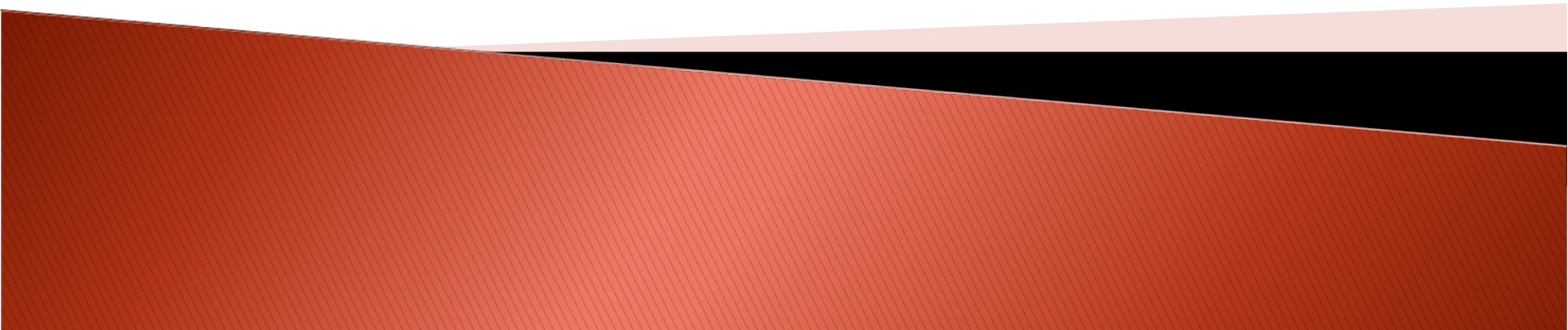


The Georgian Transnational Household: Spanning the Georgian – United States Divide


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Outline

- ▶ About the Research (goals, subject, methods and place of the study);
 - ▶ Social structure of Georgian migrants in the USA;
 - ▶ Emigrants' attitudes toward their being in the USA;
 - ▶ Concluding thoughts and recommendations
- 

The Goal and Subject of the Research

- ▶ To examine the current emigration trends from Georgia to the United States through exploring of transnational migrant households with a special focus on the experiences of labour migrants, as well as migrants' motivation for staying in the country of destination (USA) for a period of time, is the purpose of the project;
- ▶ The Georgian 'transnational household', a new type of a family ***“that has adopted a deliberate strategy of living two or more countries in order to maximize opportunities”*** (Ho, and Bedford. 2008, 41) for the welfare of their household and family members, is the *subject* of the survey.

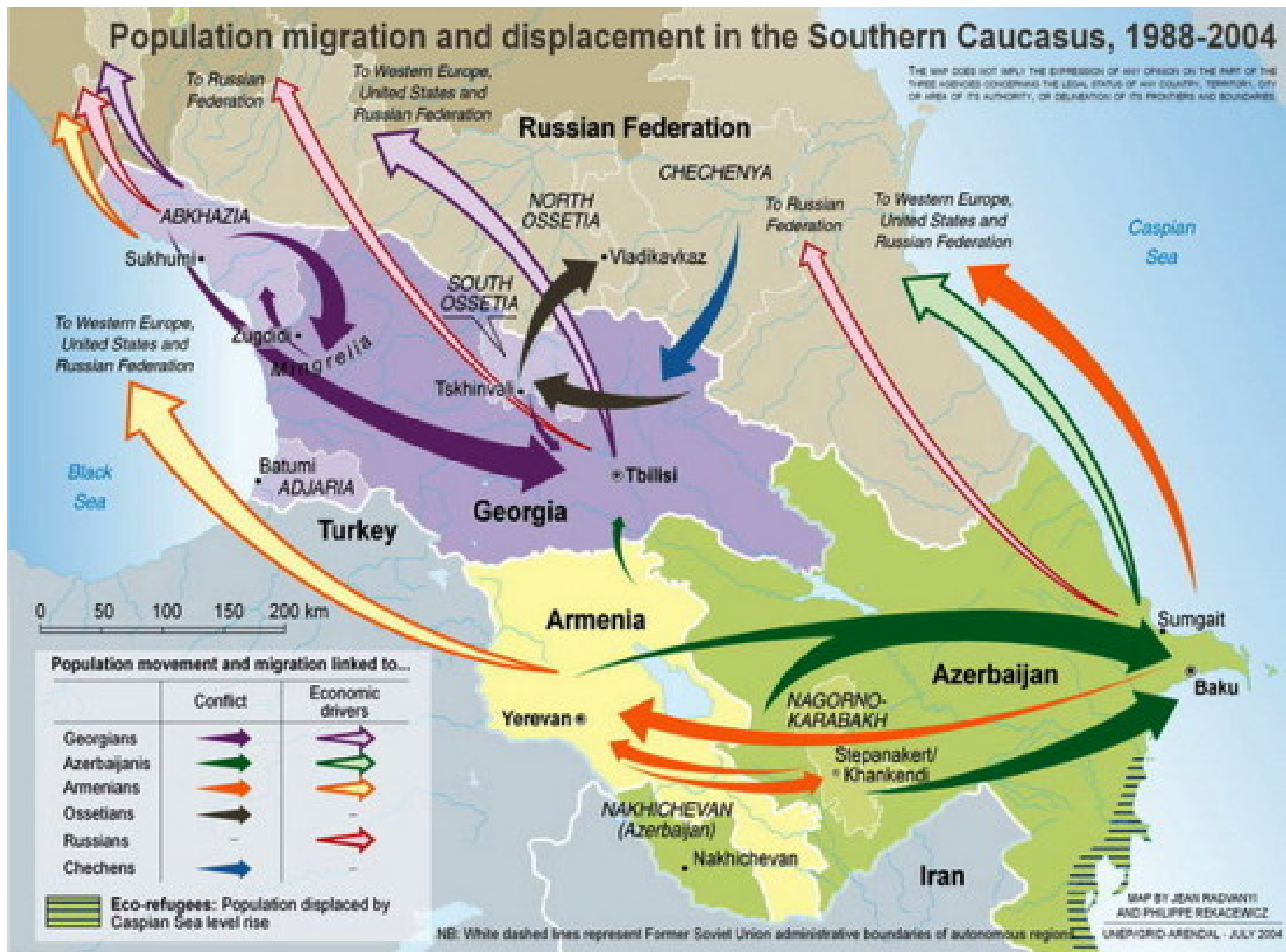
The Methods and Place of Study

By employing multiple *methods*:

- ▶ in-depth interviews, 21 total (the IRB application was issued by UM)
- ▶ 17- item questionnaires, 54 total (distributed in Greek Orthodox Church in Brooklyn, New York, after the services among the Georgian parish members)
- ▶ 159 online questionnaires at www.babajana.com
- ▶ and secondary statistical data, we examine in what ways and spheres do emigration and transnational exchanges shape and affect the Georgian family.

The Background and Some Specifics of Georgian Emigration

- ▶ The Georgian labour emigration community has never been studied. Historically, Georgians were not distinguished with high mobility. During the Soviet Era, for almost 96,5% of ethnic Georgians who lived in the USSR, the permanent place of residence was the Georgian SSR (*Gachechiladze, R.1997.9*);
- ▶ The Georgian exodus is a new social phenomenon that started in the early 1990s -- following the break- up of the Soviet Union. By now 1 to 1.2 of 4.6 million Georgians have emigrated (*Meladze; 2003.p.40*);
- ▶ Some structural changes accompany this exodus, in particular the feminization of emigration, the professional transformation (*Toqmazishvili, 2007.p.51*) and the separation of a nuclear family members;
- ▶ The main purpose of the most labour migrants is to maintain regular contacts with their family members in the native country and send remittances.



http://maps.grida.no/go/graphic/population_migration_and_displacement_in_the_southern_caucasus_1988_2004

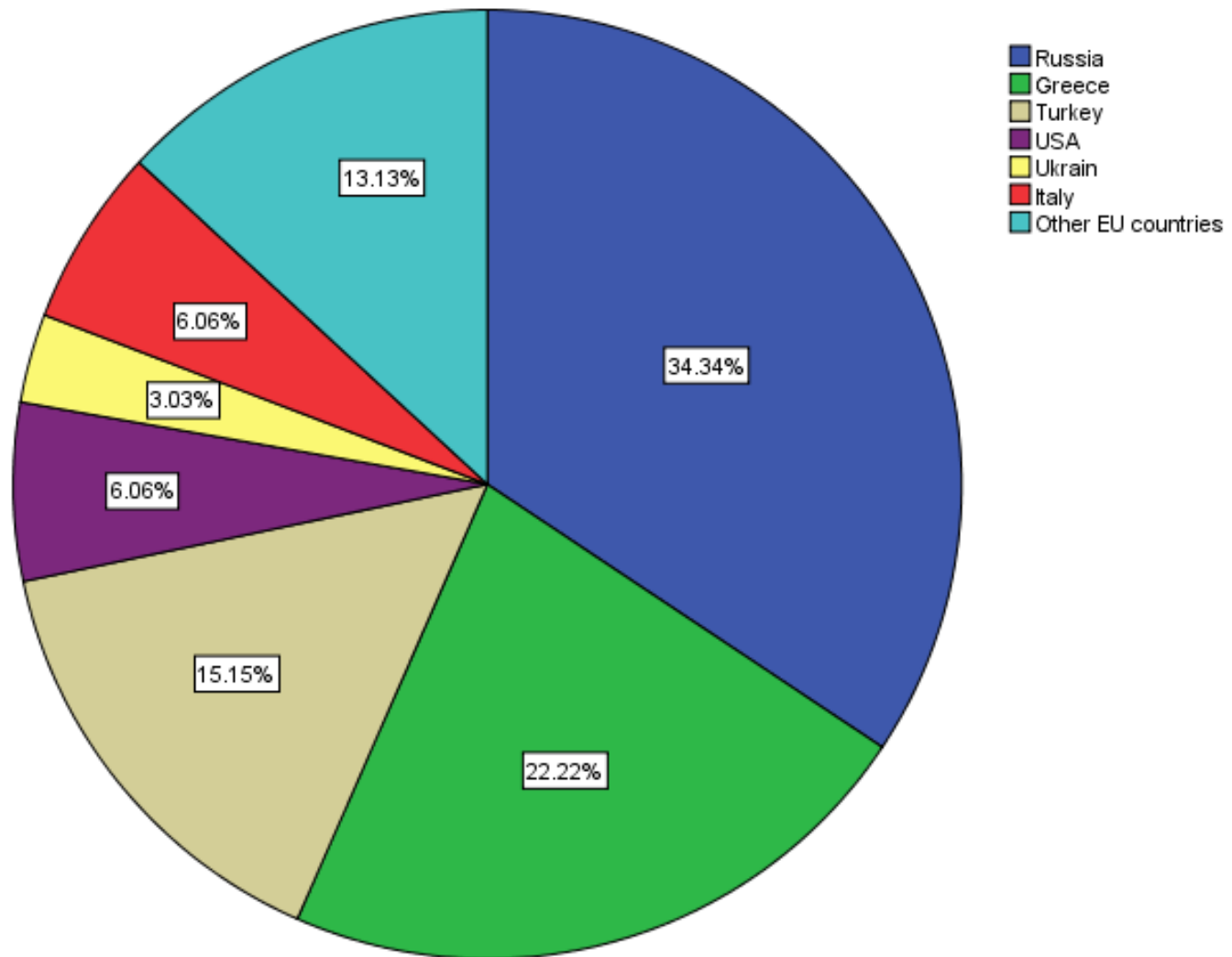
State of research in the field of study

Surveys on contemporary migration issues are scant in Georgia.

- ▶ *Labor Migration from Georgia*. (2003) by the IOM;
- ▶ *Migration and Remittances: Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union*. (2006) by the WB
- ▶ *Migration in the Black Sea Region: An Overview 2008* by the IOM
- ▶ *Migration in Georgia: A Country Profile 2008* by the IOM
- ▶ *Assessment of Banking Institutions* (2009) by the IOM
- ▶ A few articles of some Georgian experts

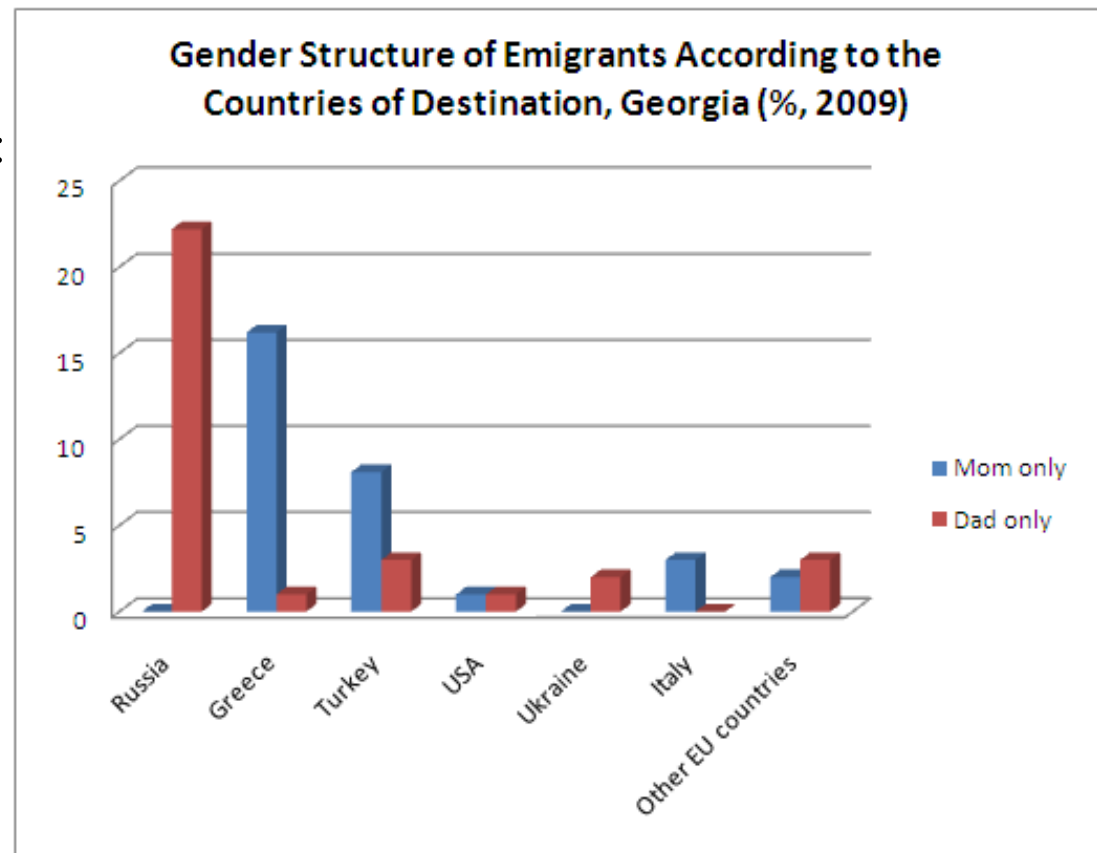
- ▶ In fall 2009 we conducted the first part of our research of Georgian migrants in Georgia

Countries of Destination. Georgia, 2009



The Sex-Age Structure of respondents, % (US, 2010)

- ▶ Female – 50.7%; Male – 49.3% (relatively 54.7% and 45.3% by IOM, 2003)
 - ▶ Age – 18-25 -- 12.1%
 - ▶ 26-35 --- 24.2%
 - ▶ **36-55 --- 48.4%**
 - ▶ 56-over --15.2%
-
- ▶ Georgian women migrants in:
 - ▶ Russia --14.8%
 - ▶ USA --- 54.7%
 - ▶ Greece – 70.1% (IOM,2003),



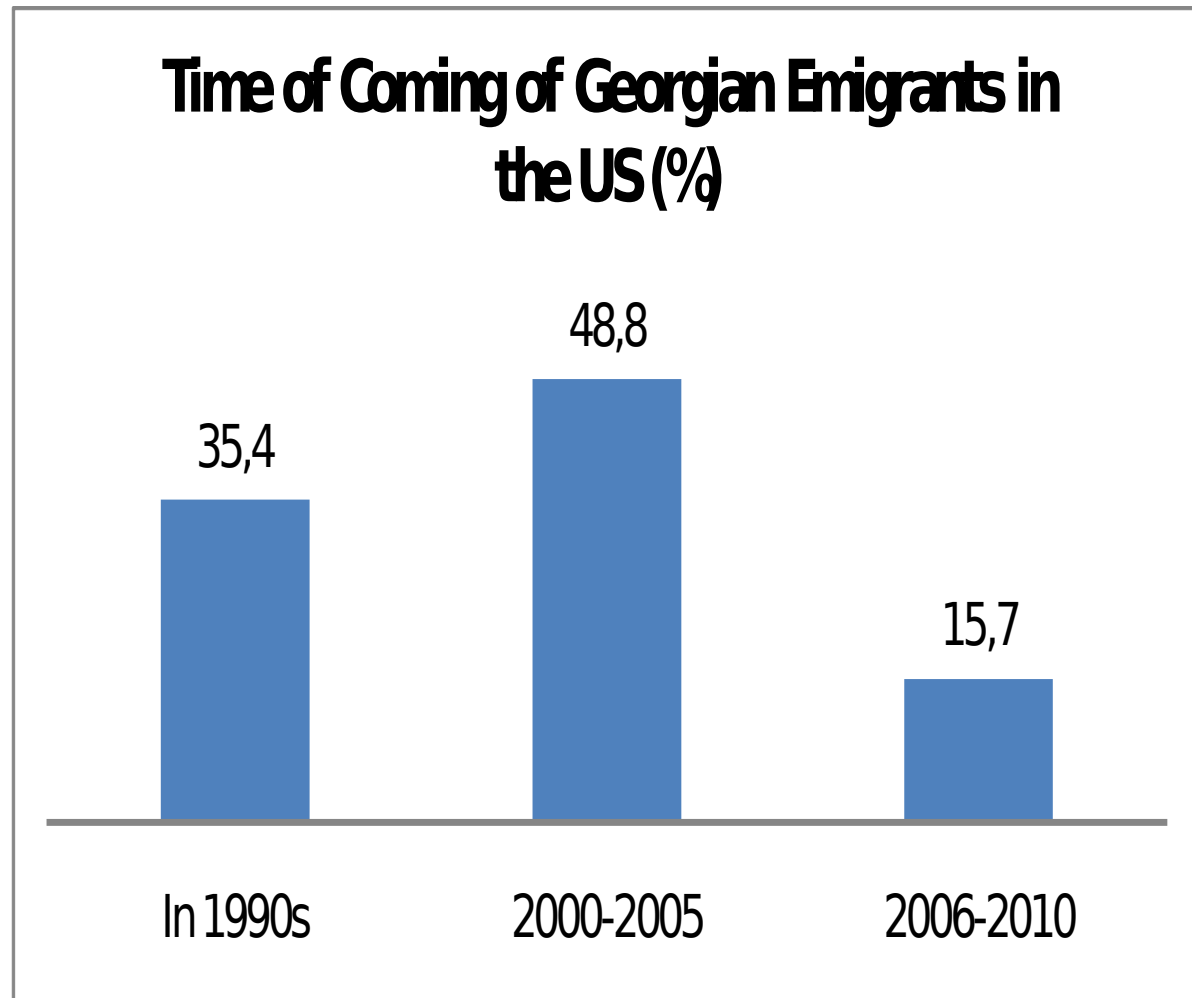
Time of Coming of Georgian Labour Migrants in the US

- ▶ Net migration rate in Georgia:

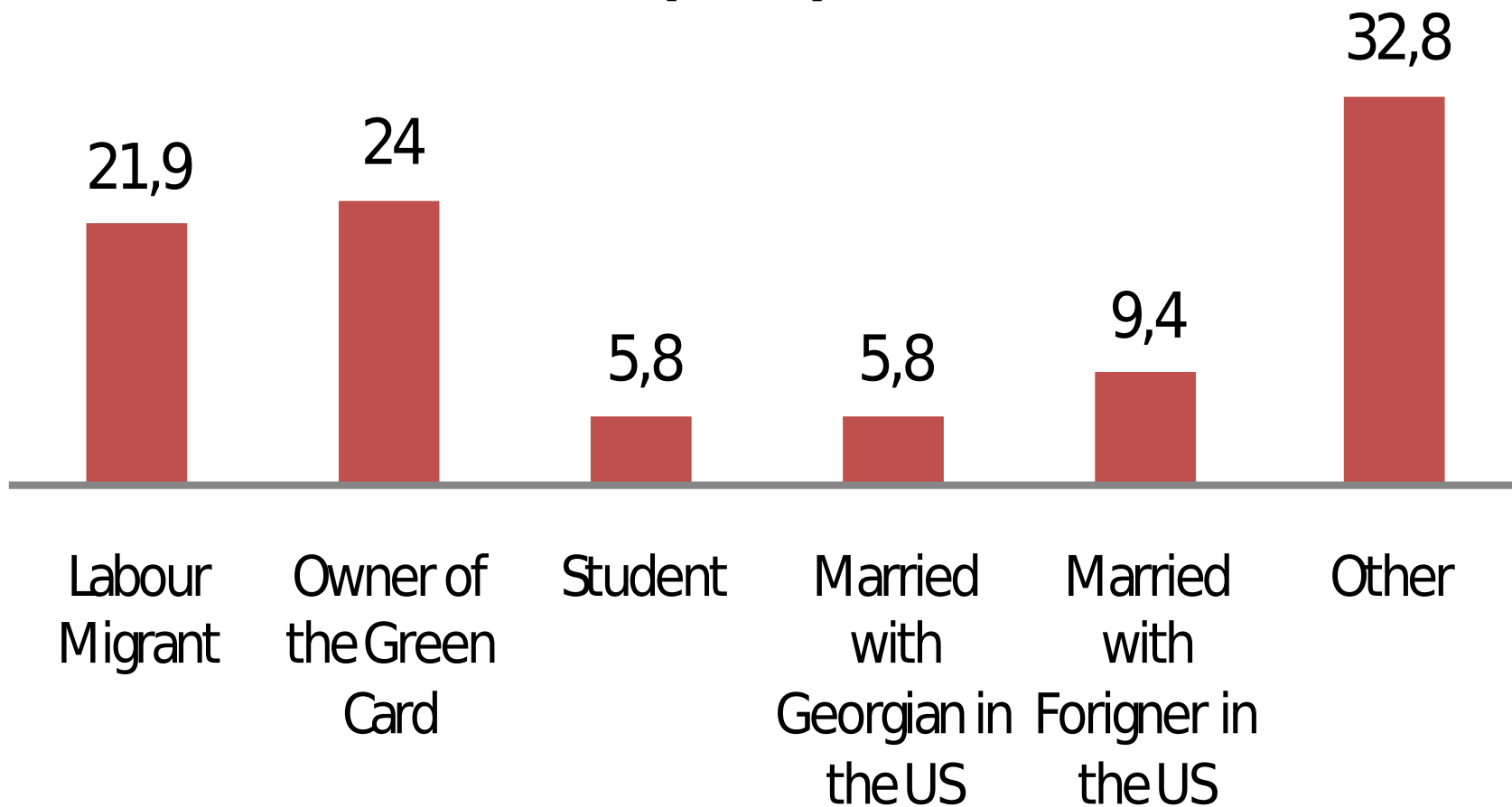
- ▶ 2005 ---- -22.5%

- ▶ 2008 ---- -20.7%

Source: (Migration in Georgia:
Country Profile 2008, p.11. IOM
www.statistics.ge).



The Status of Georgian Emigrants in The USA (2010) %

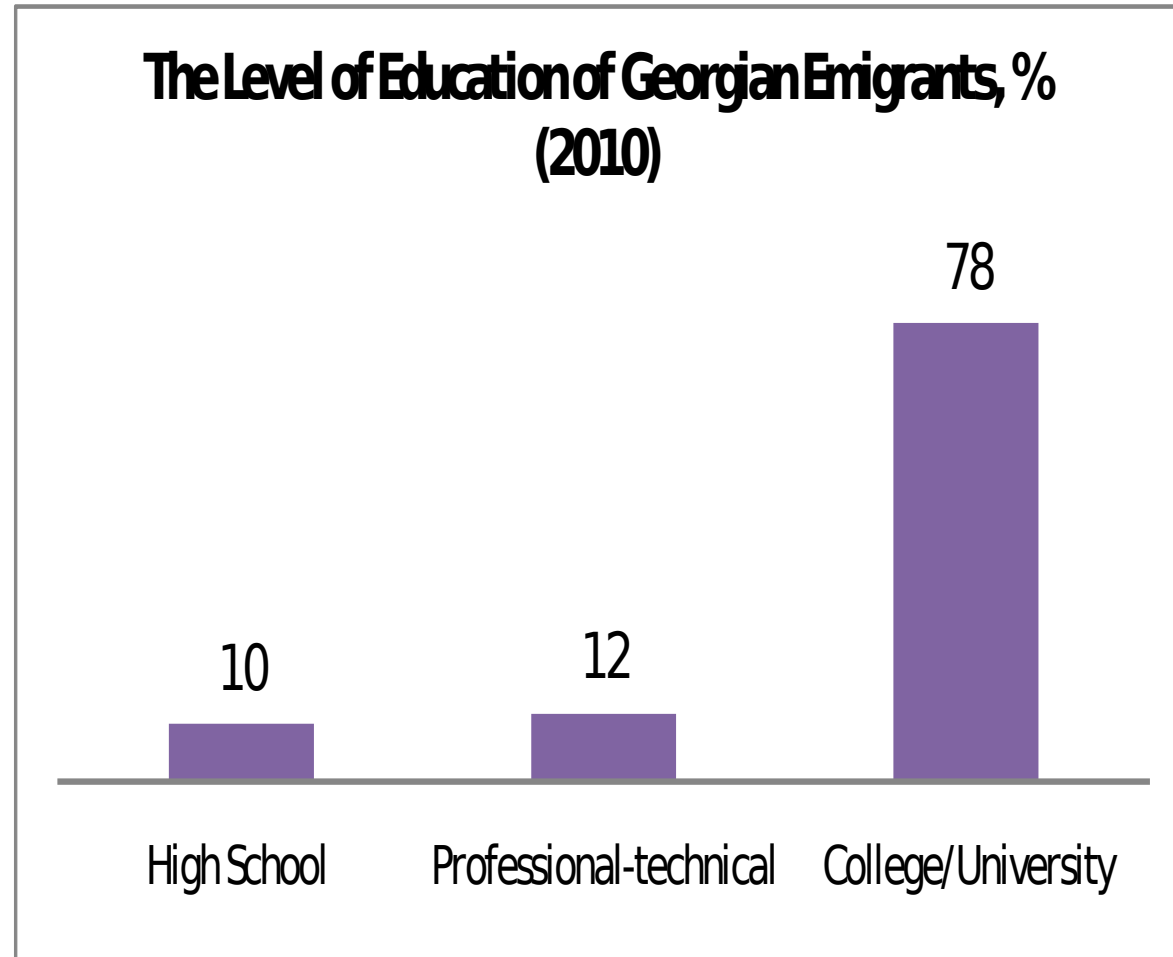


The level of Education of Emigrants'

- ▶ 44% of Georgian emigrants are with college/university education however, only 17.5% of them practice according to their qualification

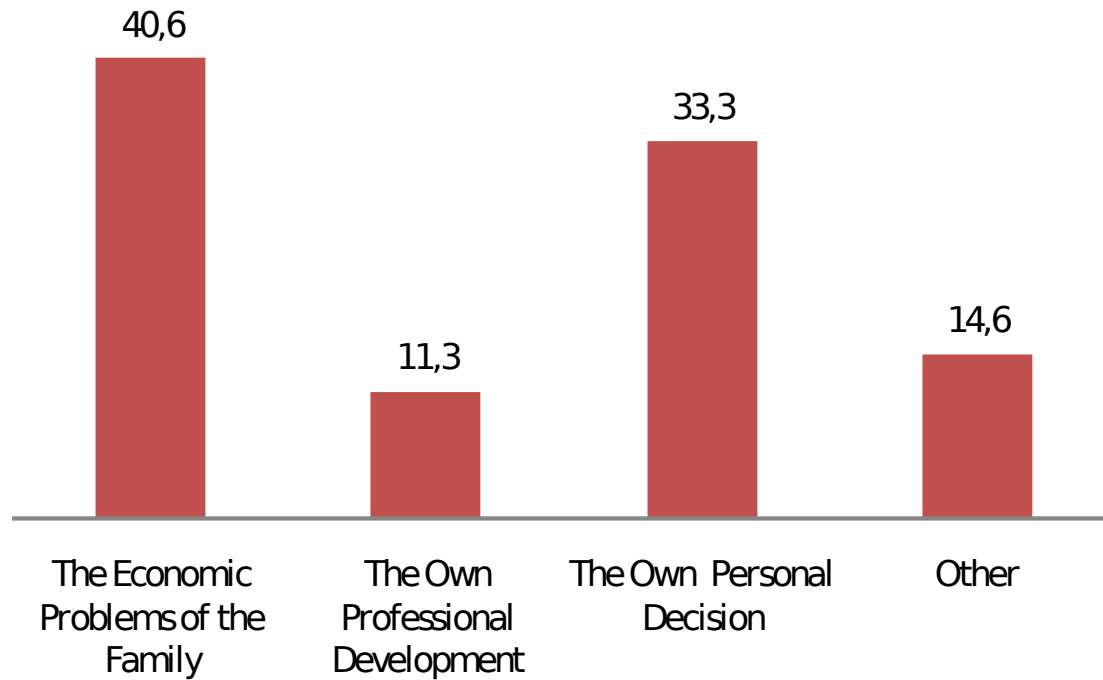
Source :Labour Migration from Georgia, IOM. 2003:44

Skilled capitalless migrants

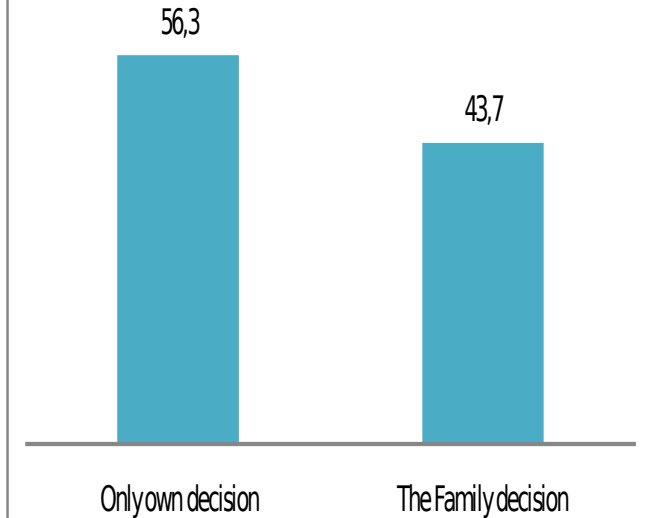


The Main Reasons to Emigrate

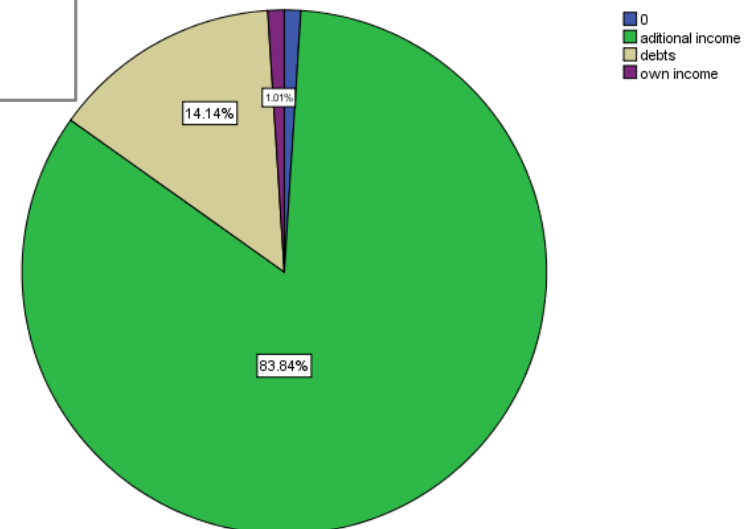
The Main Reason to Emigrate, %(2010)



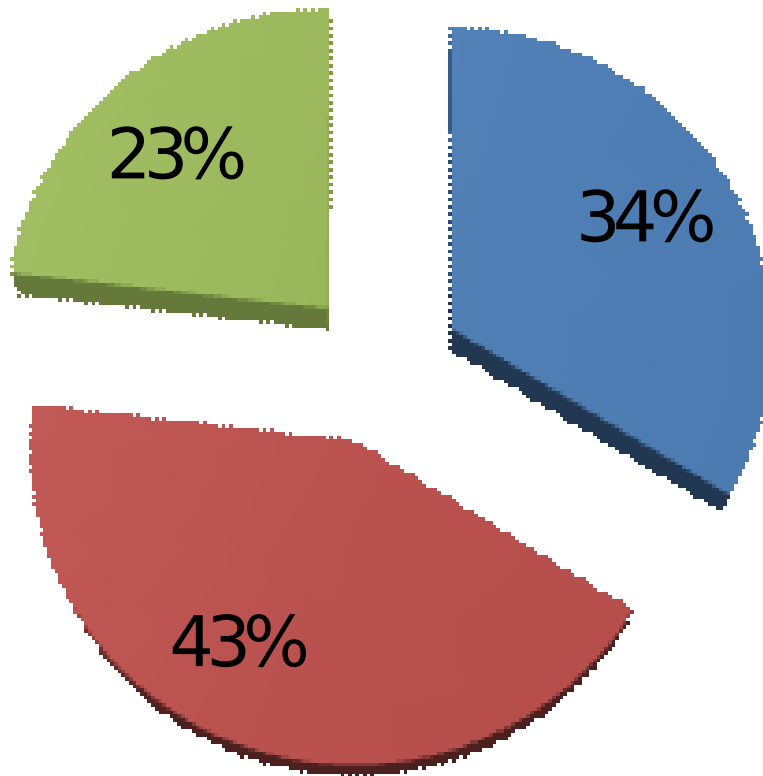
The Choice of Decision, %(2010)



Reasons to emigrate. Georgia, 2009

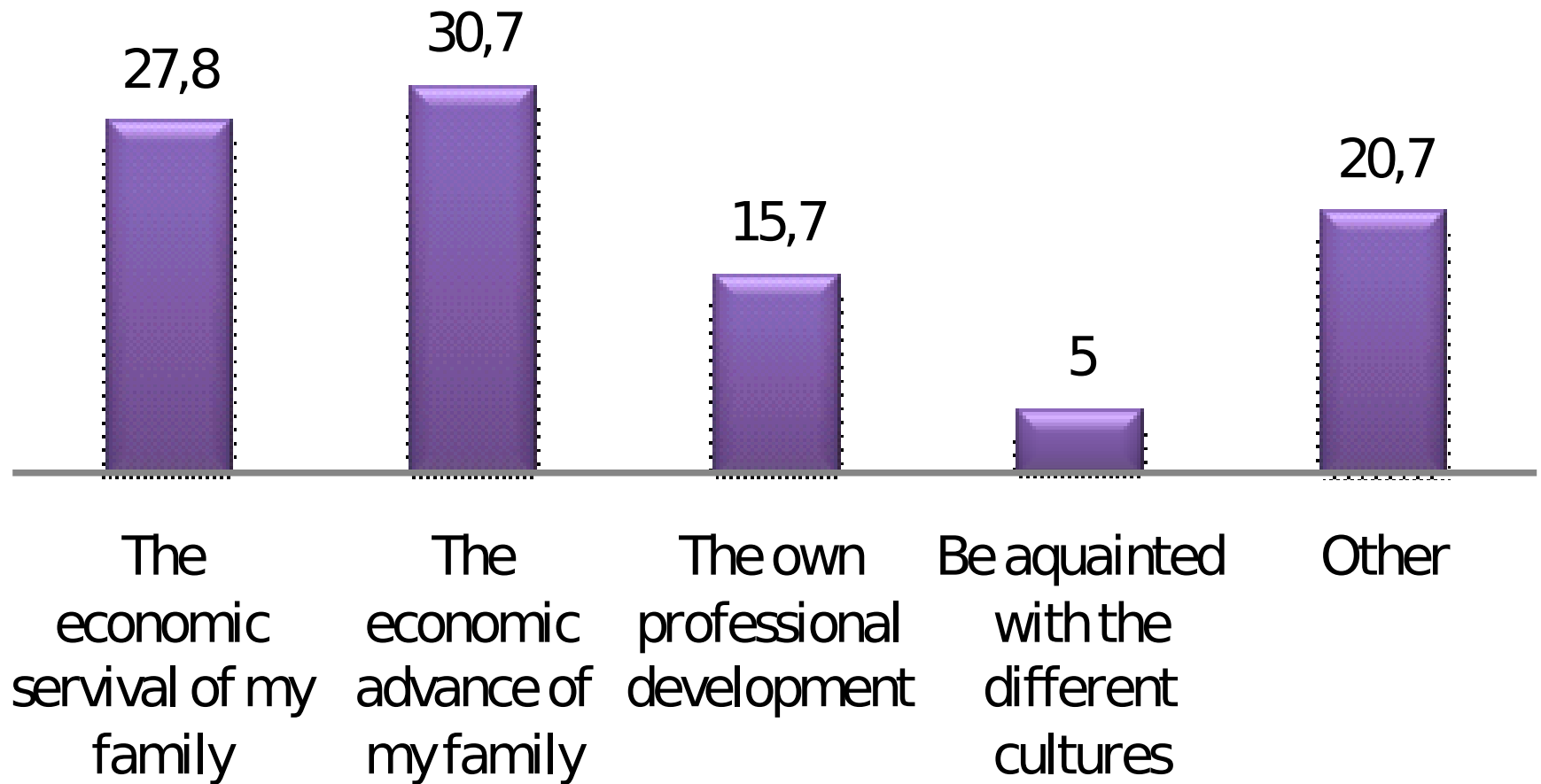


Why the USA? (2010) %



- Already existed network of familiar Georgian emigrants
- Higher/better job compencation than in Europe
- Good opportunity for education

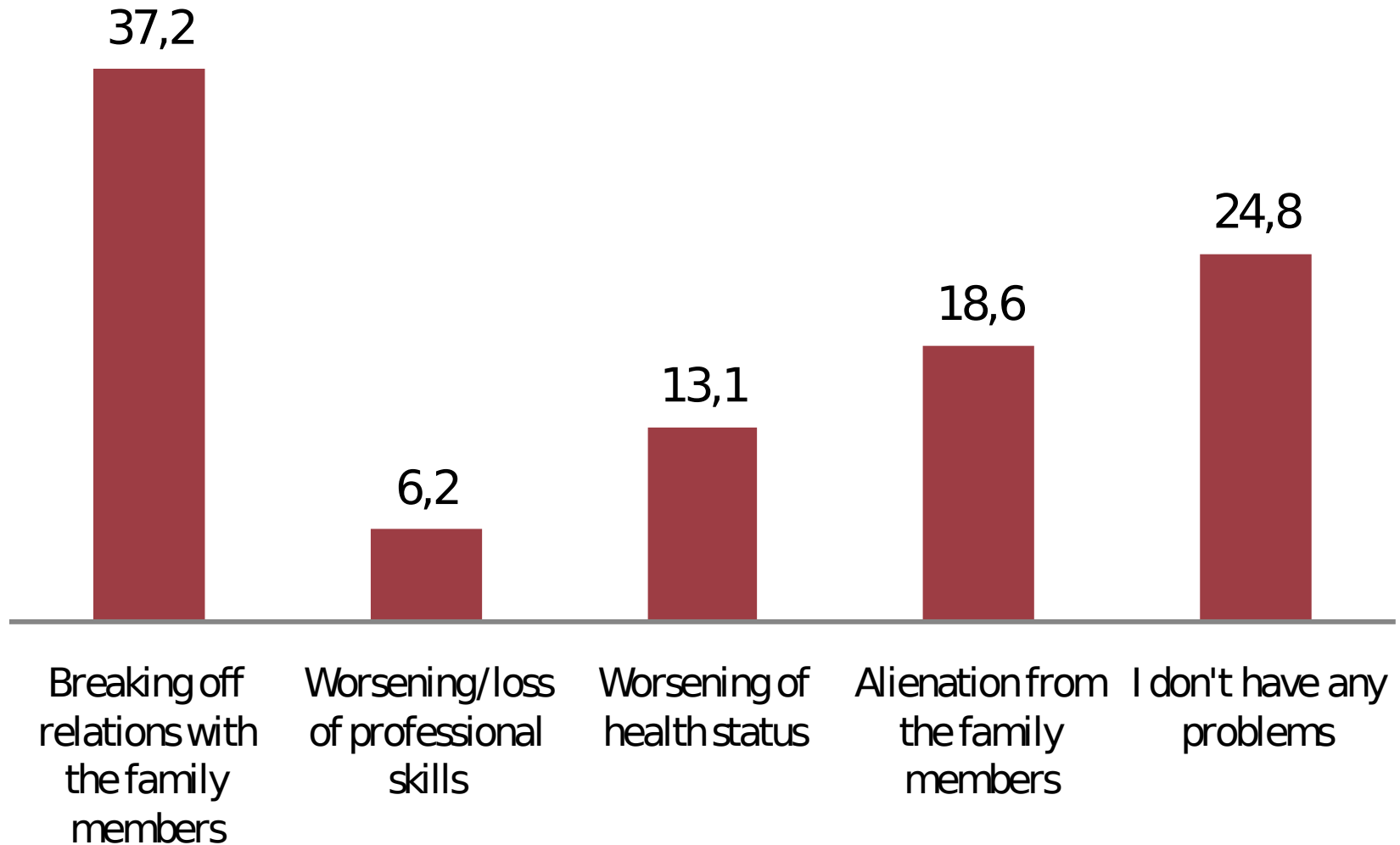
The Positive Sides of Being in the US, % (2010)



- ▶ *“...The rule of law, is among the first, I dream to have it in my country. When I violated the traffic rules, policeman issued me a ticket, he was right... When it happens, I never dispute with them, cause I trust them, they will never do it purposely like it was in Georgia. What is more, I know that I and a common American are equal in this regard,...well, not someone like celebrities or so,... you know, elite is elite everywhere, just I and an ordinary American guy”.* Zura, 52 years old, driver. Monroe, NY. April, 2010

- ▶ *“I like these wonderful opportunities for economic welfare and education here. I was the head of the Rustavi chemical plant laboratory. I and my husband (also with university education) worked for decades there. However, never afforded even to redecorate our tiny apartment. I applied to Green Card lottery and I won it. I took my family here. I was working very hard as a care giver. My daughters received medical education and work at the city dispensary now. I have wonderful grandkids, they are even smarter than their parents, but they can hardly speak Georgian, they are almost Americans”.* Lia, 67 years old, housewife. Brooklyn, New York. April, 2010

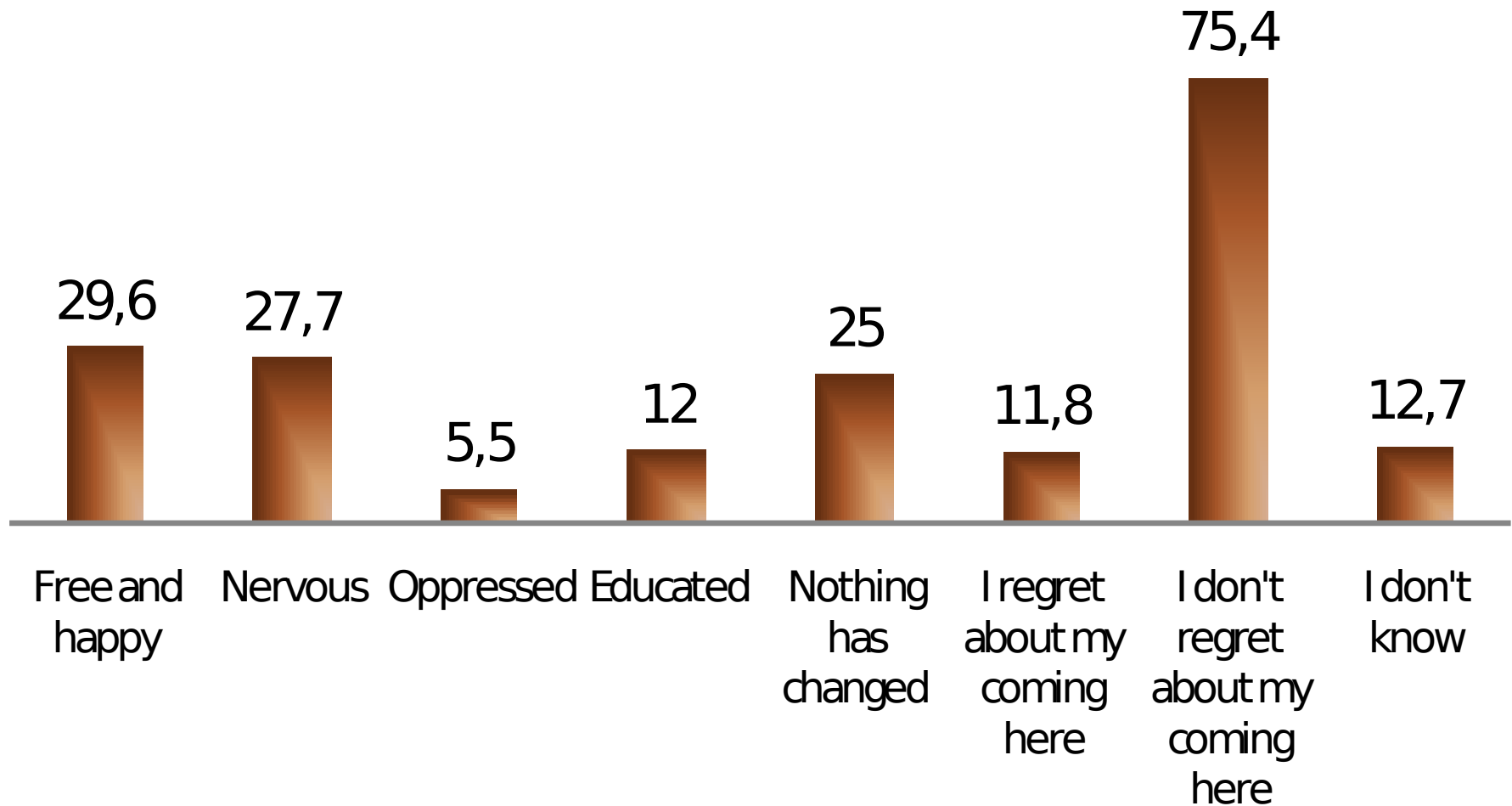
The Negative Sides of Being in the US, % (2010) %



- ▶ *“Which relations you are speaking about, which relations? How they can remain the same? Hey, come on, ... 11 years I am here, everything has changed, I am different, probably my wife is different too, even our kids, ... they grew up without me. When I arrived in America, I called them every day and thought that nothing can change our relations, but now I call her just once in a month, nothing is to speak about...”. Gia, 39 years old. Monroe, NY.*
- ▶ *“It seems to me that I have lost common language with my son. We were very cordial friends, but now... I don't know..., our everyday phone conversations become more and more like, ... official”. Nana, 58 years old, care giver. Monroe, NY.*

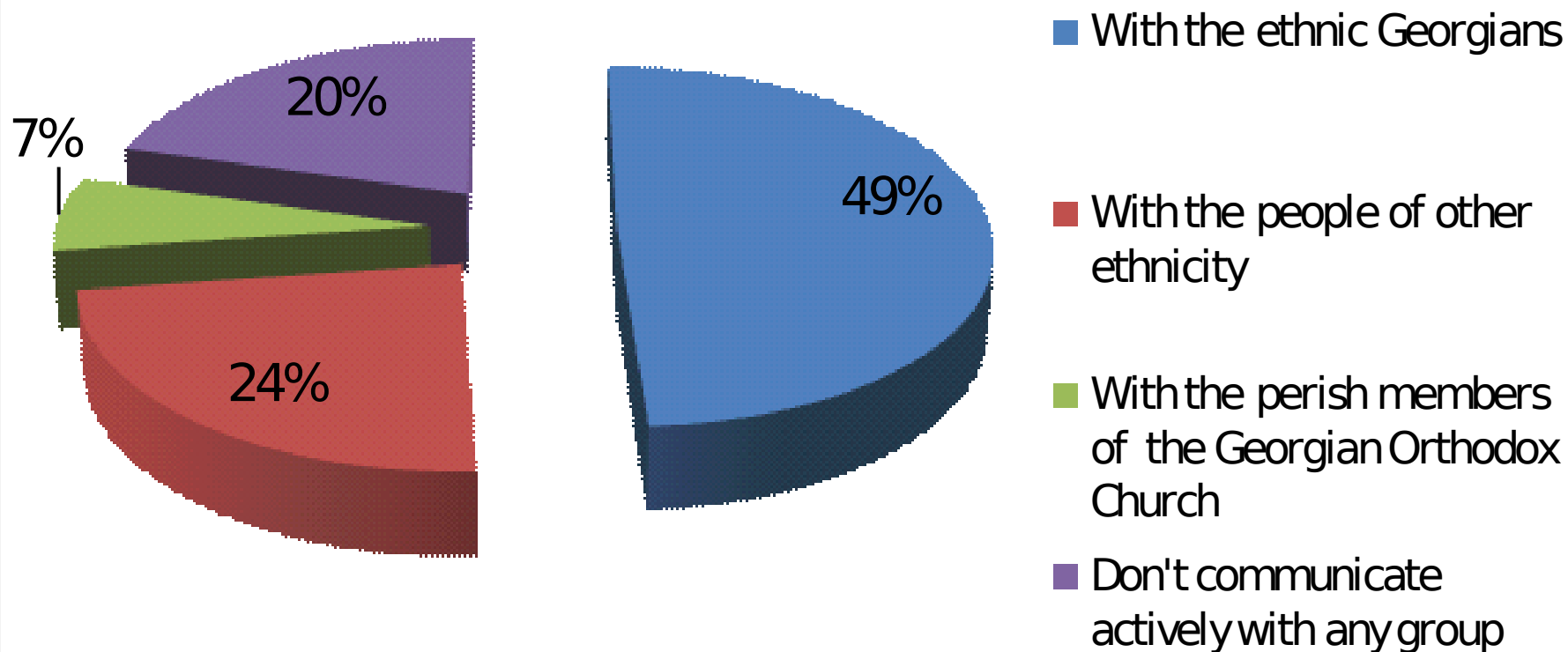
Emigrants' Attitudes Toward Their Coming to the US, (2010)

%

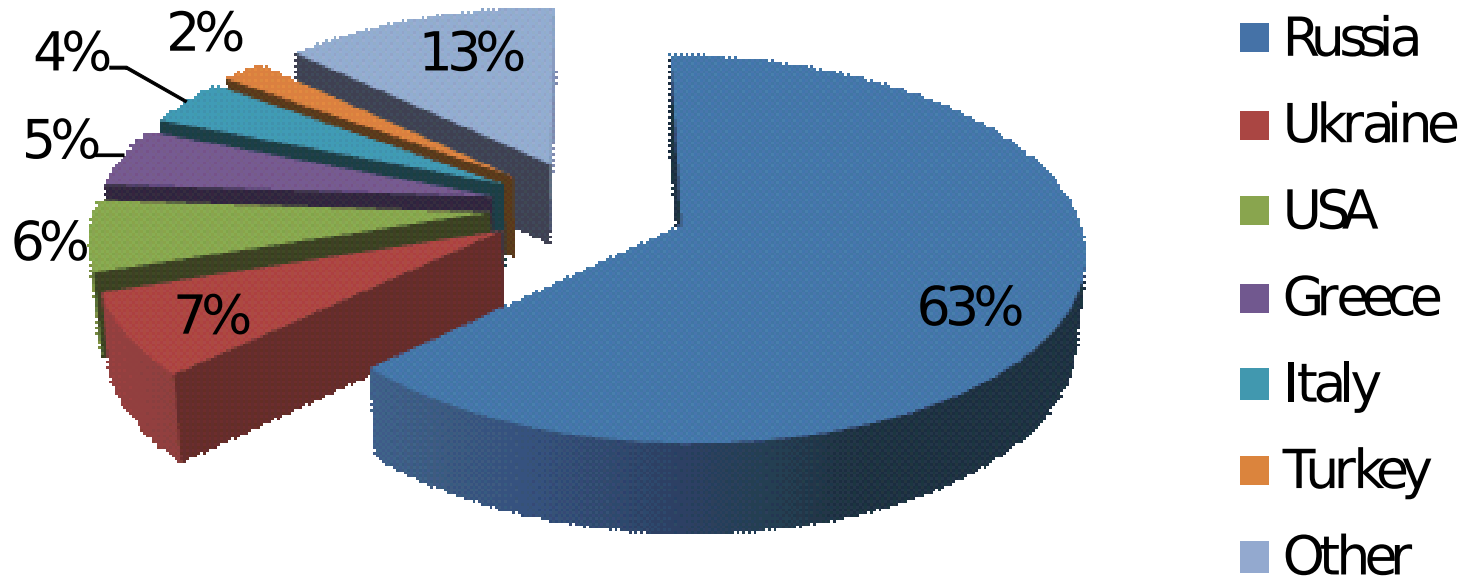


- ▶ *“Why I feel comfortable here? I am more organaised than ever, I like myself, I respect myself. I know that I have my job thus, I am quiet. Well, I have some health problems, but I think I would have those had I stayed in Georgia”. Jozef, driver, 48 years old. Monroe, NY. 2010;*
- ▶ *“Well, I never built the dream towers in my mind, but anyway... it was still euphoria to come in America. Yhaaa, I new about emigrant’s difficulties in general, but I found really hard to be adapted to here...”. Lali, 37 years old, care giver. Brooklyn, New York, 2010*

Emigrants' Social Relations/ Communications in the USA, (%) 2010



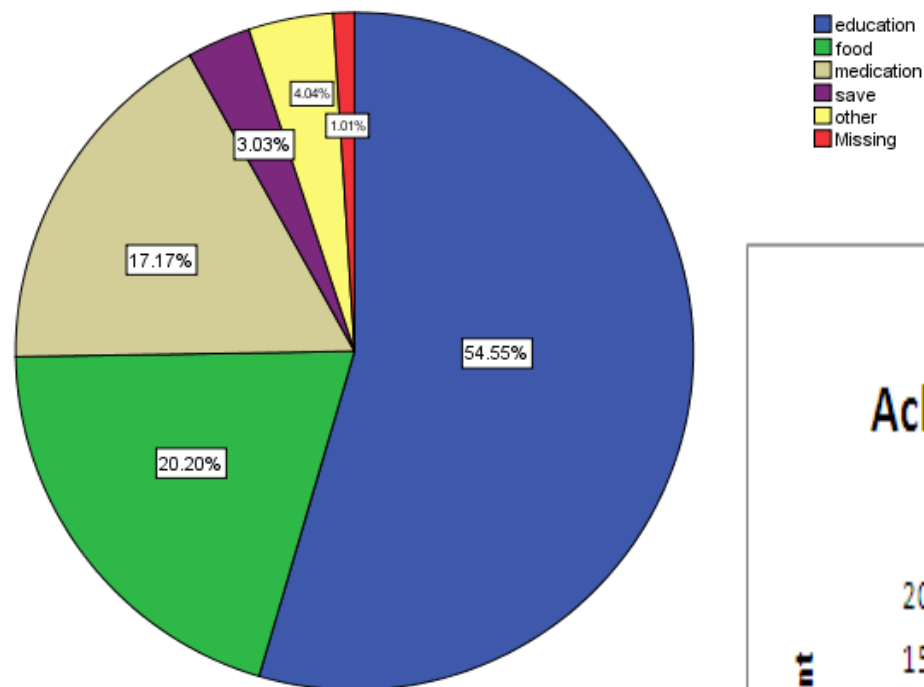
Structure of Money Transfers to Georgia by the Most Significant Countries of Transfer Origin, % (March, 2009)



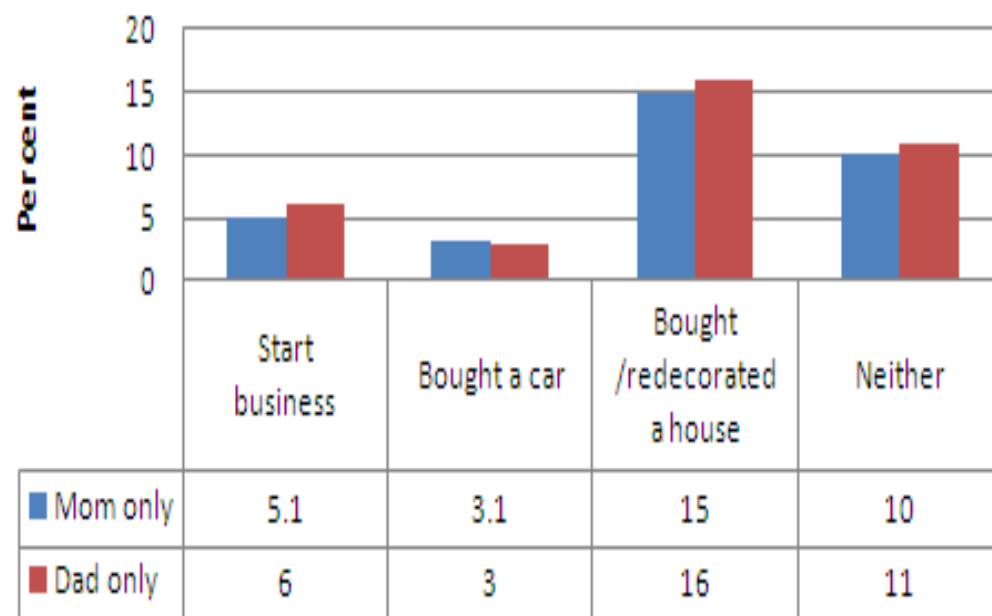
Money sent from the US --- 63,866 mill USD, 2009

Source: Assessment of Banking Institutions. IOM, 2009. p. 17

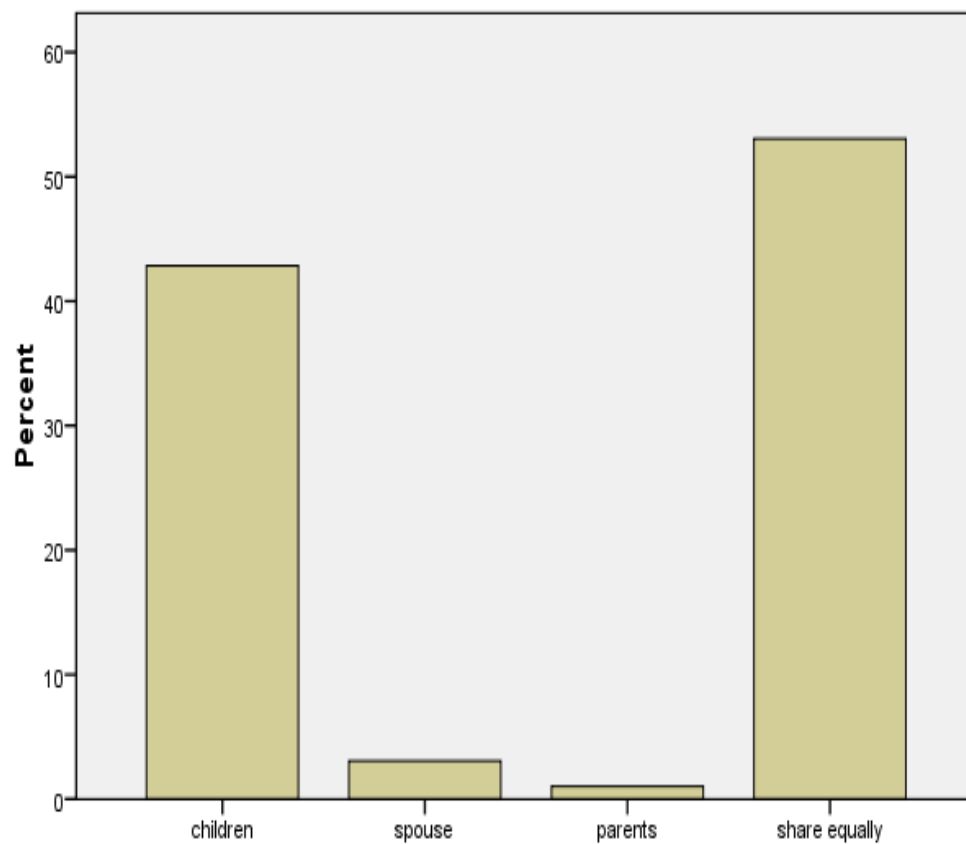
Use of Remittances %, 2009



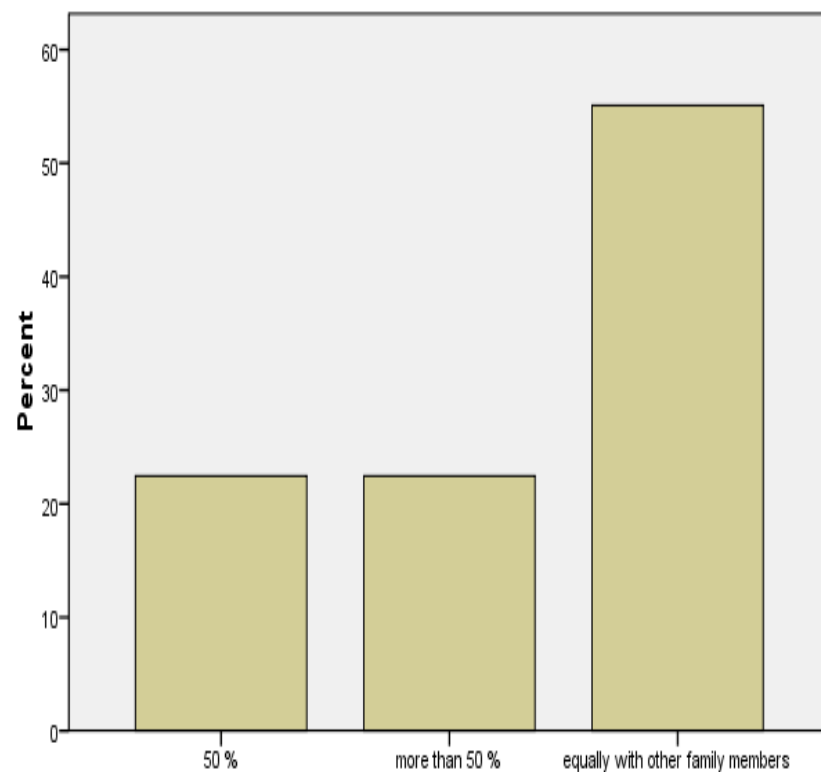
The Gender Structure of the Goals Achieved by Help of Remittances, Georgia (% , 2009)



Benefits among family members, 2009



The share of children in consumption, 2009

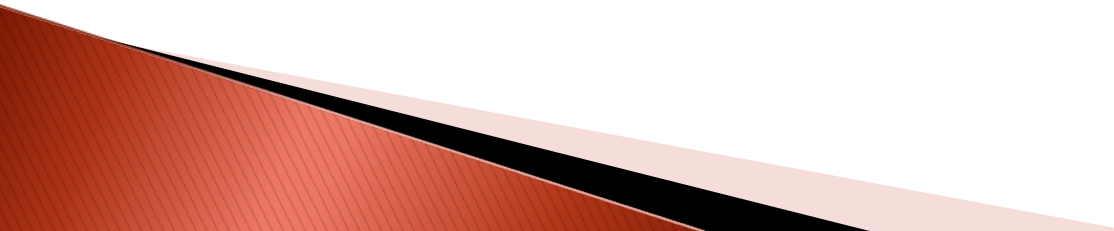


Adult children's' Disposition toward the emigrant parents support

“I never spared money that usually I received as remittances from my mom from Cyprus to fulfill any of my desires. But now, when I have one year experience of working there, I am so careful with every cent that she still sends to us. I and my dad try to save and invest in something viable.” Maya, 21 year. Tbilisi, 2009

“... Yaaa, ... we usually spend money as we wish and they [parents] .. you know... (smiling) never ask us about it. But I have more responsibilities and obligations now. I should share this money for many things – to pay my university fee, for my brother's [high school] tuition and to also give to my grandma [who takes care of us now] for food and to pay bills. I cannot make mistakes.”

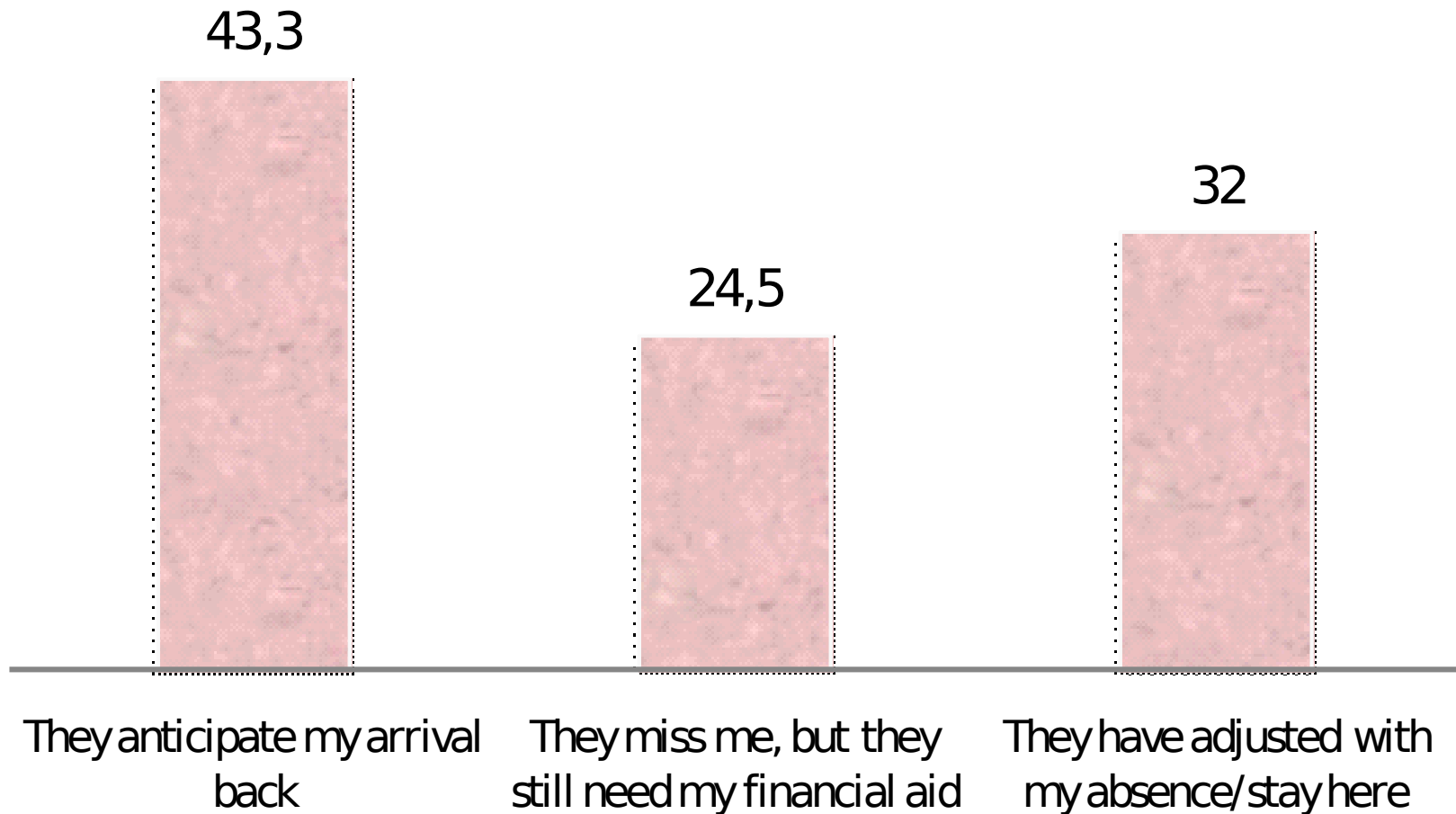
David, 22 year. Tbilisi, 2009



- ▶ *I prefer to leave everything as it is. I mean, not ask them [grown up children] to invest money that I usually send them, ... I mean, to start any business or so. Why? If they have problems with that, it will be my problems as well, I should help them to solve these problems from here. And what if I couldn't? It's only tear of nerves. I don't want. I know that I am a "money cutting machine", but I'd better to preserve these relations and not to start anything new and complicate."*

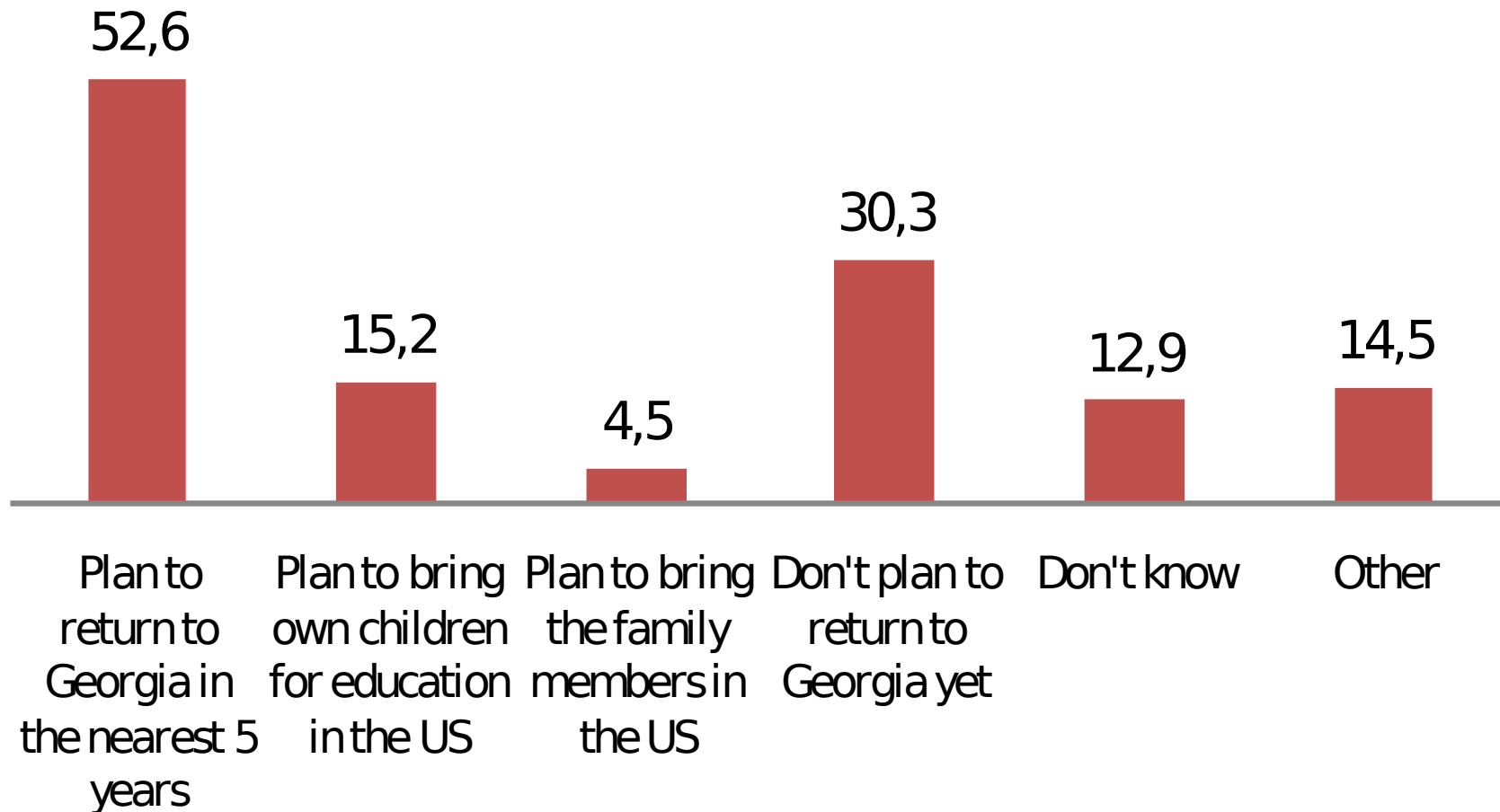
Guram, 57 years old, driver. Monroe, NY, 2010

The Attitudes of the Family Members Toward the Migrant's Move, %(2010)



- ▶ *“My grandson graduates from high school in this year. He is smart and good, he needs a lot – I pay his tuition fees, I bought a laptop for him, he really needs that. And when he starts at collage? He needs more, that’s why I am here, 7th year already..., for younger ones as well”*
Nana, 58 years old, care giver. Monroe, NY, 2010

The Future plans and the Return Policy of Migrants, % (2010)%



- ▶ *“America is the “big sweet marshland” that pulls you down, attaches you to itself. Probably, if you want, you can overcome it, but you don’t.”*

Zura, 52 years old, driver. Monroe, NY,
2010_

Concluding Thoughts and Recommendations

- ▶ Georgian emigration is child bias emigration;
- ▶ During the emigration families are separated in most cases. Separation is long and harmful for the nuclear family.
Migrant women often look after other people, while their own children and elderly parents lack their attention and care;
- ▶ Remittances create ‘a safety net’ however, they couldn’t compensate the transformed human relations;
- ▶ To establish a legal framework for managing the aspects of employment of nationals abroad, i.e. possible bi-lateral agreements that could stimulate circular migration. Increased circular migration could reduce many of the negative social effects that result from separation of families during long-term migration

Thanks!

Questions?