



European Migration Network

Ad-Hoc Query on Georgian asylum applicants

Requested by AT EMN NCP on 13th July 2009

Compilation produced on 16th September 2009

Responses from [Austria](#), [Czech Republic](#), [Finland](#), [Germany](#), [Hungary](#), [Ireland](#), [Italy](#), [Latvia](#), [Lithuania](#), [Netherlands](#), [Poland](#), [Portugal](#), [Slovak Republic](#), [Slovenia](#), [Sweden](#), [United Kingdom](#) (16 in Total)

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1. Background Information

The Austrian Ministry of the Interior has observed an increase of asylum applications by Georgian nationals. Thus the Ministry is particularly interested in the background and the travel route of the asylum applicants/irregular migrants.

2. Responses¹

		Wider Dissemination?²	<i>1) Have Member States noticed an increase of illegal migration and/or asylum applications by Georgian nationals recently?</i>
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¹ If possible at time of making the request, the Requesting EMN NCP should add their response(s) to the query. Otherwise, this should be done at the time of making the compilation.

² A default "Yes" is given for your response to be circulated further (e.g. to other EMN NCPs and their national network members). A "No" should be added here if you do not wish your response to be disseminated beyond other EMN NCPs. In case of "No" and wider dissemination beyond other EMN NCPs, then for the Compilation for Wider Dissemination

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			<p>2) <i>If yes, what is the profile of these persons (ethnic background. claims?)</i></p> <p>3) <i>Are there any recent findings concerning the routes of Georgian nationals entering the common territory illegally?</i></p> <p>4) <i>Are there any other issues you would like to share in this regard?</i></p>
	Austria	No	This EMN NCP has provided a response to the requesting EMN NCP. However, they have requested that it is not disseminated further.
	Czech Republic	No	This EMN NCP has provided a response to the requesting EMN NCP. However, they have requested that it is not disseminated further.
	Finland	No	This EMN NCP has provided a response to the requesting EMN NCP. However, they have requested that it is not disseminated further.
	Germany	Yes	<p>1. Concerning the Georgian asylum applications in Germany please see the following data: asylum applications in 2008: total 298 (first applications 232; repeated applications 66) asylum applications until 30th June 2009: total 225 (first applications 196; repeated applications 29)</p> <p>The monthly applications amount between 24 and 37 in the first five months and show a peak in June with 53 applications. But Georgia isn't one of the TOP-10 countries of origin in the context of asylum applications in Germany.</p> <p>Concerning illegals there is no specific information available.</p> <p>2. Many asylum-seekers come from the larger cities, and are of Georgian extraction. Many of them declare themselves to be the product of ethnically-mixed marriages, such as those between Ossetians and Georgians, Russians and Georgians or Georgians and Armenians, and that in consequence of this parentage they are not accepted in Georgia, Ossetia, Russia or Armenia, by reason of their mixed parentage.</p> <p>There has in addition been an increase in the number of applications for asylum by Yazidis.</p> <p>Many asylum-seekers from Georgia have claimed that their flight was in response to the conflicts between Russia and Georgia during 2008.</p> <p>The most recent claim that we are seeing is that of being a Georgian citizen with Georgian extraction and having participated in the demonstrations in April / May / June 2009.</p> <p>We would once again seem to be seeing a comparatively large number of claims to have been a member of a political party (membership of the Labour Party, for example), and/or to have been involved in political activities.</p> <p>We have also, of late, once again been seeing individual instances of claims by the applicant to have been a witness to a crime, and/or to have innocently come under suspicion of a crime.</p> <p>In instances in which an applicant claims to be suffering from an illness, this is often Hepatitis C.</p> <p>3. The principal routes of entry are:</p>

the response should be removed and the following statement should be added in the relevant response box: "This EMN NCP has provided a response to the requesting EMN NCP. However, they have requested that it is not disseminated further."

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Georgia, by sea across the Black Sea and to the Ukraine, EU Member States (ethnic group: Georgians) - Georgia, Russia, Belarus or the Ukraine, EU Member States; (ethnic groups: Georgians, Ossetians, ethnic Russians, Yazidis) - Georgia, Turkey, EU Member States (ethnic groups: Georgians and Yazidis). <p>4. During June 2009, Germany filed 44 applications to EU Member States for the acceptance of Georgians who had demonstrably already filed applications for asylum within other EU Member States, or who had demonstrably entered the country via other EU Member States. The result is that for the first time ever, in respect of Dublin Procedures, Georgia has risen to occupy one of the top positions amongst the top 3 countries of origin.</p>
	Hungary	Yes	<p>1. There were 43 applications for refugee status submitted by Georgian nationals in Hungary in the 1st half of this year, 2009. According to other months in 2009 a quite high number of Georgian nationals submitted application in May (including three families), however in June the statistical figures shows decline. According to statistical data there is a decline regarding Georgian applicants. While in 2007 52 Georgian nationals submitted applications for refugee status, in 2008 the number of applicants from Georgia was 81. In the year of 2009 the Hungarian refugee authority did not recognize Georgian national as refugee, while granted subsidiary protection for one person at the basis of application of torture, cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.</p> <p>2. Most Georgian applicants allude to economical reasons (bad livelihood, unemployment) or to the reverberations of the South-Osetian war. Some of them claim that they were/are afraid of possible new of a new armed conflict. Some of the applicants claim that they were forced to take part in demonstrations on the Russian side, or they are members or supporters of Georgian opposition. Quite a big number among applicants claim to be members of other ethnic minorities living in Georgia, or having conflicts from mixed marriage (Osetian-Abkhazian, Georgian-Abkhazian etc.). Generally, these reasons are typical, but recently there is a little shift to the reason of being supporter/member of opposition.</p> <p>3. The main route is via: Turkey – Bulgaria – Serbia. Mostly they travel by bus or by trucks. Another possible route can be via: Belarus – Poland – Slovakia. On this route Georgian citizens fly to Belarus, and from there they travel by minibuses.</p> <p>4. –</p>
	Ireland	No	This EMN NCP has provided a response to the requesting EMN NCP. However, they have requested that it is not disseminated further.
	Italy	Yes	Referring to the previous query by NCP Poland on Georgian Asylum Applicants (In 2008 Italy has received 60 asylum applications by Georgian citizens and 38 in the first half of 2009), we can say that in Italy there was not a particular increase in asylum applicants from Georgia. A similar situation also as regards illegal entries: we could say that in 2008 Georgian citizens were the 0,4% of the total of TCN removals (67 Georgian citizens).
	Latvia	Yes	This year Latvia has not observed an increase in the numbers of illegal migration and/or asylum applications by Georgian nationals. The increase in the numbers of asylum applications was observed right after the military conflict of Russia and Georgia. All people who applied for asylum had valid visas.
	Lithuania	Yes	1. In 2009, Lithuania has noticed a slight increase of Georgian asylum seekers: 6 applications so far this year whereas in 2008 the

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			<p>total number was 7 applications.</p> <p>2. Georgian applicants mostly come from South Ossetia and Akhagori district. There have been Georgians from Tbilisi, Zugdidi district claiming asylum as well. As to their ethnicity, the majority of them are ethnic Georgians.</p> <p>3. There is too small a number of asylum seekers from Georgia to make general assessments concerning routes of travel. Still, usually they travel in transit through Ukraine (no visa required for them) and Belarus until they enter Lithuania illegally, our country being mostly a transit country too (to Poland, as there is evidence in individual cases). During the asylum procedure they tend to disappear. Nonetheless, there were cases of legal travel to Lithuania to wait out the end of active military actions in their region of residence and coming back to Georgia in a few months. There are several so called Dublin cases where applicants are repeatedly returned to Lithuania from different EU countries.</p> <p>4. The majority of applicants are young men who give a vast diversity of reasons to substantiate their asylum claim: obligatory military service in Ossetia, war, unemployment, personal reasons etc.</p>
	Netherlands	Yes	<p>1) NL does not have numbers on illegal migration on this topic. (the number of asylum applications shows an increase: 62 in 2008 and 86 in 2009 up until August)</p> <p>2-4) NL cannot provide info on the questions 2, 3 and 4. Profiles and routes are often analysed in case organisations mention the need for an analysis. This need did not yet seem to exist.</p>
	Poland	Yes	<p>1. There is an increase in the number of asylum applications in the year 2009 (1485 applications until 15th July, as compared to 71 applications in 2008). This increase was observed for the first time in April, with 56 applications compared to 6 applications in March. There were 94 applications in May, 849 applications between in June and 478 applications between the 1st 15th July.</p> <p>2. The Georgian applicants arriving this year are declaring Tbilisi as their place of residence in Georgia in 95% cases. In the years 2003-2008 between 57,1% and 90% of Georgian citizens applying for the refugee status in Poland declared Georgian ethnicity. This year 77,9% of applicants declare being Kurds-Yezidis. There are also some people declaring Armenian ethnicity but they were more numerous in 2008. The Kurds from Georgia are claiming in their applications that they are persecuted in their home country because of their ethnic origins, they state also lack of work and bad economic situations as reasons of coming to Poland. Ethnic Georgians declare participation in demonstrations against Mikheil Saakashvili, membership in political parties, persecutions of people of Ossetian and Abkhaz ethnicity, the fact of avoiding military service and activity in journalism. Some applicants of Georgian ethnicity are also mentioning bad economic situations as reason for leaving Georgia.</p> <p>3. Georgian citizens arriving to Poland in the recent period are submitting their applications mainly at the Border Guard post in Terespol. According to the Border Guard Georgian citizens usually take plain from Tbilisi to Minsk and then they take train from Minsk to Brest or Terespol (they don't need Belarusian visas to pass through this country). In many cases Georgian applicants use passports issued in recent few weeks or days before arrival. Some of them are already registered in the SIS system.</p> <p>4. There is a significant number of unaccompanied minors (about 29% of applicants from Georgia in 2009).</p>
	Portugal	Yes	No. PT did not notice an increase of illegal migration and/or asylum applications by Georgian nationals recently.
	Slovak Republic	Yes	There has been no such an increase in the numbers of Georgian asylum applicants in the Slovak Republic. As for the concrete numbers there have been in 2008 – 119 applicants, while in the period Jan-June 2008 40 applicants and in the period Jan-June 2009 – 41 applicants. More information can be also obtained from the response to the PL ad-hoc query on Georgian refugees from June 2009.

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	Slovenia	Yes	In Slovenia we didn't record any increase of asylum applicants from Georgia and there were no apprehensions of illegal migrants from Georgia in 2009.
	Sweden	Yes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sweden has had no increase in Georgian asylum applicants – 2008 – 211 asylum applicants, January – June 2009 – 113 asylum applicants (and no increase during the year, 20 in June). We have no statistics on illegal immigration. 2. Not applicable 3. We do not yet have that kind of information on illegal immigration. 4. -
	United Kingdom	Yes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No increases seen. 2. Not applicable. 3. We have no direct evidence of Georgians seeking entry into the UK in any appreciable numbers by either legal or illegal means. Nor do we have any current information on the routes they use, but it has been noted in the past that they favour concealment within lorries leaving Georgia/Russia. 4. Most Country of Origin enquiries we receive on Georgia are requesting information regarding citizenship issues.
