FUTURE OF GEORGIA
SURVEY REPORT

CRRC Georgia

2021

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

CRRC Georgia	Caucasus Research Resource Centers Georgia
GD	Georgian Dream
GOC	Georgian Orthodox Church
UNM	United National Movement

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides the findings of a survey conducted for the Future of Georgia project. Through looking at Georgians' attitudes towards a number of key issues today as well as in the recent past, the project aims to understand where Georgia is heading. The study explicitly focuses on ethnic tolerance and identity; the role of the Georgian Orthodox Church (GOC) in society; attitudes towards the recent past; and views of the west. The study is financially supported by the Kingdom of Sweden. The project is implemented by the Carnegie Europe and the Levan Mikeladze Foundation.

The survey conducted within the study is nationally representative, and included 1928 respondents. It has an average margin of error of 2.2% and had a response rate of 32%. It was conducted between September 10 and September 28.

The data collected within the study lead to a wide range of conclusions about the project's subjects of interest.

Ethnic Identities

A majority of the public reports that they identify primarily as a Georgian citizen. Most people report interest in national issues as opposed to local, regional, or international, with the exception of ethnic minority respondents who are more likely to report local issues.

On the linguistic matters, the data indicate that most respondents think that if someone wants to work in the civil service they should speak Georgian, that Georgian citizens should speak Georgian, and that few would vote for someone who does not speak Georgian. Most people disapproved of having street signs in minority languages. Similarly, most would disapprove of having court cases between minorities in ethnic in minority languages in predominantly ethnic minority areas. People were more willing to have services provided in minority languages in addition to Georgian. Ethnic minorities were generally more pro-minority than others, generally speaking.

With regard to representation in parliament, most people think that there should be more women in parliament. By contrast, fewer think that more ethnic minorities or LGBT people would be good to have in parliament.

The data indicate that most people think that Georgia's wars show that ethnic minorities are a security threat. At the same time, people were split on whether Georgia's wars show that Georgians need to be more tolerant.

Attitudes towards the Georgian Orthodox Church

When it comes to attitudes towards the GOC, attitudes are generally positive towards its role in society. Most people approve of its special legal status. Most also think it is important for their family, a foundation of Georgia's identity, and that it promotes the preservation of moral values in Georgia. People are relatively split on whether the church benefits Georgia by bringing Georgia closer to Russia.

Attitudes towards the West

Most in Georgia report that the West is best able to support Georgia, with relatively small shares reporting that either Russia or no country can support Georgia. Ethnic minorities are more likely to report that Russia can support the country and less likely to name the West.

Most in Georgia also support further integration with the European Union. But, a large majority would prefer the reintegration of Abkhazia and South Ossetia to membership in NATO and the EU. Still, half of the public perceive the territorial challenges as barriers to Georgia's integration into the European Union. A plurality also see Russian anti-Western propaganda as a barrier.

When it comes to potential reasons why Georgians think EU integration would be a good thing, the public is overwhelmingly positive towards most of the potential reasons asked about. The top reasons were that Georgians will be able to go to the European Union to study and work more easily and that Georgia will become more European, suggesting that there is a similar level of interest in cultural and economic reasons. At the same time, nearly two in five think that the EU represents a threat to Georgian culture.

Attitudes towards History

The vast majority of the public view April 9 as a tragedy, though many also think it was positive insofar as it helped push Georgia to independence. The public also tends towards thinking the collapse of the Soviet Union was a good thing, though worse off citizens and ethnic minorities are less likely to think so. In this regard, the public tends towards thinking positively of Zviad Gamsakhurdia.

When asked directly about the largest successes and failures of recent governments, the public often has difficulty thinking of concrete reforms or missteps. This is particularly true of the Sheverdnadze government. The UNM government's largest successes in the public's view were fighting corruption and economic growth. Their largest failures in the public's opinion were human rights abuses and the 2008 war. The Georgian Dream government's most commonly named success was with human rights, while its largest failure according to the population has been weak economic growth.

INTRODUCTION

The Future of Georgia project aims to critically examine the direction Georgia is heading towards through a critical examination of its recent past and current views on a wide range of issues. The study is funded by the Kingdom of Sweden and implemented by Carnegie Europe and the Levan Mikeladze Foundation. Within the scope of this project, CRRC Georgia has been commissioned to carry out a nationally representative survey. This report lays out the findings from these data collection efforts.

In support of the project, CRRC Georgia's data collection efforts aim to provide data and analysis surrounding the following themes:

- Ethnic identity and tolerance;
- Religious identity and the role of the GOC in Georgia;
- Attitudes towards the West;
- Attitudes towards the recent past.

To provide data on the above subjects, CRRC Georgia carried out a nationally representative survey which had a sample size of 1928 respondents. The response rate was 32%, and the average margin of error is 2.2%.

This report proceeds as follows. The next section provides the study's methodology. The subsequent section is broken down into four subsections. The first looks at ethnic identity and tolerance. The second provides data on religious identity and attitudes towards the role of the GOC in Georgia. The third subsection goes into attitudes towards the West. The final subsection provides data on attitudes towards the recent past. The report finishes with the main conclusions. The survey questionnaire and data are available on CRRC Georgia's online data analysis tool, caucasusbarometer.org.

METHODOLOGY

The study included a quantitative survey, which was nationally representative. This section of the report provides the survey methodology.

Quantitative Data Collection and Analysis

The survey sampled using clustering with stratification. Strata included Tbilisi, other urban areas, and rural areas. The survey was further sub-stratified by north-west, north-east, south-east, and south-west quadrants of the country. The study used the list of election precincts as its primary sampling unit. Within election precincts, systematic random walk was used to identify households. Within households, a Kish table was used to select respondents. The data is weighted to population characteristics provided in the 2014 national census. Key characteristics of the survey are provided in the table below:

Figure 1: Survey characteristics

Fieldwork dates	Sample size	MOE	Response rate
09/10-09/28	1928	2.2%	32

Following data collection, cleaning, and weighting, the data was analyzed using a mix of descriptive and inferential methods. Descriptive statistics included frequencies and cross tabulations. These provide an overview of the situation in general. In terms of inferential statistics, multivariate regressions are generally used to identify differences between groups. The regressions control for the following variables:

- Age group (18-34, 35-54, 55+);
- Sex (male or female);
- Education level (bachelor's degree or higher);
- Settlement type (capital, other urban, rural);
- Wealth (proxied through an index of ownership of different durable goods);
- Ethnicity (ethnic Georgian or ethnic minority);
- IDP status (IDP or not);
- Employment status (reports working or not);

The data analysis in this document only reports statistically significant differences. Unless otherwise noted, statistically insignificant differences are not reported.

Generally, the results of regression analyses report marginal effects. Marginal effects are the difference between two groups, holding other factors constant. For instance, if ethnic minorities are 5 percentage points more likely to report uncertainty over their views of the West, this statistic should be interpreted as five percentage points more likely than ethnic Georgians and after controlling for the above listed variables.

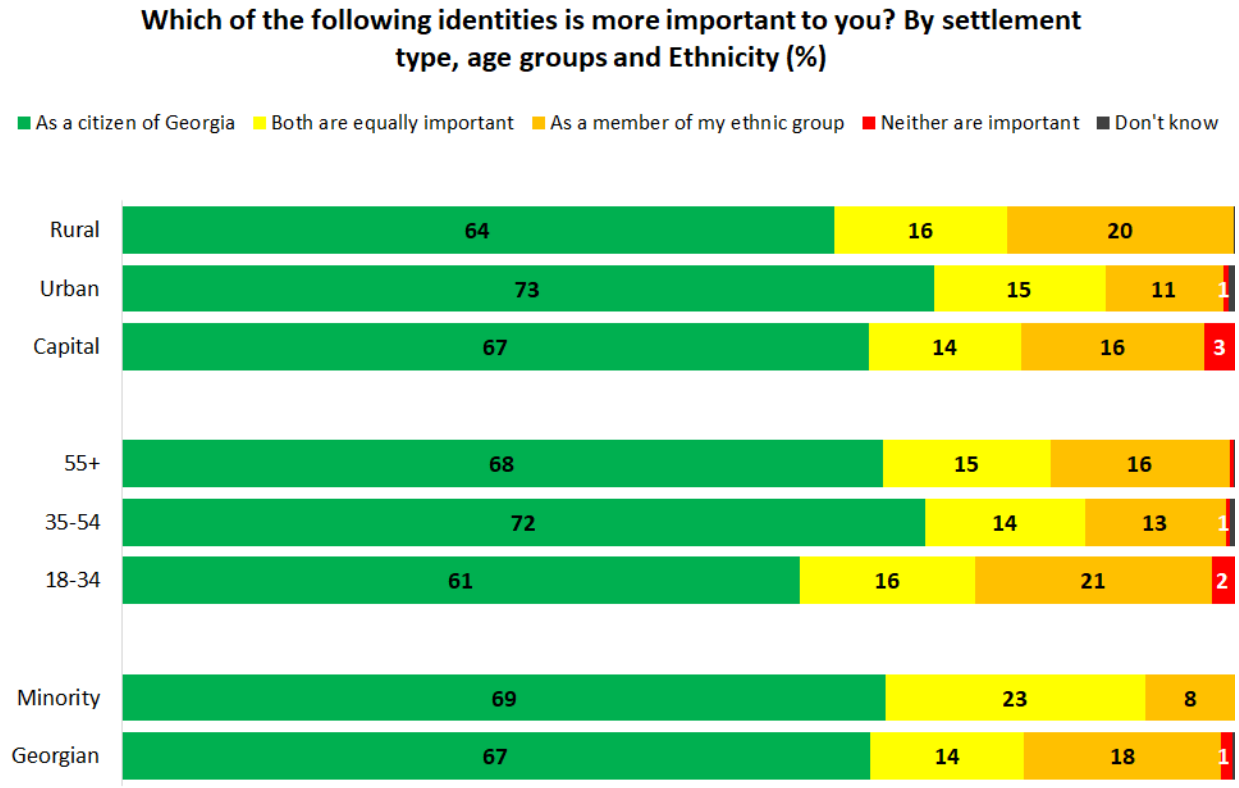
RESULTS

This section of the report summarizes the findings of the study. There are four main sections which provide overviews of peoples' attitudes and perceptions towards ethnic identities, attitudes towards the Georgian Orthodox Church, attitudes towards the West, and the recent past.

ETHNIC IDENTITIES

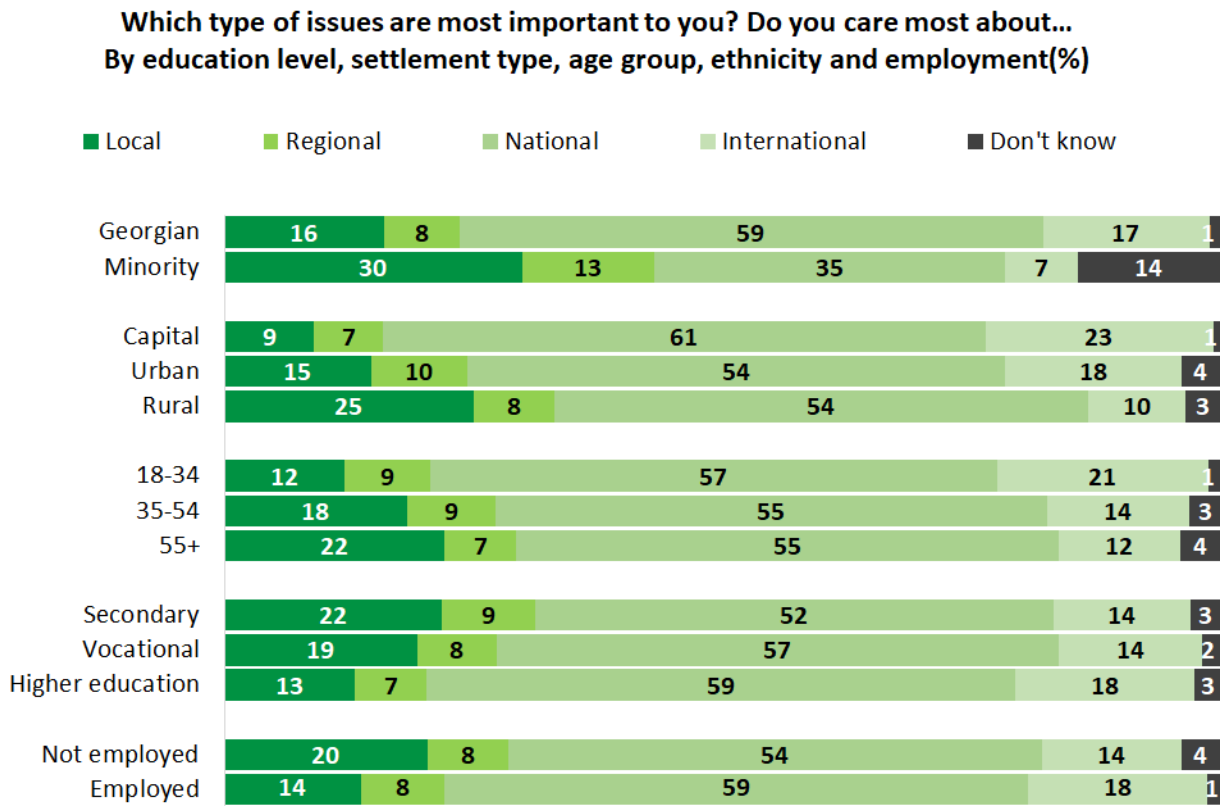
To understand which identities the Georgian population prioritizes, the study asked whether people identify with their ethnicity or citizenship more. According to results, 16% considered their ethnicity more important, and 67% identified more with their citizenship. A further 15% of the Georgian population said that both identities are equally important for them. When broken down by social and demographic variables, the data shows several differences. People from rural settlement and younger people are more likely to think that ethnic identity is more important. People from urban settlements and people from 34 to 55 years old tend toward thinking that citizenship is more important.

Figure 2: National versus ethnic identity



To explore identity, the survey also asked about what type of issues people focus on in geographic terms (i.e. local, regional, national, or international issues). The data indicate that 56% of the public care most about national problems. The next most common responses were local (18%) and international (16%) issues. Responses varied between different groups. Except for ethnic minorities (35%), in every demographic group at least half of the population care most about national issues. Ethnic minorities, people in rural settlements, unemployed people, those who are 55 or older, and those with secondary education were more likely to name local issues. Ethnic Georgians and people living in Tbilisi were less likely to. Tbilisi residents and ethnic Georgians care most about national and international problems.

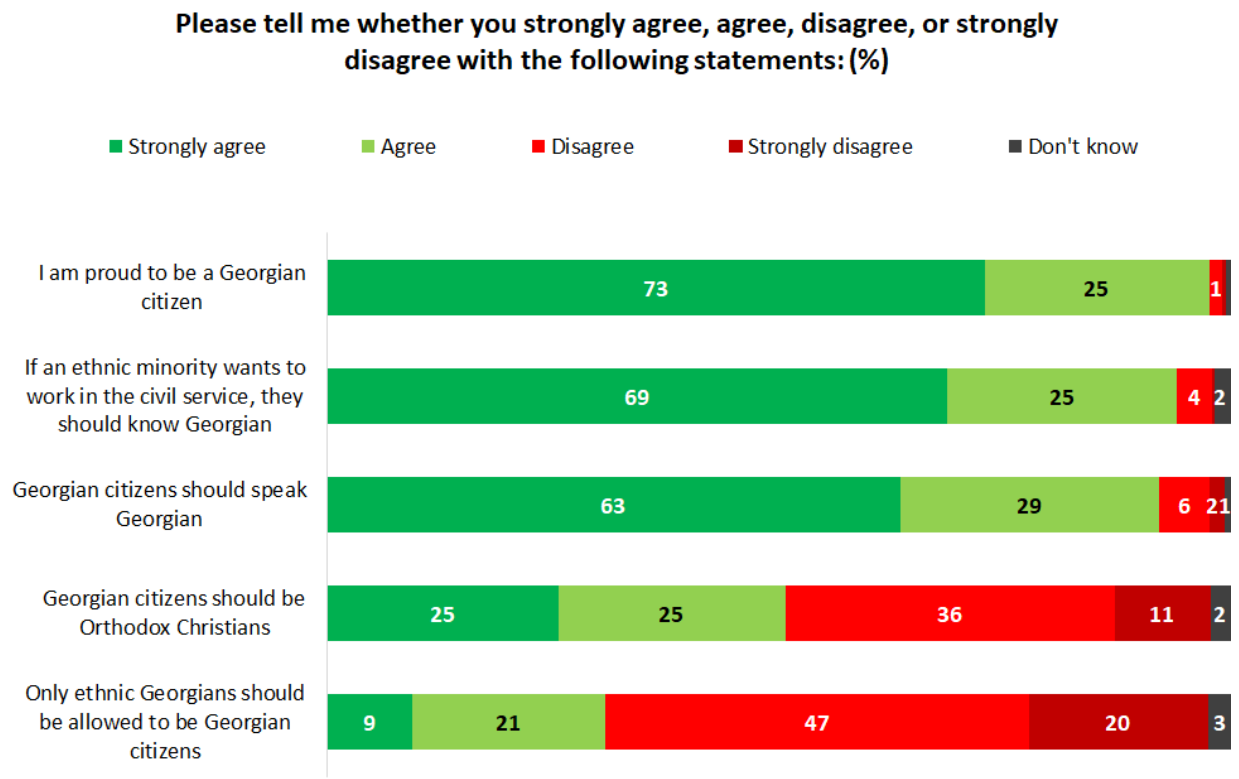
Figure 3: Importance of issues



The survey further explored people's perceptions of what might be described as nationalist views of citizenship. The vast majority (98%) of the population said that they are proud to be a Georgian citizen. Many in the public perceive language as a significant attribute of Georgian citizens. The vast majority of the public thinks that Georgian citizens should speak Georgian (92%). Most (94%) also think that ethnic minorities who want to work in the civil

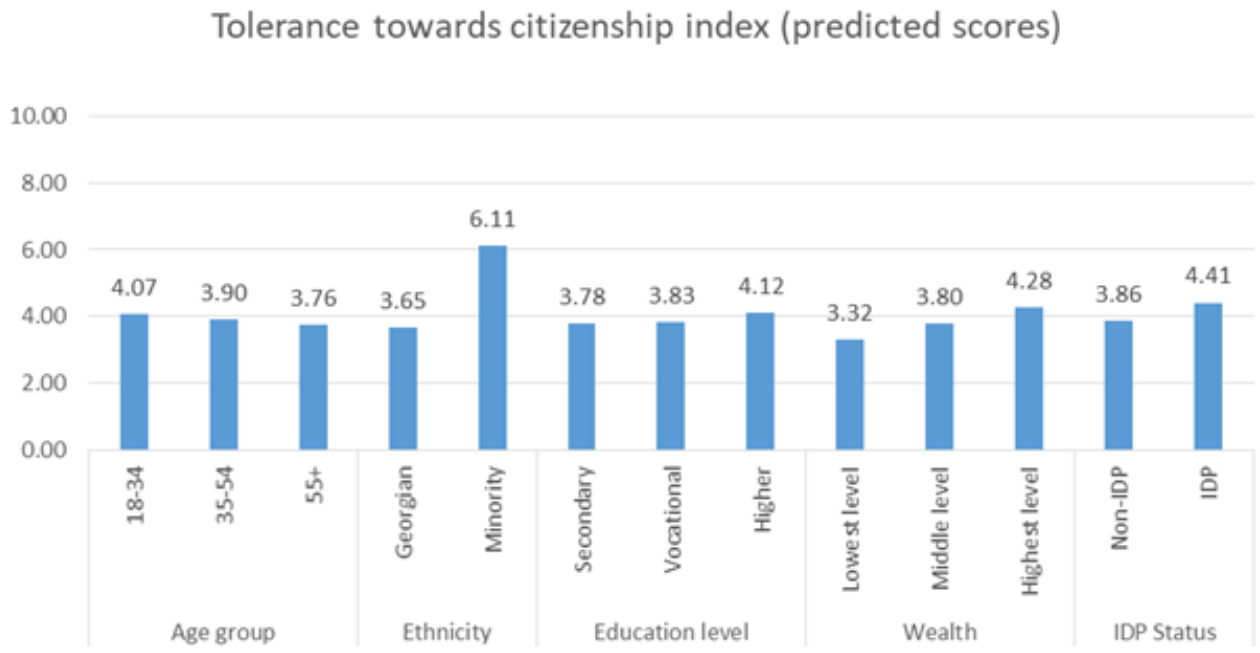
service should be required to know Georgian language. Half of the people (50%) reported that Georgian citizens should be Orthodox Christians. Also, two-thirds of the population do not think that only ethnic Georgians should be allowed to be Georgian citizens.

Figure 4: Language and religion as markers of citizenship



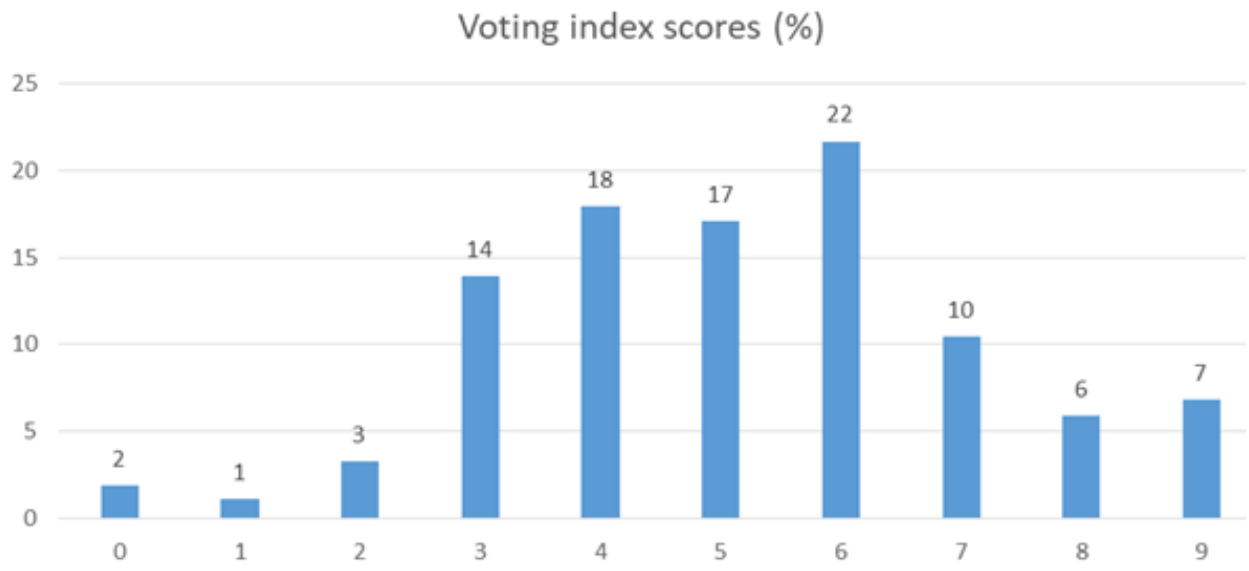
To understand which groups are more likely to agree with these statements a simple additive index of the above questions on attitudes towards citizenship was created, excluding the question on being positive about being a Georgian citizen. People who fully disagreed with all the statements had scores of 12 and those who fully agreed with all of them zero. The average score was 3.9. A linear regression suggests that older people, those with lower levels of education, and poorer people score lower, suggesting a lower level of tolerance. IDPs score higher, suggesting a greater level of tolerance. Ethnic minorities express the highest level of tolerance of all groups examined.

Figure 5: Index of views on citizenship



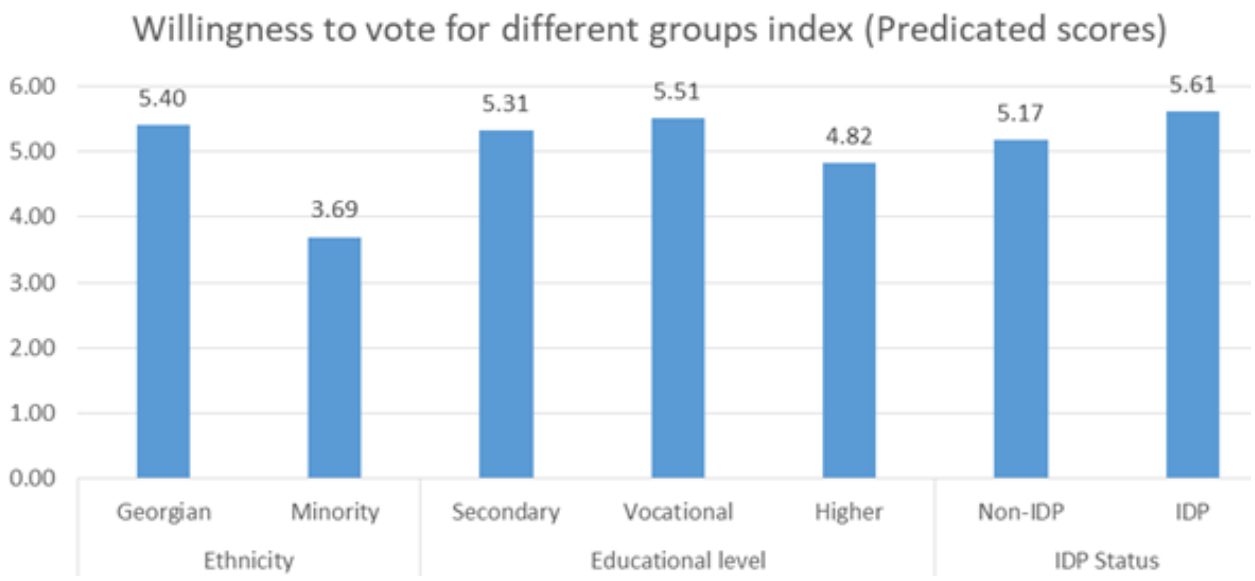
The study also asked a number of questions about whether or not people would vote for minorities of different types. Overall, 47% report they would vote for someone of a different religion, 46% of a different ethnicity, and 19% who does not know Georgian. A simple additive index of the above was created. The index varies from 0 to 9, with 0 meaning disagreement with all of the above questions and 9 meaning agreement with all of the above questions. That is to say, a low score indicates greater willingness to vote for someone who is different and a high score a low willingness. The average index score was 5.2. The distribution of the index is provided in the graph below. It suggests that people tend toward being unwilling to vote for people different from them.

Figure 6: Voting for someone different index



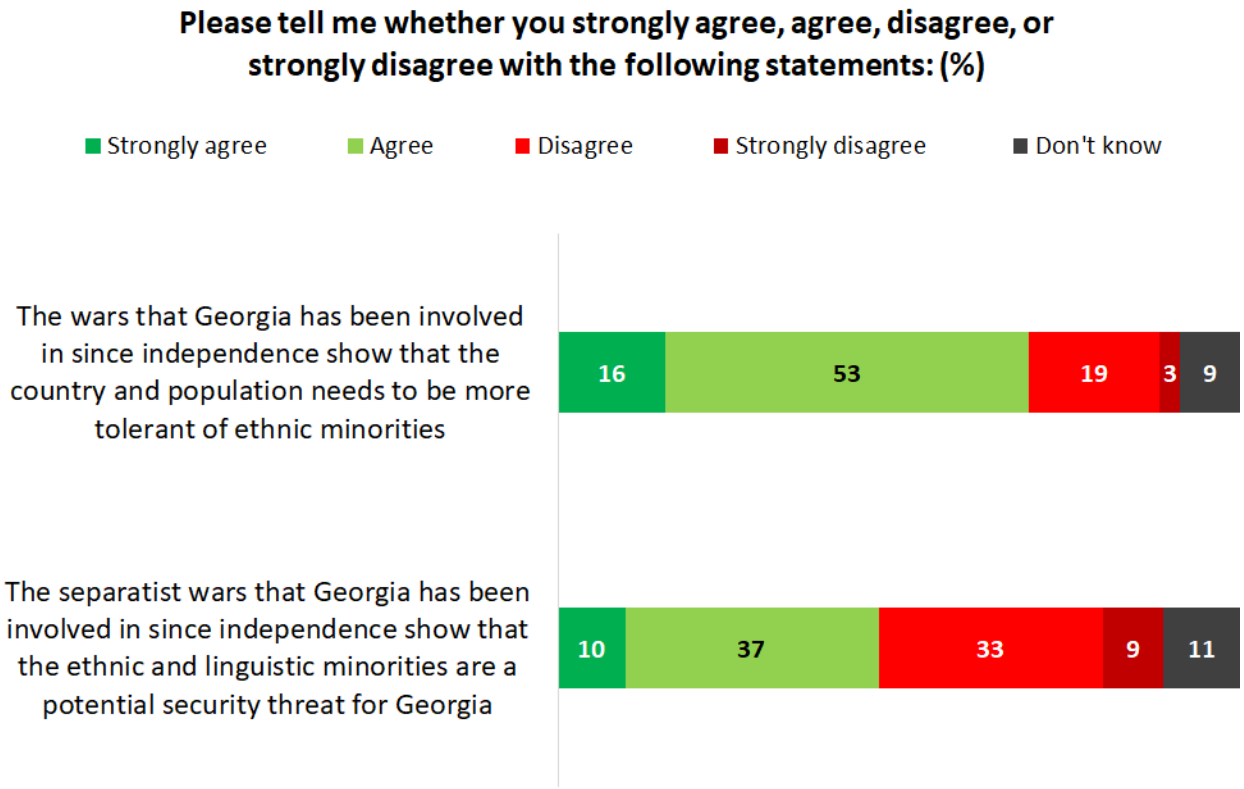
A regression analysis suggests that a number of characteristics were associated with willingness to vote for minorities, including ethnicity, education, and IDP status. People with higher levels of education are more willing to vote for someone different from them as are ethnic minorities. IDPs are slightly less willing to do so.

Figure 7: Voting for someone different index by ethnicity, education, and IDP status



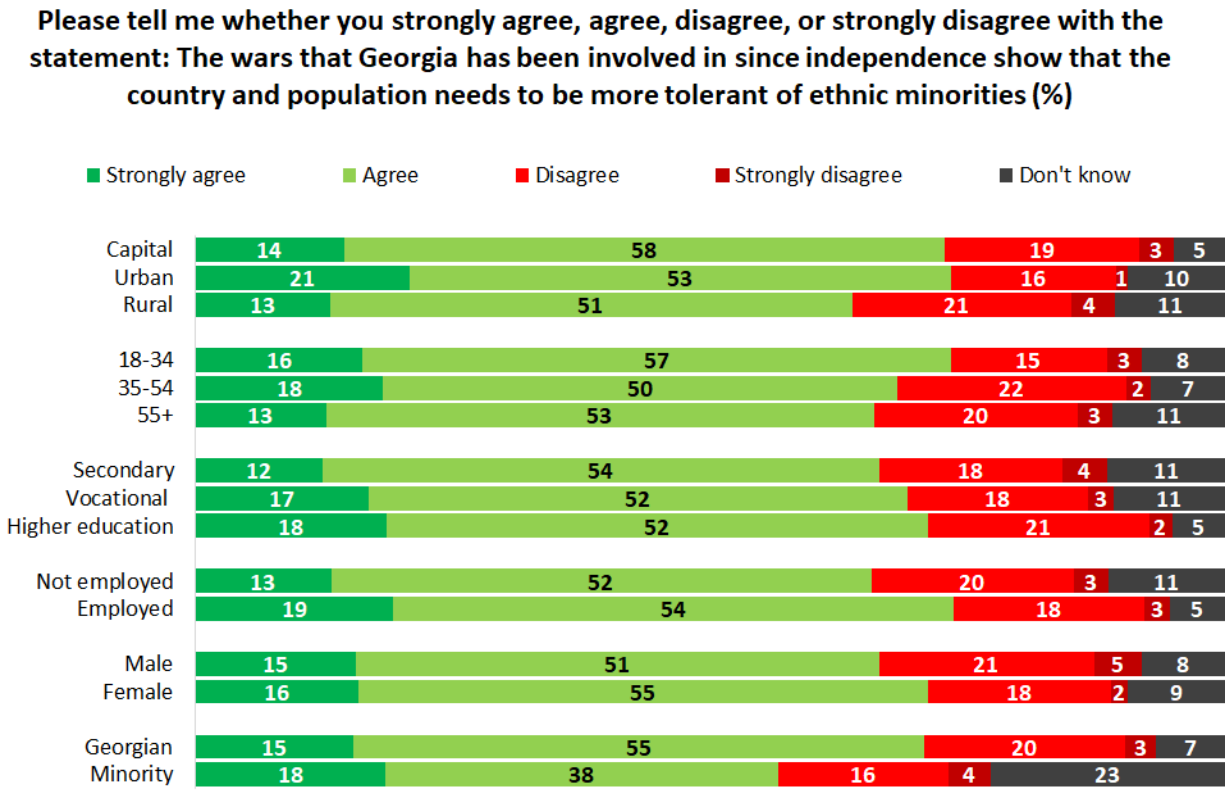
The study also asked about people's attitudes towards ethnicity as relates Georgia's conflicts. The data indicate that people tend towards thinking that the wars show Georgia's need to be more tolerant of ethnic minorities. At the same time, almost half of the people think that they demonstrate that minorities are a security risk.

Figure 8: Ethnicity and conflict



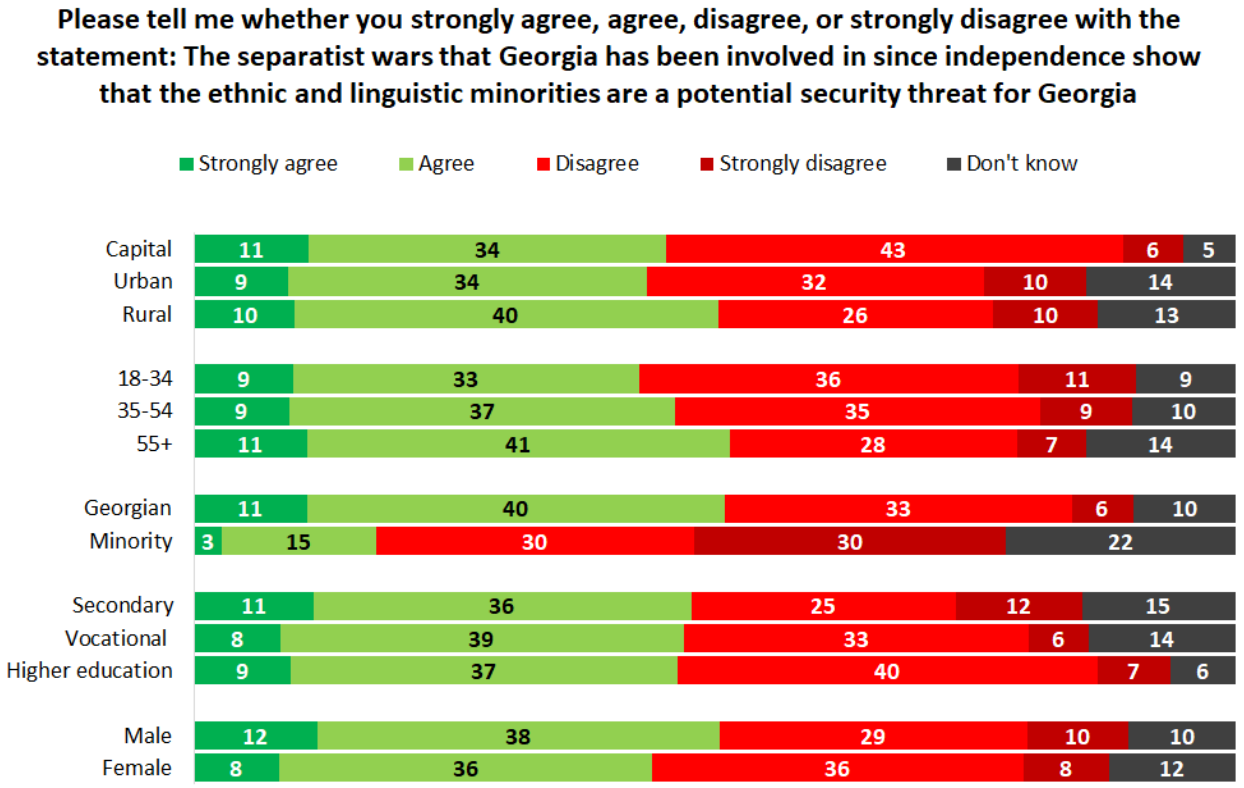
According to data, ethnic minorities, people from rural settlements, and unemployed people are less likely to report that Georgia needs to be more tolerant.

Figure 9: Ethnicity and conflict by demographic variables



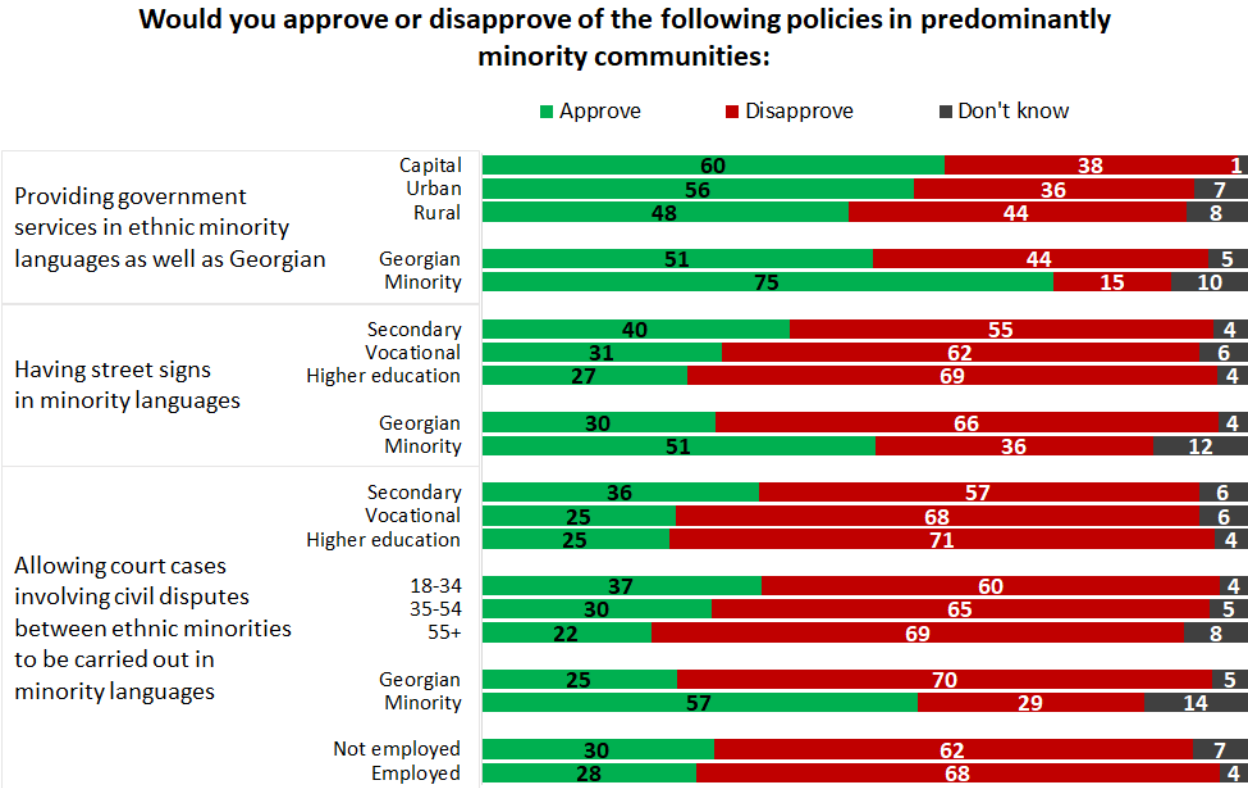
In contrast, the data suggests that ethnic minorities are the only group in which more than half (60%) do not think that ethnic and linguistic minorities are a potential security threat for Georgia. Besides ethnic minorities, Tbilisi residents, people under the age of 34, and those who achieved higher education are more likely to disagree with this statement.

Figure 10: Minorities as security threat by demographics



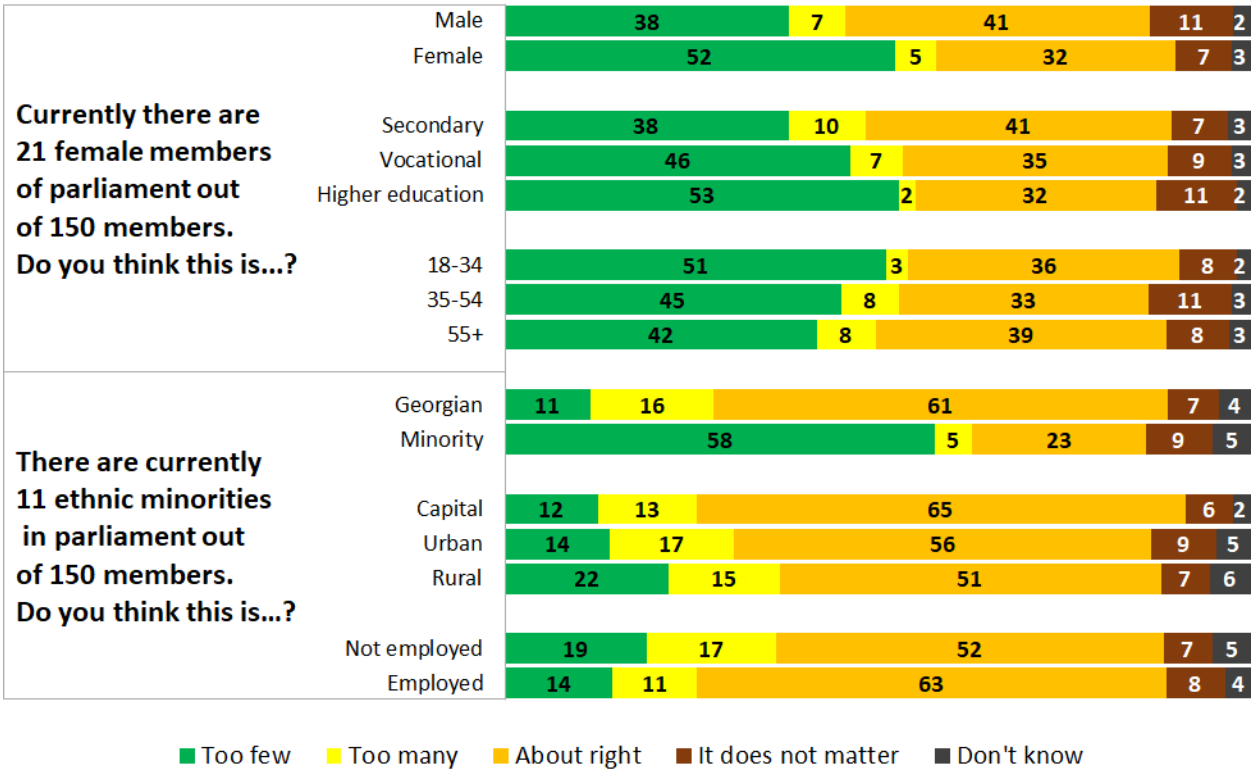
The survey also asked about government service provision in minority languages. Most people (54%) would approve of the government providing government services in ethnic minority languages together with Georgian. Most people (62%) disapproved of having street signs in minority languages. Slightly more opposed (65%) allowing court cases involving civil disputes between ethnic minorities to be carried out in minority languages. When broken down by education, ethnicity, employment, settlement type, and age, the data show several differences between groups. Ethnic minorities and people from Tbilisi are more likely to support providing government services in ethnic minority languages. People with higher education and ethnic Georgians are less likely to support having street signs in minority languages than people with lower levels of education and ethnic minorities. Also, ethnic minorities, people under the age of 35, and people with secondary or lower education are more likely to support allowing court cases between ethnic minorities in minority languages.

Figure 11: Attitudes towards service provision



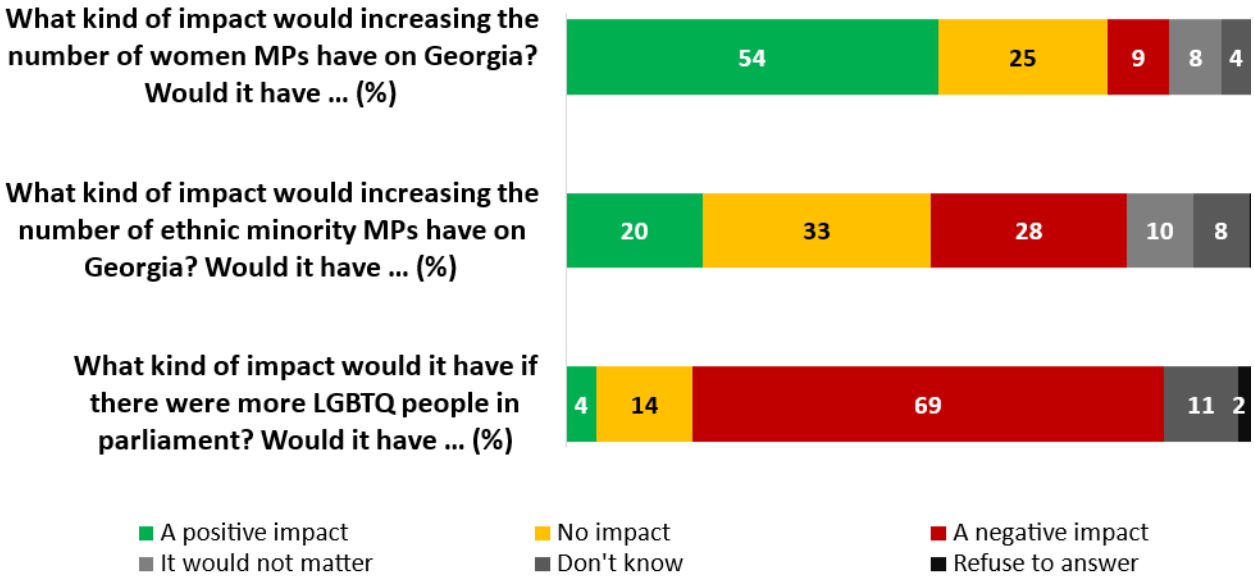
There are 21 female MPs and 11 ethnic minority MPs out of 150 members. Overall, 46% of the population said that 21 female MPs is too few, 36% about right, and 6% too many. By comparison, 17% said that there were too few minorities, 15% too many, and 56% thought 11 was about right. When broken down by social and demographic variables, the data show a number of differences. Women, people under the age of 35, and people with higher education were more likely to answer too few with regard to the number of women in parliament. Men, older people, and people with less than higher education reported the opposite. With regard to the number of ethnic minorities, ethnic minorities (58%), people from rural areas (22%), and unemployed people (19%) were more likely to report that this is too few.

Figure 12: Attitudes towards female and minority MPs



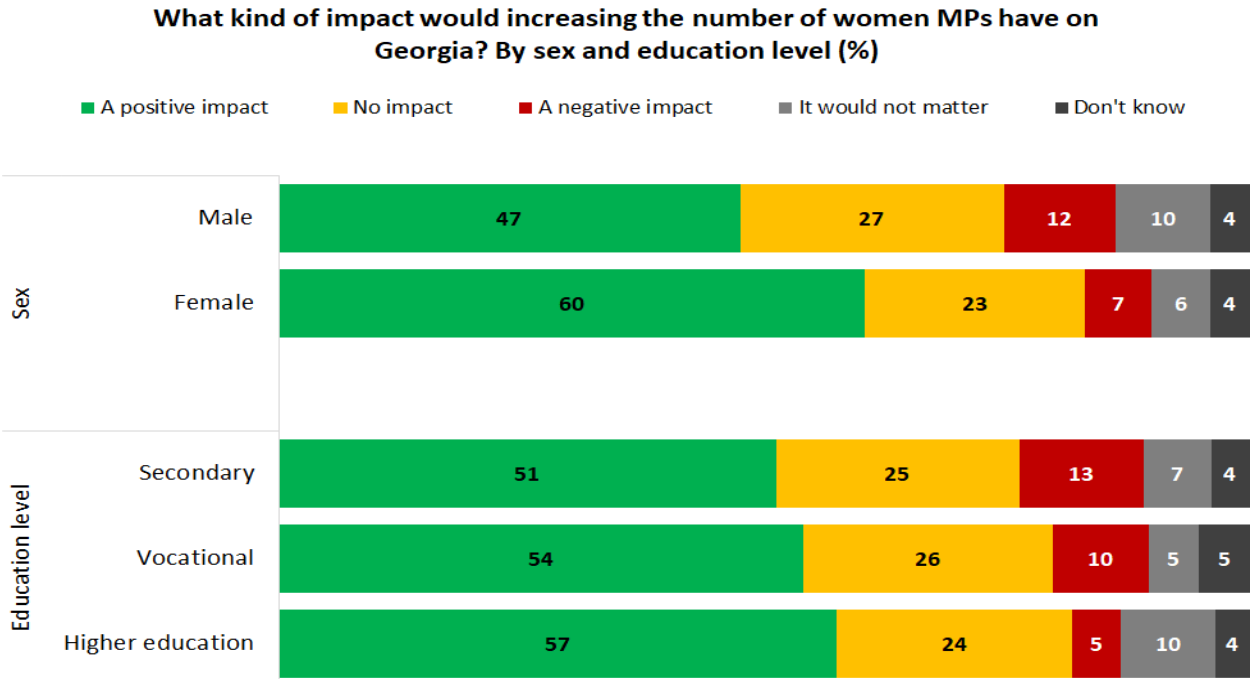
The survey also asked about what impact increasing the number of female MPs would have on Georgia. According to the data, 54% of the public think it would have a positive impact on Georgia, while 9% reported the opposite. Overall, 25% thought that it would have no impact. The same question was asked on increasing the number of ethnic minorities and LGBTQ MPs in Parliament. People had less positive attitudes towards both groups compared with women.

Figure 13: Would increasing the number of female, LGBTQ, or minority MPs be a good or bad thing?



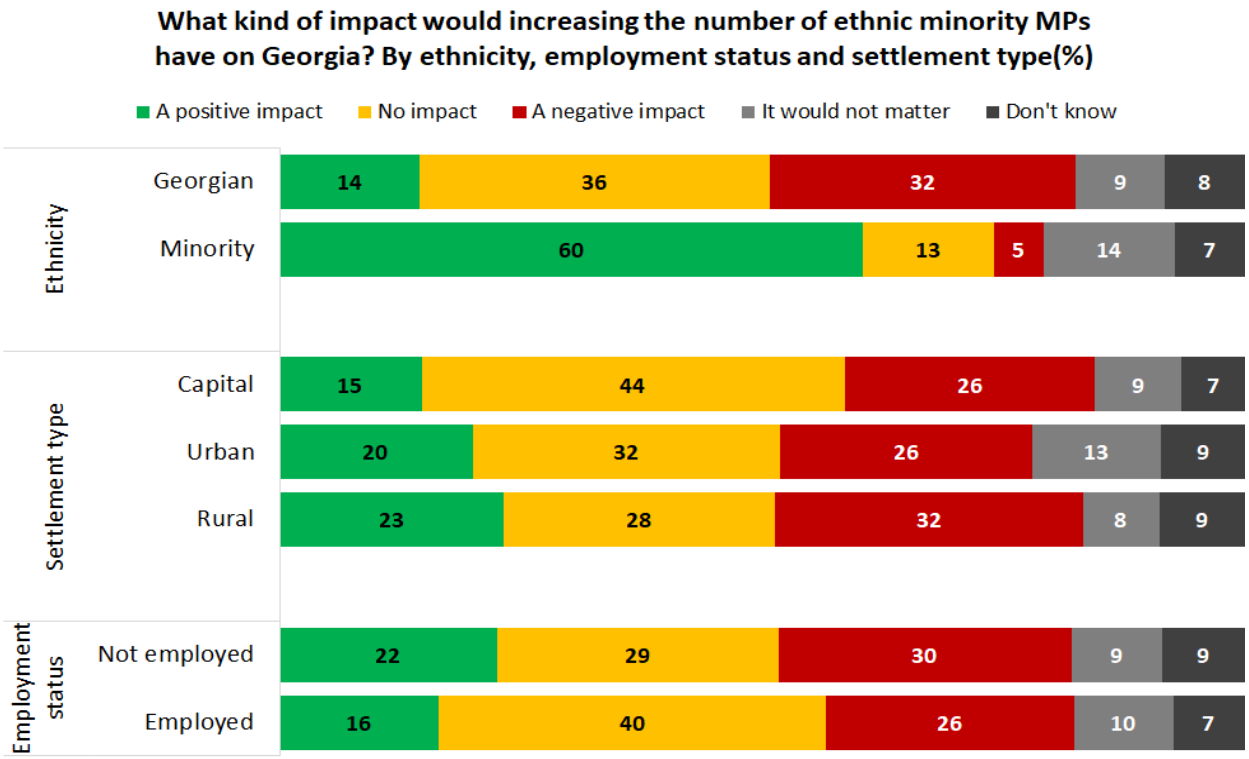
When broken down by demographics the results indicate that some people have more positive attitudes than others. A majority of women (60%) said that increasing the number of female MPs would have a positive impact on Georgia. People with higher education are slightly more likely to think so.

Figure 14: Impact of increasing female MP counts by social and demographic variables



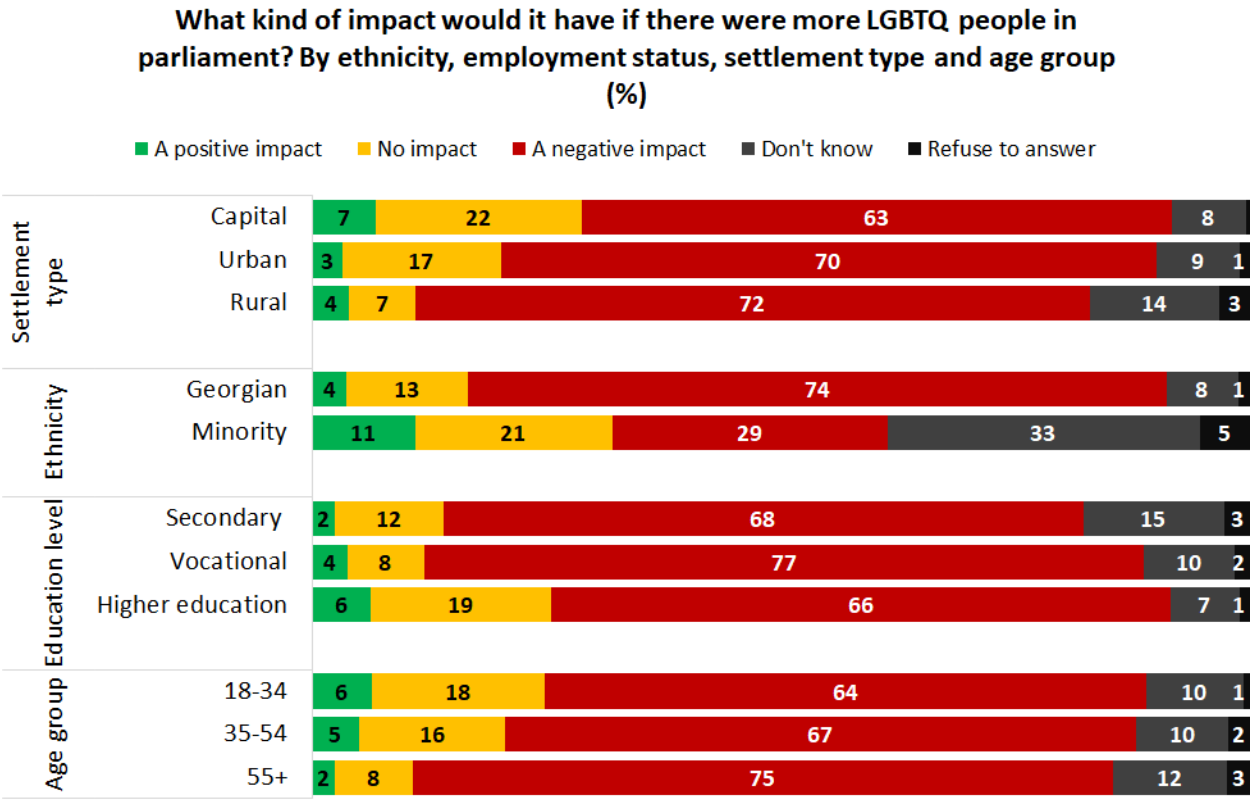
Ethnic minorities were more positive generally about increasing the share of ethnic minorities, but more negative about women and LGBTQ people than ethnic Georgians.

Figure 15: Impact of increasing ethnic minority MP counts by social and demographic variables



The data indicate that people from rural areas, Georgians, those who are more than 55 years old, and people with higher education are more likely to say that increasing the number of LGBTQ people in parliament would have a negative impact.

Figure 16: Impact of increasing LGBTQ MP counts by social and demographic variables

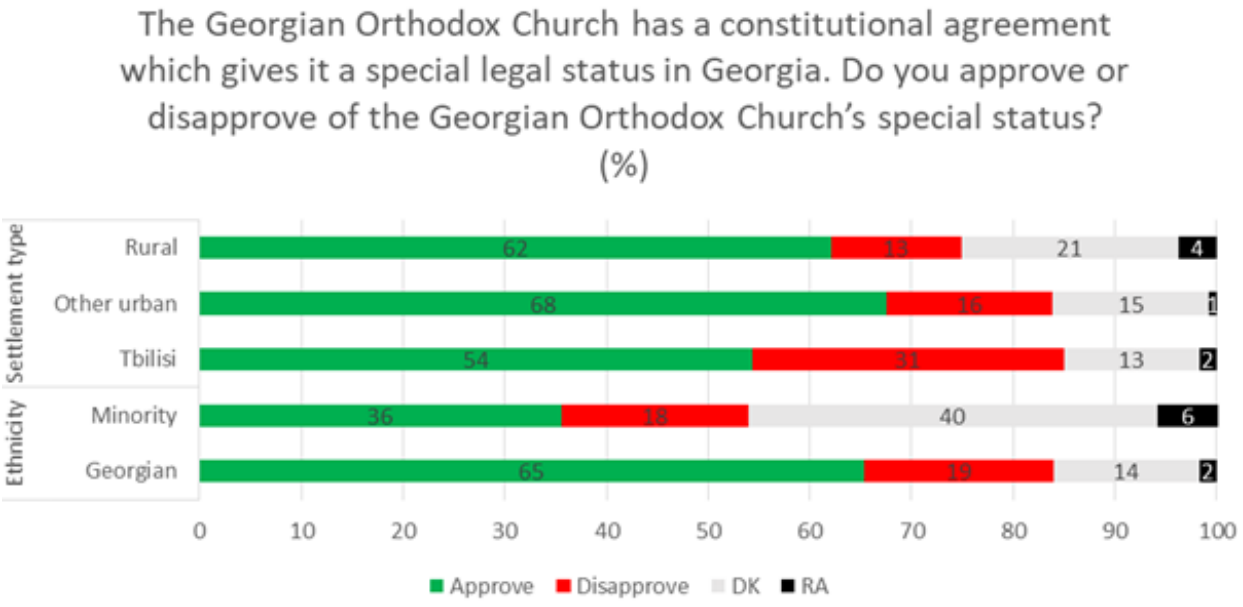


ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE GEORGIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

The next key theme within the project was attitudes towards the Georgian Orthodox Church (GOC). The data indicates that the people generally have positive attitudes towards the Church, though attitudes vary significantly between groups.

The GOC has a special legal status in Georgia through a constitutional agreement. The majority approve (62%) of the constitutional agreement, while a minority (19%) disapprove. A similar share (17%) were undecided. Logistic regression analysis was conducted to understand how attitudes vary between groups. The analysis shows that ethnic minorities (who are also often religious minorities) are less likely to approve than ethnic Georgians. People in Tbilisi are also less likely to approve than people in other urban areas or rural areas.

Figure 17:Attitudes towards the GOC's legal status

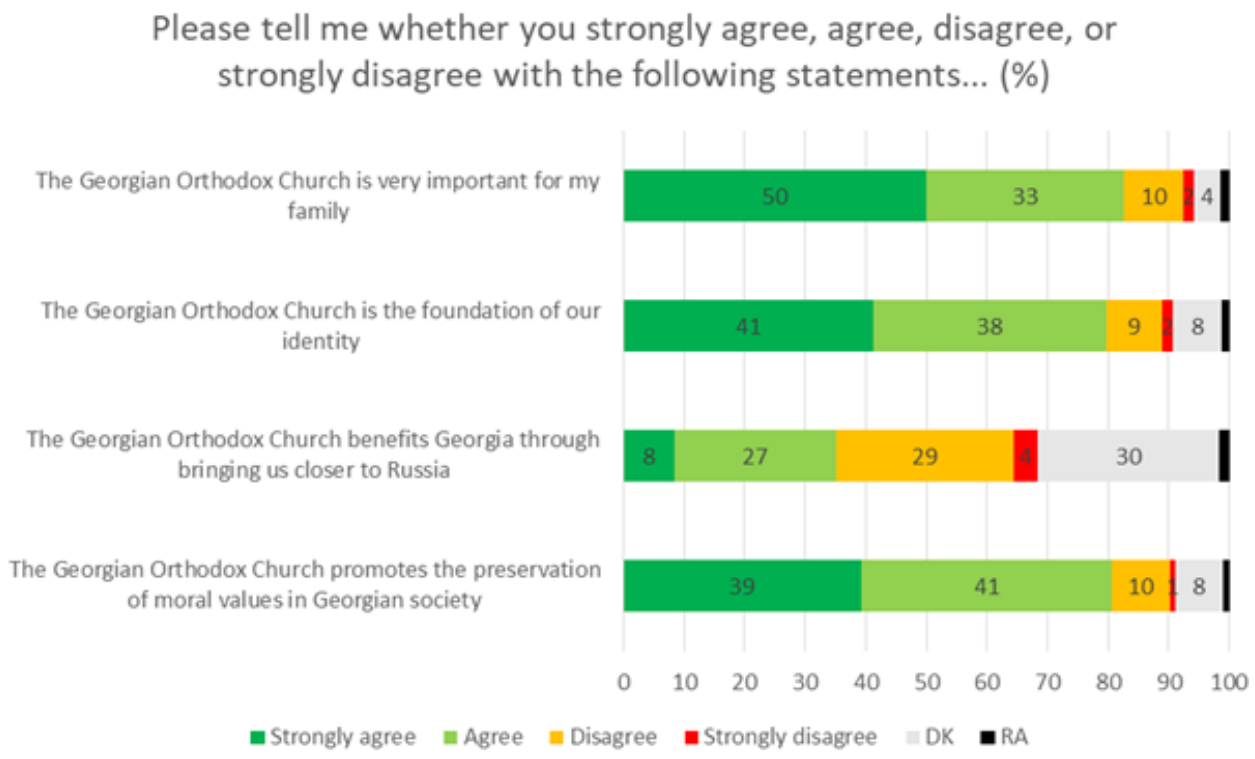


To further understand attitudes, the study asked four questions on the role of the Church in Georgian society. Respondents were asked whether they strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statements:

1. The Georgian Orthodox Church promotes the preservation of moral values in Georgian society;
2. The Georgian Orthodox Church benefits Georgia through bringing us closer to Russia;
3. The Georgian Orthodox Church is the foundation of our identity;
4. The Georgian Orthodox Church is very important for my family.

On the first, third and fourth statements people had relatively similar attitudes. In total (agree and strongly agree combined), 80% agreed with the statement that the GOC promotes the preservation of moral values in Georgian society, while only 11% disagreed/strongly disagreed, and 8% was undecided. The majority of people also agreed that the GOC is the foundation of Georgian identity (79%), and it has a very important role in their families (83%). On the second statement, the public had more diverse views: 35% agreed or strongly agreed and 33% disagreed or strongly disagreed. A third (30%) were undecided on this question. Given the uniformly positive attitudes towards the church, further data analysis was not conducted on different segments of society.

Figure 18: Attitudes towards the GOC



The above data indicate people in Georgia are supportive of the GOC. The public think the GOC promotes the preservation of moral values and support its special legal status. However, people in Tbilisi and minorities are less uniformly supportive at least when its comes to the Church's special legal status.

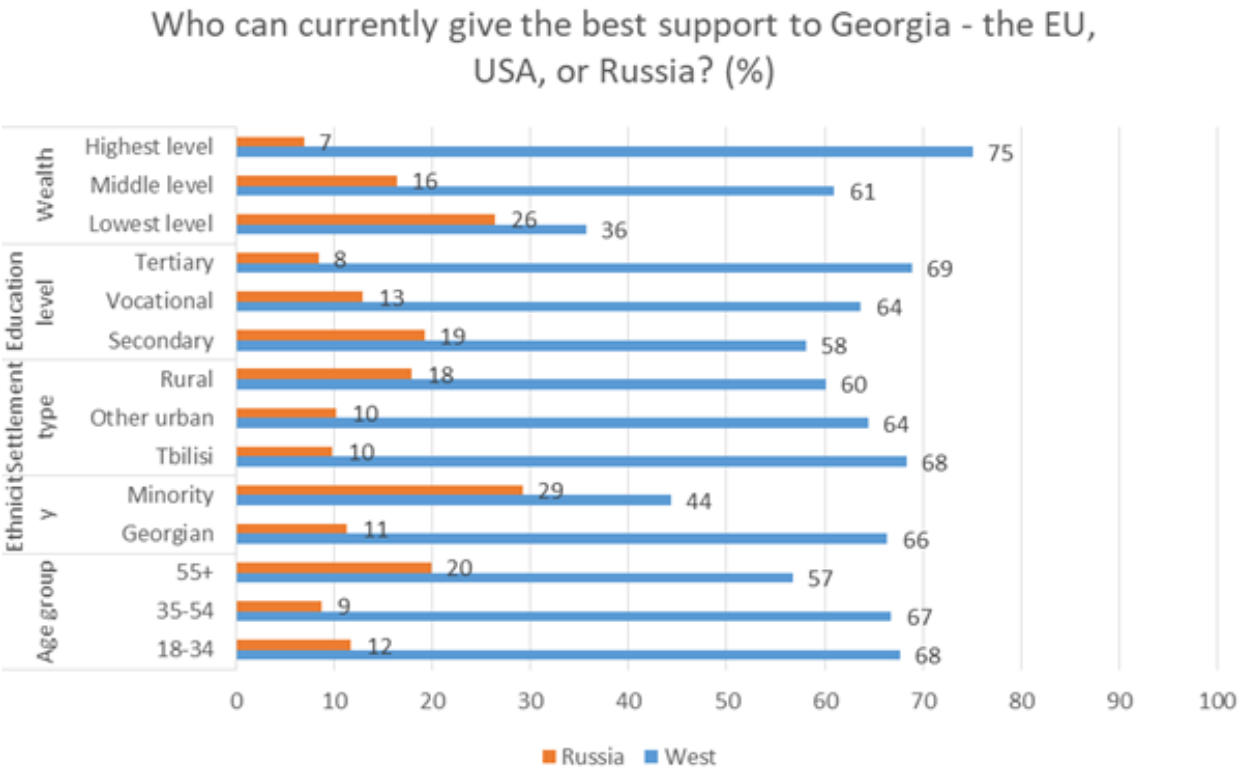
ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE WEST

The study also explored attitudes towards the West. This included a range of questions about Georgia's relationships with Western countries and unions. The study also asked about Russia, Georgian territorial integrity, and domestic institutions as relates foreign relations.

The data indicate that people tend to consider Western countries as Georgia's best supporters. A plurality of the public (39%) said that the EU can currently best support Georgia. A relatively smaller share of people (24%) considered the US as Georgia's best supporter. A smaller share reported Russia can best support Georgia (13%). A similar share (15%) of respondents said that none of these countries/unions can support Georgia, and 8% responded "Don't know".

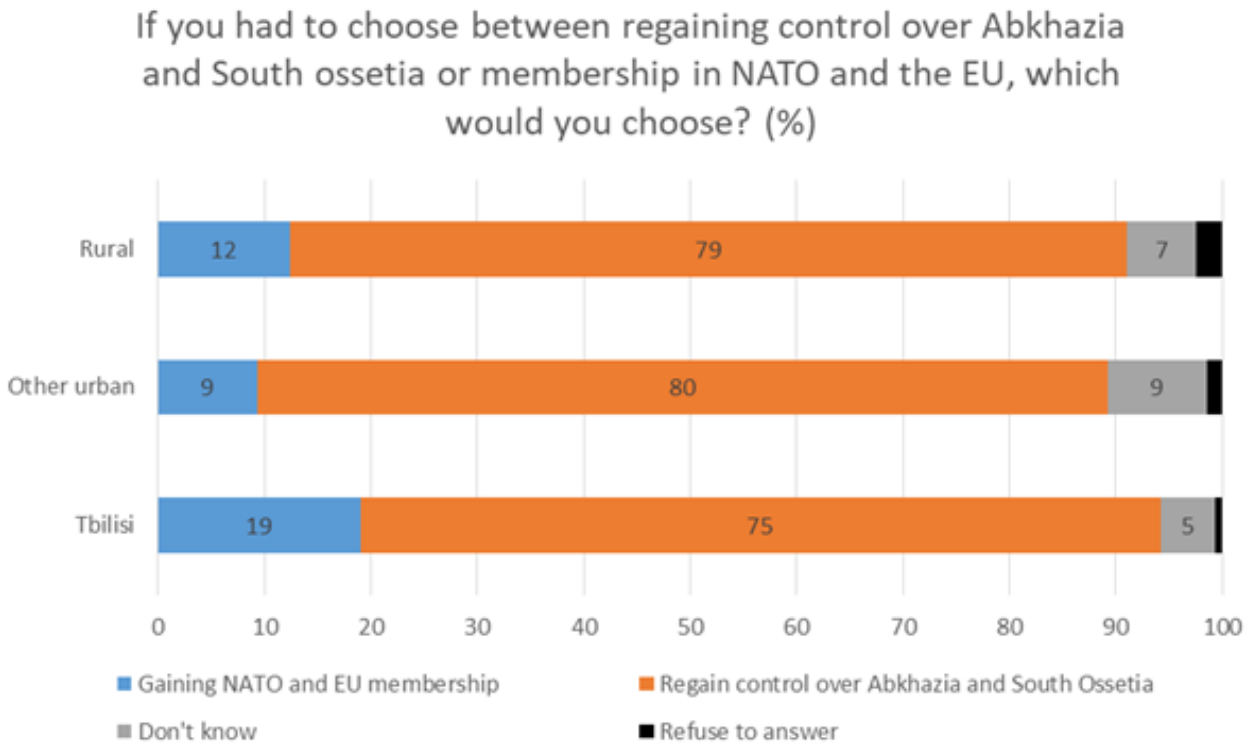
Ethnic Georgians are more likely to report that the EU or United States can best support Georgia. Ethnic minorities named Russia more often. Education, age, wealth, and settlement type also matter. People with higher education and people under the age of 56 are more likely to report that the EU or United States can best support Georgia. People with more wealth are more likely to respond the EU or US, while those with less wealth report Russia more often. People in Tbilisi report the West more often, while people in rural areas report Russia more.

Figure 19: Georgia's closest supporters



The study asked about perceived tradeoffs between Georgia's Western integration and regaining control over Abkhazia and South Ossetia. The survey asked, "If you had to choose between regaining control over Abkhazia and South Ossetia or membership in NATO and the EU, which would you choose?" Overall, 78% of respondents chose regaining control over Abkhazia and South Ossetia, while 13% preferred membership in NATO and the EU. A small share (7%) were also undecided. A regression analysis controlling for the demographic variables described in the methods section suggests that the only significant difference between groups is that people in urban areas outside Tbilisi are less likely to support giving up the territories for NATO and EU membership compared with those in Tbilisi.

Figure 20: Abkhazia and South Ossetia or NATO and the EU

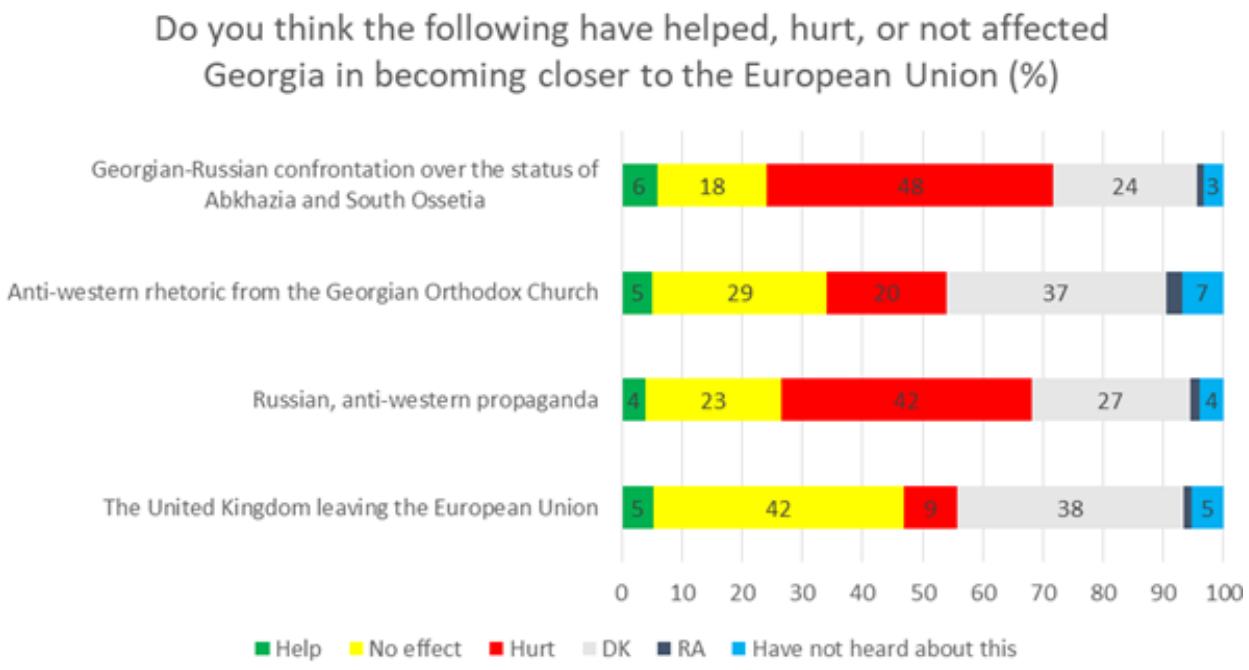


EU integration is an often discussed topic in regard to Georgia's international relations. This study asked about people's attitudes towards EU integration. Overall, 78% of respondents supported Georgia's integration into the EU. According to the data, 14% of respondents do not support the EU membership, and 8% did not know or refused to answer. Further analysis of this question suggests that ethnic minorities (53%) are less likely to support membership in the EU than ethnic Georgians (82%).

The survey also asked about which factors help, hurt, or do not affect Georgia's European integration. The results indicated that factors related to Russia were considered as most hindering. A plurality of the population (42%) said that Russian anti-western propaganda hurts Georgia in becoming closer to the European Union. A smaller share (18%) said that it did not affect this process, and only 6% reported that this factor helped. The remainder of the population (24%) were undecided or had not heard about Russian anti-western propaganda (3%). Georgian-Russian confrontation over the status of Abkhazia and South Ossetia was also considered a barrier to Georgian EU integration by near half (48%). The study also asked about the influence of other foreign events. A plurality (42%) said that the United Kingdom leaving the European Union has not affected Georgia's EU integration.

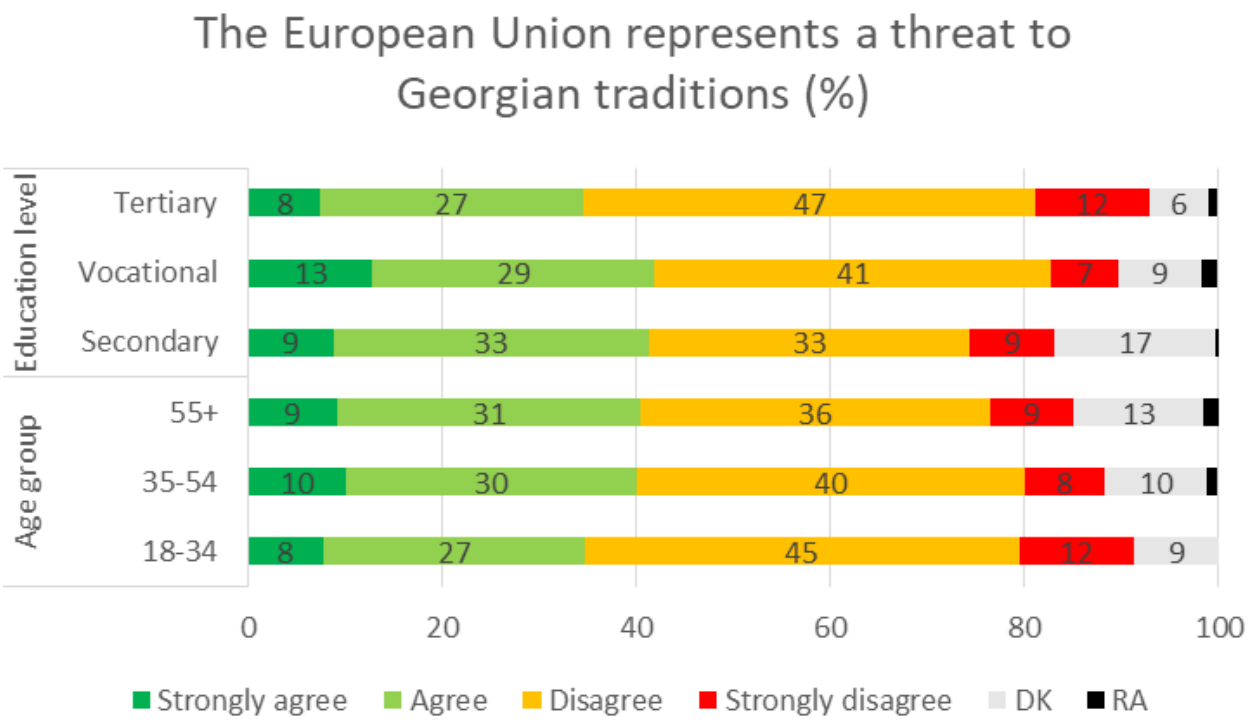
Respondents were asked to what extent anti-western rhetoric from the GOC affected Georgia in becoming closer to the EU. The results suggest that relatively few view this as hindering Georgia's integration (20%). A slightly larger share said that it did not affect integration (29%), and a plurality did not know (37%).

Figure 21: Events helping and hindering Georgia's integration into the EU



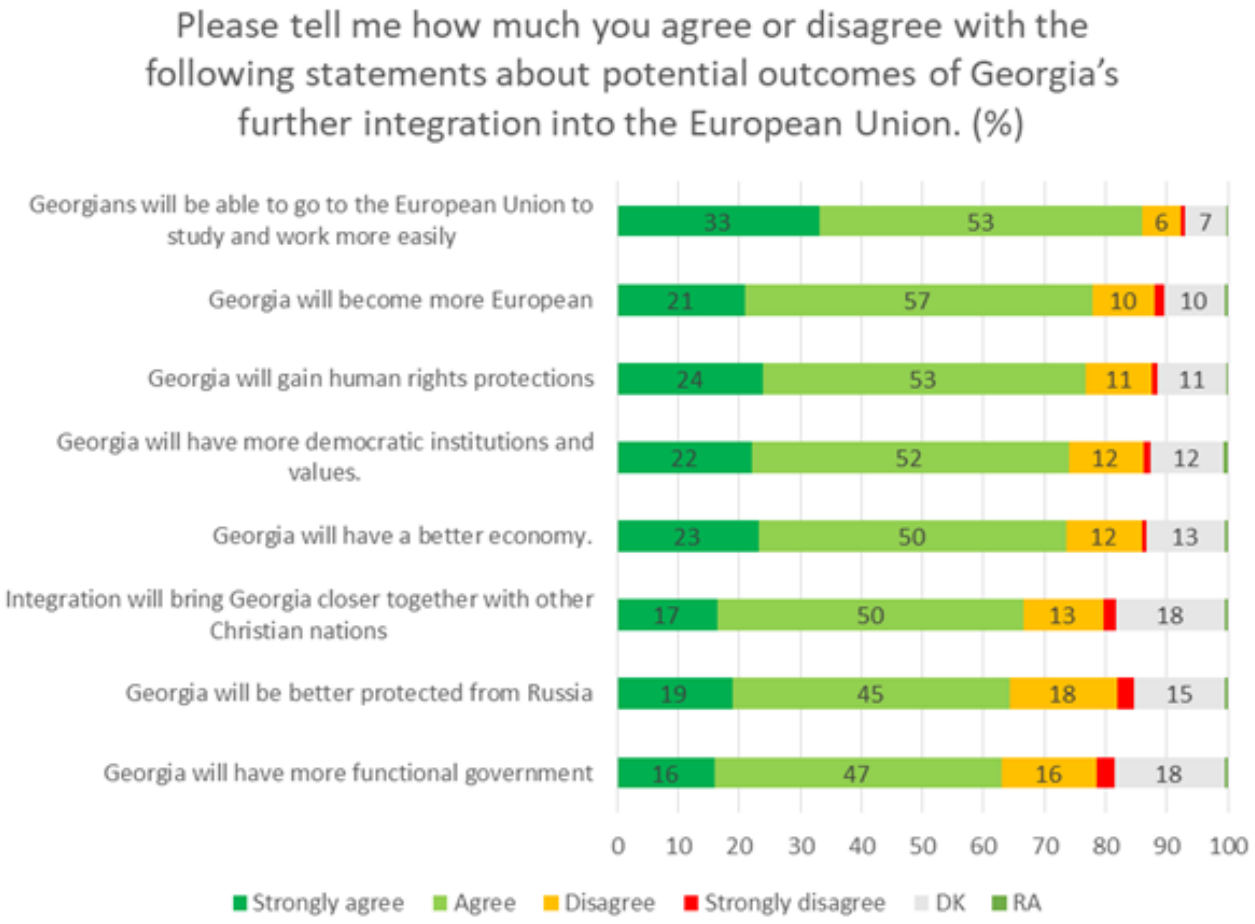
Respondents to the survey were asked whether they agree or disagree with the statement that the EU threatens Georgian traditions. Half the public (50%) disagree with the statement, while 39% agree that the EU poses a threat to Georgian traditions, and 11% reported that they didn't know. A regression analysis suggests that people with higher levels of education tend to disagree with this sentiment more, controlling for other factors. It also suggests that older people are more likely to agree with this sentiment compared with younger people.

Figure 22: Is the EU a threat to Georgia's traditions?



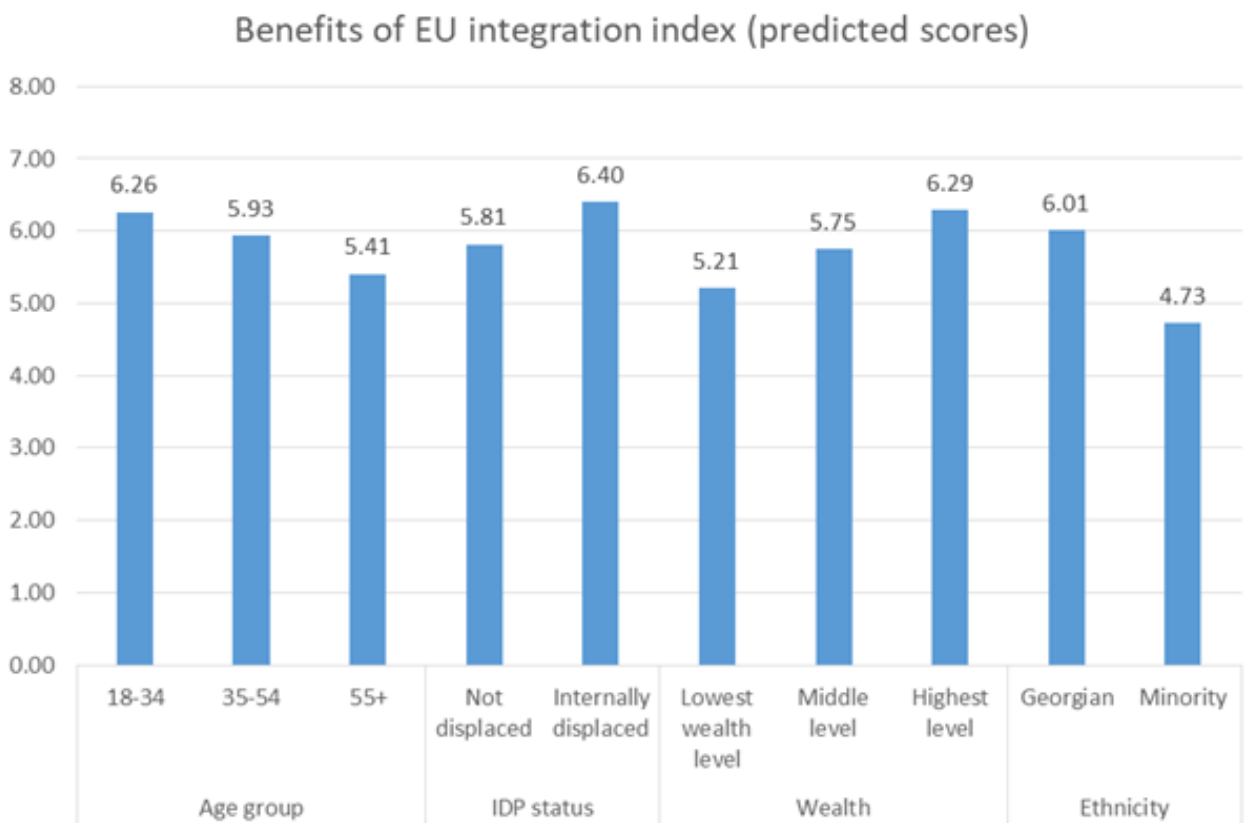
The study asked a wide range of questions about potential outcomes of Georgia's further integration into the European Union. The data indicate that a large majority agree that Georgia would be better off in the EU. People agreed most strongly with the benefit being that Georgians could go to work and study in the EU more easily. The least agreed to sentiments were related to Georgia having a more functional government and being better protected from Russia. However, a majority still agreed with these questions.

Figure 23: Perceived outcomes of further integration with the EU



Based on these questions an index of positivity towards integration with the European Union was created. The index varies from 0 to 8, with 0 being only negative or uncertain in attitudes and 8 being only positive towards the outcomes asked about. The average score was 5.8. A regression suggests that IDPs, younger people, wealthier individuals, and ethnic Georgians are more positive, controlling for other factors.

Figure 24: Perceived outcomes of further integration with the EU Index



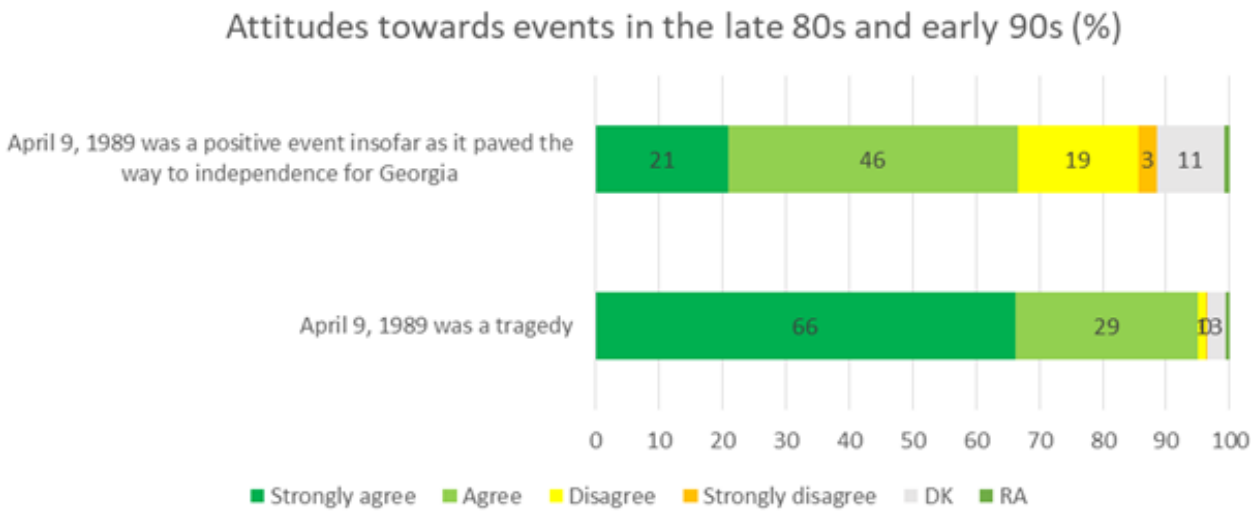
Generally, the public has positive attitudes towards Western integration. People consider the EU as Georgia's best partner, while relations with Russia are noted as a barrier in becoming closer to the EU. However, motivations for integration are primarily associated with an improved economic situation, rather than human rights and democracy.

ATTITUDES TOWARDS HISTORY

There is a wide variety of opinion about events in modern Georgian history. The study asked a number of questions about people's feelings on these issues. This section presents these views.

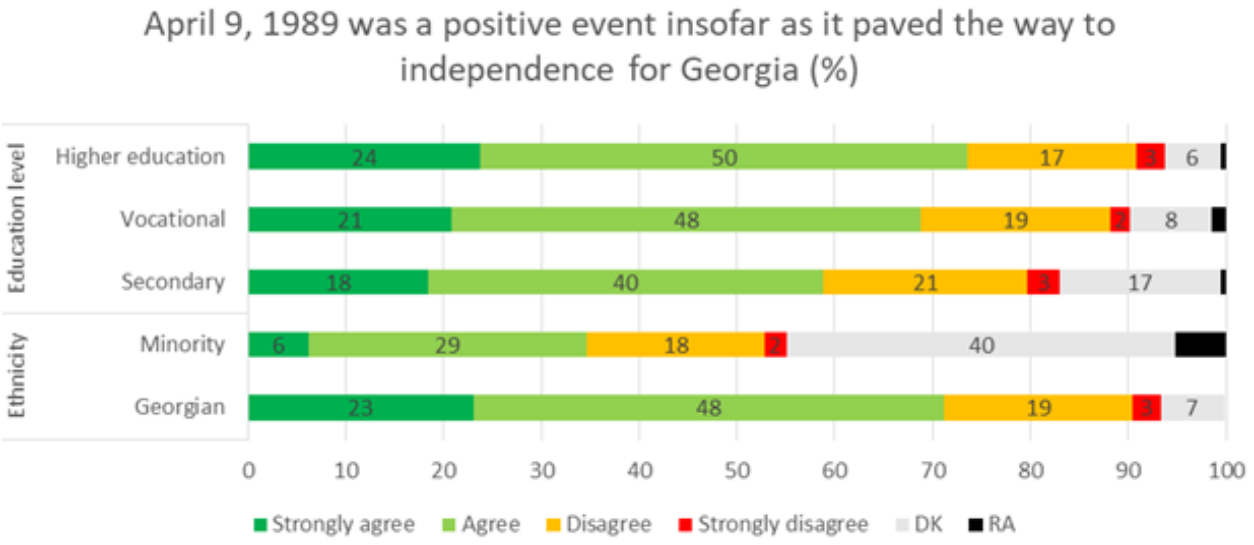
Prior to the dissolution of the USSR, protests were held in April 1989. A violent crackdown followed on April 9. The survey asked about whether people view April 9 as a tragedy as well as if it was positive insofar as it paved the way to independence. The public almost uniformly agree that April 9 was a tragedy (95% agree or strongly agree). Views are more divided about whether the event was positive.

Figure 25: Attitudes towards April 9



When broken down by social and demographic groups, the data show a number of differences on the second question. Ethnic minorities are significantly more likely to be uncertain about whether April 9 was positive insofar as it led to independence. Similarly, people with lower levels of education tended to be less positive and more uncertain.

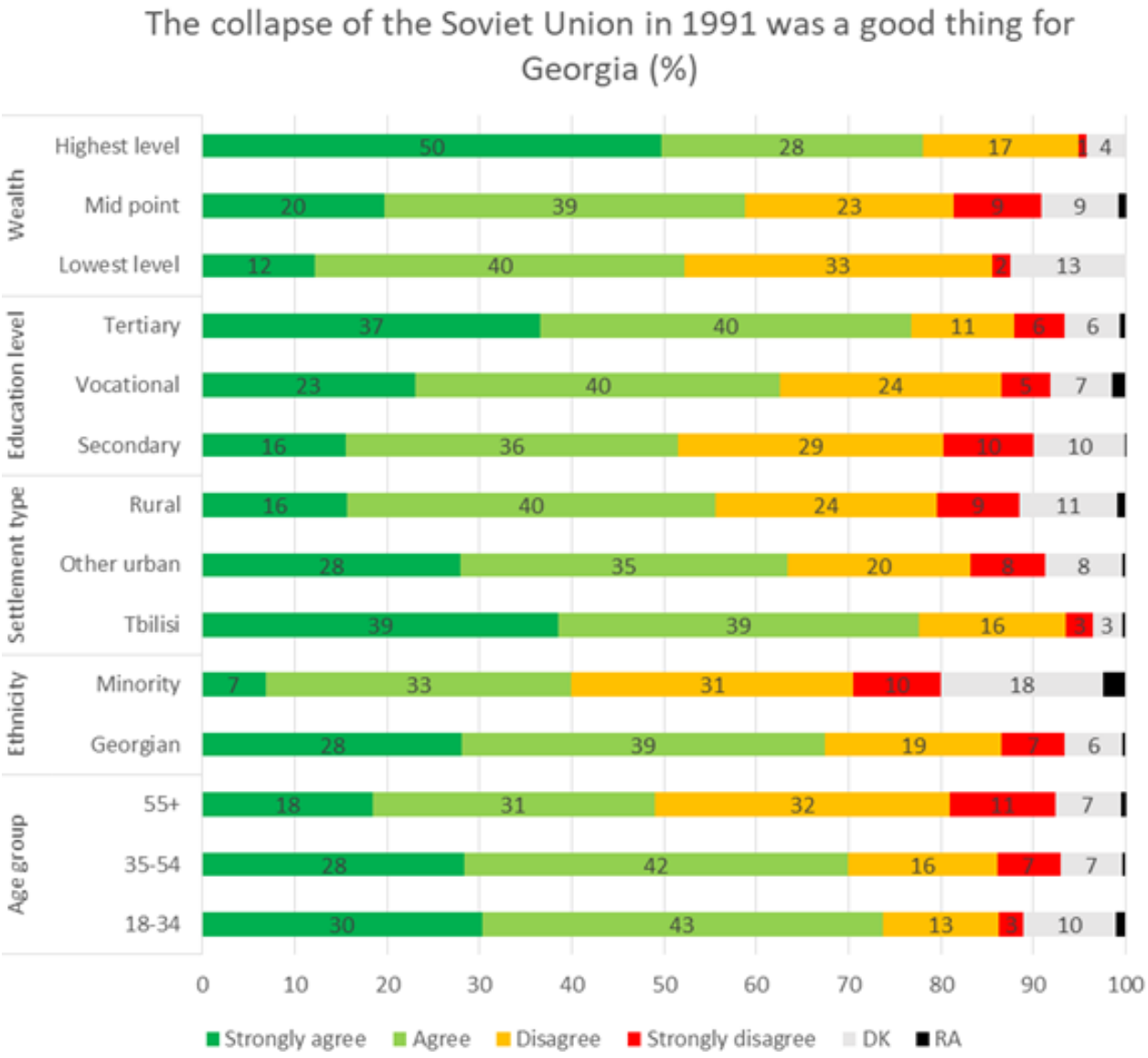
Figure 26: Attitudes towards April 9 among different groups



The data indicate that most of the population agree (64%) that the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 was a good thing for Georgia. A minority (28%) of the population did not agree with the statement. A small share (8%) said that they did not know what to answer or

refused to answer (1%).[1] A regression analysis suggests that age, ethnicity, education, wealth, and settlement type are important predictors of whether or not people think that the collapse of the Soviet Union was a good thing. Younger people are more likely to agree that the collapse was a good thing. People in Tbilisi, those with higher levels of education, and those with more wealth were more likely to view the collapse as a good thing, controlling for other factors.

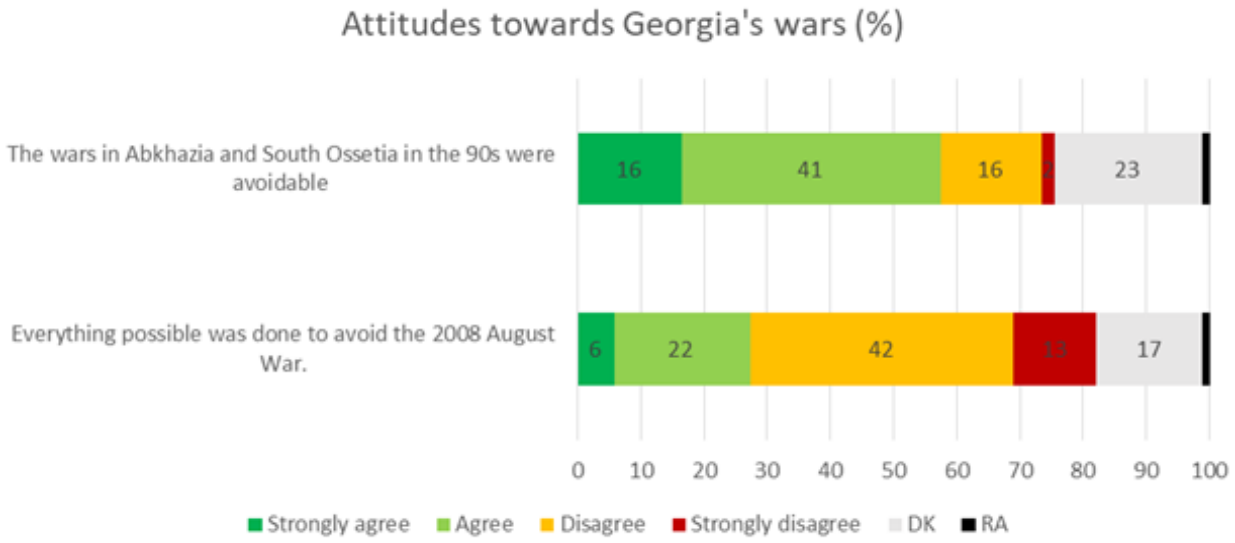
Figure 27: Attitudes towards the collapse of the Soviet Union



[1] The sum of percentages in response to this question does not sum to 100%, because of rounding error.

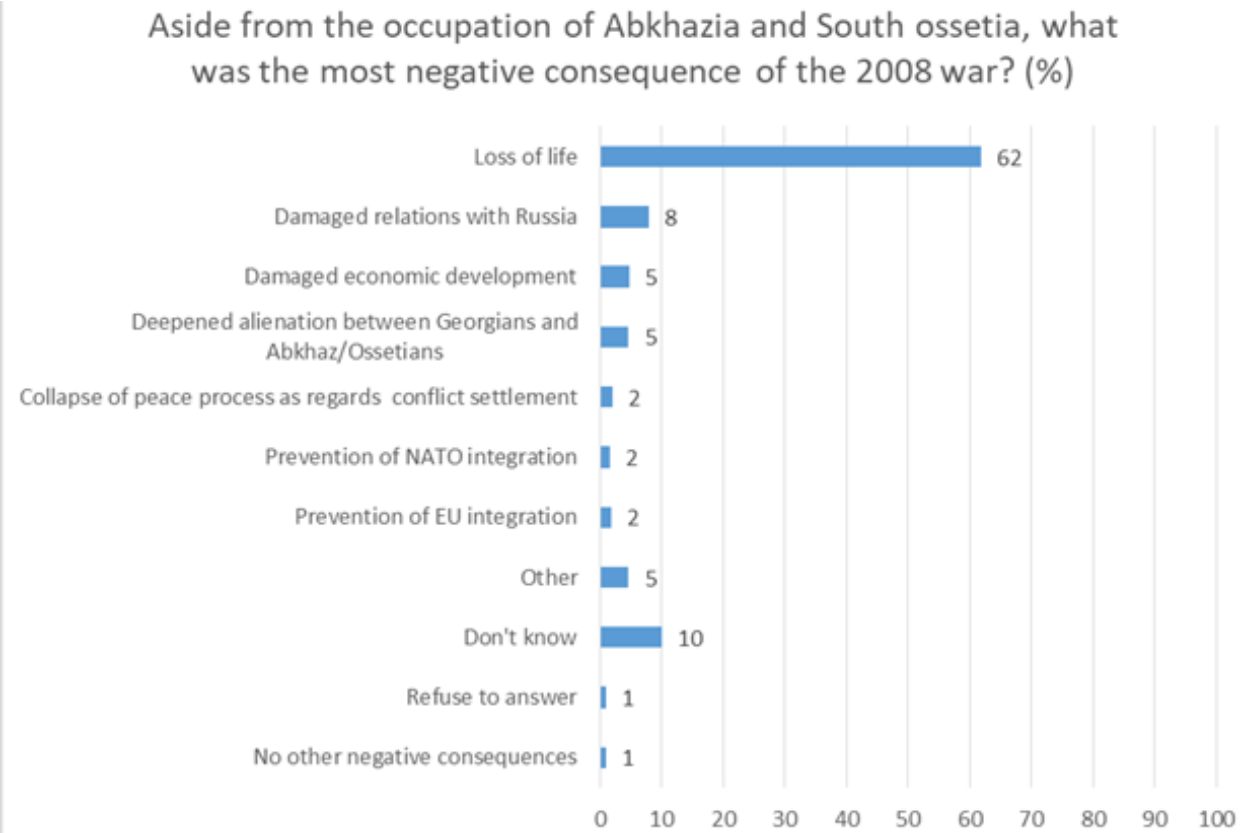
During the past 30 years, Georgia experienced a civil war and two ethnic conflicts. The public tends to think the ethnic conflicts and 2008 war were avoidable. The data suggest people tend towards thinking that the wars in Abkhazia and South Ossetia in the 90s were avoidable (57%). Only 18% disagreed. Many were also undecided (23%). Another question related to the 2008 August war. The majority of respondents disagreed (55%) that everything possible was done to avoid the 2008 August war, and only 28% agreed.

Figure 28: Attitudes towards the conflicts



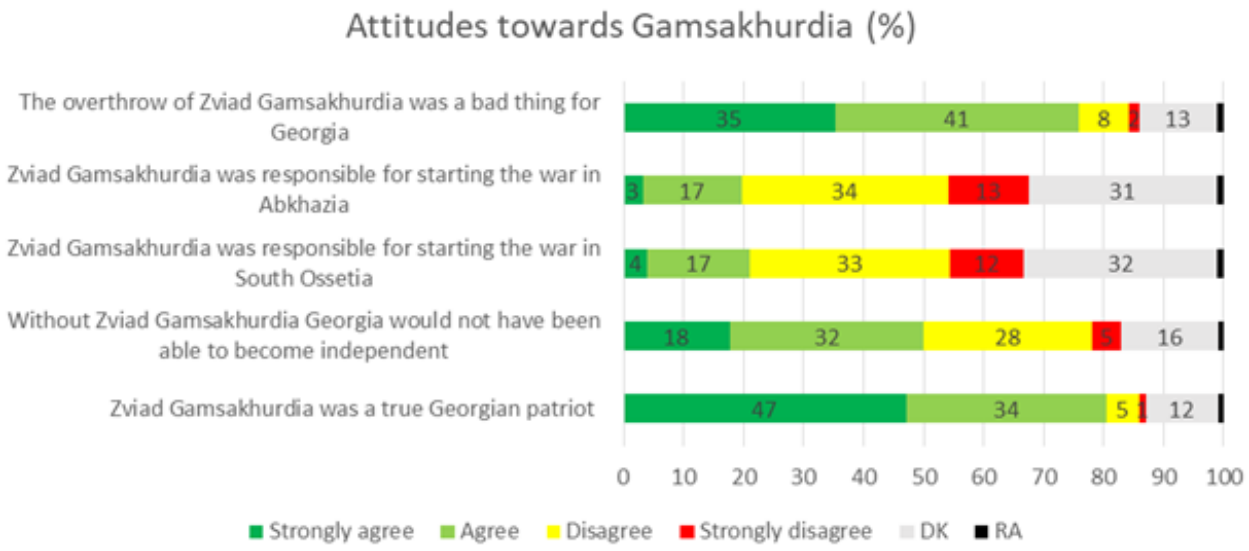
The study also asked what the most negative consequence of the 2008 war was aside from the occupation of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. A majority responded loss of life (62%). The next most common response was don't know (10%). Other responses were named by less than 10% of respondents.

Figure 29: Consequences of the 2008 war



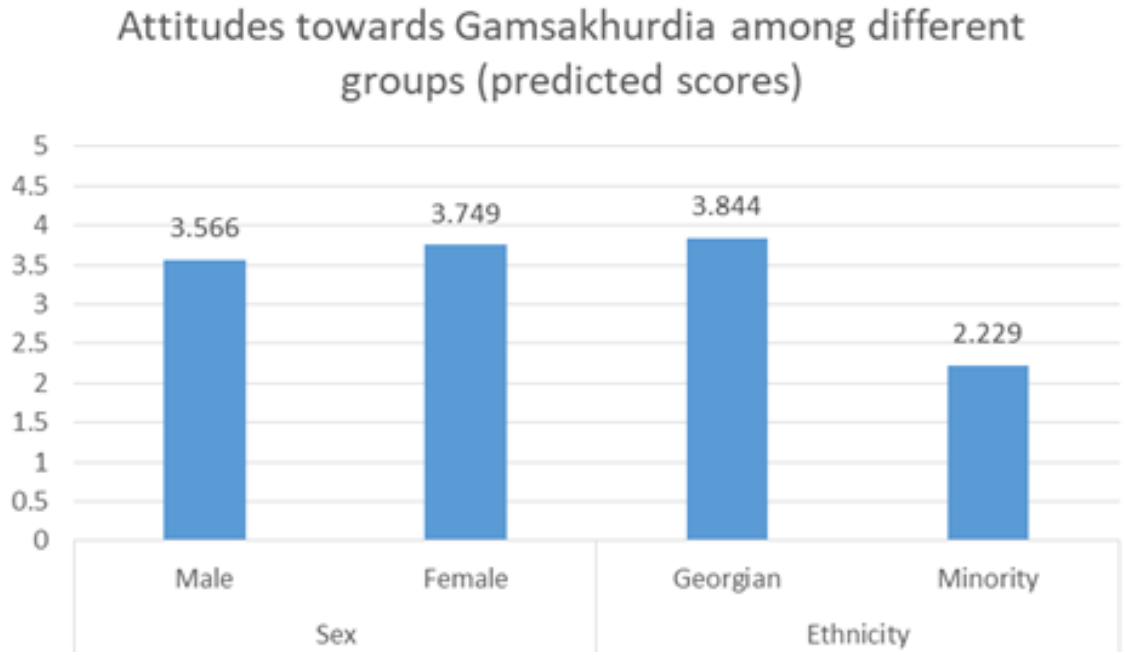
The survey also asked people for their opinions on the first president of Georgia, Zviad Gamsakhurdia, who was deeply involved in the ethnic conflicts. The data shows that generally people have positive attitudes towards Gamsakhurdia. Most people think that Gamsakhurdia was a true patriot (81%), and that his overthrow was a bad thing for Georgia (76%). Half (50%) think independence would not have happened without him. Similarly, more people disagreed than agreed with the idea that Gamsakhurdia was responsible for starting the war in Abkhazia (47% disagree versus 20% agree) and war in South Ossetia (45% disagreed versus 21% agreed). On these questions, however, nearly a third of the public was uncertain.

Figure 30: Attitudes towards Gamsakhurdia



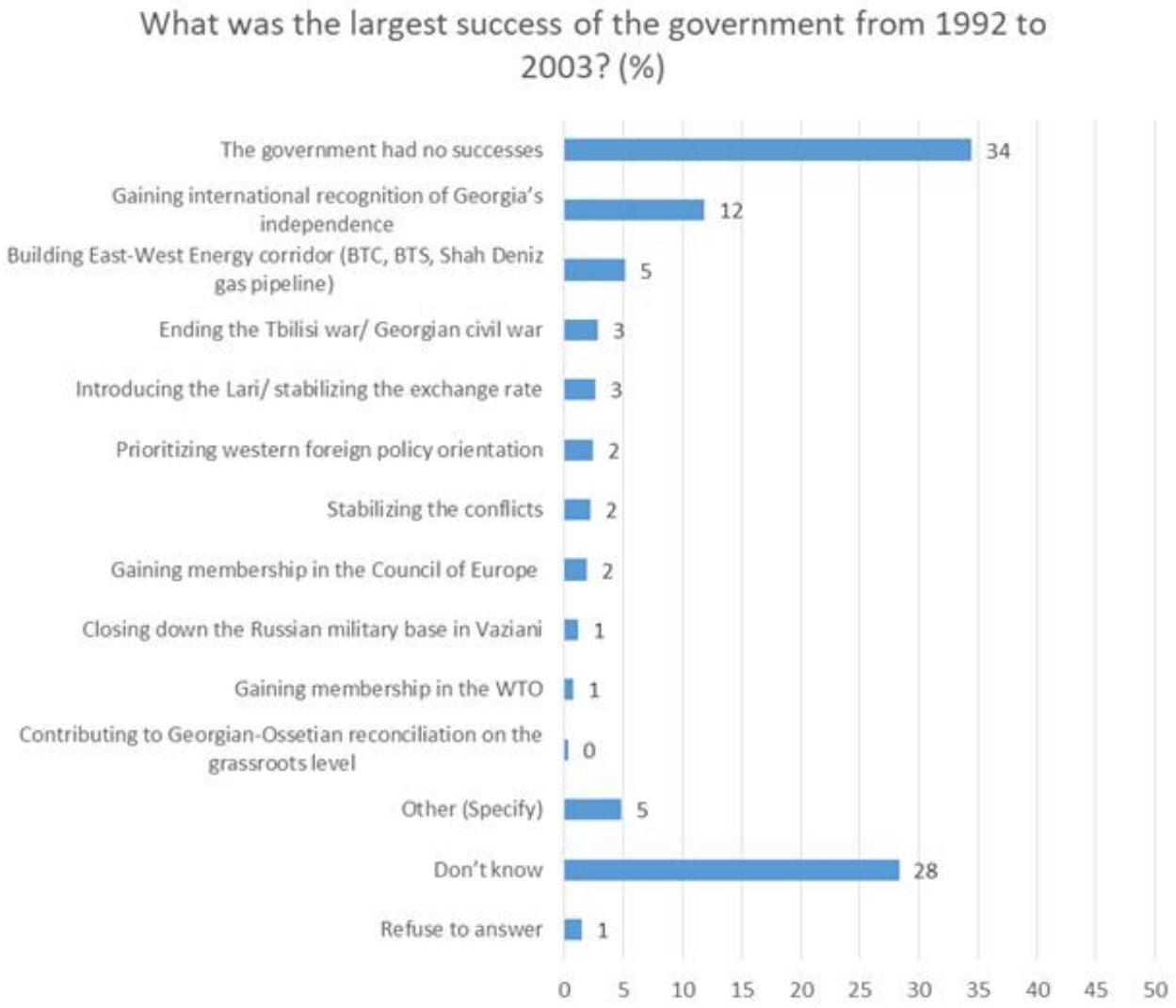
Using these questions, an index was calculated, with solely positive attitudes towards Gamsakhurdia equal to 5 and solely negative or uncertain attitudes equal to 0. The average score was 3.7 on the index. A regression analysis suggests that ethnic minorities hold more negative and uncertain attitudes towards Zviad Gamsakhurdia, while women hold slightly more positive attitudes than men.

Figure 31: Attitudes towards Gamsakhurdia broken down by social and demographic groups



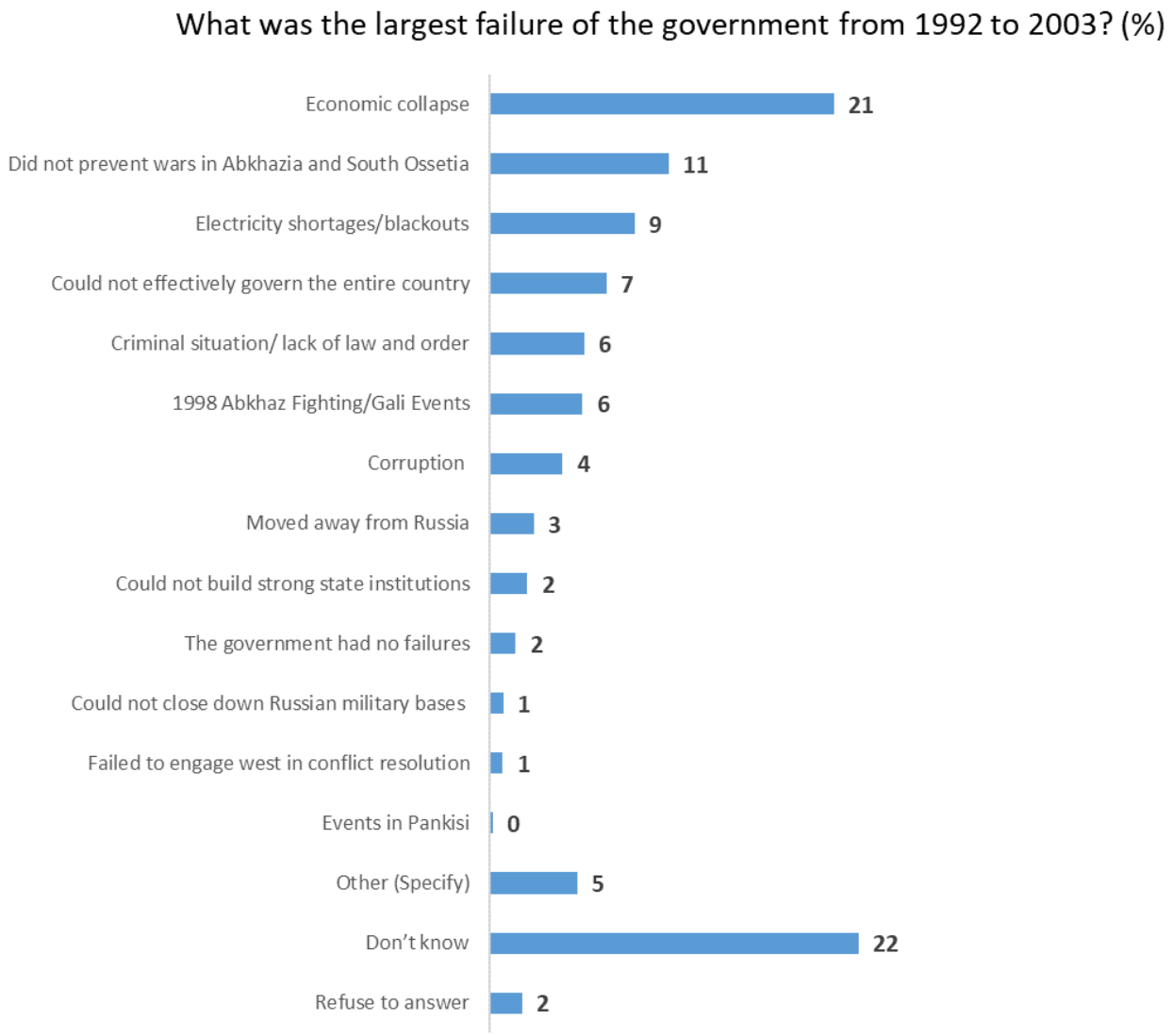
Aside from attitudes towards Gamsakhurdia, the study asked about the largest successes and failures of the three governments after Gamsakhurdia. People found it difficult to name a success of Shevardnadze's government (28%) or thought they had no successes (34%). One in nine (12%) reported that the government's largest success was gaining international recognition. All other responses were named by 5% or less of the public.

Figure 32: Sheverdnadze's successes



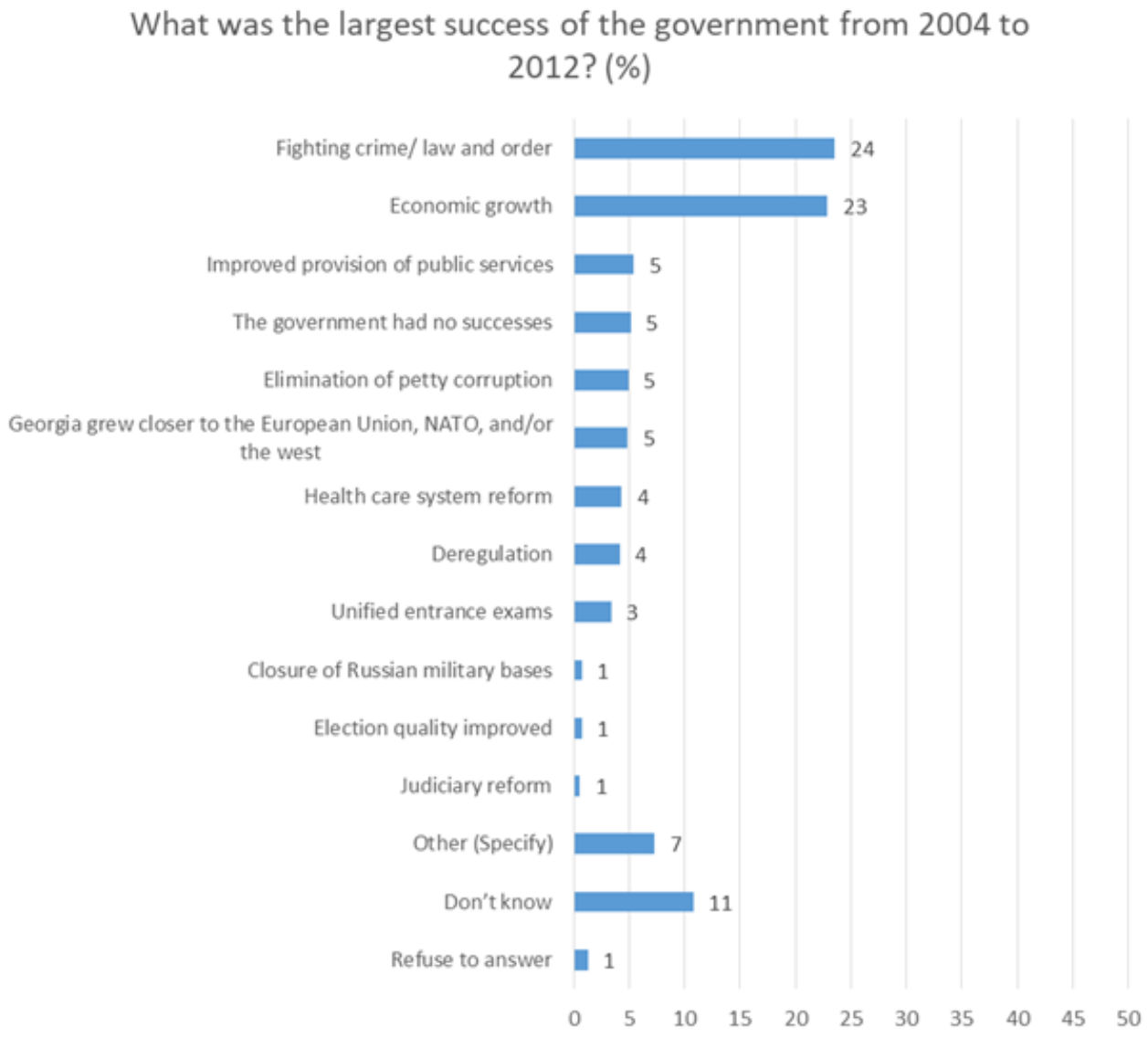
While the public was unclear about Shevardadze's successes, they have clearer views about its failures. A fifth (21%) indicated economic collapse. One in nine (11%) reported not preventing the wars in Abkhazia and South Ossetia. Despite being more certain of Sheverdnadze's main failures, still one in five responded don't know to the question (22%).

Figure 33: Sheverdnadze's failures



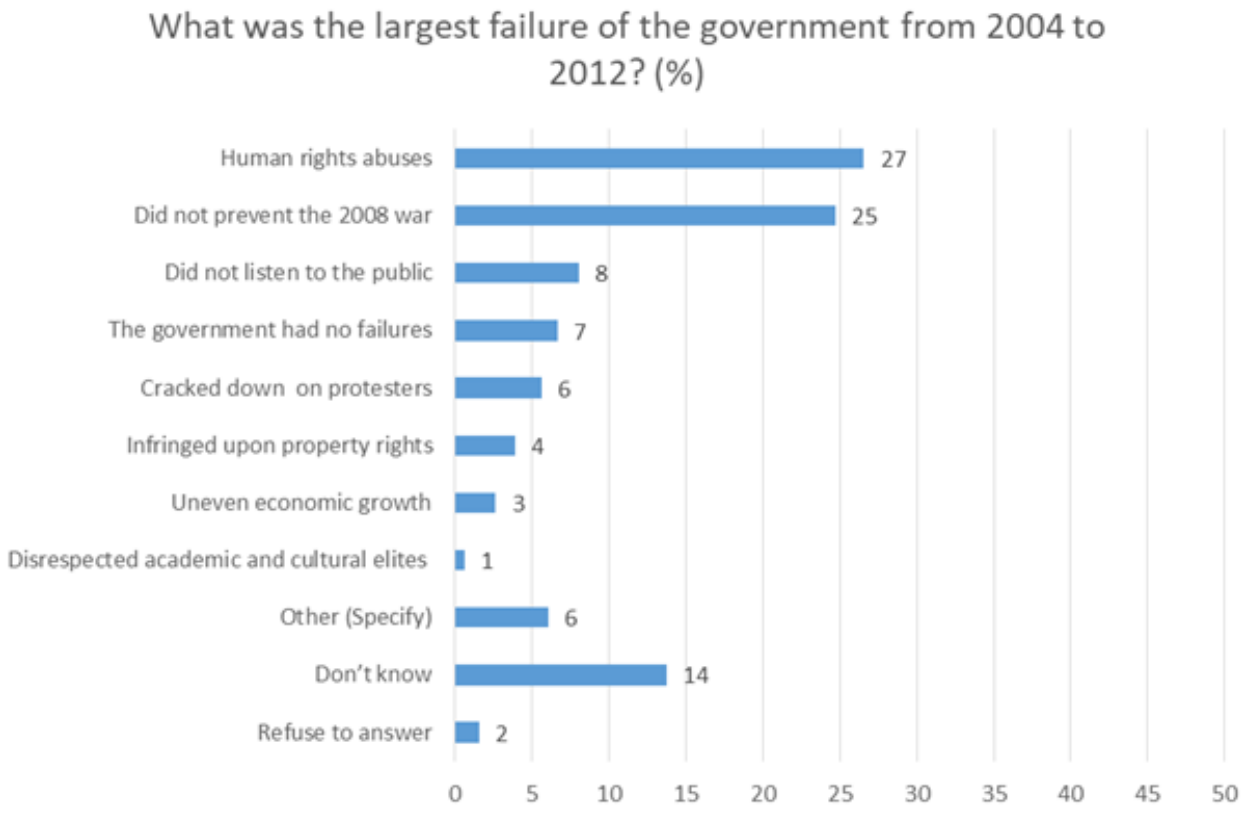
In contrast to Shevardnadze's government, people had more solid opinions about the UNM government's largest success and failure. Fighting crime/ law and order and economic development were named by similar shares of respondents (24% and 23%, respectively). After these, the next most common response was don't know, which was named by 11% of the public. The remainder of responses were named by 5% or less of the public.

Figure 34: The UNM's successes



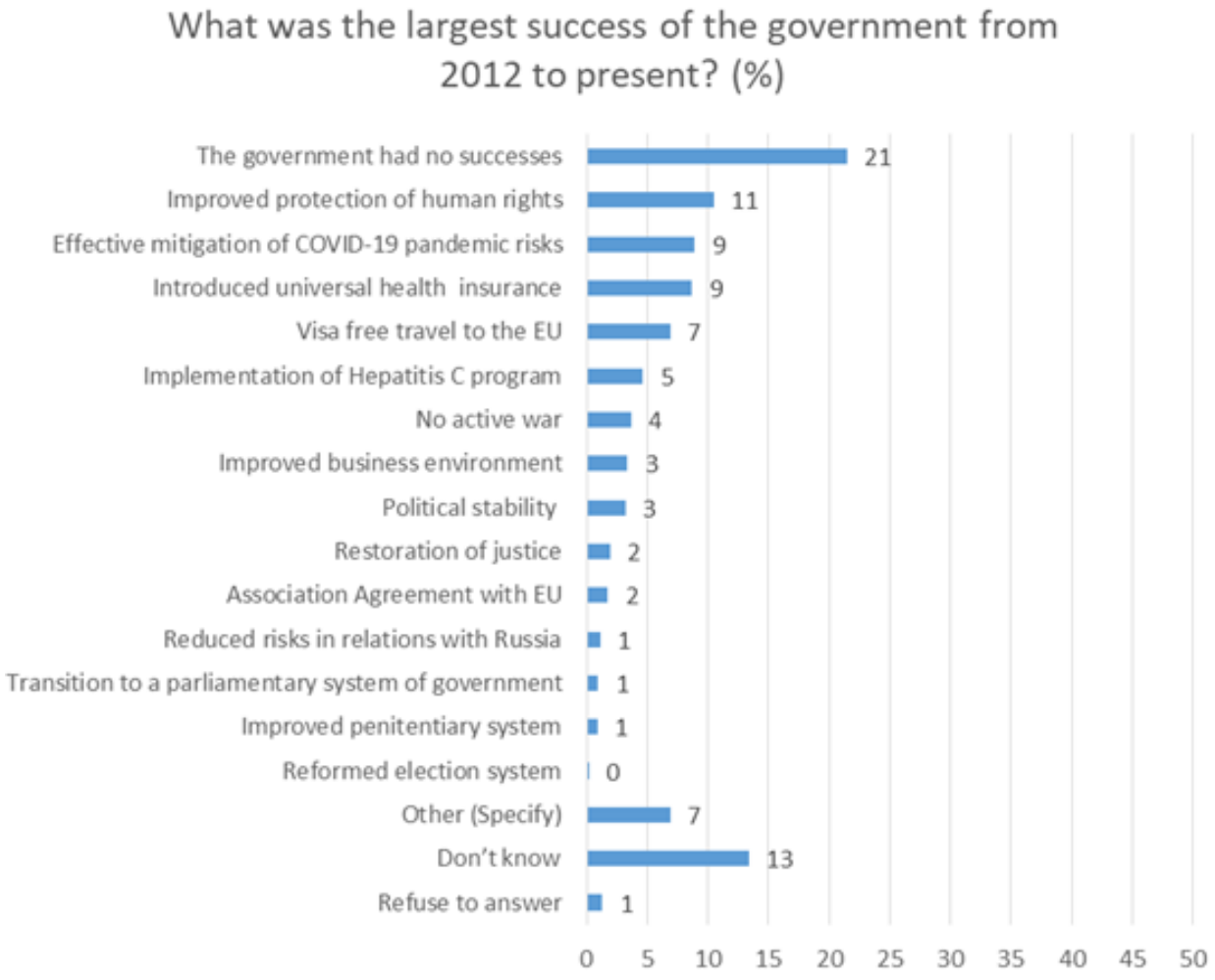
In terms of failures, the largest share of people named human rights abuses (27%) and not preventing the 2008 war (25%). The third most common response was don't know (14%). Other responses were named by less than 10% of the public.

Figure 35: The UNM's Failures



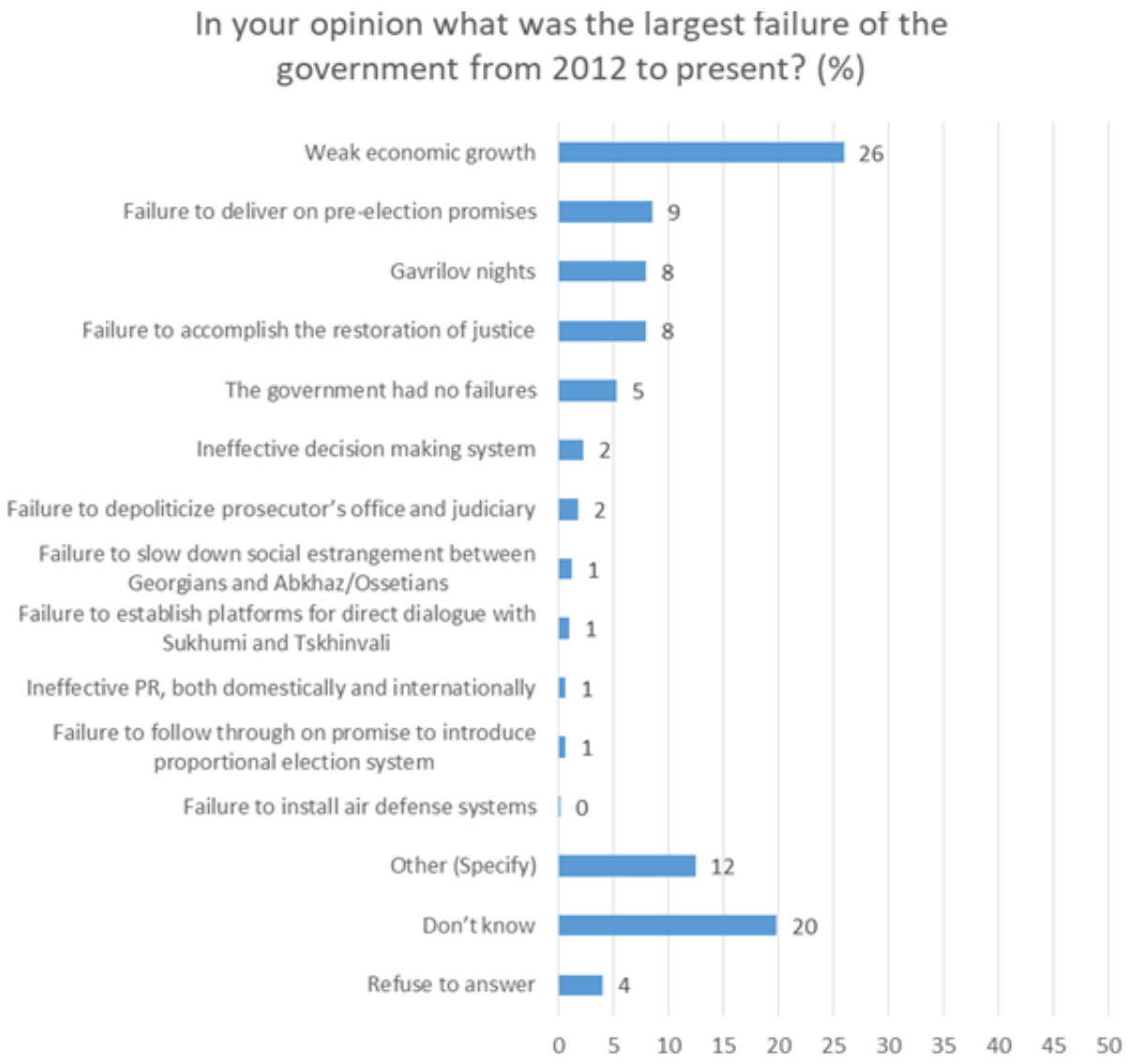
The study also asked about the current government's largest successes and failures. The most common response to the question was that they have had no successes. The second most common response was don't know (13%). The third most common response was improved human rights protections (11%). This was followed by Covid-19 response and the introduction of universal healthcare (9% each).

Figure 36: GD's largest successes



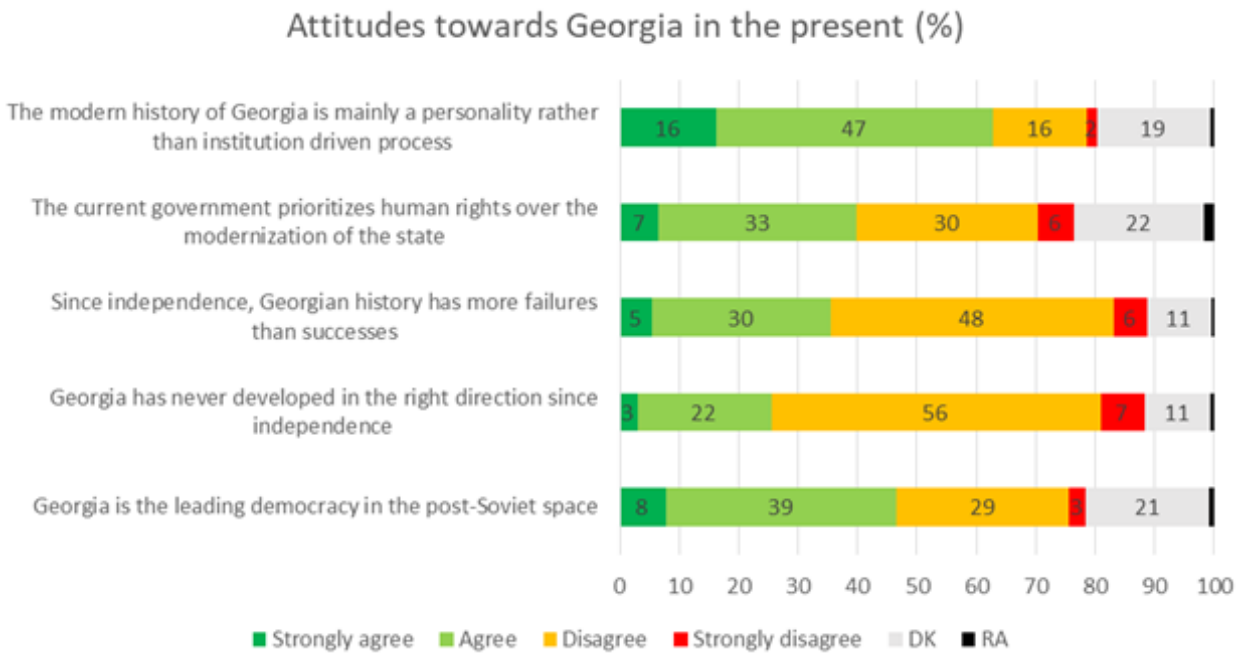
The largest failures of the GD government according to the public included weak economic growth (26%), failure to deliver on election promises (9%), and the Gavrilov nights (8%). There was also a high level of uncertainty on the question, with 20% responding don't know. Other responses aside from those available on the survey were common. Rather than any single theme though, the responses included 103 different responses.

Figure 37: GD's largest failures



Moving to the present and the country's current situation, respondents were asked their views of the state of development of a number of issues in the country such as democracy and human rights. The data shows that people tend to agree that Georgia is the leading democracy in the former Soviet space (47%). In contrast, 32% disagreed with this statement, and 21% were undecided. The majority of people disagreed that Georgia has never developed in the right direction since independence (63%). A majority (63%) also agreed that modern Georgian history has been mainly a personality rather than institution driven process. Most also disagreed with the idea that since independence, Georgian history has more failures than successes (54%). Respondents' attitudes were divided over whether the current government prioritizes human rights over the modernization of the state (40% agree compared to 36% disagreeing).

Figure 38: Views on Georgia's role in the world



The population of Georgia considers the collapse of the USSR a positive event. However, they tend to believe the conflicts associated with it could have been avoided. With regard to the successes and failures of each government, people found the questions difficult to answer often. The most common responses though fit with the general discourse, with Shevardnadze not being remembered positively generally. The public credit the UNM government with fighting crime and economic growth, while faulting it for human rights violations and not being able to avoid the 2008 war. With regard to GD, people have more diverse views of successes and tend toward thinking weak economic growth is its largest failure. At present, the population also tends to believe Georgia is on the right track in many respects.

CONCLUSIONS

The above data and analysis lead to a number of conclusions about ethnic identities, the role of the church in Georgia, attitudes towards the West, and Georgia's recent past.

Ethnic identities

Most in Georgia identify primarily as Georgian citizens rather than members of their ethnicity. They also tend to be interested in national issues rather than local, regional, or international ones, with the exception of ethnic minority respondents who are more likely to report interest in local issues.

On linguistic issues, the survey suggests that most Georgians think that if someone wants to work in the civil service they should speak Georgian, that Georgian citizens should speak Georgian, and that few would vote for someone who does not speak Georgian.

The data are also not very positive with regards to the state conducting business in minority languages in addition to Georgian. Most people disapproved of having street signs in minority languages. Similarly, most disapproved of having court cases between minorities in ethnic in minority languages. However, people are more approving of having services provided in minority languages in addition to Georgian. Ethnic minorities were generally more pro-minority than others.

The study also asked about whether people thought a number of minority groups should have more representation in parliament. Most people think that there should be more women in parliament. By contrast, fewer think that more ethnic minorities or LGBTQ people would be good to have in parliament.

When asked about Georgia's conflicts as relates minority relations, the public tend towards thinking that Georgia's wars show that ethnic minorities are a security threat. Public opinion was divided on whether Georgia's wars show that Georgians need to be more tolerant.

Attitudes towards the Georgian Orthodox Church

Attitudes towards the GOC are generally positive. Most approve of its special legal status, think it is important for their family, a foundation of Georgia's identity, and that it promotes the preservation of moral values in Georgia. The public is more divided though on whether the church benefits Georgia by bringing Georgia closer to Russia.

Attitudes towards the West

The public tends to think that the EU and USA are best able to support Georgia. Smaller shares reported that Russia or no country can support Georgia. Ethnic minorities are more likely to report that Russia can support the country and less likely to name the West.

The public tends to want to further integrate into the European Union. The reasons why are quite numerous. The top reasons though were that Georgians will be able to go to the European Union to study and work more easily and that Georgia will become more European. This data suggests that economic reasons are not the only ones why Georgians support further integration with the European Union, but also cultural reasons. Similarly human rights protections and an improved quality of democracy were named by large shares of the public as potential results of Georgia's further integration into the EU.

At the same time, nearly two in five think that the EU represents a threat to Georgian culture. Furthermore, a large majority would prefer the reintegration of Abkhazia and South Ossetia to membership in NATO and the EU.

Attitudes towards history

Almost all in Georgia view April 9 as a tragedy. Many also think that it was a positive event, however, in that it helped push Georgia to independence. Georgians also tend towards thinking the collapse of the Soviet Union was a good thing, though worse off citizens and ethnic minorities are less likely to think so. In this regard, the public tends towards thinking positively of Zviad Gamsakhurdia. Yet, most also think that the conflicts of the 90s and the 2008 war were avoidable.

When asked directly about the largest successes and failures of recent governments, the public often has difficulty thinking of concrete reforms or missteps. This is particularly true of the Sheverdnadze government. The UNM government's largest successes in the public's view were fighting crime and economic growth. Their largest failures in the public's opinion were human rights abuses and the 2008 war. The Georgian Dream government's most commonly named success was with improved human rights, while its largest failure according to the population has been weak economic growth.