



MULTICULTURALISM IN GEORGIA: PROBLEMS AND PERSPECTIVES

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Abstract:

During 25 years of independence, because of different objective and subjective reasons, independent Georgian State could not fully get over the problems concerning ethnic minorities (despite the fact that in this direction after Rose Revolution of 2003 the situation was positively changed and several steps were made) We can single out still actual several main issues concerning ethnic minorities and their integration process.

1. Among non-ethnic Georgians, especially in the compactly populated regions the level of knowledge of Georgian language is still very low.
2. In the country the level of unemployment is quite high and ethnic minorities are no exception too. In non-urban space the level of unemployment is higher than in urban space. As a result, Georgian population has less possibility to interact with ethnic minorities in the public sphere.
3. Cultural and informational alliance.
4. The level of civic alienation is quite high too.
5. Weak civic institutionalized space doesn't help the collaboration of ethnic groups and appropriate articulation of private interest.

Until recently Georgian political establishment was very cautious with the ethnic politics and indecision in this regard was also quite often. Despite the individual projects and efforts carried out in recent years, it is still difficult to say that the Georgian government has consistent and effective policies in order to overcome problems caused by its ethno-religious multi-membership. Although in this sense recently there are some positive trends but the given efforts have still fragmented character and they can't be called well-formed reflexive and coherent policy that in the near future will bring rapid and effective changes in terms of civic integration.

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As we think among the strategies of ethnic approachment the most optimal way for Georgia is the strategy of integration. The state can develop this strategy by several ways.

1. Creation of stable democratic environment and institutional development.
2. Strengthening of local self – government, what'll promote the involvement of the citizens at the local administrative level.
3. Education system should ensure spreading of the knowledge of state language among ethnic minorities.
4. To encourage development of urbanization in the regions compactly populated by ethnic minorities.
5. Obviously, cooperation between state institutions and civil society organizations, and between the state and minorities, are very important in this process.

Keywords: Georgia, ethnic minorities, multiculturalism, integration

Introduction

Georgia traditionally used to be and remains a poly-confessional and multi-ethnic state. Accordingly, there has always been and it is actual also today the problem of the peaceful coexistence of the different segments of the society within one political space. Despite the fact that in the country for centuries side by side live different ethnic and religious groups (about 100), they almost do not know (and if they do, badly) the cultural values and achievements of each other. The purpose of our paper is to determine the social and political foundations that have contributed to the origin of ethnic and religious identities in Georgia and to examine the process of their convergence and integration within the public-political space. Our study does not include all ethnic groups living in Georgia.

According to the inventory, conducted in 2002, Georgia's population is 4,351,733 people. According to department statistics, the number of ethnic Georgians is - 3,661,173, representing just a bit over 80% of the total population (Minority Map, <http://diversity.ge/geo/map.php>). The ethnic minorities are scattered almost all over the territories of Georgia, although ethnic minorities, which we consider within our study, - Armenians and Azerbaijanis live compactly mainly in two regions - in Samtskhe-Javakheti and Kvemo Kartli.

From 1945, especially in 1950-60 when massive emigration embraced Europe, the issue of multiculturalism has become actual. Despite the fact that quite all political forces declared that we are living in multicultural society pursuing of the policy of multiculturalism is often perceived negatively. At the same time the events of 1989

helped to develop the discourse around multiculturalism issues. The latest events – Syrian civil war and the huge number of migrants from east southern Asia gives a new sense of it.

In this background, especially in the lights of last association agreement between Georgia and EU we think it is interesting the case of Georgia where the idea of multiculturalism became a subject of some discourses, but still we can't say it is as popular as in Europe. Often the idea of multiculturalism is not fully adequately understood. But Georgia, which has affiliated to the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and to other international legislative regulations, will have to overcome these problems.

Conceptions of ethnic diversities

Two main concepts of "nation" have been formed during the process of modernization in Europe. The first was the "Civic" concept of nation, emerged in France and Anglo-Saxon world. According to this model, becoming the member of "nation" was determined by the citizenship of particular persons. Only after this, the state begins to take care about the formation of culturally homogenous society. In other words, it is called an inclusive model, or the model of liberal assimilation, which ensures political project of "involvement", but does not care about ethno-cultural differentiation. Liberal assimilation can't stand multimember society. Its main goal is the formation of homogenous society.

The second model is so-called "German model", which preaches ethnic concept of "Nation" and for which ethno-cultural identity is much more valuable than the civic one. In other words, it is the model of "differentiation" which is "exclusive" in its sense. In case of Western Europe, the process of formation of modern nation-state was accompanied with the centralized state formation process; because of this, these two concepts were tightly connected. Also Western European countries (although there were exceptions too) in their social and economic development were based on the neglecting of feudal hierarchy and systematic development of capitalism, the process of social and political integration was less painful, more rapid and natural.

On the contrary, in case of German and East-Central Europe, firstly, the formation of Nation began with the attempt of formation the nation borders by creation of ethno-cultural identity and only afterwards started the formation of centralized state of modern tape. At the same time, unlike of western countries, it was developed in conditions of partially feudal social system and weak developed capitalism. Hence, the process of nation building and ethnic integration was much more complicated. At the same time, this process in central and eastern European countries has been

accompanied with the attempt of liberation and battle against Empires. As a rule, in these states cultural homogenization process has been developed by dominant ethnic groups at the expense of formatting hierarchical relations towards ethnic minorities (Schoplin1993: pp. 17-24).

There are still quite a lot of differences in defining minority policies between East and West European countries. In East-Central Europe there are still more statist and communitarians than liberals. Here, the issue of “security” plays a huge role in the process of formation the ethnic policy. Often, it is considered that minorities have some undesirable connections with enemy states. On the contrary, in case of Western Europe, minorities are not considered as potential enemies. The political philosophy of “Multiculturalism” and formation of multimember society is a well-known and adopted strategy in Western Europe. Among some different versions of Multiculturalism (such as Netherland’s model of “pillarisation” of society and creation of separate educational system for ethnic minorities or Swedish model, where emigrants were announced as the part of common Swedish welfare) British model is much more interesting. In 1964, Britain rejected the model of assimilation and used the concept of integration. The initiator of this concept, ministry of home Secretary Roy Jenkins, defined it as “...not as flattening process of assimilation but as equal opportunity, accompanied by cultural diversity, in an atmosphere of mutual tolerance” (Manning, 15 November, 2011)

This idea implies the existence of two parallel spheres: cultural and institutional. On the one hand, it means the promotion of public political culture based on the idea of welfare state, where all of its members own the similar level of equality; on the other hand, it means the existence of different ethno-cultures and maintenance of ethnic languages, cultural achievements and family traditions. Whereas quite all political forces realize the fact that all of us are living in multicultural societies, sometimes the idea of multiculturalism policy is negatively considered on the examples of ethno conflicts emerged in Post-Soviet republics, Yugoslavia and even more, in Great Britain, too (Rex, Sigh 2003: 3-4).

Ethnic diversity in Georgia: short historical retrospective

Georgia typologically is attributed to the East-Central European model of development. In Georgia Modern Nation discourse emerged in 19th century. In the conditions of Romanov Empire the main goal of Georgian intellectuals of that time was to establish the concept of Georgian nation as ethno-cultural one and only afterwards to achieve the political autonomy.

They were writing a lot of about the imagined ethno-cultural borders of Georgia and quite nothing was written about the issues of citizenship or political borders. May be absence of proper conditions was the reason why Georgian ethnic discourse could not transformed into aggressive ethno-nationalism. As Stephen Jones argued, Ethnic Relations in Georgia was mostly based on mutual superstitions and stereotypes and has mostly peaceful character. (Jones, 1997: 508)

XIX century's nationalism became the main bias and strategies for country's modernization: creation of new literary language, still weak, but, nevertheless development of urbanization, creation of political parties and increasing of civic participation (Dundua, Abashidze 2009: 25).

As described above, Schoplin's argument about dominant ethnic group's attempt to create homogenous society is proper with respect to Georgia. "Homeland, language and religion" - in defence of Ilia Chavchavadze's (one of the greatest Georgian public men and writer) these three main short and concise ideas were based as almost the whole of the XIX century Georgian national movement, in general, as well as the main features of the formation of the Georgian nation. In the Georgian nation around this slogan was the awakening of the nation, on one hand, struggle to maintain the sense of the statehood of Georgia, on the other hand. To go further, in existence of the term - "Georgian nation", in general, till today, in the development of Georgian nationalism around the idea of this slogan is still a great mite.

The major concern for Ilia Chavchavadze and all the thinkers of that period was the proliferation of education in Georgian language and writing-reading. The education got on the native language should have become a basis for helping to unite Georgian identity, creating and extending the sense of national identity.

In the background, when the Russian government even tried to forbid the term "Georgia" and in press it was replaced by Tbilisi and Kutaisi provinces, the steps implemented by "*Tergdaleulebi*" ("*Tergi-drunks*"): publishing a newspaper (in which the issues related with the problems of the history and culture of Georgia, contemporary political, social and economic were discussed), whole series dedicated to the importance of education and teaching the Georgian language, the establishment of Tbilisi and Kutaisi province's royal banks (the largest part of the earned money was spent on financing the Georgian schools and theatre), the creation of "The Society for the Spreading of Literacy Among Georgians", the opening of primary, temporal schools or the edition of the Georgian language textbooks - it's a short list of the activities that made a great contribution to the creation-development of the national education

ⁱⁱ Tergi – the river in the north part of Georgia, at the frontier to Russia

system, as well as in inspiring the nationality and construction of Georgian identity among the Georgian society.

At that time Georgia's new social and political classes usually had ethnic dimension. For example, the most financially prosperous Armenian bourgeoisie that was, true, local, of Tbilisi origin, but was standing mostly apart from other ethnic groups, and often had a negative attitude. It was followed by the fact that in the statistics of that time, education and knowledge of the ethnic Georgians had the lowest rate.

After the collapse of Romanovs Empire, the first precedence of the modern nation-state in Georgia is the period from 1918-1921. The Constitution of first democratic republic declared the "nation" as the only source of legitimacy, regardless the fact of countries cultural diversity. The Constitution guaranteed civil and political liberties of the citizens including ethnic groups' rights, permitting them to use their language and other cultural ties publicly, including the Court and Parliament. The firstly, Georgian Republic became a unitary-decentralized state having two autonomous formations within the state borders (Abkhazia and Muslim populated part). But, as an irony of the history, the Constitution had been working only for four days, because of the Bolsheviks' invasion and abolishing the independence of the country.

Post-soviet period: policy towards ethnic minorities

After dismantling of the communist system the external facade side of the order, which was entirely based on fear and terror, was destroyed. Also, along with the economic and social obstacles arose the problems of ethno-religious character. Typically, in most cases, this kind of tension has its roots not in the confessional or ethnic differences, but was caused by entirely different factors. Often confessional sight expresses only the tip of the iceberg, whereas deeper meanings are hidden. In Georgia, which is characterized by its ethnic and religious diversity, clearly exists a risk of mutual incompatibility among different ethnic groups. Still not strong democratic institutions can't ensure the transformation of society as one whole civil society.

Public political discourse and the space of today's Georgia is different with its multiplicity of ethnic categories and it is difficult to call it a strong political culture based on extensive citizen participation, the basis of which for its part is the overall social and political consensus. The political culture of Georgia largely has fragmented nature in which there are a lot of socio-political elements of the primordial and pre-modern type. They, in turn, do not quite correspond to the processes and goals of the structure of the state of the modern type.

Civil Integration prevents ethno-nationalist trends and myths, which have deep roots in the views of the majority of the population. These myths and perceptions play a crucial role in the formation of national self-determination and identity. Ethno-nationalist tendencies are quite strong not only within the ethnic Georgians, but also within the ethnic minorities. Creation of ethno-nationalist tendencies in Georgia contributed several factors. These factors, we can call as the historical past and the legacy of Soviet totalitarianism, as well as the current socio-economic situation. In this regard, Soviet past is especially "distinguished". Probably rethinking of these two factors will help us to answer the question: what was the origin of ethno-nationalist tendencies contributed to Georgia and why is the integration of ethnic minorities so difficult? Of course, in the inhibited civic integration an important role plays existing political elite, but as a rule, any political actor, trying to implement a particular political project, tries to give also some legitimacy to their actions. So, very often, these elites are slaves to this reality and, therefore, they are trying to strengthen their political projects with such ideas that are familiar to most people, adopted and approved by them.

Accordingly, the level of alienation, which has ethno-religious character, is quite high in Georgia. By alienation, we don't mean only the alienation of ethnic Georgians from non-ethnic Georgians. Alienation from the "title-nation" is quite high even among the non-ethnic Georgians. Despite the hundreds of years of living together, neither Tsarist Russia and Soviet regime nor the public-political space of independent Georgia could ensure to eradicate such alliance between Georgians and non-Georgians and weaken existing ethnocentric points of view. In the first two cases – neither Tsarist Russia nor Soviet government had such aims. In contrary, the politics they lead (with different aims and different means) served more to encourage hostile spirit with each other than to ensure integration and eradication of alienation.

From the beginning of independence in 1991 neither Zviad Gamsakhurdia's nor Eduard Shevardnaze's governments have made any steps forward increasing the inclusion of ethnic minorities in public-political space. Gamsakhurdia's government was often condemned in leading ethno-centric politics too (although we don't think it is proper to speak about political course of any government being in power only for a year and half, especially in regard of that heaviest internal and external context in which newly established Georgia state was found). The period of Shevardnaze's government characterized full stagnation. The Government was doing quite nothing to increase inclusion of ethnic minorities in public-political sphere of life. Accordingly, nothing was done to improve education level.

During the period of Shevardnaze's governance ethno-politic elites seemed to lead mostly narrow political interests and serve little to help integration process of ethnic minorities generally. There was a trend that a part of the ethnic minorities (who

usually votes on the elections), voted for the candidates of the ruling political party. There could be two explanations for it: one is that most of the time the TV and press was overloaded with the information about the candidates of the governmental party. The second (and most common explanation prevailed in society), was that it is the process managed by the governmental power rather than the result of the fair elections. Nonetheless it is impossible to state it is exactly so (because of nonexistence of such dates), the fact is that the highest percentage of votes ruling party has always received from the regions compactly settled by ethnic minorities – from Azeri living in Kvemo Kartli and from Armenians living in Samckhe -Javakheti regions. Hence, it is evident, that the votes of minorities, mostly malleable segments of our society, had a decisive importance during the period of elections. Subsequently, the authority was not inclining to improve neither the level of knowledge of Georgian language nor the level of education which logically would help to increase the amount of available information and improve communication. As a result political manipulation with ethnic minorities would become more complicated and less safe.

After Rose Revolution of 2003 the situation was positively changed. Multiculturalism and the idea of ethnic minority's integration process became more popular during the Mikheil Saakashvili's governance. *"The strength of a unified Georgian state is its diversity. One of the most important challenges of the young Georgian democracy is to build a state, where every resident, despite differences, will have the feeling that he or she is a full citizen of the country. We have to deal with the alienation often resulting from the lack of knowledge of the Georgian language. On the other hand, the state has to create every condition for ethnic groups to preserve their unique identities"* - has declared M. Saakashvili (Saakashvili, <http://www.diversity.ge/eng/welcome.php>). This was the first time, when Georgia's government officially announced the idea of multiculturalism. Afterwards, this "declaration" has been transferred into action. Several steps were made by Saakashvili's government to improve the situation in the sphere of ethnic (as well as religious) minorities. One of the main things was the elaboration of the National Concept for Tolerance and Civic Integration by the council functioning under the president (May 8, 2009). It elaborates national strategy in six main directions: a) rule of law; b) education and state language; c) media and access to information; d) political integration and civil participation; e) social and regional integration and f) culture and preservation of identity. Specific governmental bodies were responsible for caring out activities to strategic directions and for implementation of relevant components (National Concept ... p. 2).

Among the steps made in this direction, most actual and popular were improvement of education level and hence, the knowledge of state language as well as preservation of ethnic identity and culture. It included 2 main directions: On one hand,

to teach ethnic minorities Georgian Language and on another hand, to take care for the maintenance of minority cultural values and language.

“We have to deal with the alienation often resulting from the lack of knowledge of the Georgian language. On the other hand, the state has to create every condition for ethnic groups to preserve their unique identities” – said the President of Georgia in 2009 (Saakashvili, <http://www.diversity.ge/eng/welcome.php>)

At a juridical level such politics found its reflection in the Law of General Education of Georgia, where is written: *“The citizens of Georgia for which Georgian language isn’t native language are granted to get general education in their native language, according to the national teaching plan, on the ground of juridical level. In these institutions it is mandatory to teach Georgian language”*(Law of General Education of Georgia, article 4, chapter 3).

With regard to education of national minorities the Concept outlines the some main target areas to be improved, which is: pre-school education, access to general education, access to higher education; improve command of the state language and access to vocational training programmes and adult education for persons belonging to ethnic minorities.

According to the law, which is in motion from 2010, representatives of ethnic minorities are passing the part of the national exams, “General Aptitude”, in their native language – Azeri, Armenian, Ossetian and Abkhazian. As a result, we have seen growing the number of the non-ethnic Georgian students in our high schools. Simultaneously, in the Universities the system of 4+1 (which means that enlisted students have to study Georgian language intensively during one year) was established. Also during this same time, the system of quotation was installed in the framework of which it determined the number of minorities who could continue to study in such a privileged system. It was distributed as follow: out of the total number of students which are pre-admitted, 5% of Azerians and 5% of Armenians are passing exams in Azerian and Armenian languages and 1-1% for Ossethian and Abkhazian native speaking students. As a result of such politics the number of the non-ethnic Georgians studying in Georgian Universities has increased. All of these steps can be of course positively evaluated. Although, there are some considerations about this:

1. The system of quotation may be praiseworthy during some period of time. Thought I think it isn’t favourable to work with this system for a long period. Generally the system of quotation is a widely accepted practice all over the world’s political systems. On one hand, this system has a lot of positive effects, but on the other hand it has some negative ones too. In my opinion, in the case of Georgia, there are some possibilities that it may bring to a higher number of quoted students in prestigious faculties where there are already a lot of students.

2. On the other hand, we need to take into consideration that this regulated system (where a part of the national exams can be taken in the language of your choice) might reduce the motivation to learn the Georgian language for non-ethnic Georgians (Janashia, 2009: p.5). Therefore being accepted to Georgian universities as representatives of ethnic minorities (regardless in which language they have passed the national exams), students have to continue studying in the State language. The ethnic minorities following their interests of integrating Georgian's public political space will properly understand the benefits: the execution of educational program at the level of secondary schools, their inclusion in such programs serving as their own benefits as well as the improvement of their everyday connections to continue studying in universities and getting educated.

Despite some possible negative aspects, evaluation of the politics of teaching the Georgian language and stimulating ethnic minorities of getting education in Georgian Universities by passing exams in their native language is evaluated unequally positively.

The main problems of integration in the ethnic communities

During 25 years of independence, because of different objective and subjective reasons, independent Georgian State could fully get over the problems concerning ethnic minorities (despite the fact that several steps were made in this direction.) We can single out still actual several main issues concerning ethnic minorities and their integration process.

1. Among non-ethnic Georgians, especially in the compactly populated regions (mostly in the urban and partly urban spaces) the level of knowledge of Georgian language is still very low. According to the data of UN statistics; 24,6% of ethnic Armenians living in the region of Samckhe–Javakheti and only 16,9% of ethnic Azeri living in Kvemo Kartli region know the official State language. Comparing to this, in Tbilisi which is an urban zone and at the same time where ethnic minorities are living dispersedly, level of knowledge of the state language between the same ethnic minorities is very high: 95,6 % among ethnic Azeri and 96,4% among ethnic Armenians (National..., October 2008, p. 36).

During the period of the research I have made in-Depth interview with the respondents of ethnic Azeris and ethnic Armenians in Akhalkalaki-Akhaltsikhe and Marneuli-Dmanisi regions. While reshipping the results of interviews two main problems came in evidence:

a) the number of the hours for teaching the Georgian language is insufficient. According to the large number of interviewed representatives of ethnic minorities for achieving some results it is necessary to reinforce Georgian language teaching course more; the person, who over the years held office in the education sector at the municipality of Akhaltsikhe also realizes that there are problems with teaching Georgian Language among ethnic minorities. As she has noted, the problem is not of financial type or of political will, but about methods and approaches as well as teaching techniques (Meeting on the issues...30.01.2015)

b) The relation with ethnic Georgians in non-school spaces and on the level of everyday communication is insufficient. Accordingly, some possible versions of how to solve this problem were identified. Among them we can outline, for example, compulsory army – where representatives of non-ethnic Georgians may have a chance of communication with Georgians; also broadening projects like “Patriot Caps”.

2. In the country the level of unemployment is quite high and ethnic minorities are no exception too. In non-urban space the level of unemployment is higher than in urban space. As a result, Georgian population has less possibility to interact with ethnic minorities in the public sphere. All of these factors are not favourable for the full integration of ethnic minorities; Average income among compactly populated minorities (as well as in all of the rural zones in Georgia) even by the standards of Georgia is low. Cultural and informational alliance. A closed cultural development of the ethnic groups causes the non-interestedness and lack of information about the cultural achievements of each other. Factually, in one cultural space exist several subcultures alienated from each other; after gaining independence, Georgia did not have common and long-term strategy for increasing the civil and political participation of ethnic minorities.
3. The level of civic alienation is quite high too. Lack of information is one of the reasons of low level of participation into the elections. Activity in the public sector has a very low index (in this sense, there is somewhat higher level of activity among ethnic Georgians). Apparently, we can say that the already low rate of development of civil society and the activity is lower and almost zero in the regions inhabited by ethnic minorities. Despite the fact that informational and educational projects are frequently launched in the areas populated by the ethnic groups in recent years the problem still remains. At the same time, in Georgia generally, and in regions populated by ethnic minorities too, really functioning self-government bodies are rare things. The communication with the local population is not active from the side of the governmental and local self-governing bodies; Inclusion of the ethnic minorities in the decision-making process is very low. Nearly 60% of ethnic minority respondents say, there are

quite no meetings with the members of local government (NGO Public Advocacy, 2014: p.28). These meetings are more frequent in pre-election periods which indicate that political elites are still more likely to consider ethnic minorities as passive electoral force than active citizens.

4. Weak civic institutionalized space doesn't help the collaboration of ethnic groups and appropriate articulation of private interest. According to the results of a survey, most of the members of the ethnic minorities are acquainted neither with political parties, nor with the non-governmental organizations. On the question: Are you acquainted with non-governmental organizations activities in the region? – 59, 2 % of the Azeri respondents (living in Kvemo Kartli region) answered - “Absolutely not acquainted” (NGO Public Advocacy, 2014: p.26). Quite the same situation is about political parties. Factually, non-governmental sector (as well as political parties) is engaged in the electoral process only shortly before the election process starts. Even at this stage, the issue about ethnic minorities is not so popular. Only several organizations work on improvement of ethnic minorities' voting habits during pre and actual electoral period; but their activities mostly are of short-term character and the results prove that their efforts are not enough to change the situation.

In modern Georgia, such a low level of knowledge of State language by ethnic minorities and, accordingly low level of education, are part of the main factors (although not the only) to weaken civic integration. Despite the fact that there are a lot of problems with ethnic minorities successful integration and the greatest part of non-ethnic Georgians do not know (or know very badly) Georgian language, most of them still consider Georgia as their native country politically. According to the statistical research made by „SIDA“(Swedish International Cooperation Agency) in the regions of Kvemo Kartli and Samckhe -Javakheti on the question: do you consider Georgia as your native country and in the future perspective do you connect your own revenues and jobs with Georgia? – 96% of interviewed respondents answered that they make equal their own revenues and the revenues of their families to Georgia during the nearest 5 years (Ethnic and...November 1, 2012). In our opinion, such a high percent of interviewed respondents who is going to relate their future with Georgia in some degree must be a result of the politics begun some years ago (of course with some other factors, too) and which is continuing in the sphere of education until today. Unfortunately, statistic dates like these of several years before do not exist which could have given us opportunity to compare the dates with each other. Even during the statistic research made by SIDA has not been asked the question which could make it possible to determine the factors of respondents' such dependency. Accordingly, our consideration that politics of education and teaching the Georgian language somehow

were the main reasons of such vision, couldn't be solidified by the results of any research acquainted to us.

Conclusion

Until recently Georgian political establishment was very cautious with the ethnic politics and indecision in this regard was also quite often. Despite the individual projects and efforts carried out in recent years, it is still difficult to say that the Georgian government has consistent and effective policies in order to overcome problems caused by its ethno-religious multi-membership. Although in this sense recently there are some positive trends (for example, development of the concept of tolerance and civic integration and some programs realized on the basis of it, removing from passports the fixation of ethnicity in a Soviet-style, holding certain educational programs, tests of the skills on the Unified National Examinations on the languages of minorities, establishment of the quota system, etc.) but the given efforts have still fragmented character and they can't be called well-formed reflexive and coherent policy that in the near future will bring rapid and effective changes in terms of civic integration.

Predominantly ethnic groups (there is a better picture in the case of disperse settled ethnic minorities) are very poorly integrated into the general public-political space and practically do not participate in the process of building political institutions and the state. Ethnic minorities generally are the passive recipients of the decisions taken in high political echelons rather than active participants in the development of the political agenda, who will be imbued with a high sense of civic responsibility and the spirit of self-consciousness. However, it should be also noted that the policy in the field of language teaching for the ethnic minorities is aimed at long-time perspective and naturally its results cannot be immediately apparent. Accordingly, the generations who will know the state language fluently, who will be educated in Georgian educational space in the future will be one of (one of, because only knowledge of the Georgian language cannot solve the diverse range of problems) the guarantors and contributing factor of the fact that the integration of the ethnic minorities in the public-political space will be successful and well-grounded.

So arises the question: What type of civic integration is better in the lights of longtime perspective for Georgia? As we think among the strategies of ethnic approachant the most optimal way for Georgia is the strategy of integration, which should not be expressed according the ethno cultural borders (except the cases of Abxazia and South Osethia)

The state can develop this strategy by several ways:

1. Creation of stable democratic environment and institutional development. The practice of developed liberal democracies teaches us that only democracy can ensure the creation of the bases for peaceful political and social space, based on the equality and consensus.
2. Strengthening of local self – government, what'll promote the involvement of the citizens at the local administrative level.
3. Education system should ensure spreading of the knowledge of state language among ethnic minorities. The accent must be shifted to elementary school classes and not to high school pupils, as well as to the villages, where citizens have quite no possibilities to interact with native speaking Georgian citizens and, so to study or improve their knowledge of state language.
4. To encourage development of urbanization in the regions compactly populated by ethnic minorities.
5. Obviously, cooperation between state institutions and civil society organizations, and between the state and minorities, are very important in this process.

As we have seen, Georgia in the ethno-confessional sense is a diverse and fragmented country. One of the main objectives is to create a public space in which all ethnic and religious groups living in the country will have a sense of loyalty to the given State. And most importantly, if Georgia wants to keep the integrity of the country and become a consolidated democracy it has to solve the problems of multicultural society and become fully integrated society.

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