



**Institute of Social Studies and Analysis**

**PROBLEMS OF GEORGIAN AND NON-GEORGIAN POPULATION IN  
TEN SELECTED DISTRICTS AND THEIR ATTITUDE TO THE  
SERVICES PROVIDED BY LOCAL GOVERNMENT  
AND SELF-GOVERNANCE BODIES**

**(October 2008 )**

## **Methodology**

The **goal** of the survey was:

- a) to recognize level of satisfaction of citizens to those social services which are provided by legal institutions of local governance and self-governance;
- b) to find out tendencies of interaction between population and local government and decision making process concerning issues which are important for local residents.

**The type of Research:** Quantitative Sociological Survey;

**Method of data collection:** Face to face interview;

**General Unity:** 18+ years old population of 10 districts in Georgia;

**Sample size:** 4000 respondents.

Survey has been conducted in 5 regions: Adjara, Kakheti, Shida Kartli, Kvemo Qartli and Samtskhe-Javakheti. 10 districts/territorial units have been selected in each region, with compact settlements of ethnic Georgians, as well as ethnic non-Georgians:

- ✓ In Shida Qartli region ethnic Georgians and non-Georgians (mainly, Ossetians) of Gori and Kaspi districts have been interviewed;
- ✓ In Kakheti region ethnic Georgians and non-Georgians (mainly, Azerbaijanians) of Lagodekhi and Sagaredjo districts have been interviewed;
- ✓ In Adjara region ethnic Georgians and non-Georgians (mainly, Russians and Armenians) of Batumi city and Kobuleti district have been interviewed;
- ✓ In Kvemo Qartli region ethnic Georgians and non-Georgians (mainly, Azerbaijanians) of Marneuli and Dmanisi districts have been interviewed;
- ✓ In Samtskhe-Javakheti region ethnic Georgians and non-Georgians (mainly, Armenians) of Akhaltsikhe and Akhalkalaki districts have been interviewed;

400 respondents have been interviewed in each territorial unit, among them 200 – ethnic Georgians and 200 – ethnic non-Georgians. Equal number of Georgian and non-Georgian respondents provides representative data for each group in each territorial unit.

### **Sampling:**

**Sample frame:** Data base of Census units of the 2002 population Census for Georgia.

**Sample design:** Multi stage cluster sampling with preliminary stratification.

Overall sample size (4000 interviews) has been distributed between target districts/territorial units in proportion to population with 18 and more age.

Each district has been divided in strata according to the size of settlement. Namely, 2 strata were defined in each district:

1. Small towns/district centers;
2. Rural settlements.

Sample size which is defined for each district has been distributed between strata in proportion to population with 18 and more age.

**Primary Sampling Unit (PSU)** was:

- a) Census units in /town/district center strata;
- b) Village in rural strata.

In each PSU 10 interviews have been conducted. PSU's have been selected by using Probability Proportional to Size (PPS) method.

**Secondary Sampling Unit (SSU)** was household. In each selected PSU SSU's have been selected by random walking method using step between households. Step size differed in different types of settlement.

**Final Sampling Unit (FSU)** was individual with 18 and more age. FSU's have been selected by using Kish Table.

**Data weighting** has been conducted according to settlement, age and gender quotas.

Sample model has been designed in such manner that maximum number of error for each unit is following:

- ✓ District population: 1.5%
- ✓ Ethnic Georgians in district: 2.2%
- ✓ Ethnic Georgians in districts: 2.2%

Distribution of the overall Sample Size is given in the table #1:

**table #1**

<b>district</b>	<b>village %</b>	<b>town %</b>	<b>Georgian %</b>	<b>non-Georgian %</b>	<b>Sum %</b>
1. Gori	52.4	47.6	49.8	50.2	10.0
2. Kaspi	52.5	47.5	49.5	50.5	10.0
3. Akhaltsikhe	52.5	47.5	50.6	49.4	10.0
4. Akhalkalaki	52.6	47.4	50.5	49.5	10.0
5. Dmanisi	52.5	47.5	50.2	49.8	10.0
6. Marneuli	52.5	47.5	48.7	51.3	10.0
7. Batumi		100.0	50.1	49.9	10.0
8. Kobuleti	47.5	52.5	50.3	49.7	10.0
9. Lagodekhi	63.7	36.3	51.5	48.5	10.0
10. Sagaredjo	70.5	29.5	49.3	50.7	10.0
<b>Sum</b>	<b>49.7</b>	<b>50.3</b>	<b>50.0</b>	<b>50.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

## Main Findings and Conclusions

With the exception of Batumi, the territorial units with prevailing non-Georgian population are better informed about the local budget and the activities of local governance and self-governance bodies than the territorial units with the majority of Georgian population. This could be caused by the fact that in those districts there are more programs implemented by international organizations and NGOs and aimed at the development of local governance and self-governance bodies.

Respondents' level of awareness is much higher than the level of *participation* in the discussion of the local budget. In the covered districts, a vast majority of respondents (over 80%) has never been involved in like activity.

In the assessment of local governance and self-governance bodies positive evaluation prevails.

In all the selected territorial units, the employment problem is named much more topical than the other problems faced by the districts. This is followed by problems related to utility service (gas and water supply). The fact that the scarcity of entertainment places ranks fourth among the problems also deserves attention.

With the exception of Batumi, the level of infrastructure development (water pipes, gas pipes, sewerage system, outdoors lightning, garbage disposal, roads, transport, places for entertainment, medical and preschool institutions) is low or very low. Only the electricity supply problem is more or less solved.

When evaluating the importance of problems, respondents from *Akhalkalaki district* assess actually all the problems (except for employment) as more topical and acute than other respondents. This could have two explanations: 1) *Objective* explanation: All the listed problems are more topical for Akhalkalaki district than for the other districts; 2) *Subjective* explanation: Residents of Akhalkalaki district are more sensitive to these problems and are more demanding. Cultural peculiarities might have also contributed to this. We can assume that the "potential to express protest" is higher with dense Armenian population in Georgia than with other nationalities. I think that experts have to determine how grounded these assumptions are.

In the selected districts, citizens do not often approach the local government to ask for the solution of named problems. As a rule, for the last two years, over 70% of respondents has never approached local governance or self-governance bodies for assistance. The situation is better only in Dmanisi district where 35% of citizens has approached authorities for help.

Among those respondents who have approached the local government for this or that kind of help, two frequencies prevail: a) once a year, and b) more rarely than once a year. And again, the situation is relatively better in the selected districts of Kvemo Kartli (Dmanisi, Marneuli).

When asked why they had never asked local governance for assistance, respondents in most selected districts said that there was *no hope the government would provide any help*. This was named as the main reason. In other cases respondents said that the reason was the inexistence of problems. In some cases (in Akhaltsikhe and Akhalkalaki districts) population prefers to find informal alternatives to government assistance like the solution of problem by oneself or with the help of friends.

In local government, the bodies that are basically approached by population are the district gameoba (in case of districts) and the mayor's office in case of Batumi.

Population approaches the government mainly to solve the following problems:

- Pensions and allowances;
- Medical service;
- Problems related to dwelling;
- Problems related to drinking water;
- Employment;
- Problems related to irrigation water.

In individual districts covered by the survey different problems are more salient than the others. So, the districts differ by the problems they request local authorities to solve.

- Population in Kaspi district approaches the government to solve the problems related to pensions and allowances;
- In Akhaltsikhe districts demands are mostly related to drinking water;
- Population in Dmanisi district mostly asks authorities to solve medical problems;
- In Batumi the local government is mostly approached because of dwelling houses and apartments.

Respondents basically give a negative evaluation to the readiness of local governance to help population. According to respondents, the lowest level of readiness to help is characteristic of the local governance of Kartli districts – Gori and Kaspi. Citizens of the selected districts in Kvemo Kartli and Samtskhe – Javakheti as well as those in Lagodekhi district also express dissatisfaction. The local governance of Sagarejo district is thought to show solidarity with people. Ajara is also relatively satisfied with the local governance (Kobuleti district, Batumi).

Irrespective of whether the local governance's readiness is positively or negatively evaluated, the *opinion that problems have not been solved* is common to all the districts.

Despite this, the survey shows that some link still exists between the positive evaluation of the authorities' readiness to help and the objective solution of problems. 43% of respondents who approached the government for help says that the problems were fully or partially solved. The same was mentioned by over one third of respondents in Ajara who had approached the local government for help.

In many districts (Lagodekhi, Kaspi, Gori, Akhalkalaki, Kobuleti districts; Batumi) it was difficult for most respondents to name the *reasons* that prevented the local government from carrying out their responsibilities in an appropriate way. Those who named such reasons spoke about lack of finances, lack of professionalism and poor management. Purely subjective factors, like low motivation to do job, were not considered as determinants.

It is notable that corrupt deals as a shortcoming of government performance was rated as one of the lowest among the factors in almost all the districts. However, Kvemo Kartli districts (Dmanisi, Marneuli) are exceptional in this respect. In these districts many point to corruption among local authorities (18% and 15%, respectively).

The findings clearly show that when dealing with this or that problem authorities are never biased and treat equally ethnically Georgian and non-Georgian population. Respondents have minimum complaints regarding unequal treatment.

Respondents have no clear opinion regarding population's appropriate reaction to local government's inability to solve problems. A very big share of respondents (especially in Ajara and Akhaltsikhe districts) is not able to answer this question. There is quite a significant number of respondents in many districts who are used to the existing situation. Arrangement of protest marches is most supported in Dmanisi district. In Gori district people prefer to directly address the central government. In Marneuli district formation of community unions able to solve problems through one's own resources is thought to be most advisable.

Survey results show that the residents of Kvemo Kartli districts (Dmanisi, Marneuli), are most involved in community life. Level of involvement is also relatively high in Shida Kartli districts (Gori, Kaspi) and Batumi. In this respect, the situation is deplorable in Samtskhe – Javakheti and Sagarejo districts.

Find below the most common forms of participation in community life:

- a) Participation in different community meetings;
- b) Participation in collective declarations, in fund raising activities to solve problems, etc.

The survey revealed a statistically significant difference between Georgian and non-Georgian respondents when evaluating problems and their components. This difference bears the signs of structural discrimination and/or of the situation where people are used to problems (Find the explanation of the terms in the text). Many cases like these are clearly observed in the districts that are densely populated with non-Georgians constituting a minority (Lagodekhi, Sagarejo, Kaspi, Gori districts). The named cases are minimal in the districts without, actually, any non-Georgian residents densely populating their territory (Batumi, Kobuleti district). There are some signs of structural discrimination of the local Georgian population in Akhalkalaki district and/or of the situation where population is used to the existing problems.