earlier years.

From a gender perspective, however, the extreme widening of the gap between men and women is the most worrisome development. Investigating what led to such unequal outcomes for men and women is of utmost importance, in order to prevent this situation from persisting and leading to an ever-increasing gender gap.

Figure 28:

Share of applicants who were financed (self-employment support grant programme)



Source: Authors' calculations based on data provided by the Agency.

The overall likelihood of being financed should also be disaggregated by region. In Tbilisi, over the 2017–2021 period, women were more likely to be financed, with 52 per cent of females and 47 per cent of males being financed (Figure 29). Even in 2020 and 2021, despite the share of funded female applicants falling below that of men, the difference remained quite small. Outside of Tbilisi, however, the picture changes dramatically, especially in 2020 and 2021. In the Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti region, 35 per cent of males and 24 per cent of females were financed on average (Figure 30), while in other regions, 45 per cent of males and 34 per cent of females got funding⁵⁹ (Figure 31). These numbers strengthen the idea that female target groups in regions have been facing stronger challenges all along and face additional barriers; and these challenges were even harder to overcome in 2020 and 2021, when the pandemic significantly worsened the conditions for vulnerable groups (UNDP, UNFPA and UN Women, 2021). During this period, female applicants in Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti were almost 20 percentage points less likely to be funded than men (only 13 per cent of females were financed in the 2020–2021 period,

compared to 31 per cent of men). The situation was even more dramatic for female applicants in other regions, having just over one third of male applicants' probability of being funded.

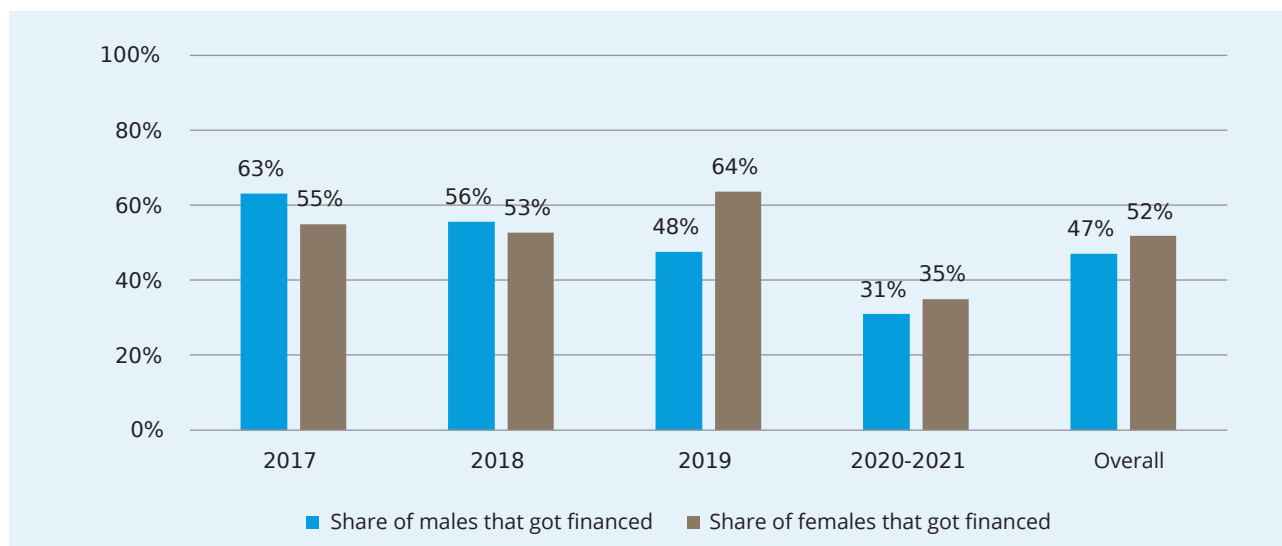
It is noteworthy that the financing rate of applicants is lower in the regions compared to Tbilisi, and this difference is more significant in the case of females. While in Tbilisi, in the period from 2017 to 2021, 49 per cent of applicants were financed on average, the same statistic in Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti and in all other regions combined was 30 per cent and 30 per cent, respectively.

According to the hypothesis of the GIA team, in addition to presenting a lower number of applications, females in the regions seem to submit less competitive applications, which translates to lower financing rates. This hypothesis needs further investigation. If it is true, and this is the real reason behind the poor funding rate for women outside Tbilisi, then there is additional need to support them to enhance their application competitiveness.

59 The decreasing rate of funding is caused by the increasing number of applications each subsequent year.

Figure 29:

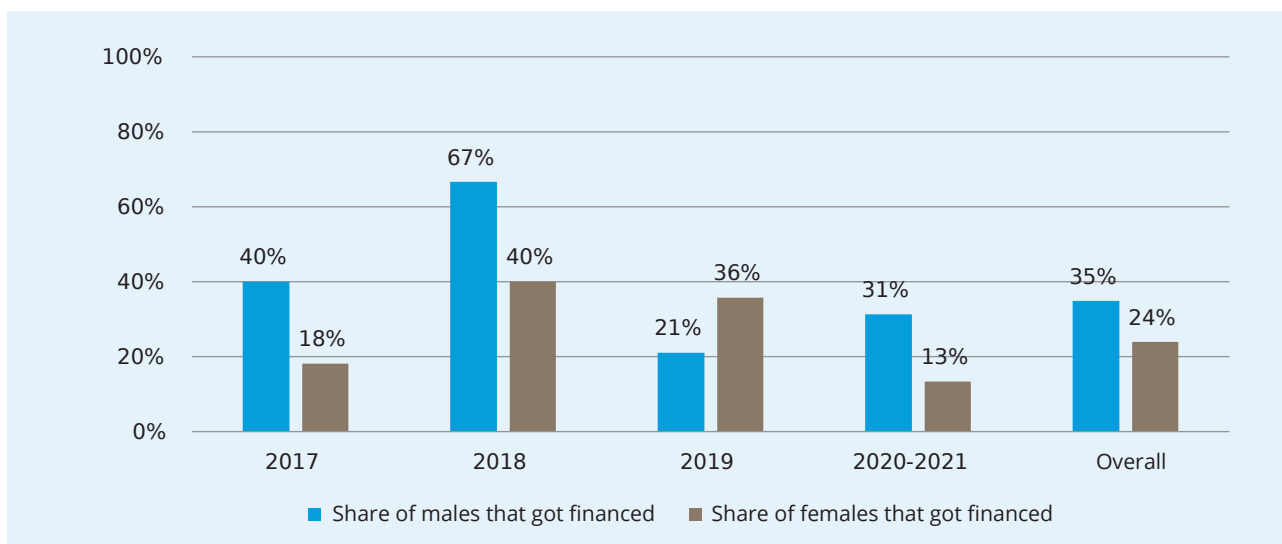
Share of those who were financed in Tbilisi (self-employment support grant programme)



Source: Authors' calculations based on data provided by the Agency.

Figure 30:

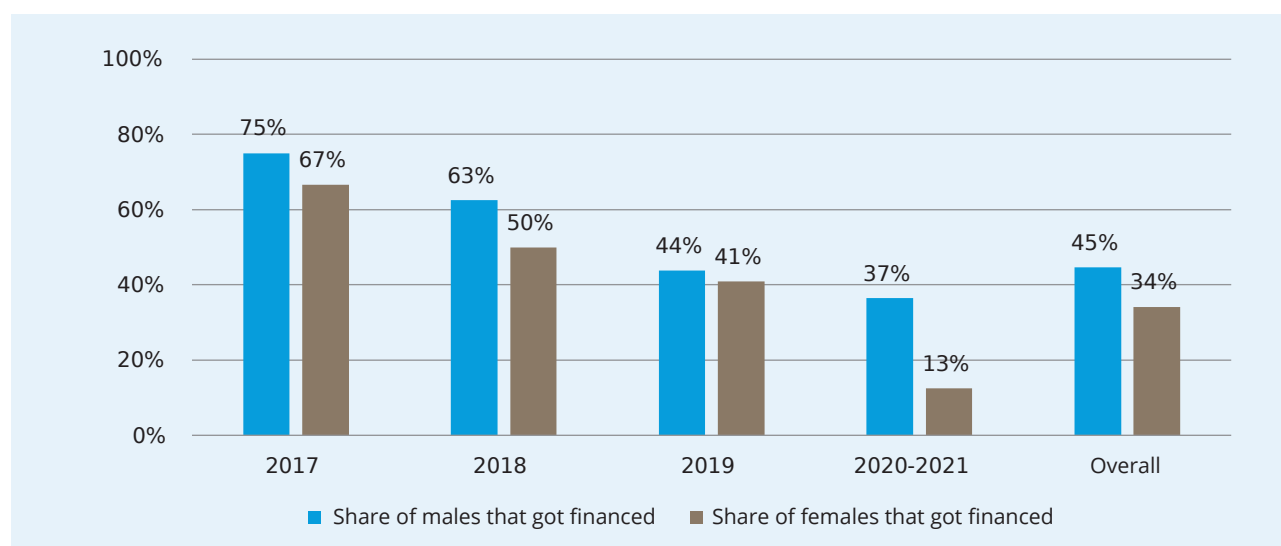
Share of those who were financed in Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti (self-employment support grant programme)



Source: Authors' calculations based on data provided by the Agency.

Figure 31:

Share of those who were financed in other regions (self-employment support grant programme)



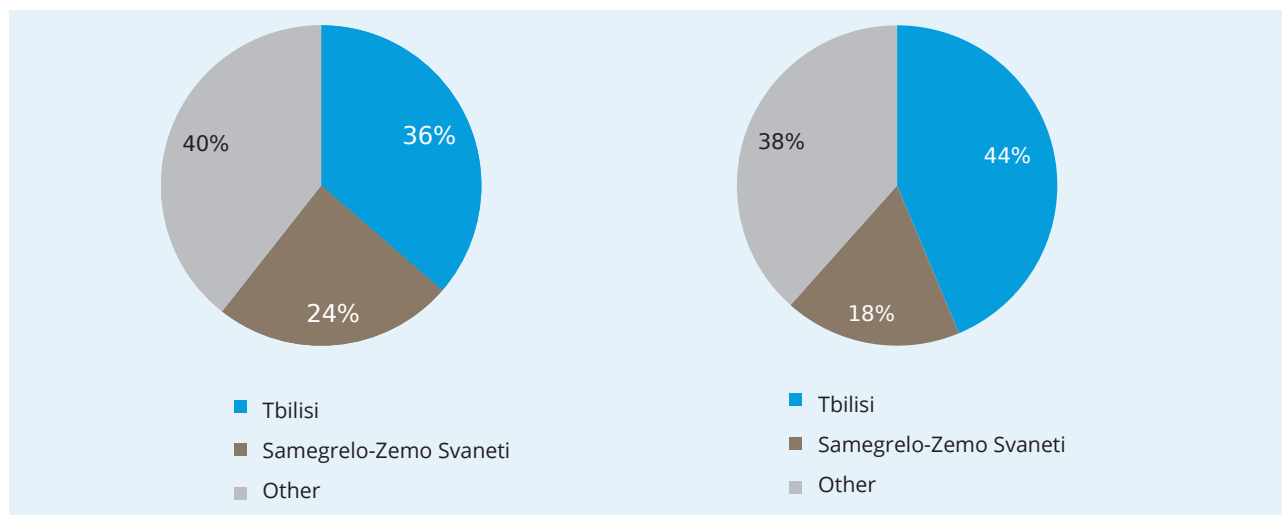
Source: Authors' calculations based on data provided by the Agency.

The GIA team explored the distribution of applicants and beneficiaries by locality to check whether there was any significant difference between the two groups. In all, 36 per cent of the applicants were from Tbilisi, and 24 per cent were from Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti, while the applicants from the remaining parts of Georgia comprised 40 per cent (Figure 32). **As for beneficiaries, on the other hand, almost half of them represent Tbilisi (44 per cent of all beneficiaries of the programme).** Samegrelo-

Zemo Svaneti is still in the minority here (18 per cent), and the other regions form the remaining 38 per cent of all beneficiaries (Figure 32). These results, therefore, seem to support the hypothesis that the competitiveness of applications presented by candidates outside Tbilisi is, on average, lower (competitiveness might relate to several factors, such as the quality, the specificities of a certain region where an applicant resides, and other barriers).

Figure 32:

Distribution of applicants (left) and beneficiaries (right) across regions (self-employment support grant programme)



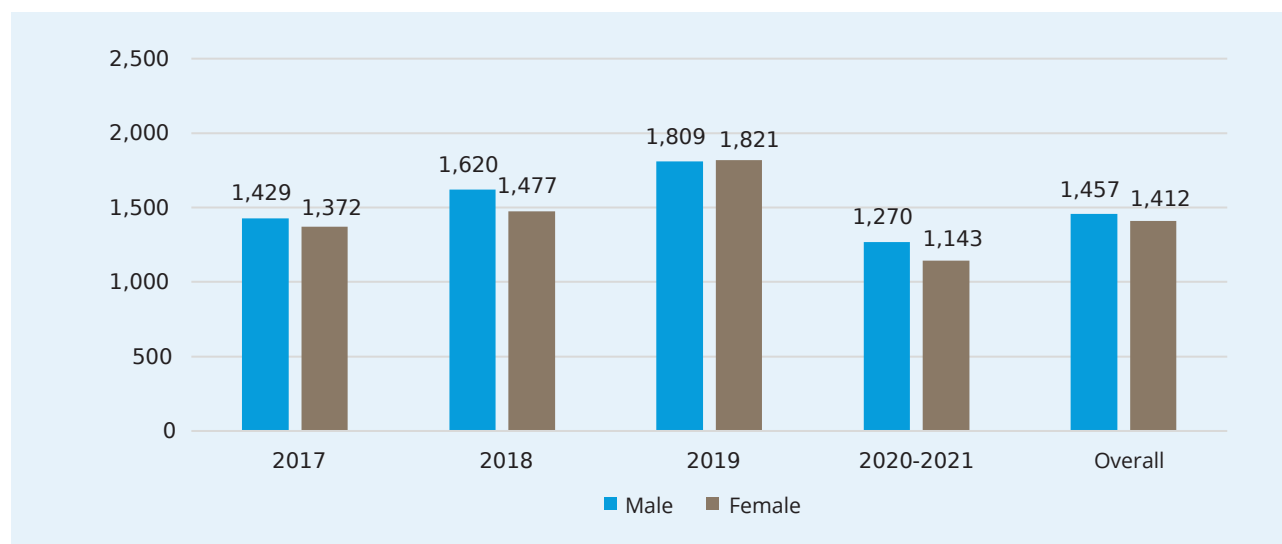
Source: Authors' calculations based on data provided by the Agency.

Another interesting pattern that can be observed in all regional groups is that of those people who get financed, females request the highest average amount of funding. In many cases, this happens even though, on average, female applicants request less money from the programme. This pattern is true for the overall results, which are not disaggregated across regions: **on average, male**

applicants request GEL 1,457 worth of tools, while women request GEL 1,412 worth (Figure 33). However, if we look at the requested funding of those who got funded by the programme, we can observe that women, on average, request funding amounting to GEL 1,698, while men request only GEL 1,643 (Figure 34).

Figure 33:

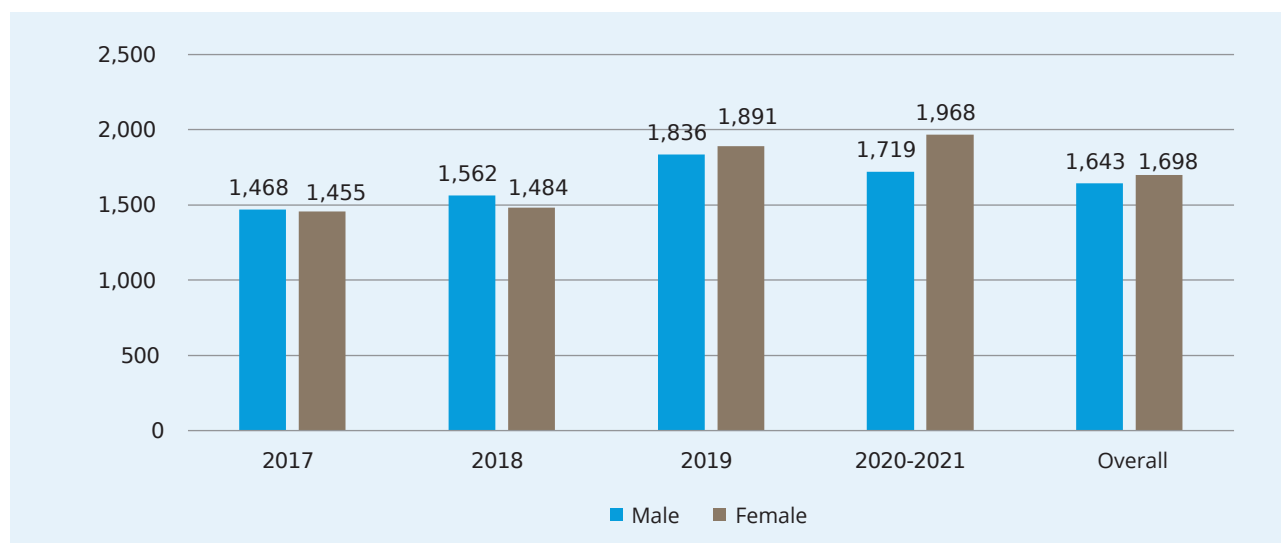
Average requested funding of applicants across all regions (GEL) (self-employment support grant programme)



Source: Authors' calculations based on data provided by the Agency.

Figure 34:

Average requested funding of beneficiaries across all regions (GEL) (self-employment support grant programme)



Source: Authors' calculations based on data provided by the Agency.

A similar pattern can be observed if regional data are considered (see Figures 37–42 in Annex 4). This interesting pattern is noteworthy and needs to be examined further. **The possible reason for such a trend might be the general observation that men tend to be more risk-loving, while women are more careful** (Le et al., 2011). This might be the reason behind the higher average amount requested by males from the programme budget (they try to request as much as possible, even though their chances of getting funded are not high if the funding request is not properly justified). On the other hand, females might try to contain their demands to the minimum (sometimes going too low to be credible). Overdemanding men and underdemanding women, therefore, might be penalized. However, this is just a hypothesis, and the GIA team cannot draw conclusions.

In addition, the GIA team has also looked at the professions of people who were financed by the programme. The GIA team identified several clusters of professions and conducted an analysis accordingly (Figure 35). Not surprisingly, there are some professions in which only one gender is represented. For example, electricians and

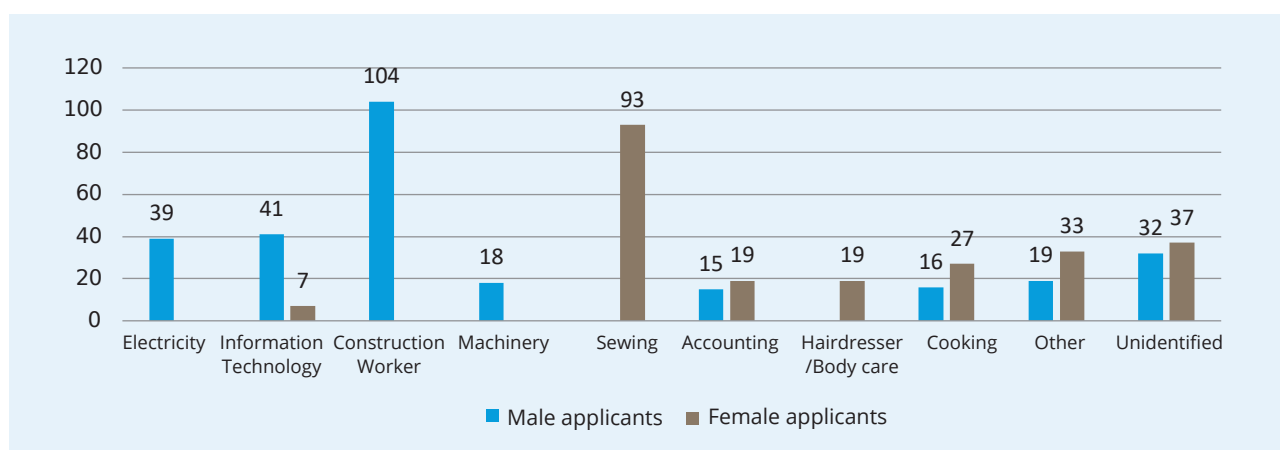
construction workers happen to be only males, while sewing is clearly a totally female-dominated job. **It is important to see what share of applicants from different professions get financed. It turns out that electricians are by far the most likely to get financed (64 per cent, against 48 per cent for the second most likely category—information technology professionals), while cooks and stylists are the least likely (21 per cent each)** (Figure 36). It is evident that, to conduct a fully-fledged analysis, it is essential to analyse gender-disaggregated data for each profession. However, the lack of such data limits such analysis.

It is important to understand what lies behind the rejection. If there is a systematic pattern that leads to rejection, one should find out whether it is gender-biased or whether it is associated with other personal or job characteristics. Together with the main data, the Agency also provided the data about the reasons for rejections at the individual level. The GIA team observed that male-dominated professions faced a lower rejection rate, and it was decided to look deeper and find out whether there was gender-determined reasons in the rejection cases of different professions. In the case of cooks, the rejection does

not demonstrate an explainable pattern; most of the rejections are individual cases. It often happens those applicants cannot persuade the experts' committee that the tool they are applying for is necessary or sufficient for their self-employment. If the experts decide that the applicant's argumentation is not convincing, then the applicant is rejected funding.

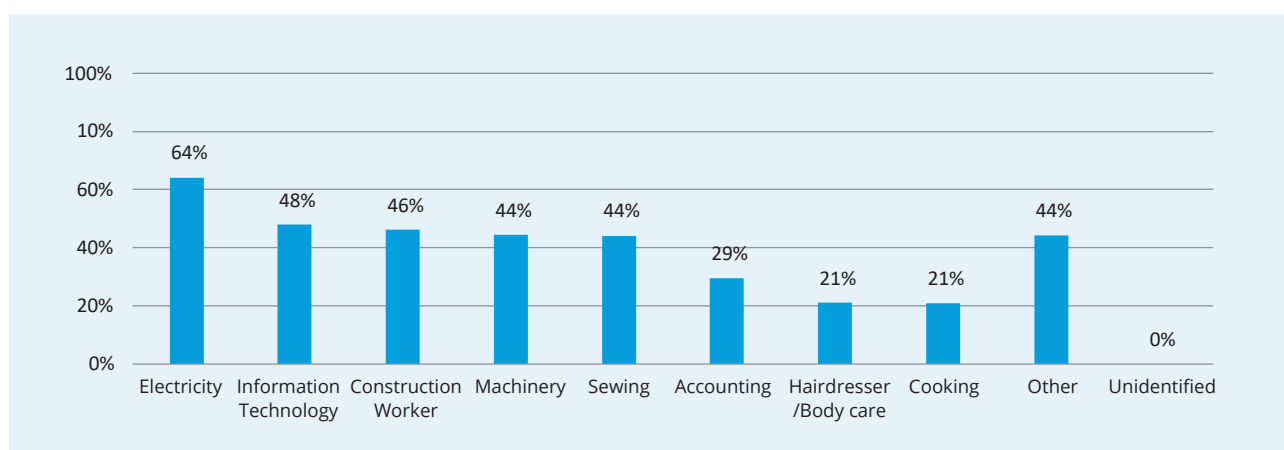
The same is true for accountants and hairdressers (which also includes body care specialists): applicants who are rejected cannot prove that the tool they are requesting is necessary or sufficient for their work and that it will contribute to their self-employment. The specific reasons are various.

Figure 35:
Number of applicants according to profession (self-employment support grant programme)



Source: Authors' calculations based on data provided by the Agency.

Figure 36:
Share of applicants who were financed, by profession (self-employment support grant programme)



Source: Authors' calculations based on data provided by the Agency.

Overall, the first impression is that the IDPs' and ecomigrants' self-employment support grant programme from 2017 to 2019 demonstrates a solid gender balance when we look at the number of applicants and beneficiaries. However, it is important to understand the existing distribution of the genders across the population of potential beneficiaries. It turns out that most of the young IDPs are males and that males enrol in the vocational education programmes more than females (61 per cent males versus 39 per cent females in 2019 and 2020); however, there are more females in the older population (aged 25+). Females who completed their vocational education comprise 61 per cent of all graduates. Unfortunately, the data about the age of the programme applicants are not available; we can only use their graduation year for analysis. It is not a very good proxy variable, as people of all ages can learn at the centres and the applicants are primarily recent graduates (if they were the graduates from the early 2000s, we could have claimed that the target population is relatively older). Therefore, we should keep in mind the average age of the applicants. If the average age is low, then it means that the target population is relatively young with male overrepresentation. So the balance in the absolute number of applications indicates higher activity from women. On the other hand, if the average age of applicants is high, it means that the target population is mostly composed of females and that gender 'balance' in absolute terms overestimates the activity of women.

The years 2020 and 2021 were chaotic in most of the world, so it is not surprising that the gender balance of this programme was also disrupted. The dramatic impact on women indicates their relative vulnerability during crisis periods, and this problem should be addressed for future crises, as serious gender imbalances might happen should their vulnerability during volatile times not be considered at all. The lower participation and lower quality of female applications outside Tbilisi could also indicate that there is a need to target females more in these regions—and that the application process and promotion of the programme should be tailored to their needs.

In terms of financing, there is just a small gap between males and females, and it is mostly caused by the disruptions during the pandemic. In Tbilisi, females are slightly more likely than males to get financed, but in other regions, the opposite happens. In every region, males request higher funding, but, among the beneficiaries, females are those who had requested more funding eventually. This tendency can be explained by the personal characteristics of the programme applicants and/or by the characteristics of their chosen profession. To sum up, even though the self-selection process might be biased in either direction, the gender-disaggregated programme funding rate itself indicates that the programme, in terms of financing, is gender-neutral.

PART 4.2: GENDER ANALYSIS OF THE PROGRAMMES: QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

During the GIA process, the GIA team complemented the quantitative analysis with a qualitative study. Although the Agency keeps data about the participants of these programmes and monitors results, these data were still not enough to conduct a proper gender analysis, as they did not capture information about the degree of beneficiaries' social-economic integration into society, as well as whether/how their participation in the programme changed their gender roles, values and perceptions. Moreover, such data would not provide any information on the opinions of applicants and beneficiaries about how these programmes could be improved. Collecting the opinion of rejected participants was particularly important especially for the self-employment support grant programme, where rejection rates were significantly higher and concerns about a potentially negative impact on gender equality substantially stronger. For this reason, the GIA team decided to conduct interviews with applicants who did not receive funding from the self-employment support grant programme. In consideration of the extremely low rejection rates and of the much more balanced gender outcomes characterizing the vocational education support programme, the GIA team decided not to interview applicants who were not funded by this programme. In addition, interviews with representatives of the Agency's partner vocational educational institutions were conducted to identify the gender specificities of the programmes and their implementation and related challenges.

Overall, a total of 20 semi-structured phone interviews (with 10 females and 10 males) were conducted with beneficiaries of the vocational education support programme, 18 semi-structured phone interviews (with 10 females and 8 males) were conducted with beneficiaries of the self-employment

support grant programme, and 17 semi-structured phone interviews (with nine females and eight males) were conducted with rejected applicants of the self-employment support grant programme. Finally, a total of five semi-structured phone interviews were conducted with the representatives of vocational institutions.

The GIA team prepared interview guidelines around several topics of interests. The interview guidelines included different types of questions: some were open-ended, some required further explanations, and some questions asked respondents to choose the relevant answer among the provided options. The advantage of conducting semi-structured phone interviews was that they enabled interviewers to be flexible to ask additional questions or change the order depending on the answers, as well as to go in-depth on any emerged topics of interest.

4.2.1.

Results of interviews with beneficiaries of the vocational education support programme for IDPs and ecomigrants and representatives of vocational educational institutions

a) Results of interviews with programme beneficiaries

Semi-structured interviews were constructed around the following topics:

- Impact of the programme on beneficiaries' employment status, their economic situation and their educational outcomes
- Impact of the programme on beneficiaries' involvement in the decision-making process of the household, economic independence, gender roles in the family and attitudes and perceptions from family members and society

- Assessment of the application process and channels through which beneficiaries received information about the programme
- Identified challenges while applying for the programme and ways to overcome them
- Beneficiaries' satisfaction level with the programme and the overall service provided by the Agency
- Beneficiaries' suggestions to improve the programme

Impact of the programme on beneficiaries' employment status, their economic situation and their educational outcomes

The aim of the vocational education support programme for IDPs and ecomigrants is to reimburse the transportation costs of the beneficiaries who are studying in vocational education institutions, with the intent to facilitate their successful entry into the labour market. Assessing the impact on the beneficiaries, however, is challenging. Most of the earlier beneficiaries of the programme are recent graduates of the vocational education colleges, and the full impact of vocational education upon their labour market outcomes has yet to fully unfold. **For a more informative analysis of the impact of the programme, a certain period of time must pass following graduation. Moreover, the evolution of other relevant variables during the period also needs to be monitored, to make sure that all of the variables affecting the labour market outcomes are controlled by the research team.** Clearly, the graduates of 2020 and 2021 have faced a very challenging labour market, which was heavily affected by the pandemic, and the assessment of the impact of the programme on the socioeconomic status of the beneficiaries cannot be fully implemented unless the labour market returns to normal. **Therefore, the result that only 4 of the 20 respondents (one female and three males) said that they are working according to their profile should be taken with caution.** Of the remaining respondents, almost half are still students, and being unemployed as a student is quite common. Finally, most of the graduates who are not working according to their education profile use the knowledge they acquired

during their academic years in personal matters or when helping relatives and friends. In conclusion, the success of the programme under this dimension is difficult to assess at the moment.

Impact of the programme on beneficiaries' involvement in the decision-making process of the household, economic independence, gender roles in the family and attitudes and perceptions from family members and society

The interviews also allowed us to assess the personal evaluation of the beneficiaries regarding their social and family status before and after the programme. One third of the female respondents claimed that their role in decision-making processes increased since they enrolled in a vocational education programme. Almost the same ratio is observed in the case of the male respondents.

Similar patterns are also observed among males and females when they are asked how the vocational education contributed to their financial independence and the redistribution of roles between males and females inside the family. In both groups, most responses are that the programme has not contributed much, and there are either no changes or the changes are not attributable to the vocational education.

The most evident impact of the programme—especially on women—is observable when the beneficiaries are asked about their assessment of the way they were perceived by society and their family. Most of the women (eight out of nine) said that they felt that other people valued them more after they acquired vocational education. In the case of males, only 2 out of 10 said that they felt a different attitude from the people around them—or, at least, expected it. The rest said that they did not feel a change. In this sense, **we can say that—in the eyes of the participants—vocational education programmes seem to have mostly affected the perception that society had of women's social role and value, while the perception of males' role and value seems to have been unaffected in most of the cases.**

Assessment of the application process and channels through which beneficiaries received information about the programme

Application

The majority of interviewed beneficiaries responded that it was either simple or very simple to fill in the application. Only two of them said that they found it hard to apply. After a deeper analysis, we found out that even those applicants who found it simple to fill in the application form, however, sometimes needed help from someone else. Eight of the interviewed beneficiaries claimed that they communicated with the Agency or the vocational education centre to get help throughout the process, while 12 individuals filled in the form themselves, without any external support. **It turns out that everyone—among the interviewed beneficiaries—who needed help during the process had the contact information of the Agency, which was ready to help them overcome any difficulties. All of the applicants assessed the help from the Agency as beneficial or, at least, as neutral.**

The vast majority of those who apply directly gets funding. There are no difficult stages to go through, so almost everyone found it simple to participate in the programme.

When analysing using a gender dimension, the GIA team found that none of the female beneficiaries claimed that filling in the application was difficult for them and that **only three of them (of the total eight people who contacted the Agency)** contacted the Agency to clarify some questions. **Overall, all of the female beneficiaries were satisfied with the help of the Agency during the application process.**

Communication channels

The Agency uses several channels to deliver information about the programmes to the IDPs and ecomigrants who are potentially eligible to participate. These channels include SMS, Facebook posts and other forms of communication through the vocational education centres' administration. Of the interviewed individuals, half claimed that

they received the information from the college administration itself, thus indicating that this source of information might be the most productive. Five interviewed said that they got information through SMS, four got it from a friend or a relative, three from the Internet (Facebook page), and only one directly from the Agency (informational meeting about vocational education). Several interviewed individuals mentioned that they obtained the information about the programme from more than one channel of information, with SMS and administration channels being mostly used. This would seem to suggest an increased involvement of vocational education college administrations in this process, as most applicants get information about the programme from them, and they seem quite effective in reaching out to potential applicants. Even though SMS are sent to many potential beneficiaries, relatively few of them name SMS as their main information source. This might be caused by the fact that many people can simply neglect SMS and delete a message without analysing its content (it also happens quite often that they change their phone number). The Agency is aware that sending SMS to potential beneficiaries might not be the most efficient way to reach out to them; therefore, they use several channels of information delivery in addition to SMS, such as printing and delivering leaflets and stickers to IDP settlements to maximize their potential participation in the programme.

In the technological era, using a web portal or social media network to contact potential beneficiaries can also be productive. Several applicants mentioned that they found the information on Facebook. As Facebook is an extremely popular social network in Georgia, it can be very helpful to utilize its advertising properties to reach potential beneficiaries.

A very important way of sharing information is the network of beneficiaries itself. Previous or current beneficiaries can suggest that 'newcomers' enrol in the programme. To expand the network of beneficiaries, therefore, it is of utmost importance that current beneficiaries are satisfied with the programme. For this reason, it is important that the Agency works to collect feedback from the former beneficiaries. The information might allow the Agency to assess how

satisfied they are and contribute towards building the network of future beneficiaries.

The vast majority of the interviewed individuals (18 out of 20) claimed that they will definitely suggest the programme to other potential beneficiaries (one interview was terminated before we asked this question).

It is important to mention that there is no clear gender difference as far as channels of information are concerned. The target audience of each channel is evenly split between the two gender groups.

Identified challenges while applying for the programme and ways to overcome them

Based on the interviews conducted, the overall impression is that filling in the application was not overly difficult for the participants. No specific challenges were identified.

Beneficiaries' satisfaction level with the programme and the overall service provided by the Agency

The majority of respondents stated that, **without the help of this programme, they would not be able to attend the classes**, as transportation costs would not be affordable, or they could have just barely afforded the transportation costs. **It is noteworthy that, of the beneficiaries who could not have afforded transportation without this programme, all of them live in the regions, and the majority are women.**

Except for one female, who said that sometimes the payment was overdue and therefore assessed the programme as neutral, the remaining women claimed that the programme was beneficial to them. This satisfaction is mirrored in the fact that **every woman** claimed to be ready to suggest other potential beneficiaries to apply for the programme.

Beneficiaries' suggestions to improve the programme

The programme itself is designed in a quite straightforward manner. As there are not many

dimensions to it, the room for improvement is quite narrow. Most of the respondents could not suggest any improvements to the programme and claimed that it is very good already.

Those who identified some margin for improvement suggested the points described below.

The need to improve the bureaucracy, especially for disabled people, was suggested. One of the participant's family members (the GIA team was not able to conduct the interview with the participant himself/herself) assessed the application procedure as complicated, as the family had to go visit the Agency office several times and bring in the applicant for signature (which was not easy due to the applicant's physical condition). Regardless of the fact that the respondent classified this example as a need to improve bureaucracy, it might be a case of not providing sufficient information for applicants' family members (as they could be offered to submit the application online).

Only one person proposed financing access to the Internet, as the academic process for that individual was held mostly online. However, most of the respondents said that during the pandemic, they still needed to attend practical sessions, and the Internet could not be very useful for this purpose (as most of the learning process is face to face).

The delayed/suspended or smaller amounts of funding should be addressed. One of the respondents complained about the fact that the Agency reimburses only half of the requested amount. The GIA team has double-checked this fact with the Agency representatives, and the following explanations were provided: when municipalities are providing transport discounts to vocational education students, only the residual amount is reimbursed. As mentioned above, the Agency checks this information with local municipalities. According to the Agency, they provide this explanation to beneficiaries while signing a contract. **However, it might be the case that these explanations are not clear to respondents, or they do not know about existing discounts in their localities and do not take advantage of them.** In addition, during

the contract period, if changes to the transport tariff occur, the beneficiary has to notify the Agency in order for the respective adjustments to be made.

Three individuals (one female and two males) declared that **financing suddenly stopped, and they could not understand why**. One of them contacted the Agency and solved the problem, as this interruption of the reimbursement was due to the COVID-19 lockdown. The financing was restored when this beneficiary notified the Agency that the study process had already moved to in-person learning. The other cases were double-checked with the Agency, and a possible explanation is the following: the period of the contract, signed with the beneficiary, envisages time of studies checked with the respective of professional education institution. The beneficiary is required to notify the Agency if the duration of the study process is extended; otherwise, the reimbursement will stop by the date initially specified in the contract. **It might be the case that also this clause of the contract is not always well understood by beneficiaries, and they simply do not know that they have to contact the Agency in such cases. It seems that there is a need to explain such peculiarities to beneficiaries in advance or to remind them periodically (by SMS, for example) or in cases when the Agency knows that the probability of such unforeseen changes is high (e.g. during a pandemic).**

There was also a complaint about the fact that sometimes **reimbursements were delayed**.

As expected, of those who had recommendations about improvements, the most popular request was to **increase the funding** of the project and, therefore, the number of beneficiaries covered by the programme would increase.

b) Interview results of representatives of vocational educational institutions

The GIA team conducted semi-structured phone interviews with vocational institutions' representatives to study how the vocational education support programme affected IDP students' class attendance and the education they got in the institutions. The

interviews were conducted with representatives of the five vocational colleges with the highest number of programme beneficiaries. The interview guide was developed around the following topics:

- a) Importance of the vocational education support programme for IDPs and ecomigrants (i.e. whether or not it is creating additional incentives to enrol)
- b) Perceptions about transportation as a barrier to studying (i.e. whether or not transport costs are a barrier for students and what are the other existing barriers), and recommendations to improve the programme
- c) Cooperation with the Agency and implementation process of the programme
- d) General information about trends in vocational education and labour market changes
- e) Monitoring of graduates' employment outcomes

All questions were asked from a gender perspective to see whether there were any differences across genders.

- a) Importance of the vocational education support programme for IDPs and ecomigrants

There is not a common perception about whether the programme serves as an incentive to enrol in vocational education. Of the five respondents, three think that the programme is one of the reasons why IDPs are enrolling in a vocational college, as financing transportation costs is an important support mechanism for them. One respondent was not sure whether this programme affects enrolment, while the other one did not agree: "If a person does not want to study, this [programme] will not help." However, all agree that reimbursing transport costs has **a positive impact on attendees and on the study process in general**. According to the interviews, **IDPs are attending classes more often compared to non-IDPs** in some locations. According to the respondents, there is no gender difference in this regard.

- b) Perceptions about transportation as a barrier to studying, and recommendations to improve the programme

Respondents think that, because **some IDPs and ecomigrants are from socially disadvantaged families, for them, the cost of transportation is actually a barrier to studying.** Respondents residing in the regions highlight that **transportation is not sufficiently developed in their neighbourhood and that students must pay higher costs because of this.** For example, there are cases in which there are no specific transport services that will take students directly from their residence to the college, and these students must take intercity transport and must pay intercity fees, which are costlier. Therefore, in such distinct cases, respondents proposed allocating a special transport from IDP collective settlements to specific vocational education institutions in Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti (from Mujava community to Jvari). This concrete case was later discussed with the Agency representatives too. The Agency was aware of this problem, studied it and decided not to allocate the transport as it will cost much more than financing these beneficiaries' costs individually.

As for the other barriers, one respondent proposed reimbursement of **rent and food expenses as well**, because—due to the underdevelopment of the transport services—some students spend many hours commuting. Some of the respondents also highlighted the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the studying process, as well as the new barriers to online study that have been created. According to them, during this period, reimbursing Internet expenses would have been much more important to students than reimbursing transportation costs. In addition, most of the students were attending online classes using their mobile phones, and they did not have access to personal computers or laptops. Gender differences were not highlighted regarding this issue.

c) Cooperation with the Agency and implementation process of the programme

All interviewed institutions have been involved in the programme since the start of the programme. Vocational education institutions, as mentioned also by the interviewed beneficiaries, do serve as a channel for sharing information about the programme among the target audience. The colleges are conducting

open days, spreading information using TV, websites and social media, and printing leaflets in which, along with general information about their programmes, they also distribute information about the Agency's programmes (including information about the vocational education support programme). Before the pandemic, open days were conducted twice a year, but now there is only an open day conducted online once a year. Some of the colleges interviewed were also **conducting face-to-face meetings in IDP settlements before the pandemic.** However, these meetings and information sessions seemed not to target specific groups, nor aimed to increase female participation in vocational education programmes and have general characteristic. As for the recommendations, according to the respondents, the Agency should temporarily focus on online meetings since face-to-face communications are restricted due to the pandemic, but face-to-face open days should be resumed as soon as the regulations allow it. In addition, these meetings should be targeted to potential female candidates to increase their involvement in the programme and, through that, increase their involvement in vocational education.

The colleges are sending data about the attendance of the IDP students to the Agency every month, and then the Agency is reimbursing the transportation costs to the students. **The Agency provided institutions with a special table template in Microsoft Excel.** Vocational education institutions were taking attendance before the programme as well. Within the scope of this programme, now they just have to insert the data into the Excel table and add the reason for the absence. Therefore, they **do not consider sending attendance information to the Agency because it would be a significant administrative burden, and they did not need to allocate additional resources for the programme administration.**

d) General information about trends in vocational education and labour market changes

Colleges are constantly updating their programmes based on labour market trends. In recent years, they added new dual and integrated programmes based on market demand, such as those covering information

technology, welding, cooking, hairdressing, printing technology and financial services. The vocational colleges' representatives claim that there are not purely determined 'masculine' or 'feminine' professions. For example, in a nurses' programme, which stereotypically is perceived as a 'feminine' occupation, there are males enrolled as well; and in the programmes that are considered as 'masculine' professions, like those of high voltage transmission lines and substations masters, or car engineers, there are female students too. However, these are mainly exceptions, and the gender gap is still visible.

Dual programmes, which are conducted in close cooperation with the private sector, according to the respondents, are very successful as they are characterized by almost 100 per cent employment.⁶⁰ As the students have practical experience within the companies, these companies are hiring them after graduation. For example, the Enguri hydro power plant and Energo-Pro Georgia are hiring energy specialists and graduates of other energy-related professions, and a Kutaisi sewing factory is hiring graduates of the sewing programme.

Other programmes with the highest employment rates are nursing, hotel services, restaurant services and artistic wood processing. According to one of the respondents, there are programmes in which the employment rate is low, such as farming, horticulture, gardening and other agriculture-related programmes (approximately 30 per cent among graduates), which require special working equipment to start self-employment and additional financial resources from individuals. According to the same respondent, if the graduates had been provided with the relevant professional equipment, this could have increased their self-employment rates, and she provided the following example. **At the end of the beekeeping programme, graduates are provided with a beehive and have the opportunity to start self-employment immediately. However, the institution does not have enough resources to**

provide the other graduates with the relevant equipment. In this regard, the Agency's self-employment support grant programme for IDPs and ecomigrants seems to be filling this existing gap and contributing to the increased employability of graduates.

The average employment rate of graduates in the institutions whose representatives were interviewed is 60–70 per cent. In some colleges, there is a gender gap in the employment rates and even in the graduate rates. The main explanatory factor leading to this gap, according to the respondents, is marriage, with some of the women who get married **quitting their studies halfway.** The respondents reported no cases of women quitting their studies due to direct pressure or force from their family. **However, even without the vocational education administration noticing direct pressures on female married students, it is evident that this is a complex phenomenon connected with societal attitudes, the burden of unpaid care work, stereotypes about vocational education, gender norms and values, and expectations about married females from families and society in general.**

As for the recommendation, the interviewees suggested that the Agency should coordinate better with the institutions and determine what the most important gaps are to target their resources to solve these issues as the institutions in some cases do not have the resources themselves.

e) Monitoring of graduates' employment outcomes

Unfortunately, none of the colleges are monitoring employment rates by social status, and most of them did not even monitor it through a gender lens. **They only collect general information about employment. As it is very easy to disaggregate information about graduates by gender, this fact points to administrations' low interest in directing their attention to this matter.**

60 According to a 2020 tracer study, indeed the dual programmes have the highest employment rates. Specifically, 60 per cent of the class of 2019's graduates of dual programmes were employed after one year, while the same

number for subject programmes' graduates was 47.6 per cent; and for modular programmes' graduates—49.6 per cent (ACT, 2020).

4.2.2.

Results of interviews with beneficiaries of the self-employment support grant programme for IDPs and ecomigrants

a) Results of interviews with programme beneficiaries

Semi-structured interviews were constructed around the following topics:

- Impact of the programme on beneficiaries' employment status, their economic situation and their educational outcomes
- Informational channels
- Assessment of the application process and identified challenges
- Beneficiaries' satisfaction level with the programme, the received tools and the service provided by the Agency
- Beneficiaries' suggestions to improve the programme
- Impact of the programme on beneficiaries' involvement in the decision-making process of the household, economic independence, gender roles in the family and attitudes and perceptions from family members and society

Impact of the programme on beneficiaries' employment status, their economic situation and their educational outcomes

Overall, according to the interviews, the self-employment support grant programme has had a significant **impact on the employment** of beneficiaries in several ways: (a) beneficiaries decided to become self-employed because of the programme; (b) beneficiaries had the opportunity to expand their own business activities because of the programme as they have received professional equipment; and (c) beneficiaries have changed the status of their employment from employed to self-employed.

These findings, in combination with the tracer study results discussed above (that a significant share of vocational education graduates are not working in specialities related to their education), and with the information obtained interviewing representatives

of the vocational education institutions (highlighting how graduates, in some instances, cannot start working because of the lack of appropriate tools), **show that the self-employment support grant programme contributes to the efficiency of government spending on vocational education and a reduction in the skills mismatch.**

According to the interviews, without the programme's support, it would be almost impossible for beneficiaries to start their own business activities, as **this target group belongs to one of the most vulnerable groups in society**. IDPs have **limited access to finance**, and it seems that this problem is **more severe for women**. The female beneficiaries who were interviewed reported that—because of the lack of professional equipment—before benefiting from the programme, they were mainly forced to do their work manually (such as sewing, embroidering, etc.), which significantly lowered their productivity and required lots of their time and effort. On the contrary, men—handicraftsmen—who did not own equipment were usually able to borrow the tools or were employed by others. For both groups, the professional equipment provided by the programme has led to increased productivity of the target audience and has enabled them to expand their activities.

Participants mentioned that receiving professional equipment gave them **significant support** to start or expand their own business activities. Several participants mentioned that, even in the absence of the programme, they could have become self-employed or continued working but with difficulty, as they could not afford any professional equipment or any equipment of the same quality, which would result in lower-quality output and/or a more time-consuming production process. Moreover, even the beneficiaries who would have been able to buy the same equipment mentioned that the programme helped them, as it would have required much more of their time, money and effort to get the equipment independently. Thus, even in this case, the programme **shortened the time needed for technological changes** and improved working practices.

The **economic conditions** of the beneficiaries have improved (with beneficiaries reporting slight to significant improvements) after participating in the programme. It has to be mentioned that the COVID-19 pandemic, which severely hit the Georgian economy, has affected beneficiaries and their economic situation as well. However, they still consider their economic status and prospects to be improved, and they have positive expectations for the future. It is noteworthy that this programme seems to have a **positive spillover effect** on employment, as some programme beneficiaries have hired or are planning to hire new employees. This spillover effect is visible for both male and female participants.

Another aim of the interviews was also to find out whether the programme had encouraged participants to enter vocational education. Based on the interviews, it seems that participants have mostly **heard about the programme once they were enrolled in vocational education or after graduation.**

It seems that this target audience has a relatively low willingness and opportunity to develop professionally by enrolling in professional development courses. Once asked, they express willingness to enrol in professional development courses, but with in-depth questions, it seems they have not put any effort in this direction and that the probability of acquiring additional skills seems low.

To sum up, the self-employment support grant programme is contributing to the socioeconomic integration of participants and improves their living conditions by creating employment prospects. Without the programme's support, beneficiaries would either not be able to achieve the same success or, even if they could, it would be obtained among greater difficulties and would take longer. **This impact is even bigger for females as they usually have a relatively higher level of manual work and less access to finance. Thus, this programme is contributing to gender equality in this regard. The programme does not seem to be as efficient in achieving the goal of promoting vocational education among IDPs and ecomigrants.**

Informational channels

The Agency uses **several channels** to provide information about the programmes to the target audience: SMS, informational meetings with IDPs (e.g. forums, face-to-face meetings, printed materials, etc.), sharing information through vocational education centres and closely cooperating with vocational education institutions. Using different informational sources is crucial to increase awareness about the self-employment support grant programme and its linkages to vocational education, especially as vocational education in Georgia is suffering from a lack of information (and a negative perception) in general. Considering that women, and especially displaced women, have a lack of social networks, using different sources increases the likelihood that relevant information will reach them. **Based on the interviews, beneficiaries received information mostly through SMS and thanks to the administration of the vocational institutions.** Even those who reported being informed via SMS—and eventually applied—did not pay attention to the first message. Only after receiving multiple SMS did they decide to act. Interviews showed that SMS is not a very efficient source of information-sharing, as it is a common practice to advertise a lot of information using it and, therefore, for individuals to delete the messages often without reading them. Hence, SMS should be coupled with other information-sharing sources. In one of the interviews, it was suggested to (a) use the **resources of local NGOs** to disseminate information about the programme to specific target groups, as such organizations are better aware of the local context and know local needs; (b) increase the proactiveness of the representatives of local municipalities in spreading information about the Agency programmes; and (c) increase visibility and interactivity on social media, particularly on Facebook.

As discussed above, there is a need to spread information to potential beneficiaries before they enter vocational education institutions.

The study found that there is also **another very significant information-sharing channel: the programme beneficiaries themselves.** All beneficiaries have already shared information about

the programme and have advised their friends and relatives to participate. Some even helped with the application process. Thus, **having a satisfied beneficiary can have a magnifying effect on spreading information about the programme and increasing the awareness level among the target audience.** In the words of one respondent, a female beneficiary from Imereti, “A living beneficiary is the best advertisement.”

Assessment of application process and identified challenges

Generally, **beneficiaries perceive the application process as an easy one.** The study has not found any gender differences in this perception. However, some challenges were identified. These challenges were mainly associated with making financial calculations and delivering an invoice. In case of any difficulties with the financial calculations, beneficiaries had the opportunity to consult with the Agency and received proper directions. In addition, the Agency gave them a chance to explain their calculations during the interview process, which participants found very helpful.

The fact that an **interview is included in the participants' selection process** is viewed positively by participants, as they have the opportunity to present themselves better and explain their motives for applying. This target group can have difficulties with expressing their motives in the application form and could be more convincing during the interviews.

The initial requirement of the programme to provide **three invoices** was considered as a significant challenge by the beneficiaries. Usually participants needed equipment that was imported by one or two suppliers, and delivering three invoices was impossible, or was artificial, as the Agency had to buy this equipment at an affordable price from only these particular suppliers. These participants contacted the Agency to explain the issue, and, according to them, the Agency relaxed the requirement if the justification was accepted. It has to be mentioned that the Agency removed the requirement of three invoices starting from 2018, as a result of monitoring participants' feedback.

With regard to **required invoices (now reduced to one), some challenges still remain.** In particular:

- a) **Long distance** – Some equipment is not sold in proximity of beneficiaries, and they have to visit the capital or some other large city to get an invoice. This might be especially problematic for female applicants who have family responsibilities and are usually less mobile.
- b) **Time** – Some participants encountered the following problem. During the call for applications, suppliers did not have the required equipment in place, and participants had to replace their desired equipment with one of a lower quality. According to the beneficiaries, some shops provide invoices valid for very short time periods. In addition, one beneficiary who is planning to apply again to the programme has the following problem: the needed equipment is not in Georgia, and the shop is not able to provide an invoice and cannot offer any price in advance. Thus, the participant is not sure whether the price will exceed the programme grant amount or not.
- c) **Lack of information** – Some participants had difficulties acquiring information about particular shops where the needed equipment was sold.

Overall, based on the interviews, the Agency played and plays an important role in assisting applicants to overcome difficulties with the application process. However, not all applicants had contact information for the Agency representatives at the application stage. They received such contact information during the initial monitoring stage. The Agency can direct more effort during the application process to spread its contact information in case there are any questions.

Beneficiaries' satisfaction level with the programme, the received tools and the service provided by the Agency

Overall programme satisfaction should be analysed along two dimensions: firstly, beneficiaries who have already received their tools; and secondly,

beneficiaries who won the grant and are still waiting for their tools. The GIA team has not found any gender difference in the satisfaction level overall.

The first category assessed the programme positively. Most of the beneficiaries are very satisfied, and the rest are satisfied with the quality of the transferred tools. The beneficiaries state that the received tools are exactly the ones that they requested. **However, the beneficiaries do not assess the time required for the Agency to purchase and transfer the equipment as positive.** It is not obvious for most of them why the Agency requires so much time to transfer equipment when they have the exact parameters of the equipment, the supplier and the price. The beneficiaries who received their tools during the pandemic seem more understanding and do not complain about the timing so much, while others perceived this as a problematic issue.

As for the current beneficiaries who are still waiting for the transfer of equipment, they are very happy to have won this grant and are looking forward to receiving the tools. It is hard for them to express their level of satisfaction with the programme at this stage. **However, the prolonged period and the uncertainty about the exact date of transfer create the following challenges** for the applicants:

- a) In some cases, the expected equipment needs special complementary supplies that are not used by the applicants at this stage. Currently, they are uncertain how to plan their process—that is, how many supplies to buy. For example, one female beneficiary who is waiting on a knitting machine does not know yet how much knitting cotton she has to buy for the upcoming season. Her current machine uses a different type of knitting cotton, and if the new machine arrives, she has to buy different supplies.
- b) Some applicants do not know exactly whether all of the requested equipment will be transferred or not, as equipment prices have increased since the call for applications (and they might exceed the grant ceiling).
- c) When participants ask for equipment, whose quality is frequently updated (for example,

laptops), waiting for a prolonged time period means that currently they could have asked for a better-quality product.

- d) Overall, applicants cannot plan their business activities without knowing when they can expect to receive the necessary equipment.

Additional questions asked during the interview process revealed that currently, beneficiaries who are waiting on the transfer of equipment do not possess all needed information. **The Agency representative cannot provide information about the current status of their equipment (e.g. whether or not some part has already been purchased and, if so, which part in particular) and the exact date of transfer. This lowers beneficiaries' trust towards the programme, and some seemed discouraged.** The GIA team is aware that the Agency has objective reasons for the prolonged transfer period, as they have to announce tenders, and sometimes one round is not enough and requires additional time. **The Agency is well aware of this problem and has already tried to overcome this challenge partly by introducing a voucher system for cheaper products. However, more effort should be put into periodically updating the participants about the status of purchases. Participants need this information to not waste time and to plan their business activities accordingly.**

Apart from this problem, beneficiaries are very satisfied with the service delivered by the Agency and evaluate communications with them positively. A female participant from Tbilisi noted: “[Agency representatives] were always available regardless of the number of questions I had. Even if they were not able to answer my call immediately, they always called me back.” A female participant from Kvemo Kartli further remarked: “I think everyone [in the Agency] is eager to help and provide assistance.” Some programme participants even recall the names of contact persons from the Agency.

Beneficiaries' suggestions to improve the programme

While analysing beneficiaries' responses about how to improve the programme, no particular gender pattern was visible. Both male and female

participants have similar ideas. In particular:

- **Increase the number of tools that can be requested** – As the number of tools that can be requested is fixed to three, beneficiaries ‘rank’ the tools based on their price, not necessity. They first try to ask for higher priced tools to use the grant amount. If this number was not fixed, some of them could demand more tools based on their actual needs.
- **Reduce the time required to transfer the equipment** – As discussed above, prolonged waiting time periods affect beneficiaries negatively, create uncertainty and make it hard for them to plan future activities.
- **Increase finances (even marginally in exceptional cases) or provide the possibility of co-financing** – Participants understand that the state budget is limited, and they try to provide reasonable suggestions. Participants suggest adjusting the budget to inflation—increasing the prices of equipment in general. Some beneficiaries mention that specific specialities might demand only one equipment price, which is slightly higher than the grant amount. In these cases, participants recommend either being provided with the option to co-finance (i.e. participants pay the difference between the price and grant amount) or being granted an exception of some range.
- **Use an individual approach if a product is innovative and new in the Georgian market** – One female participant also noted that in cases when a product is innovative and new, the Agency might consider increasing the grant amount and making exceptions or giving the opportunity to finance an individual for a third time.
- **Increase awareness and convince potential participants** – During the interviews, some beneficiaries stated that initially they had not expected to receive the grant and were very surprised to win. Such a relatively low perception about the chances of winning among the target audience should be addressed by the Agency, as it might discourage potentially eligible individuals from applying.

As already discussed, participants do not like the uncertainty related to the time needed to receive the equipment, nor the long waiting times themselves. Therefore, it is advisable to work to reduce this time, update participants about the progress of purchases and reduce uncertainty in this regard. As one of the beneficiaries suggested, **it might be preferable to give participants flexibility** to acquire equipment on their own without delay (if they prefer to do so). Beneficiaries do not see the benefit of delay and receiving their tools alongside other participants at an official awarding ceremony. On the other hand, the Agency can promote the programme by showcasing success stories. **To contribute to gender equality, it would be crucial if, in such showcase success stories, female participants were presented. It is vital that such stories do not strengthen existing social norms (for example, avoid suggesting that females are only additional contributors to the family income, are the main caregivers, are mostly responsible for household chores, etc.). Instead, the stories should be inspiring, could portray exceptional female initiatives, could serve as examples for others and could have transformative power. Moreover, it is preferable that the Agency, in collaboration with other government entities, promotes the engagement of female IDPs in high-paying jobs.**

Impact of the programme on beneficiaries’ involvement in the decision-making process of the household, economic independence, gender roles in the family and attitudes and perceptions from family members and society

The programme seems to affect both genders similarly, with one exception: the positive impact on female participants’ productivity might be higher, as many of them were doing their job manually. Differences are revealed once the impact on decision-making, economic independence, gender roles and attitudes are concerned.

First of all, it has to be mentioned that beneficiaries— at first—did not clearly understand interviewers’ questions about the decision-making process at home, gender roles and attitudes. In almost

every case, researchers had to explain what they meant by each notion. An additional challenge was having a phone survey, as interviewers were not able to observe respondents and draw additional conclusions. Despite this challenge, the following gender differences were highlighted:

The programme in general contributes to increased appreciation from family members and society towards beneficiaries but by a different degree for males and females.

All beneficiaries highlighted that positive change is mainly attributed to two main factors: (a) professional success and the ability to hire assistants or new employees; and (b) a more positive attitude from society in general and even family members due to the improved financial situation. **However, female beneficiaries also highlighted that the programme contributed significantly towards increasing their confidence level and self-esteem. Female beneficiaries perceived that, because of this programme, they felt more ‘visible’ and ‘appreciated’ in their local communities.** It must be mentioned that female beneficiaries answered this question **with a lot of enthusiasm and excitement** and with more details compared to their male counterparts. **For male beneficiaries, this question was not clear at first, as they did not understand how or why the programme could change any attitudes and values towards them. Only after additional explanations from the interviewer were they able to provide answers.** It seems that because males are perceived as the main breadwinners in Georgian families, males themselves and the local community in general have higher expectations about them, so the programme's contribution in this regard is marginal. This is why the change for female participants is more significant.

These qualitative interviews also revealed the existing stigma related to vocational education. One female participant from Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti, who had initially pursued a higher education degree but applied for vocational education, shared that the local community was negatively surprised by her decision. However, after becoming successful, this attitude changed. Thus, the self-employment

support grant programme, by improving the social-economic conditions of beneficiaries and showcasing success stories, has the power to **soften the stigma attached to vocational education in general, facilitate women's integration into the economy and strengthen them financially.**

The programme beneficiaries who were interviewed seemed **equally involved in the decision-making process within their families.** Both male and female participants mentioned that after the programme, their financial contribution to the family income increased.

During the interviews, the GIA team did not ask about the exact financial change in participants' revenues, yet some female beneficiaries mentioned that they could not support their families on their own. **Thus, despite the increased economic independence of the participants, the programme impact is still not adequate to equip females with a sufficient level of economic independence to support their families alone.** One female participant mentioned an additional benefit of the programme—now she can sew clothes for family members and reduce family expenditures.

As for the division of household work among family members, participants do not mention any change in this regard that has been induced by the programme. Participants of both genders highlight that they help their spouses or other family members. One female participant from Tbilisi mentioned that her husband is actively supporting her with her work (bringing supplies) and taking care of their child when she is working.

Overall, the programme seems to be contributing to changing existing social norms and attitudes in Georgian society, increasing the perception of the value of (and appreciation for) women and increasing their economic independence. It is possible that, if this aspect was highlighted more at the programme promotion stage, its contribution might be even greater.

b) Interview results of rejected applicants

Semi-structured interviews were constructed around

the following topics:

- Employment status – their current status and profession (i.e. whether they have similar professions under which they applied to the programme)
- Reasons for rejection – rejected participants' perceptions and official explanation received from the Agency
- Second attempt at applying – whether they have applied for a second time, or under which circumstances they would have applied for a second time
- Assessment of the application process and related challenges
- Economic and financial situation

Employment status

The interviews showed a bigger variation in employment status for rejected participants compared to programme beneficiaries. Even the rejected participants who are **still self-employed** have encountered several difficulties:

- a) Some of them have to rent professional tools, which significantly increases their costs and reduces their profit margin.
- b) Some are borrowing professional equipment from their relatives and friends. This reduces their flexibility to start work immediately, and sometimes it creates barriers to attaining new clients (because this equipment might not always be available for their use).

As a result, rejected participants who continue to be self-employed without their own professional equipment suffer from forgone income. It is almost impossible for rejected participants to purchase professional tools themselves, as the income they generate is barely enough to cover their everyday family costs. Hence, they are not able to accumulate finances for investment.

One of the interviewed rejected applicants who encounters difficulties with renting or borrowing professional tools is currently out of the labour force, unable to start working without professional tools. Among other participants, there are some who

have acquired new professions and are working in different fields.

It must be mentioned that the current labour market situation for rejected candidates highlights gender differences. In particular, female participants are more likely to leave the labour force either due to rejection (after becoming discouraged) or family issues (after getting married).

Reasons for rejection and second attempt at applying

The interviews showed that most of the rejected applicants are not aware of the reasons for their rejection. There were a few cases in which rejected applicants knew the reason and were aware in advance that they were not qualified, but they decided to apply anyway. Some applicants were communicating with the Agency and claim that the letter explained the reasons for rejection, while some applicants even state that the Agency recommended that they apply to a different programme whose criteria were more suitable for their application. However, there were several applicants who have not received any reasons from the Agency and/or have not asked.

It must be mentioned that after rejection, many participants become discouraged and have a lack of incentives and motivation to reapply. This issue particularly applies to female participants. The finding of the GIA team is in line with international evidence according to which females are more likely to become discouraged following rejection and that their probability of reapplying is low, as they tend to attribute failures to their own lack of ability (Deaux and Farris, 1977). Moreover, as rejected participants are not aware of the particular reasons for their rejection, it is harder for them to improve their application in the future. This finding highlights the importance of more active communication from the Agency to provide participants with the reasons for their rejection.

Interestingly, rejected participants from the years 2020 and 2021 are not yet aware that they have been rejected. This has created barriers for them with regard to planning their future activities and/

or reapplying to the programme. The GIA team has double-checked this fact, that interviewed rejected participants from 2020 and 2021 do not yet possess their status update from the Agency representatives. According to the Agency, rejection letters and SMS were officially sent by mail to the mobile phones of all rejected participants. Thus, additional investigation is needed from the Agency's side to discover the reasons behind the lack of awareness among applicants. There is a need to improve the efficiency and timing of communication in this regard.

Assessment of the application process and related challenges

While most beneficiaries found the application process to be simple, there is no unanimous opinion from rejected applicants in this regard. Some evaluate it as an easy process, some claim it was neither easy nor difficult, and others claim that it was difficult. There was also a case in which the application was not filled in by the applicant on her own. There were also complaints about the very detailed nature of the questions. Financial calculations appear to be difficult for this target group, as they are characterized by huge potential variations in income that depend on demand and are uncertain in most of the cases. The uncertain nature of their income flows makes it harder for this target group to forecast future financial flows and make financial calculations for purposes of the application process.

Economic and financial situation

Compared to the programme beneficiaries, rejected applicants appear to have experienced worse developments: the economic situation has improved or stayed the same for only a few among the rejected participants who were interviewed, while it has worsened for most of them. This change in the economic situation was attributed to limited employment prospects and to the pandemic. Thus,

as expected, this target group is very vulnerable to economic shocks, especially during crises like the pandemic.

Comparing the current conditions of the rejected applicants to that of the beneficiaries seems to suggest that the programme may contribute to the improved economic and financial situation of beneficiaries by creating better employment prospects, reducing participants' expenditures on renting and/or borrowing professional equipment, and providing stimuli to expand their business and attract more customers.

Overall, the rejected applicants could be divided into two groups: (1) those who were less motivated, realized that they did not deserve a grant and/or have changed their profession; and (2) those who are in need of professional equipment and have difficulties working without their own tools. There might also be a third group, who could be eligible but erroneously thought they would not be deserving of a grant and therefore gave up (women, according to the existing literature, are more likely to appear in such a group). Since the last two groups seem to be very vulnerable (and deserving) groups, additional efforts must be directed to help them improve their application and encourage them to reapply. For example, there was a case when a person was denied a grant because he was not qualified enough to satisfy the requirements for that year. However, now with the changes to the requirements of this programme, he is qualified. Because he does not know the reason for his rejection and/or the corresponding changes to the requirements, he has not reapplied, regardless of his willingness to participate. Thus, this again highlights that there is room for improvement to cover vulnerable target groups. One way would be to have the Agency proactively review old applications and notify eligible applicants, providing clear information about how to apply successfully.

PART 5: IDENTIFIED GENDER-SPECIFIC CHALLENGES

The analysis conducted by the GIA team revealed that the vocational education support and self-employment support grant programmes for IDPs and ecomigrants are gender balanced in terms of financing as there is no significant difference among financing rates by gender. The vocational education support programme demonstrates no difference in financing rates by gender in geographic and time dimensions. This pattern is not as evident in the case of the self-employment support grant programme, as some disruptions are observable at the regional level and over the years. In addition, the GIA team has also identified gender-specific challenges that not only are specific to these programmes per se but also can be extended to the other livelihood-supporting programmes as well. To contribute to gender equality in such programmes, the following gender-related aspects should be taken into consideration.

Participation

Female financing rates in the self-employment support grant programme are less balanced outside Tbilisi. These numbers could indicate that females residing outside the capital face additional obstacles while competing in this programme. This result might signal that the quality of the applications submitted by females is lower in the regions; therefore, there is additional need to support them to enhance their application quality.

There is also a need for more efficient communication with rejected applicants to make sure that the rejection does not negatively affect their labour market participation and their decision to apply to upcoming programmes in the future. This aspect is particularly important for female participants because, according to the international evidence and based on in-depth interviews with rejected applicants, females are more likely to become discouraged following rejection and that their probability of reapplying or applying to similar programmes is very low.

Gender norms and stereotypes

Some professions are considered as specific to a certain gender and are therefore considered either feminine or masculine. The same tendency is observed according to the quantitative and qualitative analysis of the self-employment support grant programme. This issue might be concerning, as male-dominated professions have a higher probability of being financed due to their specific characteristics, such as market coverage and mobility. 'Male professions' like electricians and construction workers are expected to be more mobile and flexible, are not constrained by or to a specific locality and have the opportunity to cover a wider range of consumers. On the other hand, 'female professions' tend to have a lower probability of financing due to more limited self-employment prospects (which is not associated with their gender). If women choose such professions due to the existing social norms, they might be facing systematically higher rejection rates and worse expected labour market outcomes (due to labour market segregation, the gender pay gap).

Georgian society in general perceives males as the main breadwinners and has higher expectations towards their professional success, as opposed to females. This is reflected in the higher dropout rates of female vocational institution students after getting married, as well as the lower female labour market participation rates among IDPs and the general population. Hence, there is a need to increase the confidence level and self-esteem of females, encourage them to be actively involved in the labour market and enter professions with better self-employment prospects.

Unequal access and control over resources

The analysis of the GIA team revealed that the target group of the selected programmes has significantly limited access to financial resources and belongs to one of the most vulnerable groups in society. The

limited access to financial resources is reflected in the restricted access to professional equipment, which lowers their productivity and requires a lot of effort and time. This problem is more severe for women, as in the absence of professional equipment, female beneficiaries mostly do manual work and do not have the opportunity to borrow or rent needed professional equipment, compared to their male counterparts.

The qualitative analysis showed that females residing in the regions are more vulnerable to high transportation costs. All of the beneficiaries who could not have afforded transportation without the vocational education support programme live in the regions, and the majority of them are females. This might be linked to the unequal distribution of care activities, to the unequal and limited access to transportation and/or to stereotypes.

Data limitations

One should acknowledge the Agency's efforts to collect and store gender-disaggregated data about the programmes, which allows them to capture the main features about the programmes' implementation. However, there is limited expertise in the country about gender and socioeconomic outcomes and the vulnerability of IDPs and ecomigrants. In addition, there is a lack of available gender-disaggregated data (including by profession) about ecomigrants.

The limited number of studies conducted on the gender vulnerability of displaced people, coupled with the limited gender-disaggregated data overall, hinders the process of conducting a GIA on similar programmes, as—without the prior knowledge—researchers have to put extra effort and conduct in-depth analysis in all possible directions.

The image features a vertical split background. The top half is a solid blue color, and the bottom half is a solid red color. Overlapping these two colors are several large, semi-transparent circles in shades of blue and red. The text is centered in the upper blue section.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS,
CONCLUSIONS AND
RECOMENDATIONS

PART 6:

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Defining issues and goals:

- Defining what the programmes are trying to achieve in terms of overall gender equality (both within the programmes and within the overarching strategies)
- Understanding different gender-specific needs and constraints
- Assessing the level of the programmes' ability to contribute to gender equality

The goal of the vocational education programme is to promote the socioeconomic integration of IDPs and ecomigrants and improve their living conditions by creating better employment prospects. The programme aims to do so by promoting the vocational education of IDPs and ecomigrants in order to increase their competitiveness in the labour market. As for the self-employment support grant programme, its main goal is to promote the socioeconomic integration of IDPs and ecomigrants and improve their living conditions by creating a self-employment perspective and by promoting vocational education among IDPs and ecomigrants. The selected programmes view participants as a homogenous group, there are no gender quotas nor gender-specific criteria, and the Agency does not deliberately encourage the participation of a specific gender. Hence, both programmes are considered gender-neutral. However, in the case of the self-employment support grant programme, taking into consideration existing gender differences and the special needs of women and men, the goals could be defined in a more gender-sensitive manner.

The self-employment support grant programme is achieving its main goal of the socioeconomic integration of participants and improves their living conditions by creating employment prospects. Without the programme's support, beneficiaries would either not be able to achieve the same success or, even if they could, it would be obtained among

greater difficulties and would take longer. However, this programme does not seem to be equally efficient in achieving the goal of promoting vocational education among IDPs and ecomigrants, as participants are receiving information about the programme once they have already enrolled in vocational education or after graduation.

As for the vocational education support programme, there is limited evidence that this programme creates employment prospects and facilitates the socioeconomic integration of IDPs and ecomigrants, as most of the beneficiaries of the programme are recent graduates and the full impact of vocational education upon their labour market outcomes has yet to fully unfold. The recent pandemic creates additional barriers and hinders the assessment of the programme's impact. This programme, however, certainly achieves its specific objective of supporting vocational education among the target audience, as transportation is a significant obstacle for them.

Findings of the quantitative analysis

The GIA team analysed the **demographic profile** of IDPs, their educational and labour market outcomes and the extent to which these aspects differ from those of other members of Georgian society. The main findings are summarized as follows:

- There is no significant difference between the educational attainment of IDPs and non-IDPs (including along the gender dimension).
- Unemployment is higher among IDPs (the difference is observable in the case of males). The difference between the unemployment level of female and male IDPs is 11 percentage points, while in the case of non-IDPs, the difference is 4 percentage points.
- Among the young IDPs, the unemployment rate is higher compared to the rest of society. Again, the situation seems more dramatic for young men. In this age group, the difference between

the unemployment levels of male IDPs and non-IDPs is 13 percentage points, while the analogous difference in the case of females is 2 percentage points.

- Even though IDPs enjoy a similar level of education as the rest of society, their labour market performance is worse. Not only are IDPs more vulnerable, but female IDPs also face more obstacles to receiving comparable remuneration.

To analyse the gender impact of the **vocational education support programme for IDPs and ecomigrants**, the GIA team analysed two dimensions of the programme: time and geography. The data analysis yielded the following findings:

- The geographic distribution of applicants mimics the overall distribution of IDPs by region. This result indicates that there is no region-based self-selection bias and that the programme is equally accessible to everyone.
- The first three years of the programme was gender balanced in terms of the number of applications. However, in 2020, male applicants became the majority (56 per cent). Because the overall distribution of IDP students enrolled in vocational education centres is even more inclined towards males (61 per cent), it can be claimed that females are more than proportionately engaged in the programme.
- There is no imbalance in the financing rates of males and females who apply for the programme. The balance in financing rates is noticeable along both regional and temporal dimensions. Moreover, the financing rates of the socially disadvantaged population are not different from the overall financing rate.
- The share of socially disadvantaged IDPs among beneficiaries increased in 2021. This might be attributed to the pandemic as well as to the change in the legislation, which ensured that any funding received specifically from this programme would not affect the social score of an applicant.

The GIA team used the same approach to analyse the **self-employment support grant programme**. The applicants and beneficiaries were split along geographic and time dimensions and further

analysed. The GIA team had no information about the ages of the applicants; therefore, it was not possible to identify the underlying distribution by gender (males form the majority of young IDPs, while females are more numerous in the older age groups). The findings are as follows:

- The number of male and female applicants in Tbilisi are almost equal. In the regions outside Tbilisi, male applications are the majority. This seems to indicate that women in the regions face more obstacles to participating in the programme compared to those who live in the capital.
- The financing rates are, overall, gender balanced. However, differences are observable along regional and time dimensions. Women have a higher probability of getting financed in Tbilisi, but in other regions, the picture is different. Moreover, the small differences in the overall financing rates are completely determined by the imbalance in financing during the pandemic.
- Financing rates are decreasing over time. This might be caused either by the increase in the share of low-quality applicants or by the fixed financial resources of the Agency (there have been more applicants over the years, and costs also increase with inflation, but the budget of the Agency has been relatively stable; therefore, it is impossible to maintain the same rate of financing over time).
- Of the applicants' professions, four were masculine and two were feminine, while the others were more or less gender balanced. The masculine professions seem to have higher financing rates. Male professions are more mobile and flexible and can self-realize in the market more easily. On the other hand, females tend to choose professions that yield a lower probability of engaging profitably in self-employment.

Findings of the qualitative analysis

During the GIA process, the team complemented the quantitative analysis with a qualitative analysis based on semi-structured phone interviews with applicants of the programmes, as well as the members of the boards of different vocational education centres. The goal of the qualitative study was to obtain information about the beneficiaries' labour market outcomes,

the degree of their social-economic integration into society, and whether/how their participation in the programme changed their gender roles, values and perceptions. The findings from the **vocational education support programme** are as follows:

- Of the beneficiaries who claimed that they could not afford transportation costs themselves, the vast majority are females, and all are residing outside Tbilisi.
- According to the representatives of the vocational education centres, transportation is a significant barrier for students in the regions, as most of them come from poor families.
- The main information sources for the potential applicants are the administration of the vocational education centres, SMS, a website or Facebook page, and relatives and friends.
- The overwhelming majority of beneficiaries claim that filling in the application form was simple and that, if they had questions, communicating with the Agency was also easy. The vocational centres' representatives also declare that communicating with the Agency is simple and that there is no significant bureaucratic burden in the process.
- The programme has had no effect of gender roles in the family.
- While the majority of males do not feel that the societal perception of their role is changed after participating in the programme, females' self-esteem is mostly higher, and they feel more valuable in society.

To analyse the self-employment support grant programme, the GIA team conducted phone interviews with beneficiaries, as well as with the rejected applicants to see the whole picture. The findings from the **self-employment support grant programme** are summarized below:

- The programme has a positive impact on beneficiaries, as it increases access to resources and productivity. This effect is especially noticeable for women.
- The programme has positive spillover, as several beneficiaries also employ others (mostly IDPs).
- In the case of most beneficiaries, their economic conditions were slightly or significantly improved

after participating in the programme.

- The majority of beneficiaries receive information about the programme after graduating from a vocational education centre. The main information channels are SMS, the informational meetings organized by the Agency, and the administration of the vocational education centres.
- Most beneficiaries claim that filling in the application form was simple and that, if they had questions, communicating with the Agency was also easy. Several obstacles, however, were identified, such as long distances, the time cost, the difficulties associated with the financial calculations, and the lack of information.
- The quality of the tools received is good. However, the time lag between applying for and receiving the tools is assessed as negative.
- Participants have a lack of knowledge about whether they will be fully equipped or not. They might also need complementary tools. Combined, these two effects make it difficult to estimate the future precisely and develop a detailed business plan.
- The programme has no effect on gender roles in the family. Families, on the other hand, do not seem to hinder the participation of their family members in the programme. The programme has the potential to change the perceptions about vocational education, in general.
- While the majority of males do not feel that the societal perception of their role is changed after participating in the programme, females' self-esteem is mostly higher, and they feel like they are a more valuable part of society.
- Several rejected applicants are self-employed but struggle to succeed in their work due to the lack of tools. Some, after being rejected, have changed their profession, while some are not employed at all due to the lack of tools.
- Most of the applicants do not have any information about the reason for their rejection. Without knowing the reason why they were rejected, it is difficult for applicants to reapply. Some of them are discouraged after the rejection, and this effect is stronger in women.
- There is a clear difference in the assessment of the difficulty of the application process between

beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries. Non-beneficiaries mostly found it difficult to fill in the application form, while beneficiaries mostly had problems with the financial calculations. This is a key consideration to keep in mind to increase the inclusiveness of the programme.

- Different from the beneficiaries, the economic condition of most of the rejected applicants either remained the same or worsened after applying for the programme.

Collecting data:

- Gathering gender-, age- and disability-disaggregated statistics on a country and regional level
- Consulting experts, as well as regularly soliciting feedback from women and men beneficiaries (as well as rejected candidates) of the programmes

Data limitations and the lack of analysis of existing data from a gender perspective hinder proper evaluation of the efficiency and sustainability of the selected programmes:

- The limited gender expertise about the socioeconomic outcomes and vulnerability of IDPs and ecomigrants in the country, the limited number of studies conducted on this subject, and the low availability of gender-disaggregated data make it impossible to conduct an in-depth GIA.
- The lack of availability of gender-disaggregated data about ecomigrants and the very low number of ecomigrants in the selected programmes made it impossible to conduct a gender analysis selectively on this group.
- It was impossible to conduct a proper counterfactual analysis in the case of the self-employment support grant programme. Due to this, it was impossible to establish a cause-and-effect link between the interventions and outcomes of the programme, as well as produce a quantitative analysis of the impact of the programme.

Communicating and providing assistance during and after the application process:

- Analysing the effectiveness of information-sharing channels and how to improve it
- Using inclusive language
- Ensuring that key areas of gender inequality are addressed while communicating
- Providing assistance with the application process
- Offering feedback to potentially eligible candidates who were rejected (including advice about how to improve their application)

The Agency uses several information-sharing channels, including SMS to target groups, communication through the vocational education centres' administration, and Facebook. Furthermore, the Agency also prints and distributes leaflets and stickers about their programmes to IDP settlements. Moreover, information is spread using local television and radio stations. Before the pandemic, the Agency was also conducting face-to-face meetings in IDP compact settlements and was providing information about all of its programmes. Currently, the Agency focuses on online and other forms of communication.

From the standpoint of supporting vocational education, there is an ineffective communication strategy with school students before they enter vocational education institutions. Sometimes SMS—the key of the current strategy—are deleted without being read. As a result, complementing SMS with other forms of information-sharing increases the likelihood that the target audience receives information about the Agency's programmes. On the other hand, as the Agency's website is not very interactive, users might have difficulties with obtaining all of the necessary information. In addition, the timing of when programmes are announced differs over time, which might create additional obstacles for parties interested in applying (as they need to keep monitoring the website until the announcements are posted).

The Agency has played and continues to play an important role in assisting applicants to overcome difficulties with the application process for both selected programmes. However, analyses show that there is additional need to highlight the contact

information of the Agency, especially for the self-employment support grant programme during the initial stage.

Communication between the Agency and both applicants and participants would need to be improved. All applicants are notified about the final decision. However, based on the interviews, most of the rejected applicants of the self-employment support grant programme are unaware of the reason for their rejection. Even the participants of this programme are often not aware of the status of their request, particularly of the approximate time when their equipment request will be granted. Hence, there is room for improvement in these directions.

It is essential to use inclusive language during the communication process to ensure that people with different needs and characteristics are incentivized to apply. At the same time, key messages of communication should be formulated with existing gender inequalities in mind.

Monitoring and evaluation:

- Monitoring the gender impact of these programmes
- Developing gender-specific indicators
- Examining the differential impacts on different subgroups of beneficiaries
- Identifying obstacles to the achievement of equal opportunities and outcomes
- Learning lessons regarding gender mainstreaming in the programmes/sector
- Identifying and disseminating best practices

As is the case with many other programmes, when it comes to monitoring these particular programmes, it is based mostly on monitoring the implementation of actual activities and the utilization of received support (e.g. professional equipment), rather than on M&E of the processes or impact. The Agency monitors the programme once the beneficiaries are provided with their requested tools. The aim of this monitoring is to check whether the beneficiary is using the granted tools for his/her profession; to examine the impact of the programme on the recipient's socioeconomic status; and to check whether the recipient is obeying the contract.

The current monitoring form used by the Agency makes it possible to disaggregate information by gender. However, for better monitoring of the programme, it is important to add additional dimensions, such as age and region.

Proper evaluation of the selected programmes from a gender equality perspective is complicated due to the following factors:

- The non-existence of an initial benchmark/baseline study makes it hard for the GIA team to properly identify the impacts of these programmes because the selected programmes were launched without an initial baseline analysis.
- It was not possible to conduct a proper counterfactual analysis in the case of the self-employment support grant programme. As a result, it is impossible to establish a cause-and-effect link between the interventions and outcomes of the programme, as well as produce a quantitative analysis of the impact of the programme.

PART 7: RECOMMENDATIONS TO IMPROVE THE SELECTED PROGRAMMES IN TERMS OF GENDER EQUALITY

Based on the qualitative and quantitative findings and the structure of the programmes' implementation, recommendations for enhancing the impact of these programmes were clustered into four segments: (a) enhancing the programmes' gender sensitivity; (b) addressing existing gender norms during communication; (c) revising the financial schemes; and (d) tackling data collection, analysis and evidence-based policymaking from a gender perspective.

a) Enhancing the programmes' gender sensitivity

To make the vocational education support programme and the self-employment support grant programme more gender responsive, to increase women's economic empowerment and to contribute to gender equality among IDPs and ecomigrants, the following actions are needed:

- The Agency should strengthen its gender expertise and gender-sensitive capacity development, with specific thematic knowledge needed for gender inequality-related issues of internal displacement.
- The Agency should conduct a background gender analysis to identify existing gender gaps and the different needs of women and men before amending the existing programmes or introducing new programmes. It is advisable to have existing gender gaps and challenges faced by IDPs and ecomigrants in the programmes' descriptions, as well as the impact of the programmes and/or amendments on gender equality.

b) Addressing existing gender norms during communication

Regardless of the fact that the selected programmes

are gender balanced with regard to participation and financing rates, there is still room for improvement through communication channels:

- The Agency should pay more attention to increase female participation in the self-employment support grant programme from the regions by well-targeted informational campaigns and cooperation with local NGOs working with the target population (who could help participants by improving the quality of their applications).
- The Agency could more vigorously promote vocational education by conducting more targeted informational campaigns with youngsters before they choose their educational path.
- The Agency has the potential to change existing gender stereotypes towards vocational education by showcasing stories of successful females with vocational education.
- The analysis of the self-employment support grant programme revealed that the programme contributes to female economic empowerment by changing existing gender norms and stereotypes; therefore, strengthening communication campaigns with examples of these positive changes and using inclusive language might enhance the programme's positive impact.
- To increase overall participation in the programmes and ensure higher-quality applications, it is essential to have a well-defined time frame for the programmes in advance, especially for the self-employment support grant programme. It is advisable to announce the call for applications at the same time each year so that the interested audience can anticipate the programme and start the preparation process in advance. Moreover, the

programme participants should be updated about the status of their application. The Agency should make sure that the rejected applicants are receiving timely information about the rejection and are communicated clearly and exhaustively the reasons for their rejection. In the case of beneficiaries, they should be updated periodically on the status of their application (i.e. the purchase of requested equipment) and should be informed that they have the flexibility to acquire purchased tools themselves (i.e. not to wait for the official awarding ceremony). This would enable participants to plan future activities accordingly and would strengthen trust towards the programme and the Agency.

- Special emphasis should be paid to rejected applicants to make sure that they understand the reasons for their rejection, are motivated to participate in future programmes and will improve their future applications. This seems especially important for female participants, as they are characterized by lower labour force participation rates, and the probability that they become discouraged and leave the labour force is higher.

c) Revising the financial schemes

- The analysis highlighted the need to increase funds for the self-employment support grant programme—in particular, adjusting the funds available to compensate for increases in the overall price levels, as well as introducing a co-financing component.
- Working to remove obstacles and help needy applicants to obtain support should be a key priority. This might entail identifying barriers and taking action to remove them, in addition to increasing the available funding (or at least indexing it) to make sure that people are not rejected due to a lack of funds.

d) Tackling data collection, analysis and evidence-based policymaking from a gender perspective

It must be noted that the Agency possesses exceptionally good-quality data regarding participants to the programmes (including information on rejected applicants). However, there is still room for improvement. In particular:

- It is recommended to add information about reimbursed transportation costs at the individual level. This would simplify the evaluation of the programme's impact at a more disaggregated level, including the gender dimension.
- The Agency should increase its efforts to collect disaggregated data (including sex-disaggregation) about ecomigrants. Currently, the information about this vulnerable group is very scarce, and their participation in the programmes is very low. To address the needs of this group and to increase their participation, it is important to know its demographic and social-economic characteristics. Further research is needed in this direction.
- The Agency should strengthen monitoring and evaluation of the vocational education support programme. It is advisable to periodically monitor participants' satisfaction levels, identify challenges and evaluate the programme's impact on beneficiaries' labour market outcomes over a longer time horizon. This will require monitoring them (and, ideally, excluded applicants) periodically over time, even several years after their participation in the programme. As for the self-employment support grant programme, it is recommended to analyse financing rates and programme outcomes for different professions, keeping in mind the gender composition of profession groups; examine differential impacts on different subgroups (e.g. by gender, age and region); identify obstacles and learning lessons; and disseminate best practices.

ANNEXES

ANNEX 1.

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS'

GUIDE

a) Interview guide for the beneficiaries of the vocational education support programme

Section 1.

1. Are you currently studying at a vocational education institution?
 - I am learning
 - I have finished studying
2. How did you find out about the vocational education support programme? (you can mark several answers)
 - Via SMS notification
 - Information meeting with IDPs (forum, face-to-face, printed material, telephone/personal consultation)
 - From a friend, classmate, relative or other close person
 - From the school administration
 - Via the Internet
3. Have you heard about the self-employment support grant programme for IDPs and ecomigrants?
 - Yes (continue with question 4)
 - No (jump to question 5)
4. Have you participated in the programme, or are you going to?
 - I submitted an application but was rejected
 - I submitted an application and was accepted
 - I submitted an application and am waiting for an answer
 - I'm going to submit an application
 - I'm not going to submit an application
5. How does the reimbursement of transportation costs help you in getting an education? (Open question, with details appreciated. Interviewer: after receiving an answer, read the following options and mark the appropriate answer.)
 - Without help, I would not be able to go to school
 - Without help, I would be able to go to school, though it would be hard for me
 - Without help, I would be able to go to school without any problems
 - I do not know / I find it difficult to answer
6. Why did you choose vocational education? (you can select several answers)
 - Free tuition
 - Reimbursement of transportation costs
 - More employment opportunities
 - Possibility of participating in the self-employment support grant programme
 - Other (please specify)
7. How has your economic (financial) situation changed after receiving vocational education? Or how do you think it will change? (Open question, with details appreciated. Interviewer: after receiving an answer, read the following options and mark the appropriate answer.)
 - It has significantly improved
 - It has slightly improved
 - It did not change
 - It has slightly worsened
 - It has significantly worsened
 - I have no answer / I do not know
8. How would you rate the application process? How simple was it?
 - Very simple
 - Simple
 - Neutral – neither difficult nor simple
 - Difficult
 - Very difficult
 - I have no answer / I do not know
9. Did you encounter any difficulties with filling in the application?
 - Yes (continue with section 2)
 - No (jump to section 3)

Section 2. Identified challenges during the application process

10. What specific difficulties did you face? (open question)
11. How did you overcome these difficulties? (open question)
12. Did anyone help you in this process? In particular, who? (open question)

Section 3. Attitudes towards the Agency

13. Did you turn to the Agency for help while filling in the application?
 - Yes
 - No
 14. Did you have information on who you could turn to?
 - Yes
 - No
 15. How would you rate the quality of the Agency's services in relation to this particular programme? (Open question. After marking the relevant answer, the interviewer should ask the respondent to provide specific examples.)
 - Very positively
 - Positively
 - Neutrally
 - Negatively
 - Very negatively
 - I have no answer / I do not know
 16. In general, how would you rate the vocational education support programme? (Open question. After marking the relevant answer, the interviewer should ask the respondent to elaborate.)
 - Very positively
 - Positively
 - Neutrally
 - Negatively
 - Very negatively
 - I have no answer / I do not know
 17. What would you change in the programme? (open question)
 18. Would you recommend someone else to participate in the programme, and why? (open question)
 - Yes
 - No
 - I have no answer / I do not know
- Interviewer, indicate gender*
- Male (go to section 4)
 - Female (go to section 5)

Section 4. Changes in gender roles and values for males

19. Do you live alone or with family members?
 - I live alone
 - I live with family members
20. As a result of participating in the programme, has your involvement in the decision-making process in your family increased? (open question)
21. Has the distribution of household chores between the women and men in your family changed since participating in the programme? (open question)
22. How has your personal independence changed as a result of participating in the programme? (open question)
23. Do you think that participation in the programme has changed the attitude towards you in your family and outside the family—that is, have you become more appreciated? (open question)

Section 5. Changes in gender roles and values for females

24. Do you live alone or with family members?
 - I live alone
 - I live with family members
25. How has this programme changed your role as a woman in the family? (open question)
26. As a result of participating in the programme, has your involvement in the decision-making process in your family increased? (open question)
27. Has the distribution of household chores between the women and men in your family changed since participating in the programme? (open question)
28. How has your personal independence changed as a result of participating in the programme? (open question)
29. Do you think that participation in the programme has changed the attitude towards you in your family and outside the family—that is, have you become more appreciated? (open question)

Section 6. Concluding questions to beneficiaries who have finished the educational programme

30. Do you currently work within the profession that you studied in vocational education?
 - Yes
 - No
31. Do you use the knowledge gained during vocational education? How? (open question)

b) Interview guide for the beneficiaries of the self-employment support grant programme

Section 1. Impact of the programme on beneficiaries' employment status, their economic situation and their educational outcomes

1. Did this programme help your self-employment? (Open question, with details appreciated. Interviewer: after receiving an answer, mark the appropriate answer.)
 - Yes, I decided to become self-employed because of this programme
 - Yes, I was self-employed but did not have my own necessary tools
 - Yes, I was employed but did not have my own necessary tools
 - Other (specify)
2. If you did not participate in the programme, do you think that you would be able to be employed within the same profession? (Open question, with details appreciated. Interviewer: after receiving an answer, mark the appropriate answer.)
 - Yes, I could be employed in the private and/or public sector, with rented and/or an employer's tools
 - Yes, I could be self-employed and could buy tools with my own funds
 - No
 - Other (specify)
3. If you did not participate in the programme, do you think that you would be able to carry out your activities with the same success? Why? (Open question, with details appreciated. Interviewer: after receiving an answer, mark the appropriate answer.)
 - Yes
 - No
4. How did the self-employment support grant programme, which provided you with tools, change your economic (financial) situation? (Open question. After marking the relevant answer, the interviewer should ask the respondent to elaborate. Also try to identify the impact of COVID-19.)
 - It significantly improved
 - It improved
 - It remained the same, although the working process was eased
 - It worsened
 - I do not know / I find it difficult to answer

5. Did you get a professional education or take any courses in order to participate in this programme?
 - Yes
 - No
6. Have you taken or planned to take any courses for professional growth since you joined the programme? (Open question. After marking the relevant answer, the interviewer should ask the respondent to elaborate; if they have not taken any course, ask the reasons.)
 - Yes
 - No
7. What benefits did you receive as a result of the programme? (Open question. After marking the relevant answer, the interviewer should ask the respondent to provide details.)
 - I started/continued my activity independently
 - My working process was eased
 - I have expanded my activities (e.g. increasing the assortment, increasing the volume of products/services, etc.)
 - I have improved my socioeconomic situation
 - Other

Section 2. Informational channels

8. How did you find out about the programme? (you can select several answers)
 - Via SMS notification
 - Information meeting with IDPs (forum, face-to-face, printed material, telephone/personal consultation)
 - From a friend, classmate, relative or other close person
 - From the school administration
 - Via the Internet
 - Other

Section 3. Assessment of application process

9. How would you rate the application process? How simple was it?
 - Very simple
 - Simple
 - Neutral – neither difficult nor simple
 - Difficult
 - Very difficult
 - I have no answer / I do not know
 - Other
10. Did you encounter any difficulties with filling in the application?
 - Yes (continue with section 4)
 - No (jump to section 5)

Section 4. Identified challenges during the application process

11. What specific difficulties did you face? (open question)
12. How did you overcome these difficulties? (open question)
13. Did anyone help you in this process? In particular, who? (open question)

Section 5. Beneficiaries' satisfaction level with the programme, the received tools and the service provided by the Agency

14. Did you find it difficult to make financial calculations? (Open question. After marking the relevant answer, the interviewer should ask the respondent to elaborate.)
 - Yes
 - No
 - Other
15. Did you turn to the Agency for help while filling in the application? Did they help you? How? Did you have information on who you could turn to? (open question)
16. As a result of the funding, you were:
 - Fully equipped
 - Partially equipped
 - Minimally equipped. It became necessary to spend additional financial resources to start the activity
 - Other
17. Were there any difficulties with the process of receiving the tools? With what? (open question)
18. How satisfied are you with the quality of the tools purchased under the programme? How the received tool fit the request?
 - Very satisfied
 - Satisfied
 - Neutral
 - Unsatisfied
 - Very unsatisfied
 - Other
19. How would you rate the time needed to receive the tools? (Open question. After marking the relevant answer, the interviewer should ask the respondent to elaborate.)
 - It took less time than I expected
 - It took the amount of time that I expected
 - It took more time than I expected
 - Other

20. How would you rate the quality of the Agency's services in relation to this particular programme? (Open question. After marking the relevant answer, the interviewer should ask the respondent to provide relevant examples.)
 - Very positively
 - Positively
 - Neutral
 - Negatively
 - Very negatively
 - I have no answer / I do not know
 - Other
21. Would you recommend someone else to participate in the programme?
 - Yes
 - No
 - I have no answer / I do not know
 - Other
22. What would you change in the programme? (It is possible to give several answers. Open question; first let the respondent provide answers and explain. In case he/she is not able to provide an answer, read the list.)
 - Increase the number of tools requested
 - Reduce the tool transfer time
 - Increase funding
 - Nothing
 - I do not know / I find it difficult to answer
 - Other

Indicate gender

- Female (go to section 6)
- Male (go to section 7)

Section 6. Changes in gender roles and values for females

23. Do you live alone or with family members?
 - I live alone
 - I live with family members
24. How has this programme changed your role as a woman in the family? (open question)
25. As a result of participating in the programme, has your involvement in the decision-making process in your family increased? (open question)
26. How has your personal independence changed as a result of participating in the programme? (open question)
27. Has the distribution of household chores between the women and men in your family changed since participating in the programme? (open question)

28. Do you think participation in the programme has changed the attitude towards you in your family and outside the family—that is, have you become more appreciated? (open question)

Section 7. Changes in gender roles and values for males

29. Do you live alone or with family members?
- I live alone
 - I live with family members
30. As a result of participating in the programme, has your involvement in the decision-making process in your family increased? (open question)
31. How has your personal independence changed as a result of participating in the programme? (open question)
32. Has the distribution of household chores between the women and men in your family changed since participating in the programme? (open question)
33. Do you think participation in the programme has changed the attitude towards you in your family and outside the family—that is, have you become more appreciated? (open question)

c) Interview guide for the rejected applicants of the self-employment support grant programme

Section 1. Employment status – their current status and profession

1. Are you currently employed or not? If yes, where? (Open question, with details appreciated. Interviewer: after receiving an answer, mark the appropriate answer.)
- Employed
 - Self-employed
 - Unemployed
 - Neither employed nor looking for work
2. Despite being rejected by the programme, have you started the same activities? (Open question, with details appreciated. Interviewer: after receiving an answer, mark the appropriate answer.)
- Yes
 - No

Section 2. Reasons for rejection – rejected participants' perceptions and official explanation received from the Agency

3. In your opinion, why did you not participate in the programme, or why were you not funded with the requested tools? (open question)

4. Did you get an explanation from the Agency as to why you were rejected by the programme?
- Yes
 - No
5. Did you try to fill in the application for the second time? Why? (Open question, with details appreciated. Interviewer: after receiving an answer, mark the appropriate answer.)
- Yes
 - No

Section 3. Assessment of the application process and related challenges

6. In order to improve the programme, we are interested in the application process. In particular, how would you evaluate the application filling process? How simple was it?
- Very simple
 - Simple
 - Neutral – neither difficult nor simple
 - Difficult
 - Very difficult
 - I do not have an answer / I cannot tell
7. Did you encounter any difficulties with filling in the application?
- Yes (continue with section 4)
 - No (jump to section 5)

Section 4. Challenges of the application process

8. What difficulties did you face specifically? (open question)
9. How did you overcome these difficulties? Did anyone help you in this process? In particular, who? Did you turn to the Agency? (open question)

Section 5. Economic and financial situation

10. How has your economic (financial) situation changed recently? (Open question. Interviewer: ask the respondent to elaborate and also identify the impact of COVID-19.)
- It has significantly improved
 - It has improved
 - It has remained the same
 - It has worsened
 - I do not know / I find it difficult to answer

ANNEX 2.

TYPES OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAMMES AND THEIR PREREQUISITES

Basic Vocational Education Programme	The prerequisite for admission to this type of programme is completion of basic education (grade 9). After completion of the programme, the student gets a level 3 qualification in the National Qualifications Framework. Graduates of these programmes can enter the labour market.
Secondary Vocational Education Programme	The prerequisite for enrolment in the educational programme is possession of at least a full general education (through grade 12) or an equivalent certificate. After completion of the programme, the student gets a level 4 qualification in the National Qualifications Framework.
Higher Vocational Education Programme	The prerequisite for enrolment in the educational programme is possession of a document certifying a full general education (through grade 12) or an equivalent certificate. After completion of the programme, the student gets a level 5 qualification in the National Qualifications Framework. The graduates of the programme can join the labour market or continue their studies in higher education programmes.
Vocational Training Programme	The programme prepares individuals for performing individual tasks and duties related to a profession. The study results provided by a vocational training programme may correspond to levels 2-5 of the National Qualifications Framework.
Vocational Retraining Programme	The programme aims to ensure that individuals acquire and/or develop competence to carry out professional activities in the same field. The study results provided by a vocational retraining programme may correspond to levels 2-5 of the National Qualifications Framework.

ANNEX 3.

CRITERIA FOR LONG-TERM RESETTLEMENT OF IDPS AND ECOMIGRANTS

Criteria for long-term resettlement of IDPs⁶³

In the long-term resettlement process of IDPs, preferences are given to the following persons:

- a) Socially disadvantaged families (with a social score under 65,000)
- b) A family with two or more minor children
- c) A family whose member has an oncological disease
- d) A family with a disabled family member
- e) A parent or widow who is forced to care for a minor child or children alone
- f) An elderly person exercising guardianship or custody of a minor child or grandchild in accordance with the law
- g) A retiree living alone or a family consisting of elderly members
- h) A family whose member died in the fight for the territorial integrity of Georgia
- i) A family whose member died or went missing as a result of the conflicts in Georgia
- j) A family whose member is a veteran of the war for the territorial integrity of Georgia
- k) A family whose veteran member of the war for the territorial integrity of Georgia has died and whose spouse and/or minor child have been issued the death certificate of the breadwinner
- l) A family consisting of a person with IDP status born before 1 January 1994

Criteria for ecomigrants' resettlement projects⁶⁴

There are three sets of criteria: criteria on the degree of housing damage, social criteria and other criteria.

There are two degrees of **housing damage**: the first category includes ecomigrant families whose house or part of it has been destroyed or damaged by a natural disaster and is not subject to restoration; the second category includes families affected by a natural disaster whose houses are not destroyed, but the natural disasters in the surrounding area endanger the lives, health and property of the people living there.

As for the **social criteria**, housing preferences are given to the following persons:

- a) Socially disadvantaged families (with a social score under 65,000)
- b) A family with three or more minor child
- c) A family with a severely ill member or members (mental disorders, oncological disease)
- d) A family with a disabled family member⁶⁵
- e) A parent or widow who is forced to care for a minor child or children alone
- f) An elderly person exercising guardianship or custody of a minor child or grandchild in accordance with the law
- g) A retiree living alone or a family consisting of elderly members
- h) A family with seven or more members

Other criteria: does not have any housing at all, or housing conditions (area and number of family members) do not meet the minimal living standards.

63 Source: Order No. 01-30/N of the Minister of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Health, Labour and Social Affairs of Georgia, issued 8 April 2021. Available at <https://idp.gov.ge/>.

64 Source: Order No. 779 of the Minister of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Health,

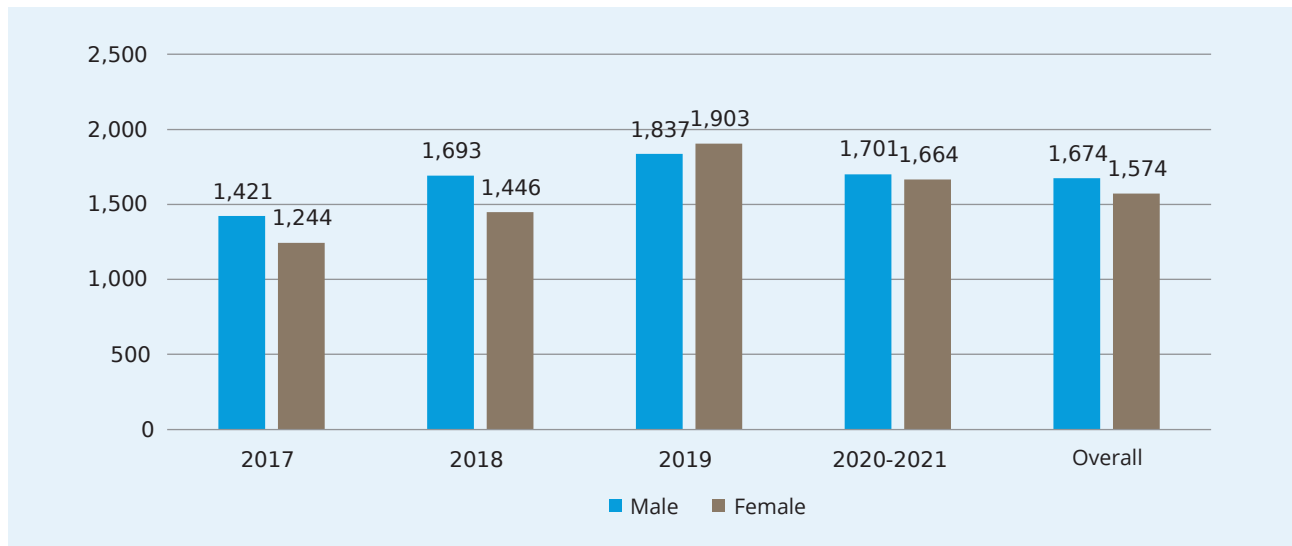
Labour and Social Affairs of Georgia, issued in 2013. Available at idp.gov.ge/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/მინისტროს-779-ბრძანება.pdf.

65 If the person jointly meets 'c' and 'd' of this criteria, the highest score among these two is assigned.

ANNEX 4. REQUESTED FUNDING OF APPLICANTS AND BENEFICIARIES, BY REGION

Figure 37:

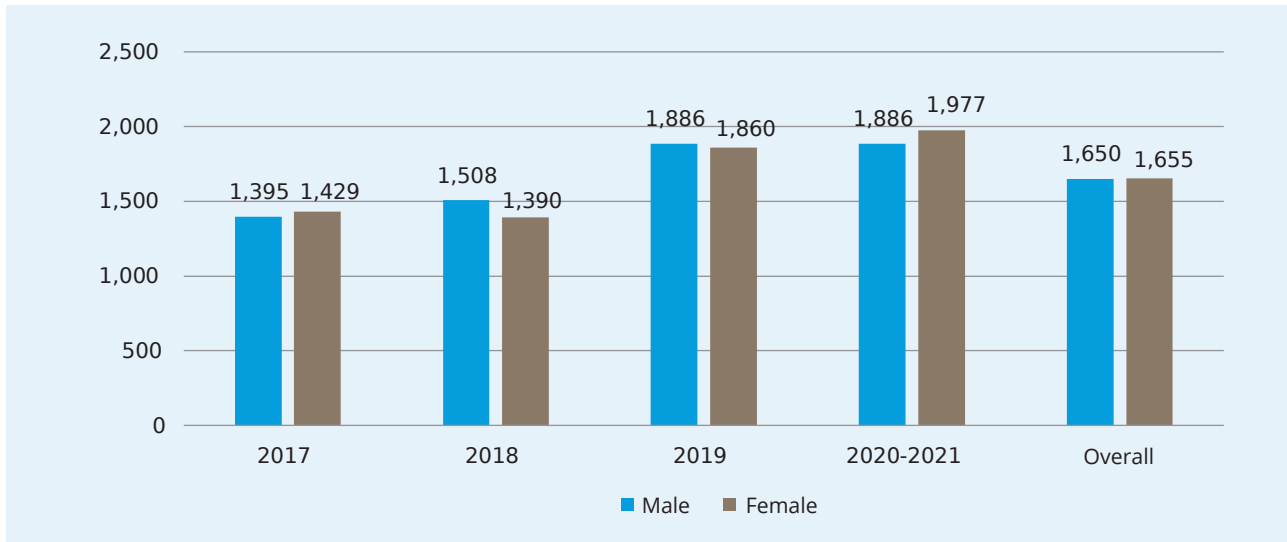
Average requested funding of applicants from Tbilisi (GEL) (self-employment support grant programme)



Source: Authors' calculations based on data provided by the Agency.

Figure 38:

Average requested funding of beneficiaries from Tbilisi (GEL) (self-employment support grant programme)



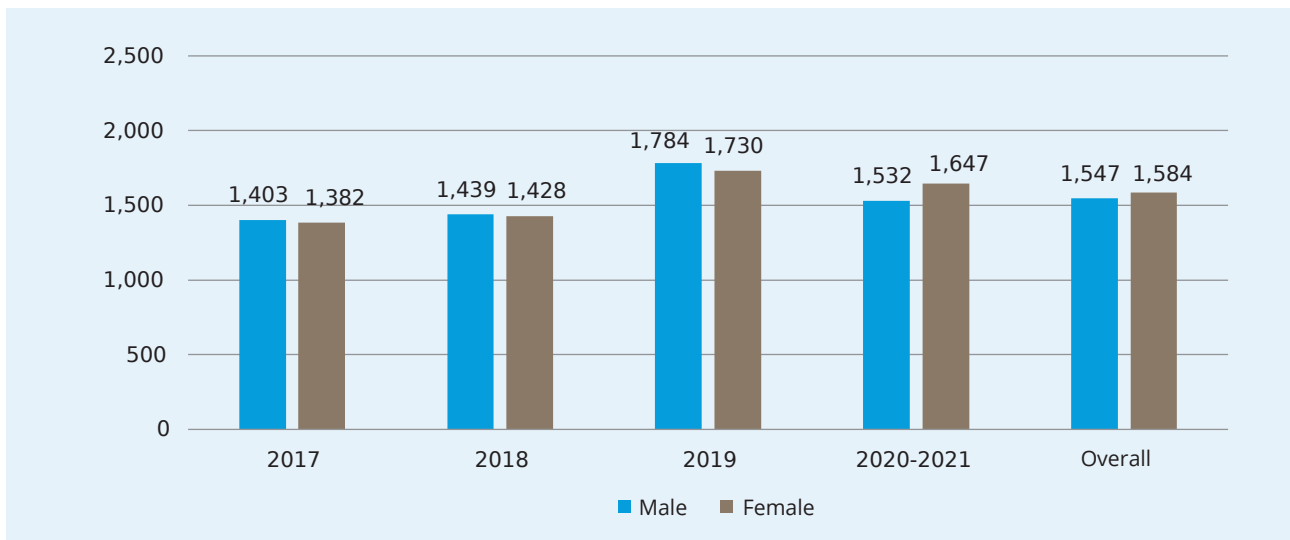
Source: Authors' calculations based on data provided by the Agency.

The difference in Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti region is even more noticeable. Overall, women there request more funding than men (GEL 1,584 versus GEL 1,547)

(Figure 39). Moreover, out of all the beneficiaries, women's requested funding is, on average, higher than the men's (GEL 1,730 versus GEL 1,645) (Figure 40).

Figure 39:

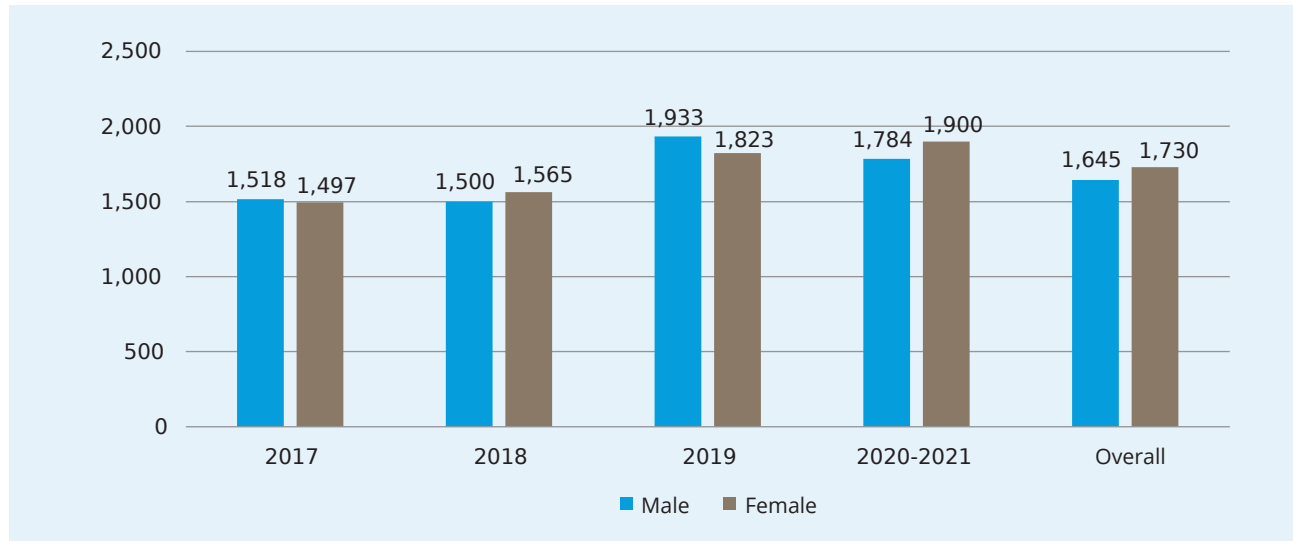
Average requested funding of applicants from Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti (GEL) (self-employment support grant programme)



Source: Authors' calculations based on data provided by the Agency.

Figure 40:

Average requested funding of beneficiaries from Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti (GEL) (self-employment support grant programme)



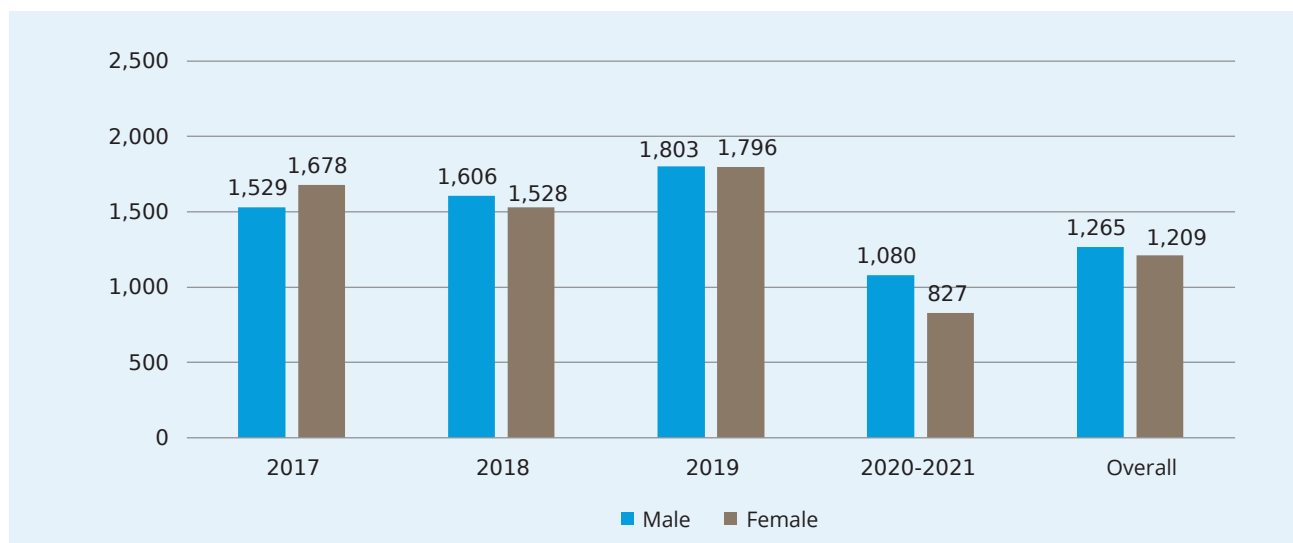
Source: Authors' calculations based on data provided by the Agency.

The difference in other regions is similar to what we observe in Tbilisi. On average, male and female applicants request GEL 1,265 and GEL 1,209,

respectively (Figure 41). Of the beneficiaries, men on average requested GEL 1,636 while women requested GEL 1,752 (Figure 42).

Figure 41:

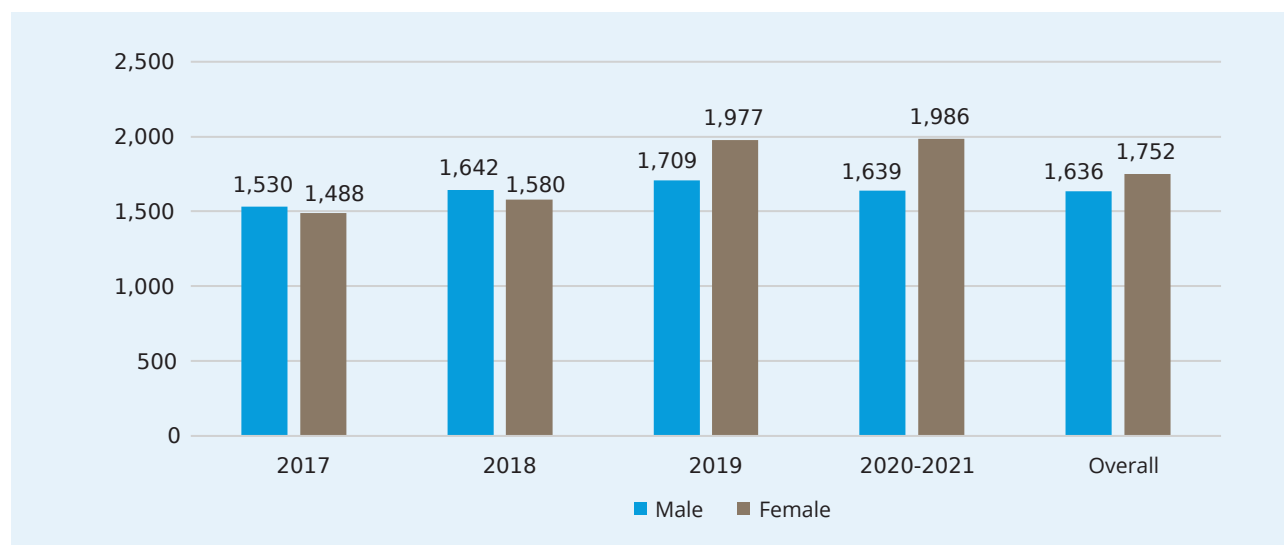
Average requested funding of applicants from other regions (GEL) (self-employment support grant programme)



Source: Authors' calculations based on data provided by the Agency.

Figure 42:

Average requested funding of beneficiaries from other regions (GEL) (self-employment support grant programme)



Source: Authors' calculations based on data provided by the Agency.

REFERENCES

- ACT. 2013. *Public Perceptions on Gender Equality in Politics and Business*. Tbilisi: ACT.
- _____. 2020. *Tracer Study Report for 2019 Vocational Education Programs*. Tbilisi: ACT.
- Association of Young Economists of Georgia. 2014. *Women's Economic Opportunities and Challenges*. Tbilisi: Association of Young Economists of Georgia.
- Benjamin, J. A. 1998. *The Gender Dimensions of Internal Displacement: Concept Paper and Annotated Bibliography*. UNICEF/IDP Gender Issues Paper.
- Deaux, K. and E. Farris. 1977. "Attributing Causes for One's Own Performance: The Effects of Sex, Norms, and Outcomes." *Journal of Research in Personality* 11 (1), pp. 59–72.
- IDMC (Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre). 2012. *Georgia - Partial Progress Towards Durable Solutions*. IDMC. <https://www.internal-displacement.org/publications/georgia-partial-progress-towards-durable-solutions-for-idps>.
- _____. 2020a. *Coordination and participation in Georgia - what worked and what didn't*. IDMC.
- _____. 2020b. *Women and Girls in Internal Displacement*. Geneva: IDMC.
- Le, A. T., P. W. Miller, W. S. Slutske and N. G. Martin. 2011. "Attitudes towards economic risk and the gender pay gap." *Labour Economics* 18 (4), pp. 555–561. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.labeco.2010.12.007>.
- Loughna, S. 2015. *An assessment of socio-economic integration and livelihood needs of IDPs in Georgia*. ACT.
- Meertens, D. and R. Stoller. 2001. "Facing Destruction, Rebuilding Life: Gender and the Internally Displaced in Colombia." *Latin American Perspectives* 28 (1), pp. 132–148. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3185096>.
- MES (Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia). 2017. *Unified Strategy for Education and Science 2017–2021*. Tbilisi: MES.
- _____. (2019). *Report on the Implementation of the 2019 Education Action Plan of the Unified Strategy for Education and Science (2017–2021)*. Tbilisi: MES.
- MoESD (Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia). 2018. *Survey of Labour Market Demands in the Tourism Industry*. MoESD.
- _____. 2019. *Survey of Labour Market Demands in the Construction Industry*. MoESD.
- State Commission on Migration Issues. 2019. *2019 Migration Profile of Georgia*. Tbilisi. https://migration.commission.ge/files/mp19_eng_web3.pdf.
- Torosyan, K., N. Pignatti and M. Obrizan. 2018. "Job market outcomes for IDPs: The case of Georgia." *Journal of Comparative Economics* 46 (3), pp. 800–820. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0147596718302439>.
- Tsurtsunia-Zurabashvili, A. 2019. *Availability of Vocational Education for Women's Economic Empowerment*. Tbilisi: Parliament of Georgia.
- UN Women (United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women). 2020. *Analysis of the Gender Pay Gap and Gender Inequality in the Labour Market in Georgia*. Tbilisi: UN Women. https://www2.unwomen.org/-/media/field%20office%20georgia/attachments/publications/2020/gender%20pay%20gap_georgia_eng.pdf?la=en&vs=636.
- UNDP, UNFPA, UN Women. (2021). *Second Wave of the Rapid Gender Assessment of the COVID-19 Situation in Georgia*. UNDP, UNFPA, UN Women.
- UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees). 2009. *Protection of Internally Displaced Persons in Georgia: A Gap Analysis*.
- Uvarova, E. and M. Yasenovskaya. 2020. *The Gender Dimension of Internal Displacement in Ukraine: Local Policies, Business Practices and Legal Instruments of Protection*. Pubic Alternative.



UN Women Georgia Country Office
87 Paliashvili Street, Office Suite 4, 0179
Tbilisi, Georgia
Tel: +995 32 222 06 04
+995 32 222 08 70

georgia.unwomen.org
www.unwomen.org