



*For the Project*

**PET**

ბანათლება მამყნარბლოგისთვის  
*Promoting Education for Tolerance*

*Funded by the European Union*

# **A Survey of Attitudes and Perceptions of Minority Youth in Georgia**

## **REPORT**

*Implemented by BCG*

**BCG**

*February 2007*

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## **I. Technical Information**

- The survey was conducted using the face-to-face interview method in secondary schools;
- School students aged from 12 to 17 were interviewed;
- The survey was carried out in Tbilisi, as well as in Marneuli, Gardabani, Akhaltsikhe and Akhalkalaki districts;
- 100 respondents were interviewed in Tbilisi, and 50 students in each mentioned district;
- The survey ordered by ALPE Foundation was conducted by Social and Marketing Research Company BCG Research;
- The survey was conducted in February 2007.

## 2. Major Trends

- In Kvemo Kartli and Samtskhe-Javakheti, as it was expected, the major languages of communication (for communicating at schools, with family members, neighbors and friends) are Azerbaijani and Armenian. As regards Georgian, it is more used in Kvemo Kartli as a second language of communication than in Samtskhe-Javakheti.
- The majority of respondents believe that the language of paperwork for governmental bodies should be Georgian, though a certain part of respondents (from 21% to 26%) in both regions populated mostly with non-Georgians think that it is desirable if paperwork is performed also in Russian along with Georgian;
- A significant portion of non-Georgian respondents (40%) does not speak Georgian. As a main reason was indicated they had no opportunity to learn Georgian, though a significant role also played the fact that they did not need to use the Georgian language in the daily life;
- The non-Georgian respondents expect difficulties in future as they do not speak Georgian. They mainly think that they will face problems in finding jobs with the Georgian organizations. In Kvemo Kartli many noted the problems with passing exams for higher education institutions (in both regions mainly populated with non-Georgian population the number of those wishing to continue education after graduating from secondary school is high);
- The respondents in Kvemo Kartli are more motivated to learn Georgian. For that they are ready to take different measures: take private lessons, attend language courses, etc, while in Samtskhe-Javakheti they believe the best way to learn Georgian is to focus on Georgian lessons taught at school;
- Georgia is clearly identified for the interviewed Kvemo Kartli students with their homeland. As their homeland, Azerbaijan was noted by an insignificant number of respondents. A different situation is in Samtskhe-Javakheti, where each third respondent deems Armenia his/her homeland. Despite this, an equal number of respondents in both

regions (slightly more than a half) clearly associate their own and families' future with Georgia;

- The main language of receiving information in Kvemo Kartli is Azerbaijani, while in Samtskhe-Javakheti they receive information with equal proportions in Armenian and Russian. As regards the TV programs in the Azerbaijani and Armenian languages televised by the Public Broadcaster, they are not practically watched in Kvemo Kartli. These programs are more popular in Samtskhe-Javakheti, where 71% of respondents watch them either regularly or periodically.
- According to the survey results, the students in Kvemo Kartli and Samtskhe-Javakheti actively read newspapers and magazines. In Kvemo Kartli especially popular is *Tumorju*, while in Samtskhe-Javakheti *Vrastan*.
- The respondents believe that the ethnic minority rights in Georgia are basically protected. The violations of the rights are more of an occasional nature and do not represent a tendency. As the most typical case of ethnic minority rights violation was noted verbal abuse.

### 3. Main Part of the Report

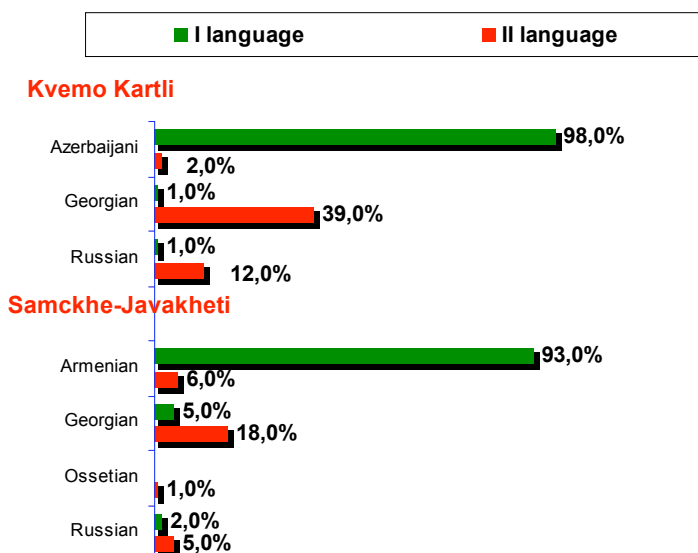
In the survey conducted we separated the overall data and the data obtained in Kvemo Kartli and Samtskhe-Javakheti. In the overall data one may easily notice some general regularities, or restore the picture of the data proportions obtained separately in Tbilisi, Kvemo Kartli and Samtskhe-Javakheti. Therefore, we thought useful to present in the Report mainly the data obtained in Kvemo Kartli and Samtskhe-Javakheti and make their comparisons.

#### 3.1 Language of Communication

As it was expected, the first language of communication in the families are Azerbaijani in Kvemo Kartli and Armenian in Samtskhe-Javakheti. It should be noted that as a second language of communication 32% of respondents in Kvemo Kartli indicated Georgian. As regards Samtskhe-Javakheti, the tendency is noticed in the region that they communicate with their family members mainly in Armenian.

Even when communicating with the neighbors the tendency remains unchanged in both regions, though in Kvemo Kartli the importance of the Russian language is increasing; Russian was indicated as a second language of communication by 24% of respondents. In Samtskhe-Javakheti Georgian is also actively used to communicate with neighbors; 17% of respondents indicated Georgian as the second language of communication.

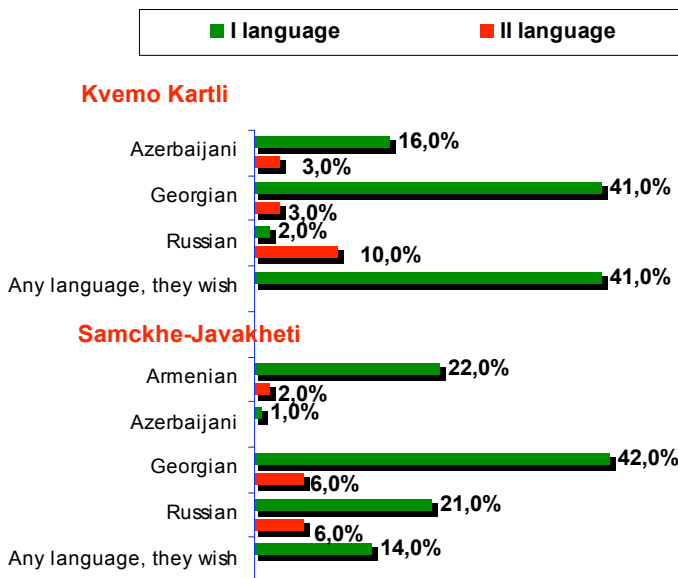
#### What is your speaking language while communicating with your friends?



During the survey was found a similar picture even when the respondents were asked if what language they speak with their friends. The respondents in Kvemo Kartli communicate in Georgian with their friends more often than the respondents in Samtskhe-Javakheti. The survey confirmed that **in general in Kvemo Kartli among the students surveyed the Georgian language is more actively used for communication than in Samtskhe-Javakheti.**

As it was expected, the students interviewed in Kvemo Kartli communicate at school in the first place in Azerbaijani and then in the second place 46% of respondents communicate in Georgian. In Samtskhe-Javakheti as a second language Georgian and Russian are used for communication at school only by an insignificant number of respondents.

**Which language do you think should be used in everyday life by representatives of different nationalities living in Georgia for communicating with each other?**



We got to certain extent a different response to a question: what should be the language of communication in daily life for Georgian citizens of different ethnicity. It turned out that in both surveyed regions a substantial number of respondents (41-42%) believe that in the first place this should be the Georgian language. The Azerbaijani and Armenian languages were noted in the first place by 16% of respondents interviewed in Kvemo Kartli and 22% of respondents interviewed in Samtskhe-Javakheti. Although among potential responses offered was included the option “Any language acceptable for them”, only 14% of respondents in Samtskhe-Javakheti indicated that response, while it turned to be more “popular” response in Kvemo Kartli: this response was acceptable for 41% of respondents.

The interviewed respondents generally agree with the idea that paperwork in the governmental bodies should be performed in Georgian. Among all respondents, the majority (53,7%) support that presumption. This tendency is almost similar in both Kvemo Kartli and Samtskhe-Javakheti, though the number in both regions is significant of those that support the idea of performing the paperwork in two languages Georgia and Russian.

**3.2 Knowledge of the Georgian Language, Homeland**

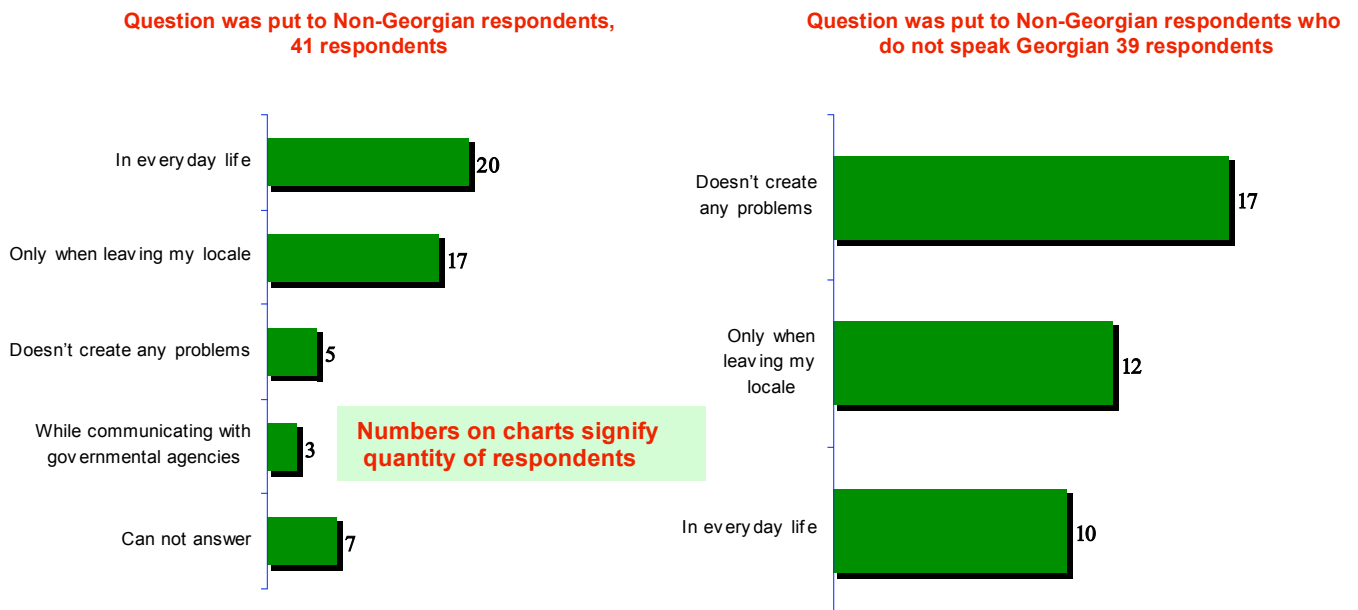
The survey found that a significant part of the interviewed do not speak Georgian. The number of such individuals is almost equal in Kvemo Kartli and Samtskhe-Javakheti, 41% and 39% respectively. In Kvemo Kartli the majority of these respondents explained that with a specific response: 32 respondents out of 39 noted that they had no opportunity to learn Georgian. The explanations in Samtskhe-Javakheti are more diverse: “I do not need in my daily life”, “Have no contact with Georgians”, etc. However the option: “I have no opportunity to learn Georgian” is also more or less found in Samtskhe-Javakheti.

The lack of knowledge of Georgian is problematic for the respondents, though this has to do more with Kvemo Kartli rather than Samtskhe-Javakheti. For 20 respondents out of 41 in Kvemo Kartli lack of knowledge of the Georgian language is problematic in daily life, while for 17 respondents out of 39 in Samtskhe-Javakheti the lack of knowledge of Georgian is not problematic at all. For both regions the lack of knowledge of Georgian is relatively problematic when they have to leave their native towns and villages.

**Does the fact of not speaking in Georgian create any problems, if yes, in which fields?**

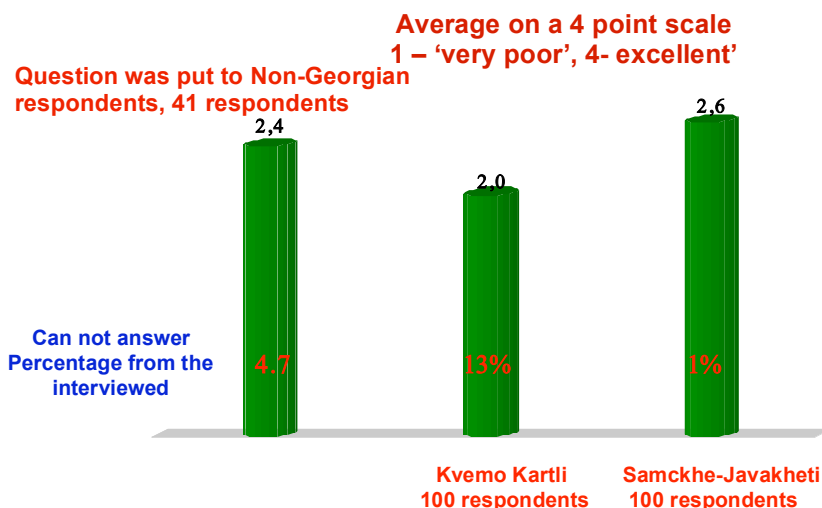
**Kvemo Kartli**

**Samckhe-Javakheti**



In both regions the respondents believe they will face problems in future because of lack of knowledge of Georgian. They mainly fear that this may hinder their employment with the Georgian organizations. A significant part of the respondents in Kvemo Kartli (24) also noted the problems with passing exams for higher education.

**To what extent do you know Georgian?**

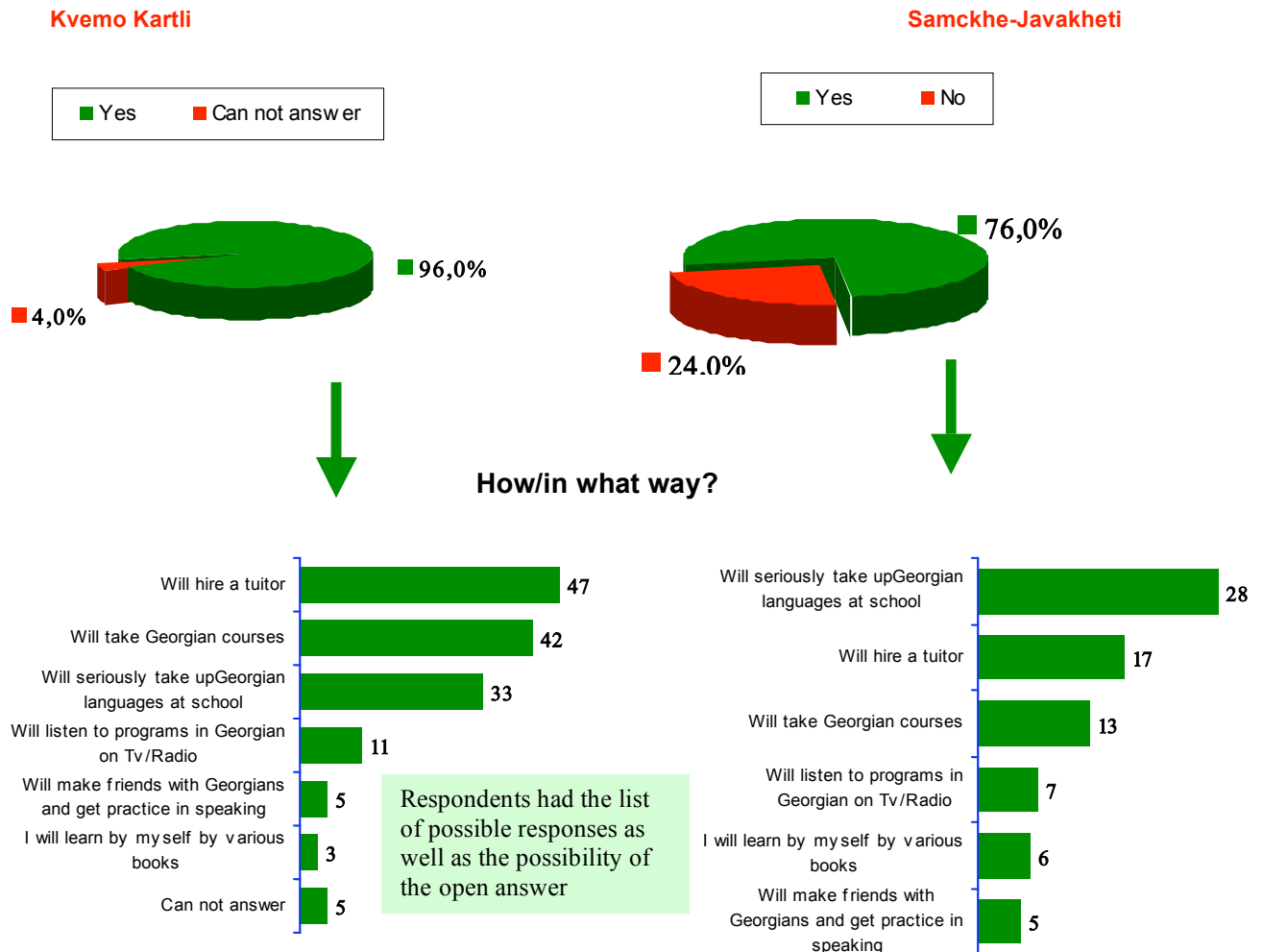


The students interviewed in Kvemo Kartli and Samtskhe-Javakheti assessed their own language skills absolutely differently. In Kvemo Kartli the respondents assessed their language skills at 2 on a 4-ball-scale, while the level of self-assessment was much higher in Samtskhe-Javakheti and was equal to 2.6 on the same scale. Also, the number of students in Kvemo Kartli is higher that found difficult to assess their skills by this criterion.

As it was expected, in Kvemo Kartli the most comprehensible text is the one written in Azerbaijani, and in Samtskhe-Javakheti – in Armenian. However, if in Kvemo Kartli the Azerbaijani language was noted by 97% of respondents, in Samtskhe-Javakheti 72% of respondents indicated Armenian, and for others the most comprehensible texts are written in Russian for 19% and Georgian for 9%.

**In Kvemo Kartli the students are more motivated to learn Georgian.** Out of 100 respondents 96 noted this willingness, while in Samtskhe-Javakheti only 76 out of 100 indicated the same. The desire to learn Georgian was expressed in Kvemo Kartli by the willingness of the local students to take any measure for that: hire a coach, attend language courses, pay greater attention to Georgian lessons at school, etc, or in other words, if needed, pay a substantial amount to learn Georgian. In Samtskhe-Javakheti the most acceptable way for learning Georgian was indicated a greater focus on Georgian lessons at schools.

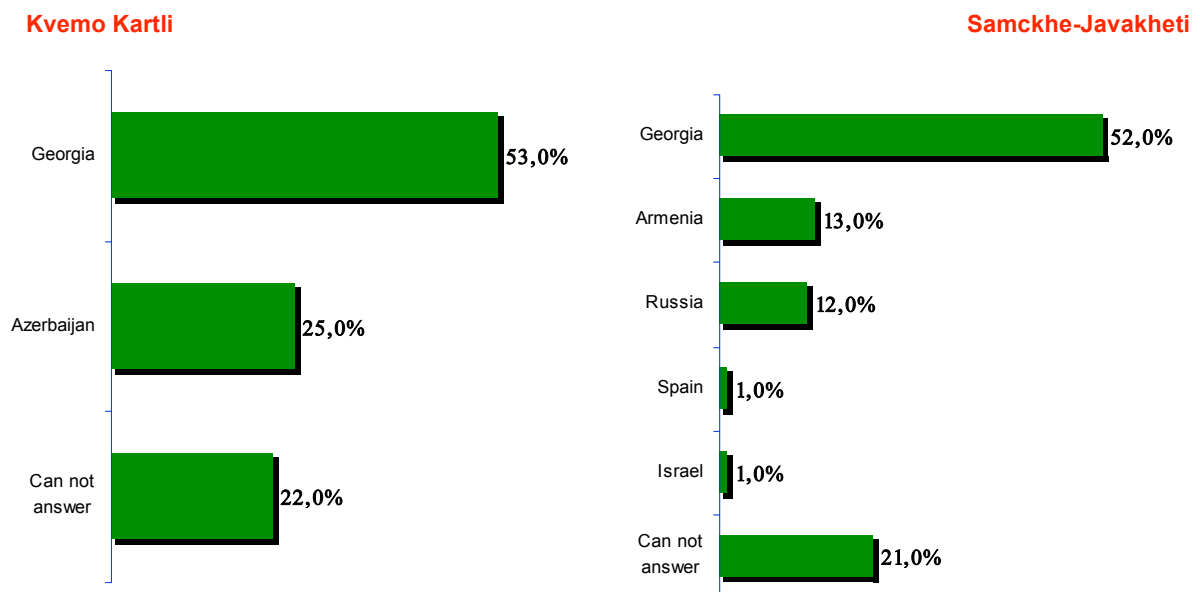
### Do you intend to learn Georgian?



**Georgia is clearly identified as a homeland in Kvemo Kartli.** In this region 86% of interviewed students indicated Georgia as their homeland and only 11% deem Azerbaijan as homeland. The situation is largely different in Samtskhe-Javakheti, where each third respondent noted Armenia as his/her homeland. In this region 62% of respondents indicated Georgia as the homeland. To this number should be added those 4% of interviewed respondents that did not indicate directly Georgia, but noted Javakheti.

Nevertheless, almost the same number in Kvemo Kartli associate their and their families future with Georgia as in Samtskhe-Javakheti. This figure is slightly higher than a half of the total number of respondents in both regions. The following difference was found: each fourth interviewed student in Kvemo Kartli clearly associated his/her own and family's future with Azerbaijan, while in Samtskhe-Javakheti they saw their future to a less extent in their historic homeland.

**To which country you vision to link the future of yours and your family after 5 years?**



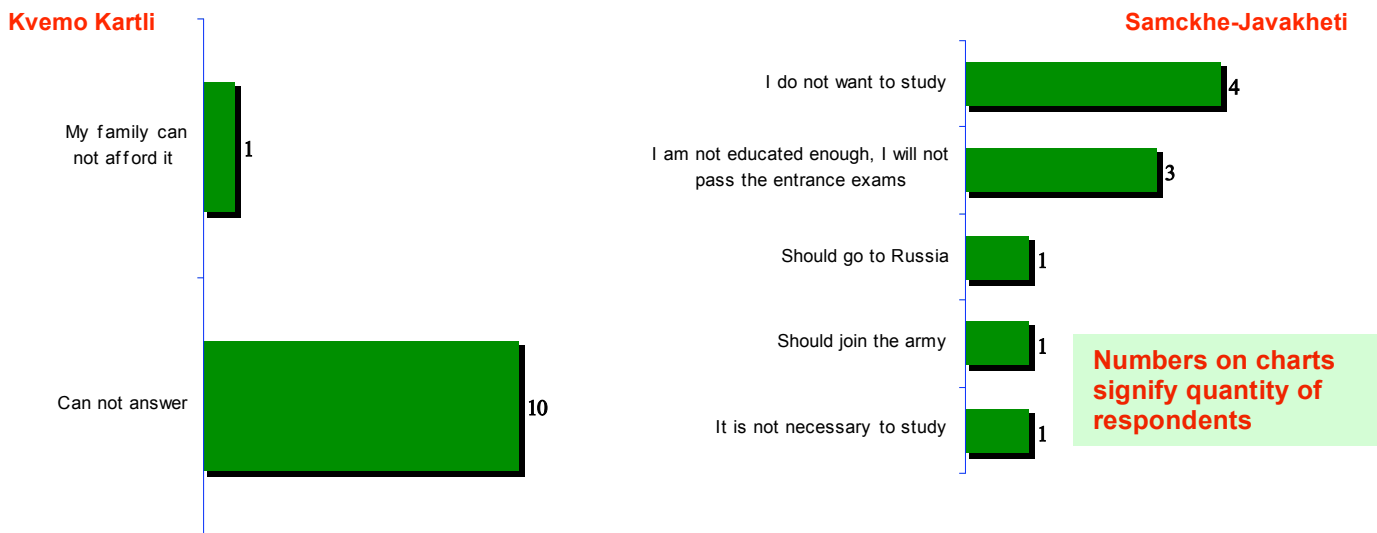
### **3.3 Prospects of Education**

According to the survey results, the majority of respondents intend to continue their education in a higher education institution. The respondents motivation in both regions mainly populated with ethnic minorities is almost equally high: in Kvemo Kartli 77 interviewed students out of 100 would wish to continue education, and in Samtskhe-Javakheti 84 students out of 100. As regards the respondents that did not wish to continue their studies after

finishing the secondary school, in Kvemo Kartli they found difficult to name the reason, and in Samtskhe-Javakheti the students were absolutely aware why they were not willing to continue their education.

### Why do not you intend to enter the University?

The question was put to the respondents who do not intend to proceed with studying at university (11 respondents in Kvemo Kartli, 10 respondents in Samckhe Javakheti)

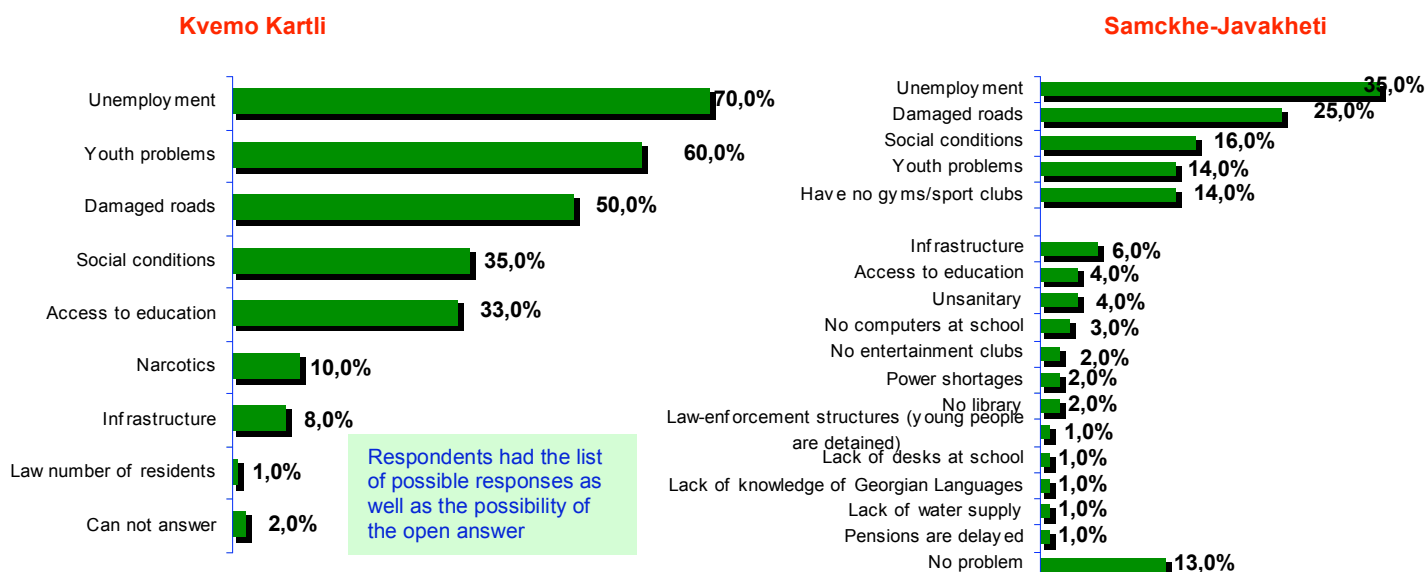


Almost equal numbers of the interviewed students in the regions think about the prospects of continuing their education in Georgia and outside. The students that planned to study outside (mostly in Armenia and Azerbaijan) noted mainly two reasons: they will not be able to pass entry exams because of the lack of knowledge of Georgian, and they have friends and relatives that will help them where they are intending to study.

### 3.4 Problems in the Surveyed Regions

The major problem for the interviewed remains unemployment. This problem is equally typical in Tbilisi, Kvemo Kartli and Samtskhe-Javakheti. However the students in Kvemo Kartli more actively indicated the problems of different kind, than in Samtskhe-Javakheti. For instance, if in Kvemo Kartli 70% of students emphasized unemployment, in Samtskhe-Javakheti this figure was 35%. Similarly, for both regions the road condition is problematic. In Kvemo Kartli they are also particularly concerned with the youth problems.

## Which problems occur on your local



*Comment: Respondents had more than one option of responses, thus, sum of the responses exceed 100%*

The students in Kvemo Kartli tend more to think that the problems their region faces are not specific for their region only and the entire picture is almost similar throughout Georgia; this is the belief of 91% of respondents interviewed in the region. They are more critical in Samtskhe-Javakheti, where each fifth interviewed student believes that the problems in their region are not typical for the entire country. They view the problems in Samtskhe-Javakheti as clearly specific for their region.

### 3.5 Sources of Information

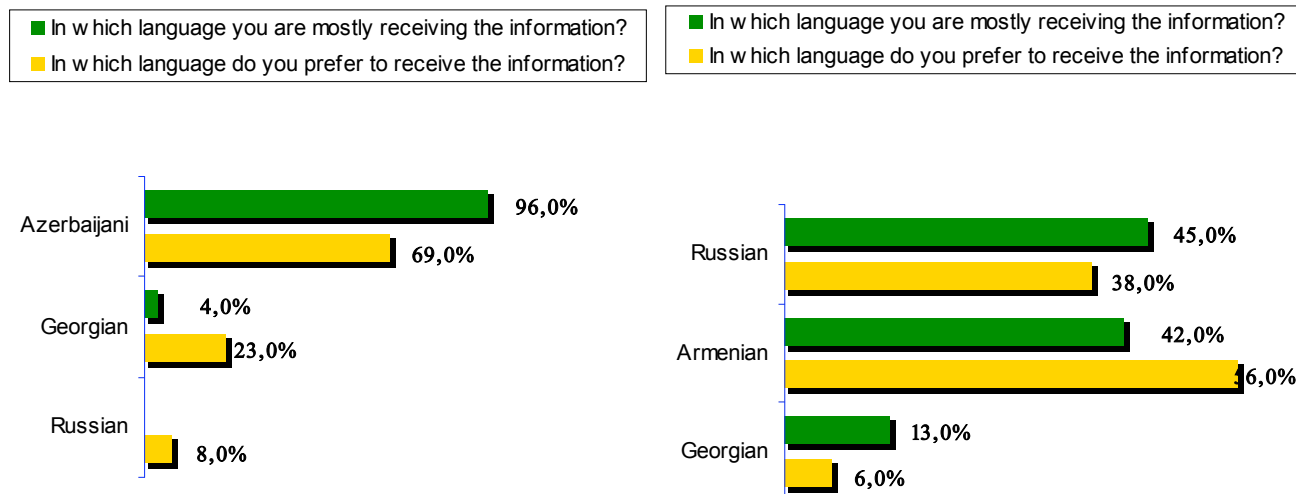
The main sources of information in Kvemo Kartli are Azerbaijani channels. In addition, information broadcasted by the central television was also noted (62%). The Russian channels were indicated by only 29% of respondents. The situation is different in Samtskhe-Javakheti, where the Russian and Armenian channels are almost equally important sources of information (Russian channels – 78%, Armenian channels – 74%). Almost an equal number of respondents in Samtskhe-Javakheti (69%) watches information broadcasted by the central television as in Kvemo Kartli.

Accordingly, in Kvemo Kartli they receive information mainly in Azerbaijani (96%), and in Samtskhe-Javakheti the proportional share of information received in Russian and Armenian is almost equal. The respondents prefer to receive information in the languages they really receive in.

## In which language you are mostly receiving the information In which language do you prefer to receive the information

### Kvemo Kartli

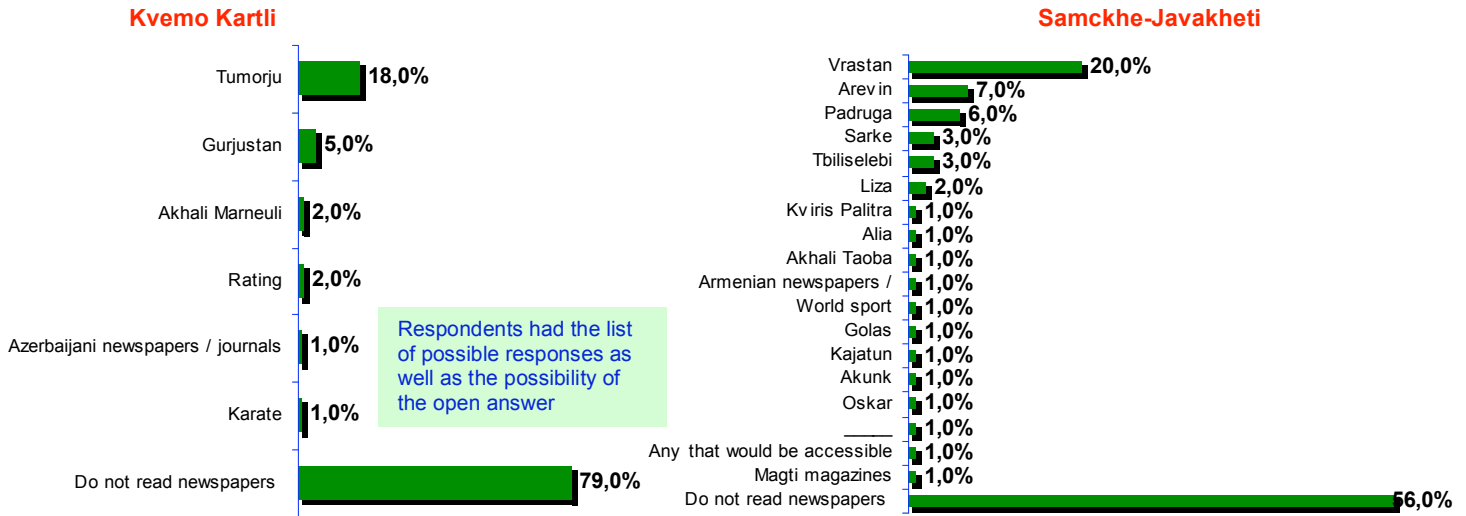
### Samckhe-Javakheti



The interviewed students watch more often entertainment and music shows. In Kvemo Kartli 25% of respondents also often watch motion pictures. As regards the programs televised by the Public Broadcaster in Armenian and Azerbaijani languages, they are more popular in Samtskhe-Javakheti. 71% of interviewed students in this region either regularly or periodically watch them. Only 29% of students do not watch these programs at all. The situation is absolutely different in Kvemo Kartli, where 92% of respondents do not watch the programs in their native languages televised by the Public Broadcaster.

**According to the survey results, the respondents rather actively read the printed press.** 65,3% of students do not read newspapers. The number of students reading press is especially high in Samtskhe-Javakheti, where only 56 respondents out of 100 do not read newspapers. In Kvemo Kartli this figure was equal to 79 students. In Samtskhe-Javakheti the most popular newspaper is *Vrastan*, which is read by each fifth respondent, and in Kvemo Kartli 18% of respondents read *Tumorju*. The major motivating factor for reading these newspapers is the accessible language they are published in.

### Which newspapers do you read mostly?



Comment: Respondents had more than one option of responses, thus, sum of the responses exceed 100% responses not exceeding more than 1 % are enrolled in “other.”

### 3.6 Minority rights

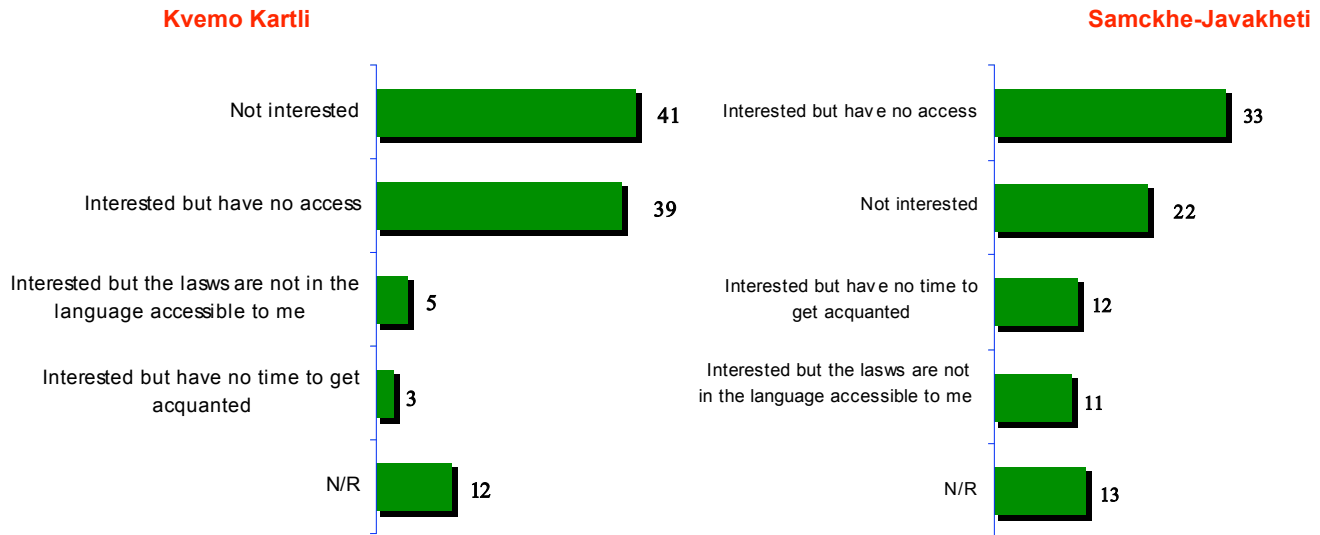
The respondents were asked if they were aware of the Georgian legislation related to the minority rights. The responses varied significantly different in Kvemo Kartli and Samtskhe-Javakheti. In Kvemo Kartli 55% of students openly admitted they are unaware of this legislation, 37% simply avoided responding and noted that it was difficult to answer the question. Only 8% of students indicated they were aware of the legislation related to the minority rights, though not well.

In Samtskhe-Javakheti less than a half of respondents noted they were unaware of the minority rights legislation or it was difficult to discuss this theme. 9% of students interviewed in this region believed they are well aware of this legislation, and 44% noted they were aware of this legislation but not so well.

As the major reason they were unaware of the minority rights legislation the respondents mainly noted, on the one hand, lack of interest, on the other hand, these materials were not accessible.

## Why are not you aware of the legislation of Georgia on minority rights ?

Respondents who are not aware of the legislation of Georgia on minority rights  
100 respondents in Kvemo Kartli, 91 respondents in Samckhe Javakheti

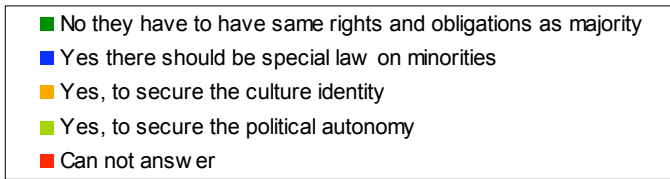


The respondents noted that the minority rights should necessarily be upheld, though this idea was more clearly supported by the interviewed students in Samtskhe-Javakheti (94%). As regards Kvemo Kartli, a significant number of respondents (48%) found difficult to discuss this theme. In Samtskhe-Javakheti a great number of respondents (64%) were also convinced that a special protection of minority rights was not necessary, as they should have had the same rights and obligations as the ethnic majority.

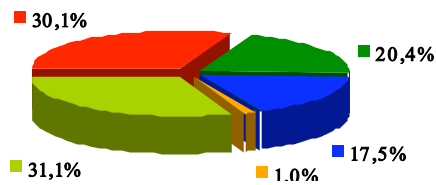
In Kvemo Kartli the respondents opinion split over this issue. Almost each third found difficult to respond. 31% of respondents believed a special protection of minority rights was necessary for the purpose of preserving the political autonomy. 17,5% of respondents noted it was necessary to have a special law on minorities, while each fifth believed that the minority rights and obligations should not be different from those of the ethnic majority.

**According to the respondents, the rights defined by the Georgian legislation are mainly upheld.** This idea was supported by 70% of interviewed respondents in Samtskhe-Javakheti and 39% of respondents in Kvemo Kartli. For a substantial portion of students in Kvemo Kartli (61%) it was difficult to express their opinion on the matter.

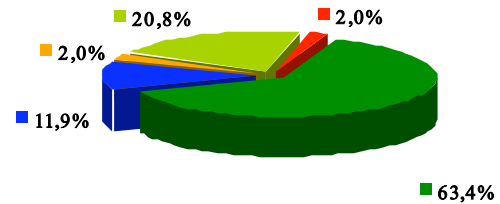
## Should minorities enjoy special protection?



**Kvemo Kartli**



**Samckhe-Javakheti**



*Comment: Respondents had more than one option of responses, thus, sum of the responses exceed 100%*

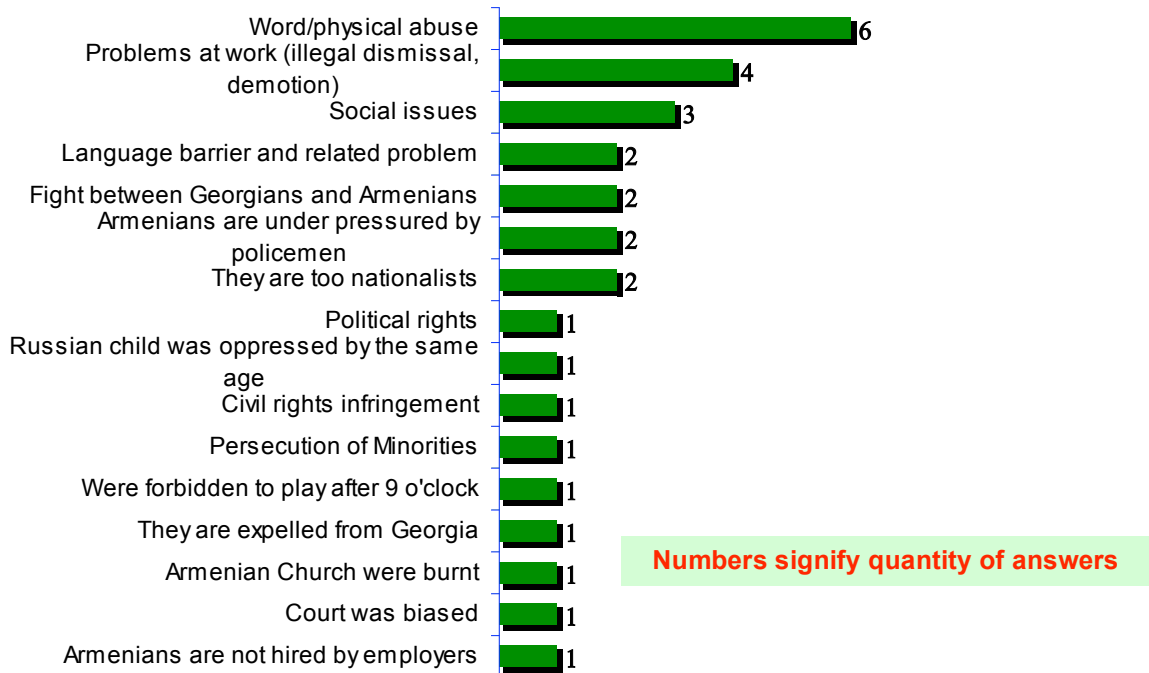
### 3.7 Case of Minority Rights Violation

The respondents in Kvemo Kartli and Samtskhe-Javakheti were asked if their rights, as of ethnic minority, are violated. In both regions the absolute majority of respondents denied that, but in Kvemo Kartli each fifth interviewed respondent refused to answer the question. An indirect question, if the respondents had heard about the cases of minority rights violation, was answered in Kvemo Kartli by 78% of respondents negatively, and 22% found difficult to respond. In Samtskhe-Javakheti 11% of respondents confirmed such facts.

About the facts of violation of minority rights heard in total 30 respondents (both in Kvemo Kartli and Samtskhe-Javakheti, as well as in Tbilisi). They indicated various facts of rights violation, though with greater frequency (6) the verbal abuse was noted.

## What types of abuses?

The question was put to the respondents who heard about minority rights abuse cases  
30 respondents



The facts of ethnic minority rights violation are viewed as separate cases rather than a tendency. The respondents mainly blamed separate individuals and did not view this as a result of a state policy. They deemed bureaucrats responsible for ethnic rights violations but not the President.