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**PUBLIC DEFENDER OF GEORGIA**

# **WOMEN AND MOBILITY**

**GENDER ASPECTS OF THE WOMEN  
DAILY MOVEMENT**



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# 1. INTRODUCTION

Free movement is the main precondition for economic development, prosperity and access to services. Daily transportation needs, choice of means of transportation, frequency of use of vehicles and its purpose<sup>1</sup> are different for people with different gender identities.<sup>2,3</sup>

In a patriarchal society, mobility, movement, and access to public spaces are largely the prerogative of men. The lack of access to mobility and/or the restriction of the right to free movement is one of the manifestations of gender-based violence and inequality. The peculiarities of mobility, in turn, lead to different rates of access to public spaces, still creating gender roles and structural barriers.

Despite its importance, public transport is only one aspect of mobility. The problem, however, is that the transportation sector is predominantly male-dominated. In addition, in all regions, including the capital, the challenge is the smooth operation of municipal transport and the arbitrary nature of the work of private transport companies operating on the ground, which is often manifested in chaos and disorder. The malfunctioning of public transport, and in some cases its absence, is a major challenge for women, especially for rural women, as this complicates twice as much their access to education, employment and other basic services.

The COVID-19 pandemic has completely changed the existing model and capabilities of movement. Restrictions caused by the pandemic have a disproportionately negative impact on women and girls. Restricted mobility has increased women's unpaid working hours, reduced development and employment-oriented activities, and made it difficult to escape from a violent environment. Due to limited mobility, women have reduced access to health services, including sexual and reproductive health services.

In order to study the gender aspects of mobility, the present study examines the gender characteristics of daily mobility, the choice of means of transportation and what motivates this choice, gender barriers to specific mobility means and the impact of gender and mobility barriers and challenges on gender equality and women empowerment.

The aim of the study is to examine the gender aspects of mobility in Georgia, needs and traits including movement restrictions and peculiarities resulted by the COVID-19, to examine the extent to which these needs are covered by existing municipal services and to make recommendations which will be foreseen on local and international level while developing relevant policy papers.



1. Jeff Turner, Margaret Grieco, *Gender and Time Poverty: The Neglected Social Policy Implications of Gendered Time, Transport and Travel*, Time and Society, 9 (1), SAGE, 2000. Available online at: <https://bit.ly/3pb6lcx> [last visited on 20.01.2021]
2. Robin Law, *Beyond 'women and transport': towards new geographies of gender and daily mobility*, Progress in Human Geography 23(4), 1999. Available online at: <https://bit.ly/35VS1wR> [last visited on 20.01.2021]
3. Vincent Kaufmann, *Re-Thinking Mobility Contemporary Sociology*, Routledge, 2016. Available online at: <https://bit.ly/3syJKst> [last visited on 20.01.2021]

## 2. KEY FINDINGS

The analysis of the research results reveals that women's daily mobility has important gender aspects that affect their mode of movement, goals and means and often translates into limited mobility, because the existing modes of mobility are not tailored to the needs of women, namely:

- ▶ Women's mobility is gender predetermined and mainly relates to their daily, paid and unpaid work.
- ▶ Women are less likely to move because of their own needs than because of the needs of dependents.
- ▶ Women who have young children and live in rural areas refrain from daily commuting with their children as it is inconvenient for them to walk and change several means of transport.
- ▶ Women's mobility directly depends on the amount of their income. A significant proportion (38.4%) of women with very low income rarely or never leave home.
- ▶ In rural areas, the daily rate of women's mobility is lower than in urban areas.
- ▶ Women's mobility has an important age dimension. Half of women over the age of 61 rarely or never leave home.
- ▶ Women mostly travel short distances and to several locations during the day.
- ▶ Women's mobility for education is extremely low in all regions.
- ▶ Women in Georgia do not have equal access to different means of transportation, which would allow them to move in the preferred direction, at the desired time and at an affordable price, which is related to the shortcomings of transport and road infrastructure.
- ▶ Public transport is either inaccessible to most rural women because it does not have full geographical coverage, or is dangerous because there is a risk of virus transmission during the pandemic due to lack of preventive measures and, in general, there is an increased risk of accidents due to public transport malfunctions.
- ▶ Only a small percentage of women (10.4%) own a car and the time and purpose of their movement often depends on the mobility plan of the (male) family members.
- ▶ The main mobility mean for women is walking.
- ▶ The pandemic has had a major impact on women's daily mobility. For the most part, women were restricted in mobility due to restrictions on transportation.
- ▶ Most municipalities lack a long-term transport policy or a special service working on these issues;
- ▶ The main challenge for the regions included in the study is the operation of private transport, which fails to meet the needs of all residents.
- ▶ Representatives of self-governing units find it difficult to see the connection between gender equality, women's needs and mobility.

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## 3. RESEARCH VALUE

Mobility has a gender dimension; the experiences of women and men that accompany daily movement are completely different. Vulnerability, fear of physical or sexual violence in public places and when using public transport are the main factors that limit the daily movement of women and girls. Women's mobility is also characterized by a multifaceted, so-called "travel chain", which mainly involves moving long and short distances for domestic or care work.

This study is the first in Georgia that studies the gender characteristics of mobility. On the one hand, the research will help to start discussions around this issue, identify the needs of women in terms of mobility, and, on the other hand, the research recommendations and findings will be an important contribution to the transport and infrastructure policy planning process.

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## 4. METHODOLOGY

### 4.1. Research scope and limitations

The aim of the study is to examine the gender aspects of mobility in Georgia, needs and peculiarities including COVID-19 mobility restrictions and peculiarities, to examine whether these needs are covered by existing municipal services and to provide recommendations that shall be reflected on relevant policy paper development process at local and international levels.

The study should answer the following questions:

1. What are the daily movement regimes of women and girls and their relation to gender stereotypes and gender roles;
2. What are the gender needs and barriers to relocation and what impact do the challenges and barriers to relocation have on gender equality and the economic empowerment of women;
3. What types of transportation do women choose and what determines this choice;
4. To what extent is municipal transport tailored to the needs of women and girls, including different needs;
5. What impact have the restrictions caused by the Coronavirus pandemic had on women's daily mobility and access to mobility.

For the purposes of the study, Georgia (excluding the capital) was divided into two strata - Eastern and Western Georgia, with a region (cluster) randomly selected in each stratum. In each cluster - municipalities were selected according to size. As a result, the survey was conducted in western and eastern Georgia, in particular in selected municipalities in Adjara, Imereti, Kakheti and Shida Kartli regions.

The study was not conducted in the capital, due to the different nature of mobility and transport infrastructure, as a result of which its comparison with other regions would not be methodologically justified.

However, the study does not address migration, tourism, and residential mobility issues, and focuses on the daily mobility regimes of women and girls. The latter refers to studying the ways in which women resort to daily commuting, the means they use on a daily basis, the time they spend on daily commuting, and the goals that their daily mobility serves.

Due to limited time and human resources, the study does not examine the gender differences and peculiarities of mobility modes in general, but focuses on the gender characteristics of women and girls' movement regimes to identify the barriers and needs that need to be addressed at this stage in a critical manner to ensure equal economic involvement and access to basic services.

## 4.2 Research target groups

The main target groups of the study are women and girls living in four regions of Georgia (Adjara, Imereti, Kakheti and Shida Kartli). It is clear from the international experience that it is important to study the special needs of women and girls in terms of mobility, especially in terms of women's economic empowerment, violence against women and girls, and their access to basic services.

In addition to the main target group of the research, the objects/key information providers involved in the research are:

- ▶ International organizations/missions working to monitor the rights of women in Georgia;
- ▶ Representatives of the executive, who are directly involved in the decision-making process related to transportation and transport infrastructure;
- ▶ Local self-government representatives in the selected municipalities;
- ▶ Local NGOs working on the rights of women.

## 4.3 Research methods

Both quantitative and qualitative methods will be used to achieve the aims and objectives of the research. One of the main tools of qualitative research is the desk research, which examines international experience in terms of gender aspects of mobility and gender needs of women's daily movement.

Written information has also been requested and focus groups with key informants involved in the research were also conducted during the research process. Within the quantitative research, 814 interviews were conducted with the main research group, namely, adult women living in the study regions (Adjara, Imereti, Kakheti and Shida Kartli). Qualitative research was conducted to identify women's intersectional needs on mobility issues, to identify key characteristics and indicators, as well as to interpret data from quantitative surveys and to highlight trends.

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# 5. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

## 5.1. What is mobility

Gender and mobility are inter-determining, complex concepts in a particular socio-cultural and geographical reality. Their importance largely depends on the power models and hierarchy in society. Gender is a social aspect of the human sex, while mobility is a social practice that among others, shapes gender roles, including through its repetitive, predetermined modes. On the other hand, gender inequality, stereotypes and roles largely determine the peculiarities of moving around in society.<sup>4</sup>



4. Fran Martin, Ana Dragojlovic Gender, Mobility Regimes, and Social Transformation in Asia, *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, 40:3, 2019. Available online at: <https://bit.ly/3nXc6Jo> [last visited on 20.01.2021]

The link between mobility, rights and freedoms has long been recognized. An example of this is the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Article 13), which states that “everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each State”.<sup>5</sup> The right to move is mentioned in important documents such as the European Commission’s 2011 “White Paper”<sup>6</sup>, which aims to achieve the main goals of the European Union, i.e., the proper functioning of the internal market and the strengthening of economic, social and territorial integration. Promoting orderly, safe, legal and accountable migration and mobility is the Georgia’s adapted target (10.7) for the UN Sustainable Development Goal 10 (Reduced Inequality), which the country plans to achieve in 2030.<sup>7</sup>

The simplest definition of mobility is physical movement. It involves moving from one geographic place, space, or location to another and is often used to discuss areas such as transportation and urban planning.<sup>8</sup> In the modern world, mobility is not only a means of connecting from one geographical point to another, but also an important part of life. It is a social event that changes in time and space and affects people, objects and places and their interdependence.<sup>9</sup>

Mobility has three components: individual action, potential action, and freedom of movement. Individual action is defined as the movement or journey performed. Potential action is the movements that people would take but could not because of existing constraints (including financial constraints) and freedom of movement, which may never be exercised, although it implies freedom of movement, possession of information about means and opportunities of movement, and skills required to potentially make a move.<sup>10</sup>

Given these components, it is important that mobility policies are designed to ensure that the public is provided with a) access to transport and communication infrastructure (roads, tickets, etc.); b) skills and habits required for the use of transport infrastructure (including level of awareness about mobility); and c) the potential for use, which includes information on mobility and the need and desire to move.

In order to study mobility regimes in a particular geographical area, the analysis of individual components and its determinants in society shall be carried out in four contexts:

1. Socio-economic context analysis focusing on the effects of socio-economic factors on mobility regimes;
2. Technological context analysis focusing on groups of people and the impacts of technological change on their modes of movement;
3. Behavioral analysis that focuses on the motives, limitations, and opportunities for individuals and groups to move; and
4. Policy analysis, which involves reflecting the needs and capabilities of people in terms of mobility in policy documents by decision makers.<sup>11</sup>



5. Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948. Available online at: <https://bit.ly/3sGu2eA> [last visited on 20.01.2021]

6. WHITE PAPER Roadmap to a Single European Transport Area – Towards a competitive and resource efficient transport system, 2011. Available online at: <https://bit.ly/3p0atvw> [last visited on 20.01.2021]

7. Sustainable Development Goals 2030. Available online at: <https://bit.ly/39KbRvV> [last visited on 20.01.2021]

8. Paola Jiron, Mobility on the Move: Examining UrbanDaily Mobility Practices in Santiago de Chile, PhD Thesis, London School of Economics and Political Science, 2009. Available online at: <https://bit.ly/3oXLKs1> [last visited on 20.01.2021]

9. Tim Cresswell, The Production of Mobilities, *New Formations*, 43. 2001. Available online at: <https://bit.ly/38UTNac> [last visited on 20.01.2021]

10. Peter Jones, Mobility and Individual in Western Industrial Society, edited by Peter Nijkamp, *Transportation Planning in a Changing World*, 1987. Available online at: <https://bit.ly/3qM18Z5> [last visited on 20.01.2021]

11. Peter Nijkamp and others, *Euromobile: Transport, Communications and Mobility in Europe : a Cross-national Comparative Overview* 1990. Available online at: <https://bit.ly/2XXSt9a> [last visited on 20.01.2021]

Studies have shown that low- and middle-income populations generally experience low access to transportation, with women and vulnerable groups among those are distinguished with lower access.<sup>12</sup> Therefore, analyzing the needs of low- and middle-income women and vulnerable persons should be an important part of urban planning. In particular, the system must meet their mobility needs by providing at least the following features:

1. Financial accessibility (transport should not be the most important expense for the family)
2. Physical accessibility (routes, frequency and timeliness of service, locations)
3. Social accessibility (quality of service, transport design, security)<sup>13</sup>

Ensuring these characteristics when considering gender aspects requires the institutionalization of gender-segregated data collection and analysis, as separate studies cannot cover people with different needs in different social, cultural and geographical environments, which should be an essential part of the mobility policy-making process.

## 5.2. Mobility regulatory framework in Georgia

Transport and its infrastructure is a key element for people to be able to move around daily for work, household, educational or other purposes.<sup>14</sup> Daily mobility is fundamental not only to community, family or livelihoods, but to all the central issues of sustainable development, be it forms of settlement, energy consumption or otherwise.<sup>15</sup>

In Georgia, along with industrialization, new communication roads were built, from here the development of modern transport began, the first railway was opened in 1871, from Poti to Zestaponi, the construction of Poti seaport began and the factor of development of the Batumi Port and the city as a whole was the transported oil coming from Baku to Batumi by railway. A unified, complete transportation system was developed in the 1950s, which included rail, road, sea, air, pipeline, and air-rope transport.<sup>16</sup>

Transport policy is changing following the post-socialist economic and political transformation.<sup>17</sup> In the Soviet Union, mobility was a key element of socialist politics, economics, ideology, and everyday life. In other words, the ideological commitment to “progress towards a better future”, which in itself implied different types of mobility opportunities. The collapse of socialism gave rise to new international mobilities, namely advertising and international business corporations, and contributed to the growing globalization of popular culture. Various experiences of mobility were created, with the replacement of common rows and the exchange of car parts, given the increased level of motor activity, while public transport systems designed to support the socialist workforce were further fragmented by revenue, reflecting broad social and



12. Tanu Priya Uteng, Gender and Mobility in the Developing World, World Bank, World Development Report, 2021. Available online at: <https://bit.ly/2KrbKNc> [last visited on 20.01.2021]

13. Vincent Kaufmann, Rethinking Mobility, Routledge, 2016. Available online at: <https://bit.ly/3syJKst> [last visited on 20.01.2021]

14. Richard Olies, Public Transport in Developing Countries, 2005

15. Susan Hanson, Gender and mobility: new approaches for informing sustainability, A Journal of Feminist Geography 17(1), 2010, Available online at: <http://bit.do/fMH4u-> [last visited on 20.01.2021]

16. Tamar Dolbaia, Transport and Communications, Georgia's Social Geography, Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University, 2020, Available online at: <http://bit.do/fMH8B-> [last visited on 20.01.2021]

17. Tauri Tuvikene, Vladimer Sgibnev, Karola Neugebauer, Post Socialist Urban Infrastructure, Routledge, 2019

economic changes. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, private transport was preferred in countries with economies in transition, while the diversity of public transport was becoming increasingly insignificant.<sup>18</sup>

On the example of Georgia, in the conditions of market economy, the field of intercity transport was completely de-regulated and the main attention was paid to the compliance with the conditions provided by international agreements, which mainly regulate the process of transporting passengers abroad. Since the mid-2000s, Georgia has radically changed the country's transport system infrastructure and service delivery by building roads, railways, port terminals, and airports.<sup>19</sup>

The Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia is the creator and implementer of the transport policy, the LEPL Land Transport Agency is subordinate to it and the Ministry exercises its control and supervision. With the support of the Asian Development Bank (ADB), it is planned to formulate a national transport policy and to develop capacities in terms of transport planning. According to the document, transport policy, in economic, financial or environmental terms, will strengthen the sustainable delivery of transport services, as well as strengthen security issues. We read in the document that the transport policy also defines the investment targets of the sector and the financial arrangement for both capital and operating expenses. The policy will support modal integration through road connections and operating costs, while direct investment in international roads and other transport assets continues. It also describes the role and responsibilities of each component serving the different groups of transport service users and sets out requirements for coordinated planning, investment prioritization, modernization of technical standards and characteristics, and workforce development.<sup>20</sup>

Developed with the assistance of the Asian Development Bank, the country's strategy is to become a competitive international transportation hub, which also includes improving road connections within the country. It will help Georgia connect international roads to local regional centers by improving secondary roads, which will increase domestic and international trade opportunities and maximize results for women through access to livelihoods and services. Priority will be given to areas where better connections are achieved through growth in less developed areas.

The process of transport transition, which is accompanied to post-socialist economic and political transformation<sup>21</sup>, has been studied by several authors on the example of Georgia. The authors, who study the barriers to transport development, say that the main problems are the legislative system, fuel quality, traffic organization, poor transport and its impact on human health, public transport issues and citizen engagement;<sup>22</sup> In addition, the "Country Cooperation Strategy: Georgia states in the document for 2014-2018 that the challenge for the country is the lack of transport policy and lack of planning and coordination.<sup>23</sup> It should also be noted that transport planning has no gender character, neither in terms of accessibility nor functionality, the existing documents do not contain an analysis of gender-determined needs.



18. Ketil Bureli, Kethrin Horshelman, *Mobility in Socialist and Post-Socialist States*, Palgrave Macmillan 2014

19. Tamar Dolbaia, *Transport and Communications, Georgia's Social Geography*, Ivane Javakishvili Tbilisi State University, 2020, Available online at: <http://bit.do/fMH8B-> [last visited on 20.01.2021]

20. Ketevan Papashvili, *Georgia: Sustainable Urban Transport Investment Program*, 2020, Available online at: <http://bit.do/fMJVH-> [last visited on 20.01.2021]

21. Kith Grim, Vik Duke, *Choice of Urban Transport: Post-Comunist Dilemma*, *Regional Studies* 30 (8), 791-795.1996.

22. Levan Karanadze, *Main Aspects of Developing Sustainable and Healthy Urban Transport*. Ministry of Environment Protection of Georgia, 2006

23. *Country Cooperation Strategy: Georgia, 2014-2018*. Available online at: <http://bit.do/fMJV8-> [last visited on 20.21.2021]

### 5.3. Migration and mobility

One of the defining aspects of mobility is globalization, an important part of which is the feminization of labor. This implies the constant migration of women from developing countries to developed states to be employed in care and service spheres. This trend has a major impact on the socio-economic and cultural fabric of developing countries.<sup>24</sup>

According to the UN International Migration Report 2019,<sup>25</sup> the level of migration has increased dramatically in the last decade. Globally, the number of female international migrants fell from 49.3% in 2000 to 47.9%. The share of female migrants was highest in North America (51.8%) and Europe (51.4%), and lowest in sub-Saharan Africa (47.5%), North Africa and West Asia (35.5%).

The rate of migration feminization in Georgia is much higher than the global rate. In particular, according to the results of the 2014 census, according to official statistics, 88.5 thousand emigrants left Georgia from 2002 to date, including 45.4% men and 54.6% women.<sup>26</sup>

### 5.4. Virtual mobility

After the 2000s, and especially after the COVID-19 pandemic, talking about mobility would not be complete without discussing information and communication technologies and virtual mobility. Virtual mobility is one of the biggest influences on changing the way of life of mankind after the invention of motorized transport.<sup>27</sup> Information and communication technologies are partially or completely replacing physical movement.

Virtual mobility also has a big impact on changes in individual movement modes, lifestyles and activities. However, when discussing it, it is equally important to provide it with a minimum of three characteristics (financial, physical and social accessibility, as in the case of conventional mobility modes, and therefore virtual mobility has gender aspects that shall be observed to analyze gender and mobility in a particular social and geographical space.<sup>28</sup>

Consequently, in order to study the gender aspects of mobility in the age of information and communication technologies, it is necessary to explicitly study how people of different gender identities relate their activities, means of movement and communication, and how they use it in their daily lives.



24. Nancy Luke, Kaivan Munshi, Women as agents of change: Female income and mobility in India, *Journal of Development Economics* 94(1), 2011. Available online at: <https://bit.ly/3nSmr9m> [Last visited on 20.01.2021]

25. International Migration Report, UN, 2019. Available online at: <https://bit.ly/3iqq7ho> [last visited on 20.01.2021]

26. Overview of Georgia's Migration Statistics, Geostat, 2019. Available online at: <https://bit.ly/3is13qk> [last visited on 20.01.2021]

27. Susan Kenyon, Glenn Lyons, Transport and social exclusion: Investigating the possibility of promoting inclusion through virtual mobility, *Journal of Transport Geography* 10(3), 2002. Available online at: <https://bit.ly/3iE0iuB> [last visited on 20.01.2020].

28. Thomas Golob, *TravelBehavior.com: Activity Approaches to Modeling the Effects of Information Technology on Personal Travel*, California University, 2000. Available online at: <https://bit.ly/2XSpAez> [last visited on 20.01.2021]

## 6. GENDER ASPECTS OF DAILY MOBILITY

Although the general aspects of mobility have been well researched in the international literature, daily mobility, i.e. individual mobility modes, has been less studied, especially with little reference to daily mobility in the gender context.

Mobility research covers issues of migration, tourism, residential mobility and daily mobility. The latter involves exploring the ways in which people move around on a daily basis, the means they use on a daily basis, the time they spend on daily movement, and the goals that their daily mobility serves.

Daily mobility is a social practice, whether this movement is physical or virtual or a combination of both, and it shapes different experiences of living in a particular social environment.

### 6.1. Mobility and economic participation

The main driver of mobility is economic participation. Most women, unlike men, perform both paid and unpaid work on a daily basis. Consequently, daily mobility is a gender-defined phenomenon and involves moving around with household chores, due to child and elderly care, which is more performed by women.<sup>29</sup> As a result, the daily mobility of women is more complex than that of men and often involves not two (home-work) but more locations that make it possible to carry out care-related activities.<sup>30</sup>

Part of the research shows that gender roles and unequal gender distribution of labor put women in time poverty, which is also reflected in travel goals, distance, transport choices and its character.<sup>31</sup> For example, women travel shorter distances and more often than men, use public transport more, and walk more frequently during non-rush hours. Women are often accompanied (to e.g. child, elderly) and passengers. In addition, they drive more safely than men.<sup>32</sup>

Often, women adapt their work schedules and conditions to the needs of other family members, while men do not behave in this way in relation to their full-time job.<sup>33</sup> For example, women who are primary caregivers of children often choose to work near home. Furthermore, in addition to the needs of family members, women often have to combine their own work and movement schedules with traffic schedules or develop alternative ways of moving.<sup>34</sup> This may translate to the fact that women have limited access to time and space compared to men.<sup>35</sup>



29. Juanita Firestone, Beth Anne Shelton, An Estimation of the Effects of Women's Work on Available Leisure Time, *Journal on Family Issues*, Vol. 9 (2), 1988. Available online at: <https://bit.ly/3nYe3VK> [last visited on 20.01.2021]

30. Tim Cresswell, Tanu Priya Uteng, *Gendered Mobilities: Towards an Holistic Understanding*, Routledge, 2008. Available online at: <https://bit.ly/2LFOmwi> [last visited on 20.01.2021]

31. Tanu Priya Uteng, *Gendered Mobilities: Case of Non-Western Emigrant in Norway*, edited: Tore Sager, Sigurd Bergmann, *The Ethics of Mobilities: Rethinking Place, Exclusion, Freedom and Environment*, Routledge, 2016. Available online at: <https://bit.ly/2M6kWHc> [last visited on 20.01.2021].

32. Peter Gordon, Ajay Kumar and Harry Richardson, Gender Differences in Metropolitan Travel Behaviour, *Regional Studies*, Vol. 23 (6), 1989. Available online at: <https://bit.ly/3p0l8GO> [last visited on 20.01.2021]

33. Susan Hanson, Perry Hanson, The impact of married women's employment on household travel patterns: A Swedish example, *Transportation*, 10(2), 1981, Available online at: <https://bit.ly/3ip682l> [last visited on 20.01.2021]

34. Sandra Rosenbloom, Elizabeth Burns, Why Working Women Drive Alone: Implications for Travel Reduction Programs, *Transportation Research Record*, 1994. Available online at <https://bit.ly/3sGweTC> [last visited on 20.01.2021]

35. Mei-Po Kwan, Gender and Individual Access to Urban Opportunities: A Study Using Space-Time Measures, *The Professional Geographer*, 51 (2), 1999. Available online at: <https://bit.ly/3p1TjOd> [last visited on 20.02.2021]

## 6.2. Mobility and gender-based violence

When studying daily mobility regimes, it is essential to consider the barriers that accompany movement due to the potential for economic, psychological, physical, or sexual violence against women, girls, and LGBT+ people.<sup>36</sup> One of the most common forms of violence against women is the restriction or prohibition of mobility, such as visiting parents, or visiting a doctor during pregnancy. It is gender based violence when women and girls are restricted from mobility to get an education and work due to economic violence, when they have limited access to the material resources necessary to move, or are unable to make decisions due to psychological violence and choose independent movement modes, means and location.

In addition to gender roles and related commitments, daily travel patterns for women are determined by factors such as whether a woman is allowed to travel alone in a particular subculture, travel by car with a person with a different gender identity, how close bus stops are to populated streets, and whether streets are lit during the night.

It is especially important to study the impact of gender-based violence in the study of LGBT+ community mobility modes. Due to the homophobic background in the society, homophobic violence and bullying in public space and transport is frequent, which restricts the right of free movement of community members and imposes special, limited regimes of mobility. This is especially true for trans women, who are often forced to move around at night due to gender-based violence and do not have access to public transport and spaces. Such mobility regimes restrict their access to education, employment, health care and other basic services.<sup>37</sup>

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Part of the literature that focuses on the gender aspects of mobility believes that inequality in terms of mobility decreases as women increasingly use their own means of transportation (e.g. car), move faster and cover longer distances,<sup>38</sup> and view these changes as positive because these models of mobility are considered as prerequisites of individual freedom and better working conditions.<sup>39</sup> This means that the “correct model of movement” in this case is also the experience of men (fast movement, long-distance travel and more personal use of cars) and not the experience of women, which involves more walking and use of public transport, and, from an environmental point of view, is a much more acceptable alternative, because it uses less energy, generates less pollutants and is a better precondition for social inclusion.

Therefore, in the policy planning process, it should be important not to equate the experiences of women and other vulnerable groups with the modes of movement and experience of men and thus eliminate gender inequality in terms of mobility, but to create an ecologically and socially accessible mobility system for both women and men.



36. Anastasia Loukaitou-Sideris, Fear and safety in transit environments from the women’s perspective, *Security Journal*, 27, 2014. Available online at: <https://bit.ly/3iphZOg> [last visited on 20.01.2021]

37. Report of the Public Defender of Georgia on the Protection of Human Rights and Freedoms, 2019. pp. 206-207. Available online at: <https://bit.ly/3sGHBeg> [last visited on 20.01.2021]

38. Lynn Dobbs, Wedded to the car: Women, employment and the importance of private transport, *Transport Policy*, Vol. 12. 2005. Available online at: <https://bit.ly/2LDnPOd> [last visited on 20.01.2021]

39. Karme Mirales-Guash, Monserat Melo and Oriol Marke, Gender Analysis of Daily Mobility in Cities and Villages: From Challenges to Sustainability, *Gender, Place and Culture: A Journal of Feminist Geography*, 2015. Available online at: <https://bit.ly/2XRvwGB> [last visited on 20.01.2021]

### 6.3. Gender characteristics of movement of urban and rural population

The gender role of women, especially the burden of unpaid work associated with it, does not change with geographical locations, leading to similarities between the movement regimes of women living in rural and urban areas. However, in developing countries, access to public spaces, activities, vehicles, and socially acceptable/unacceptable movements are different for rural and urban women.

In Georgia, internal migration from rural settlements to urban areas increased significantly with industrialization in the 1960s (42.2%). In 2014, according to a survey conducted by Geostat, 57.2% of the country's population lives in urban-type settlements.<sup>40</sup>

According to a 2012 World Bank study, high dependence on public transport and difficulties in accessing such transport are observed in developing countries. Compensation for this factor in such countries is mainly achieved by establishing such para-transit systems as taxis, minibuses, etc. This affects rural and urban women differently and is a barrier to access to movement.<sup>41</sup>

In addition to the para-transit system, owning a car is often the main means of transportation in suburban and rural-type settlements. Unequal access of women to individual transport contributes to inequality in the labor market and results in limited access to education and health services. Maternal mortality in rural women is often associated with means of transportation and, as a result, limited access to health services.<sup>42</sup>

In addition, rural women and girls often have to cover long distances on foot, such as fetching clean water, grazing cattle, and/or reaching arable land. As a result, rural women do 70% of the housework, spending 85% of their daily effort in moving. In particular, they carry at least three tons more load per year/walk three kilometers more than men, often accompanied by children, which, in the long run, has a negative impact on their health.<sup>43</sup>

As for the urban environment, modes of movement and security are different in the presence of high, medium and low incomes. Low-income women living in the suburbs are less likely to own a private vehicle and less likely to have a driver's license. Because of the different means of transportation, low-income women are dependent on public transport work schedules, returning home earlier, and may be denied employment and study opportunities due to savings. While women with high incomes and living in central areas move more and their movement mode is closer to the mobility modes of men.<sup>44</sup>



40. Analysis of the results of the 2014 population census by gender, Geostat, 2017. Available online at: <https://bit.ly/2NIM7P9> [last visited on 20.01.2021]

41. Tanu Priya Uteng, Gender and Mobility in the Developing World, World Bank, World Development Report, 2021. Available online at: <https://bit.ly/2KrbKNc> [last visited on 20.01.2021]

42. Ibid.

43. World Bank, Improving Rural Mobility : Options for Developing Motorized and Nonmotorized Transport in Rural Areas, 2002. Available online at: <https://bit.ly/39LQmuS> [last visited on 20.01.2021]

44. Peter Glick, Simultaneous Determination of Home Work and Market Work of Women in Urban West Africa, Oxford Bulletin of Economics and Statistics 61 (1), 1999. Available online at: <https://bit.ly/3qxXPEy> [last visited on 20.01.2020]

When it comes to security, the risks of violence in public space are more real for women than for men, regardless of the environment they live in. In general, security threats include, on the one hand, the existence of poor transport infrastructure (incorrect distribution of buses, subway stops, incorrect design and difficult access, arbitrary nature of vehicles, lighting system malfunction or lack of space, etc.) and on the other hand sexual harassment in public transport.<sup>45</sup>

The results of a survey conducted in Georgia in 2015<sup>46</sup> showed that 62% of female students surveyed had experienced some form of sexual harassment in public. Research shows that sexual harassment is most common on the street (44%) and in traffic (33%). This restricts the free movement of women and girls and their right to education, economic and social participation.<sup>47</sup>

Therefore, it is important to have at least an intersectional analysis of place of residence, income and gender factor in the urban transport planning process.

#### **6.4. Choice of means of transportation, its determinants and barriers**

The gender differences that emerge from the analysis of socio-economic conditions are inevitably reflected in mobility models and forms, in this respect women have special characteristics in the choice of means of transportation, mobility goals, distance traveled and mobility chain.<sup>48</sup>

The Eurobarometer survey<sup>49</sup> provides gender-disaggregated data across the EU, clearly showing differences in the choice of means of transportation. According to the survey, most men travel by car and motorcycle, while women are more likely to use public transport and bicycles. I.e. the data show that women less pollute through environmental emissions as they use public transport, although public transport is the least responsive to their needs.

Socio-economic and demographic status play a fundamental role in the fact that women have less ability to own a car, studies show<sup>50</sup> that women are more likely to be passengers than drivers when moving.

Mobility and its goals also have gender characteristics; according to statistics, in the case of women it is more diverse and versatile during the day, they move to household chores, for work involving care, family shopping, while the main mobility goals for men are job and mobility chain is not diverse.

Gender differences impact mobility with regard to its goals; travel that is not related to work needs includes the following issues:



45. Greater London Council Women's Committee, Women on Move: GLC Research on Women and Transport, 1985. Available online at: <https://bit.ly/35QQZCf> [last visited on 20.01.2021]

46. Mariam Amashukeli, Lia Jalaghania, Sexual Harassment – Invisible Discrimination Against Women, Supporters of Social Change, 2015. Available online at: <https://bit.ly/3sEGgob> [last visited on 20.01.2021]

47. UN Women, SAFE CITIES AND SAFE PUBLICSPACES FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS GLOBAL FLAGSHIP INITIATIVE: INTERNATIONAL COMPENDIUM OF PRACTICES, 2019. Available online at: <https://bit.ly/3bVGi5g> [last visited on 20.01.2021]

48. Karne Mirales-Guash, Monserat Melo and Oriol Marke, Gender Analysis of Daily Mobility in Cities and Villages: From Challenges to Sustainability, Gender, Place and Culture: A Journal of Feminist Geography, 2015. Available online at: <http://bit.do/fMJYx> [last visited on 20.01.2021]

49. Eurobarometer, Attitudes towards EU transport policy issues, 2007. Available online at: <http://bit.do/fMJYn> [last visited on 20.01.2021]

50. National Travel Survey: 2010, Available online at: <http://bit.do/fMJYS> [last visited on 20.01.2021]

1. Several destinations, such as a shopping center; school; hospital, etc.;
2. Women are less likely to move during rush hours;
3. Women are mostly accompanied by children, the elderly or people with disabilities when traveling.<sup>51</sup>

It is for these reasons that men have a standard single destination, while women have a chain of frequent and more difficult journeys, in a situation where their access to private car is significantly behind that of men.

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## 7. IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON DAILY MOBILITY

The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly reduced mobility.<sup>52</sup> On the one hand, this was due to restrictions and self-limitations introduced to prevent the spread of the virus, which, at the policy level, included restricting or banning the movement of vehicles, closing schools and workplaces, and introducing curfew hours.<sup>53</sup>

Due to the limitations caused by COVID-19, due to the complete change of mobility modes, some of the differences between the modes of movement are not relevant at this stage. However, after release of the restrictions these differences will become even more apparent, as it is expected that a pandemic will deepen gender inequality and negatively affect women's economic participation.<sup>54</sup>

Although, less attention is still paid to gender issues in transport and relocation policy planning in Georgia, and gender-differentiated statistics on urban and rural population movement are not available, it is important to collect and analyze such statistics to properly address relocation Gender aspects, at least in terms of access to basic services, which, at this point, are neglected.

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## 8. RESEARCH DAILY MOVEMENT OF WOMEN FINDINGS<sup>55</sup>

### 8.1. Daily movement of women

The study showed that 52.9% of women surveyed are moving around daily. The share of respondents who do not leave home at all, or very rarely leave home (slightly more than a quarter - 26.5%) is not small, and the mobility rate of working days is only 16.8%.



51. Smart choices for cities - Gender equality and mobility, 2020. Available online at: <http://bit.do/fmIZi> [last visited on 20.01.2021]

52. Google Mobility Report, Georgia, as of January 15, 2021. Available online: <https://bit.ly/2XUWFqI> [Last viewed 20.01.2021]

53. COVID 19 Global Gender Assessment of Response Measures, 2020. A joint online platform of the United Nations Development Program and the United Nations Women: <https://data.undp.org/gendertracker/>

54. Politics Research Paper: The Impact of COVID 19 on Women, United Nations, April, 2020 Available online: <https://bit.ly/2/BuM2W> [last viewed December 1, 2020]

55. The findings of the study are based on the results of a quantitative and qualitative survey conducted in March-April 2021. Within the quantitative research, a total of 814 female respondents were interviewed in four regions: Adjara (200 respondents), Imereti (205 respondents), Kakheti (208 respondents), Shida Kartli (201 respondents). A qualitative study interviewed 18 female respondents from all four target regions.

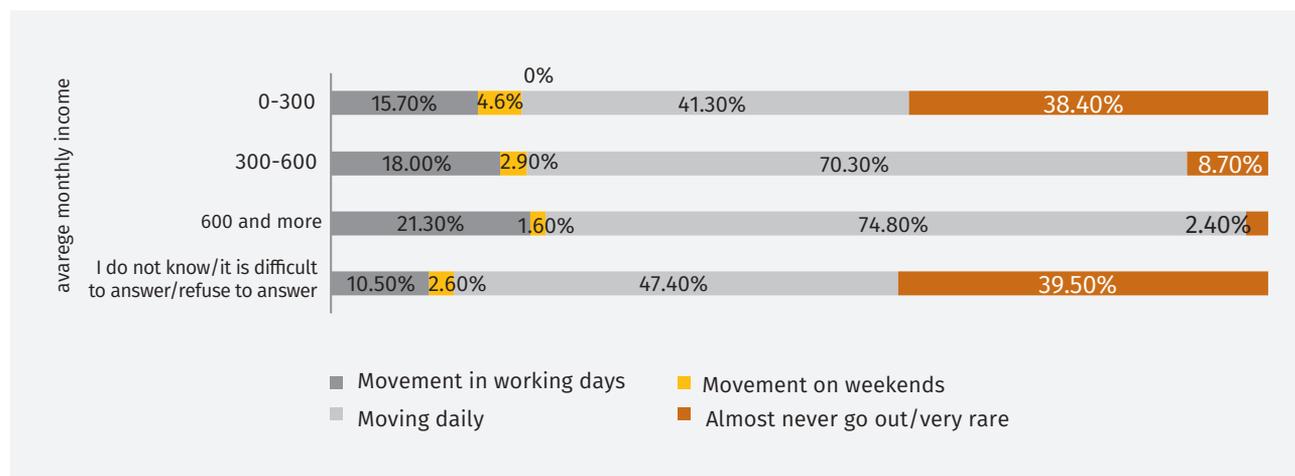
According to the analysis of the results of the quantitative research, the frequency of displacement is not reduced by the presence of dependent persons in the family. In particular, women who mentioned that they do not have dependents in the family are more likely to say that they do not leave the house at all / rarely leave the house (32.5%) than respondents of the categories of respondents who have different dependents in the family. Consequently, their daily movement rate is also relatively low (47.1%).

From the above analysis, it can be said that women, move less due to their own needs, than due to different needs of dependents - young children, elderly parents, etc. (e.g. taking to an educational institution, clinic, relocation of the respondents to their places of employment, etc.).

Nevertheless, it is difficult to move in the countryside with dependent persons, especially with small children: Women who have small children and live in rural areas refrain from moving around daily with their children because it is inconvenient for them to walk and change several vehicles.

Women’s mobility directly depends on the amount of their income. In particular, the share of daily movements of women with a minimum income is 41.3%, while daily movement of women earning up to 300-600 GEL and more than 600 GEL is 70-75%. A significant proportion (38.4%) of women with very low incomes rarely or never leave home.

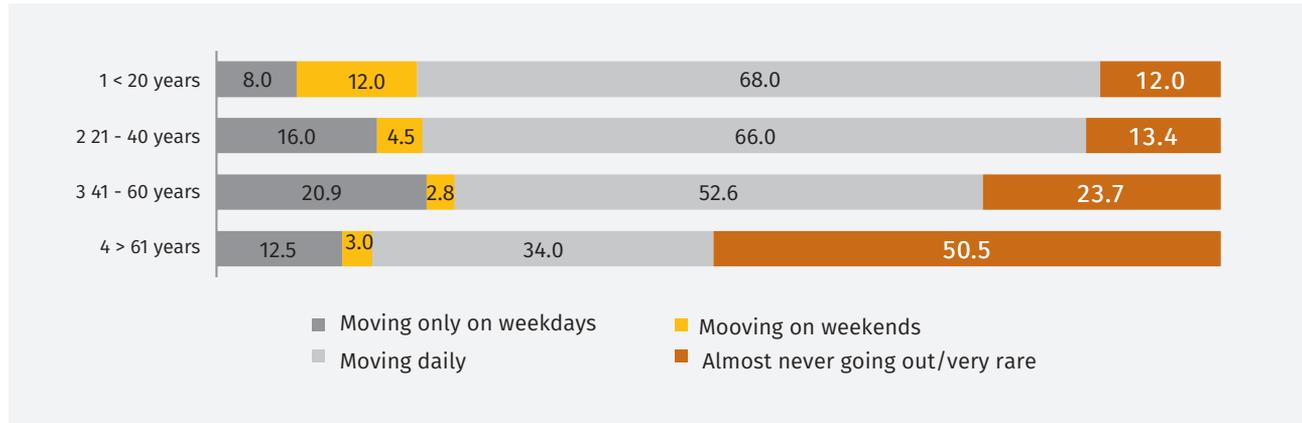
**chart N 1: Movement and income**



According to the living space (city / small town, village), the daily movement rate, as expected, is relatively lower in rural areas. 69% of women living in urban areas and 40.2% of women living in rural areas move daily. In addition, 32.7% of women in the village rarely or never leave the house, and 22.1% - only on weekdays. These rates are much lower among women living in cities.

As for the rates of movement by age categories: the highest frequency of daily movement is observed in women under 20 and 21-40 years. In the age category of women aged 41-60, slightly more than half move daily, and about a quarter of the same category - only on working days. Half of women over the age of 61 rarely or never leave home.

**chart N 2: Movement and age**



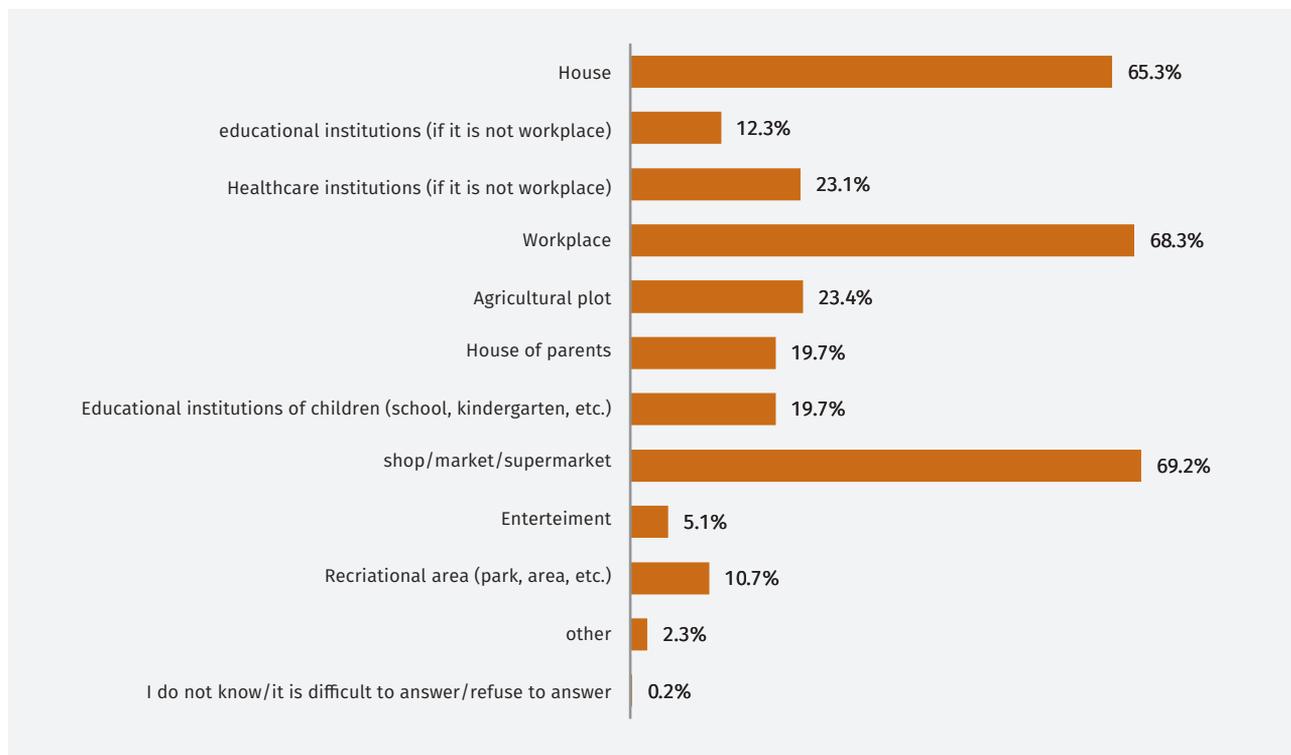
## 8.2. Women’s daily movement regime

**In general, the mode of movement of women differs from the mode of movement of men, in its essence it is more complex and involves several locations on a daily basis. A similar trend was observed as a result of the analysis of research data. Analyzing the interviews conducted as part of the qualitative research, it can be said that women move around many times during the day because they have to go to work and take care of the needs of dependent / young children, provide family members with products, medicines, visit and care for elderly parents.**

*“Every day I go in at least three directions, in the morning I take [the children] to school, then to work and then for family affairs” Respondent N14*

On weekdays, women move mainly in three directions: home (65.3%), workplace (68.3%), shop / market / market (69.2%). Also, a health facility and an agricultural plot were exposed (23%). It is noteworthy that a similar trend persists in all studied target regions, regardless of working and non-working days, regardless of women’s income and living space.

chart N3: Daily destinations



Compared to urban women, this burden is heavier in terms of mobility for rural women, as there are no network markets and pharmacies in rural areas and women living in such settlements have to travel by minibus to the district center, they are unable to provide the whole family with food. So their movement is splitted for a few days.

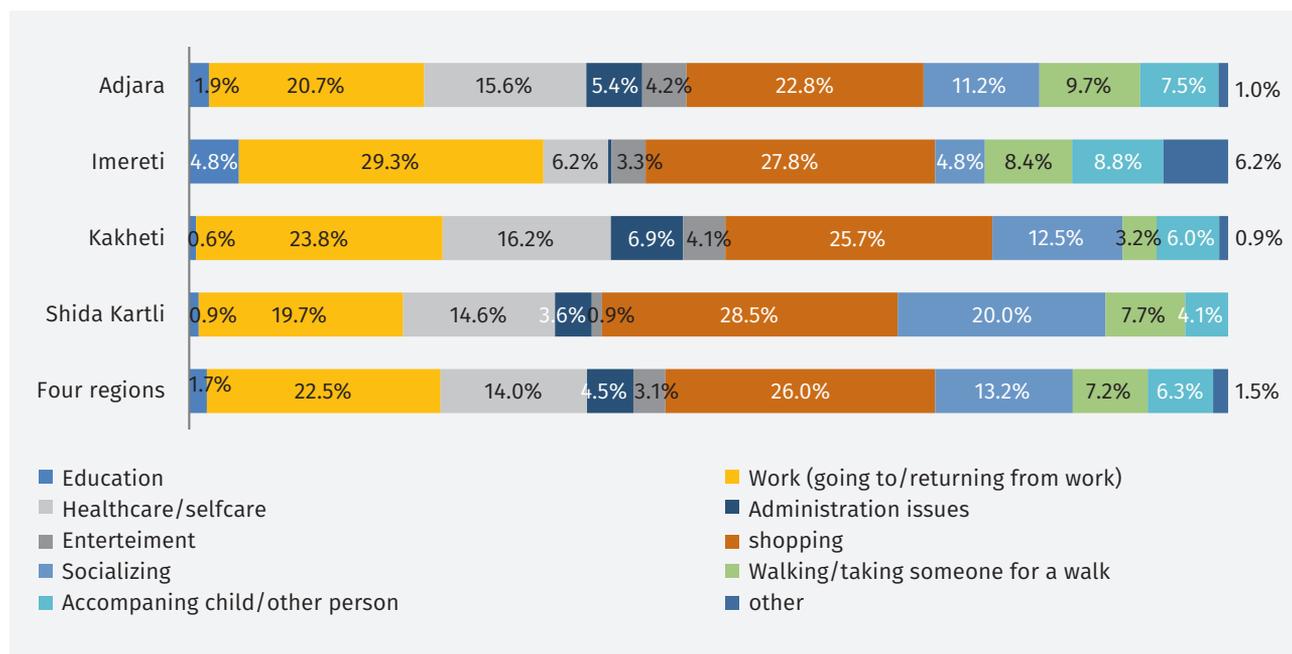
“There is a day when I need to go out three times, it depends on my family conditions, I have to visit my brother who lives alone, he is disabled from childhood and needs help, he needs help at home, in terms of cleanliness or dinner, I help. I am visiting him at least three times a week. “I depend on the market, there is a market in the village, but I have to go shopping on the weekends, because there are seven of us at home and my spouse has transport, but due to his work schedule I still have to travel myself often and use public transport.” Respondent N 5

As a result, the rate of daily movement in the village is lower (approximately 40%) compared to the city / town (69%);

### 8.3. Goals of movement

**The goals of women’s relocation are largely gender predetermined and related to their unpaid domestic work and caregiver performance. Analyzing in-depth interviews, it can be said that women have to go to work, take care of their children’s needs, provide products and medicines for family members, visit and care for elderly parents and other dependents. The movement goals of the women in the quantitative study are as follows:**

**Chart N 4: Aim of daily movement**



According to the overall data, 2 goals of transportation were identified: shopping (77.8%) and going to/returning from work or performing professional duties by moving (67.2%). In addition, health / self-care (42%) and socialization (39.5%) are relatively prominent;

The analysis of the link between movement and employment revealed the following trends: Respondents in almost all categories of employment, in general, are moving mostly every day. Unemployed women or women working in agriculture, as well as students / housewives / retirees are moving rarely or not at all.<sup>56</sup>

Women mostly move short distances. Analysis of in-depth interviews reveals that women move not often (approximately once a month) from village to city (within their own region) or between cities (from region to Tbilisi), and only when this is necessary (e.g. shopping, rest), mostly they avoid long-distance travel. As they have to change several transports, it is not comfortable for them to move with children, and private intercity transport (e.g. taxis) is expensive and unsafe.

It is noteworthy, that during research period, the mobility of women for education is extremely low in all regions. This hinders the mobilization of qualified human capital in the country through the development and teaching of relevant skills and habits, which in turn has a negative impact on the overall productivity of the country's population.



56. Interpreting the findings of the study, it is assumed that this indicator would have some impact on the pandemic-induced movement restrictions during the study period.

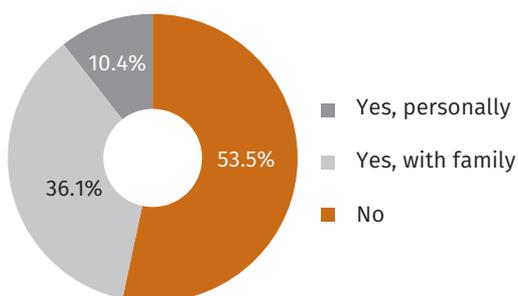
## 8.4. Means of movement

The analysis of the research results shows that women in Georgia do not have equal access to different means of transportation, which would allow them to move to desired destination, at the desired time and at an affordable price, which is related to transport and road infrastructure gaps. In terms of infrastructure - due to the lack of sidewalks, paved roads, stops and transport, there is an asymmetry between the village and the cities.

Identifying these gaps and barriers and researching needs is one of the main preconditions for urbanization and development in large cities of regions and for access to basic services for rural people.

Unequal access to transportation makes it difficult for women to move from the countryside to the city [and vice versa], which can often mean limited access to vital services and products, especially for vulnerable groups, a barrier to employment and education, and promotes unequal development in Tbilisi and other regions. The majority of women surveyed (53.5%) do not own a car. Most of the other respondents do not own a car but family owns (36.1%). Only a minority - 10.4% own a private car.

**Chart N5: Ownership of cars by women**



The analysis of women's income and car ownership shows that owning a private car is related to the amount of income, for example: 12 women with an income of 0-300 GEL own a private car, 16 women with an income of 300-600 GEL and 32 women with an income of more than 600 GEL. As for age analysis, research has shown that most often women aged 21-40 have a car in private ownership.

57.9% of respondents do not use a private car for daily transportation. Only 11% use it as a driver and 30.6% as

a passenger. It is important to note that according to interviews conducted as part of a qualitative study, women whose husbands or children have a car become dependent on their mobility, meaning that women's choice of mobility depends on the mobility plan of other family members.

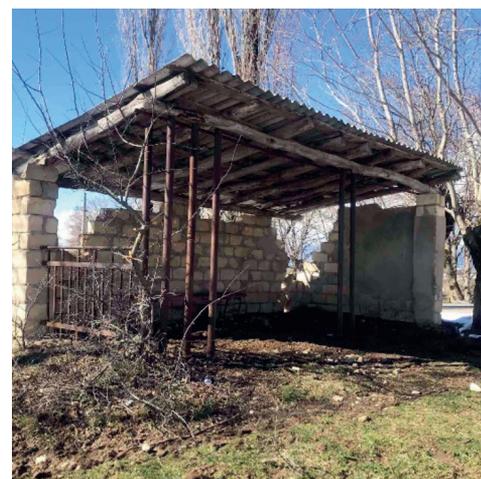
Research shows that the main means of transportation for women living in the regions is walking. Urban women have complex daily commuting routes, however, unlike rural women, medicines, products, and social infrastructure are more accessible to them, as small, urban settlements often have small network markets, pharmacies, and so on.

*"I often walk to the center, everything is close to each other, I also walk to work. Children use these new buses very well" Respondent N 14*

However, the necessary infrastructure for walking is not arranged in rural areas. Pedestrian crossings, road lights and road signs, lack of rest areas, no adaptation, restricts women from walking or make it more dangerous.

Only 10.4% of women own car and because of this, most women are dependent to either expensive private taxis or the relocation schedule of family and loved ones, which limits their free movement. According to a quantitative survey, the majority of women (71.2%) do not know how to drive a car. 19.1% are driving and have a driver's license, while 9.4% indicated they are driving but do not have driving license. Women, for the most part, use a private car for daily commuting for two reasons: convenience and time savings. According to the data, women have low access to private vehicles, taking into account the income and age factor.

*“My husband has a car when he is not at work, except the afternoon I use his car in the morning and in the evening.”*  
Respondent N 10



*Waiting for passengers in the village of Nigozeti.*



*Tskaltubo municipality, village. Bus in Dgnori*

**Public transport - which does not have a planned schedule, depends on the flow of passengers and does not have full geographical coverage. However, in-depth interviews with women point out that public transport is not safe during a pandemic due to a lack of preventive measures against the spread of the virus and, in general, an increased risk of accidents, mostly due to their malfunction and speeding.**

*“I want the bus to be scheduled as it is in the city, now it is not. If so I would not need stop.”* Respondent N 18

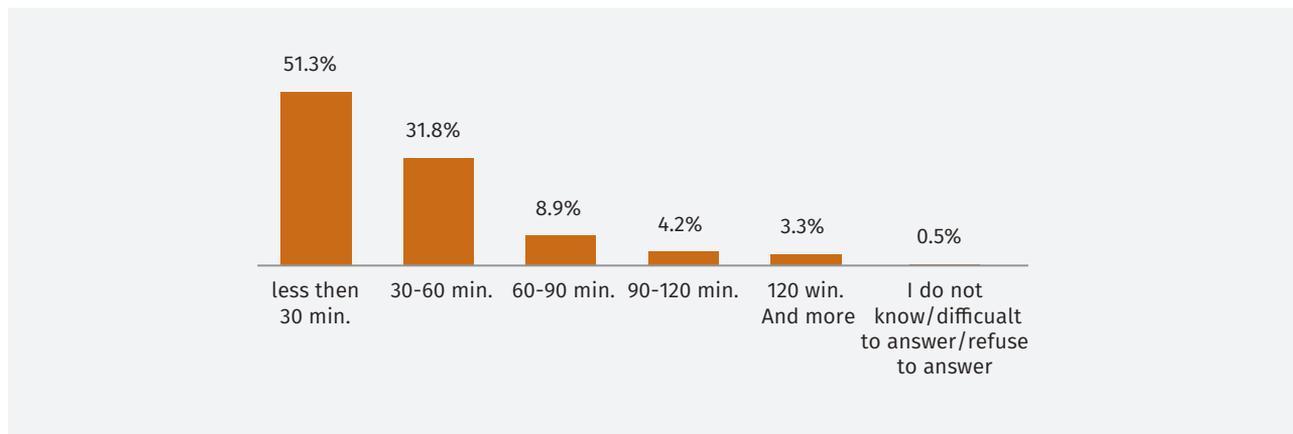
The so-called “Stop” - as a result of in-depth interviews with women, it can be said that for women living in the region, so called “Stop”, catching car and moving by it to the desired location is a common practice, as often no other means of transportation are available to them.

*“I need to change two or three minibuses to get to my mother, even though it is in the next village, sometimes I walk there. We follow Tbilisi buses as far as it goes, then it goes to the side of Tbilisi and it doesn't suit us anymore, then either someone meet us, or we are walking and someone will pick us on road and then from turn of my village” - but mostly I have to walk.”* Respondent N3

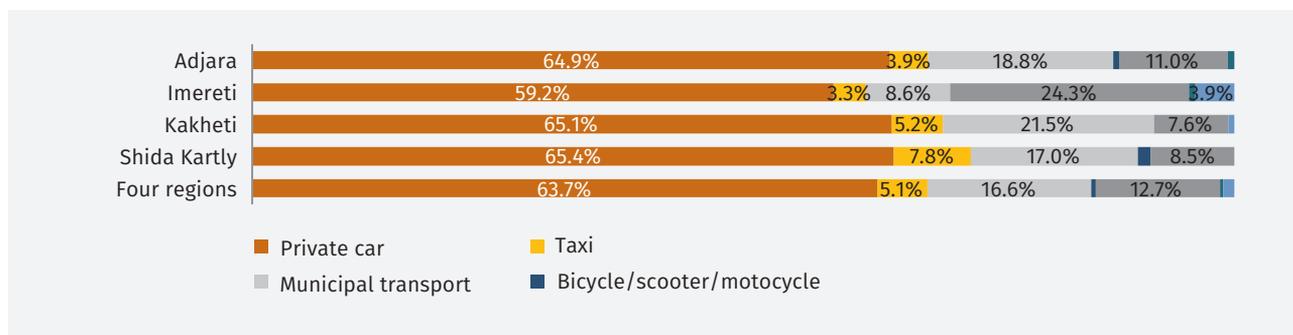
*“I am returning from school with a stop because I am an entrant and lessons are ending early, accordingly I am moving by stops with the teachers. I often stand at the edge of the highway and stop a passerby like this, every day after school. This is how we all behave here - we go together as a group. Then, at six o'clock, the Tbilisi bus arrives at home and we will follow it.”* Respondent N18

An analysis of in-depth interviews with women living in the regions reveals that women prefer to travel by car because it allows them to move at any time, in any direction, and safely taking into account pandemic.

**Chart N6: Time spent for movement daily**



**Chart N7: Priority type of movement**



However, research has shown that women, in terms of cleanliness, orderliness and comfort, like new buses and would like to be able to travel by bus to more places and more often.

### 8.5. Time, cost and frequency of transportation means

Women do not spend much time moving because they mostly travel short distances. Slightly more than half (51.3%) of surveyed women indicate that they generally spend less than 30 minutes traveling during the day. Slightly less than a third (31.8%) - fixes 30-60 minutes. According to the results of the survey, the amount spent during the day while traveling is mainly 1-5 GEL (37%), or the respondents do not have any expenses at all (28.4%). Slightly more than one-fifth fixes the cost of 5-10 GEL (21.7%).

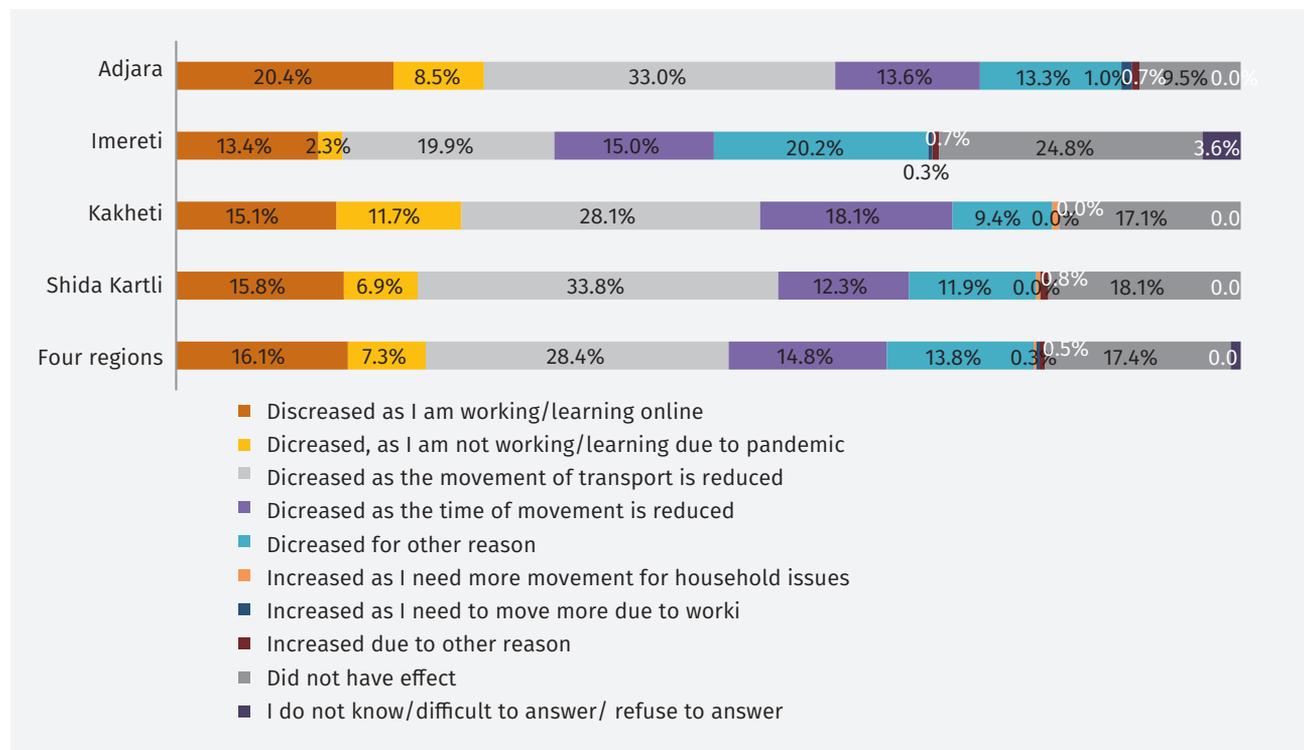
The study showed that 35.1% of women use public transport daily or several times a week. A significant proportion of women (40.1%) indicate that they use public transport several times a month. 24% never / almost never uses public transportation means. In the group of women who indicated that they use public transport daily or several times a week, in the absence of pandemic restrictions, majority still (approximately 82% of cases) uses public transport.

Women who rarely or never use public transport (64.9% of the total sample - 47.7%) say that this is mainly due to the inconvenience of public transport and lack of comfort there (21.1% of cases); Respondents who do not want to use public transport (17% of cases); And inaccessibility (no, not available) (14.7% of cases).

## 9. INFLUENCE OF CORONAVIRUS ON THE MOVEMENT OF WOMEN

A study of women's places, purposes, and means of relocation has found that women mostly move when they need to perform paid, unpaid labor, and caring labor. The coronavirus pandemic and related constraints have had some impact on women's daily mobility: both places of destination and means of transportation, as well as accessibility.

**Chart N8: Influence of pandemic on the places of movement**



Regarding the places of movement, it was found that movement decreased mainly due to traffic restrictions (28.4%), online work / training (16.1%), and generally due to travel time constraints (14.8%). Pandemic-related changes were not reflected in the movement (places of relocation) of 17.4% of women. Overall, 81.6% of respondents report that the pandemic affected their daily mobility.

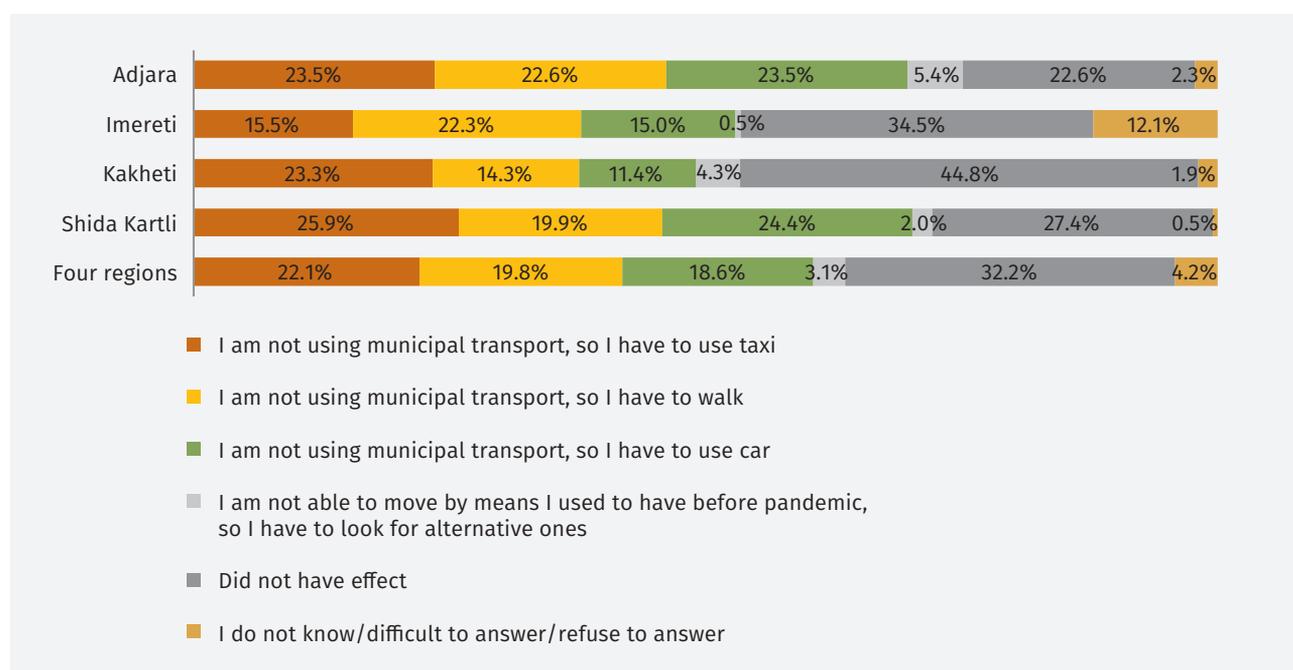
In the four regions included in the survey, the trends of the overall indicators are more or less maintained, however, relatively few respondents in Imereti region named the restriction of transport as the reason for reduction of movement (19.9%). In addition, almost a quarter of women surveyed in Imereti indicated that the pandemic had no effect on daily places of movement.

As for the means of transportation, 32.2% of the respondents stated that the pandemic did not affect their means of daily transportation. The share of women who are unable to use public transport due to a pandemic and have to find / use alternative means is 63.6%. Among them, the respondents who mentioned that:

- ▶ They cannot use public transport and have to travel by taxi (22.1%);
- ▶ They cannot use public transport and have to walk (19.8%);
- ▶ They cannot use public transport and have to travel by car (18.6%);

As for the individual regions: mainly, overall trends are maintained. However, most respondents in Kakheti reported that the pandemic did not affect their means of daily movement (44.8%), while in Adjara - the smaller number reported so (22.6%). In Kakheti, the proportion of respondents who do not use public transport and have to walk is relatively small (14.3%).

**Chart N 9: Influence of pandemic on the means of transportation**



In addition, the survey data show the following trend: about half of the groups of surveyed women (48-53%) who could not use public transport during the pandemic and have to walk or use taxi were mostly on public transport during the non-pandemic period. Respondents who had to travel by car during restrictions were relatively less likely to use public transport during a pandemic-free period (38%).

Respondent women (80% of the sample) who reported that the pandemic affected their places and means of transportation in one way or another (mostly negative) cited two main reasons for this impact: increased transport / petrol costs (35.5%) and the virus. Abstinence from movement due to risk of delay (28.8%).

Relatively pronounced - inability to move due to restrictions (18.8%). Similar data are observed in some regions, although in Shida Kartli the share of women who are unable to travel due to the risk of virus transmission is relatively high, while in Imereti there was the highest number of women who were negatively impacted by increased transport / petrol costs (45-46%).

The study also showed a trend that no matter how accessible places or means of transportation were for women due to the pandemic, the vast majority of them are assuming to return to the normal rhythm of life after the pandemic is over.

As a result, it can be said that pandemic-induced restrictions have negatively affected the mobility of most women. Most of them were limited in their choice of places and means of transportation while the existing ones became more difficult for them to reach.

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## 10. MUNICIPAL POLICY RELATED TO RELOCATION

A focus group was conducted as part of the research on the relocation policies of the self-governing units and municipalities involved in the study.<sup>57</sup> Based on the information received, it was found out that in the vast majority of municipalities (namely: Tskaltubo, Samtredia, Terjola, Zestaponi, Sachkhere, Khulo, Khelvachauri, Lagodekhi, Akhmeta, Kvareli, Gurjaani, Kareli, Khashuri), private companies who won the tenders are responsible for the transportation locally. Despite the desire of municipalities to have municipal transport, their budget and financial resources are not enough to provide it, they are unable to purchase and maintain transportation means, due to lack of finances. According to the representatives of these municipalities, they do not have a long-term vision or strategic document on transport and mobility issues, moreover, there has been no discussion on this issue.<sup>58</sup>

“There is a need among the population, the population applied the City Hall to solve the transport problem, but the municipality is totally relied on private vehicles.” - Akhmeta Municipality representative.

“In terms of women’s mobility, the proper functioning of public transport is especially important. There is a demand from the citizens. Girls and young people need public transport to move freely in the municipal center, get an education, they have problems. There are minibuses and private taxis, however, when they use taxi, they have to pay more.” - Gurjaani Municipality Representative.

In those municipalities that have specific transport-related services and own municipal transport (Chiatura, Telavi, Gori), their transport access is limited to the towns in this municipality, while in the villages, like other municipalities, private companies operate.

In some municipalities, such as Kutaisi, Batumi and Kobuleti,<sup>59</sup> preparatory work on transport issues is underway or there is already prepared mobility strategy document, although currently the bus line in these cities is municipal and the minibuses are private.



57. In total, 4 focus groups were conducted in May 2021 with the representatives of the municipalities of the target regions (Adjara, Imereti, Shida Kartli, Kakheti).

58. On the example of Sachkhere, where, like other municipalities, both the means of transportation and the bus station are private, the community of people with disabilities demanded an adapted vehicle for people with disabilities, which is why Sachkhere City Hall purchased one adapted bus to provide service for the group. A similar exception is Keda, the mayor of the municipality said they will have e-transport funded by the Japanese embassy in the future, the mayor said there is a policy document from 2019 but no concrete steps have been taken due to lack of finances.

59. This issue is ongoing in Kutaisi, there is a document in Kobuleti that deals with the development of public transport, and Batumi has a ten-year integrated plan in cooperation with the UN Development Program to promote sustainable development of mobility.

Batumi Municipality is the only one from the focus group municipalities with the developed transport policy, prepared in cooperation with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), and only this municipality has gender-segregated statistics on transport behavior, however, this data is not updated systematically.

### **10.1. Service responsible for transport issues in the municipality**

According to focus groups it was revealed that there is no unified approach on the implementation of transport policy in the self-governing units. For example, in the municipalities of Terjola, Zestaponi, Khelvachauri, Keda, Signagi, Kareli and Khashuri in Tskaltubo, there is neither a service responsible for transport policy nor a specialist in the relevant field.

According to the representatives of Kutaisi, Samtredia, Sachkhere, Chiatura, Lagodekhi, Gurjaani and Kvareli municipalities - they have an infrastructure service which also deals with the issue of transport, and their activities extend on improving the transport infrastructure. The transport service established in the city of Kutaisi has the same workload. The above-mentioned service also solves issues such as outdoor lighting, creation of a unified payment system, arrangement of stops, training of controllers and drivers, and more. According to the results of the research, only in Batumi and Telavi there are transport services that have a transport policy department.

“We meet with the population intensively, research their opinion and take it into account when making decisions.” Representative of Telavi Municipality

In the focus group, no gender analysis of mobility was conducted in any of the municipalities and there was no communication with the Gender Equality Council on transport issues. Moreover, most municipalities find it difficult to identify the gender aspects of transport policy and, consequently, this issue is not even on the agenda.

“I do not even know what to say about the relationship with the Gender Equality Council. Frankly speaking, I do not see a logical link in cooperation with them. I do not even know what might be different needs of women and men in terms of transportation. We are trying to take into account the needs of people with disabilities and now, as already said, we are planning to renew the vehicles and, in our opinion, it will be important to purchase adapted transport “- Representative of Kobuleti Municipality.

### **10.2 Municipal projects related to transport**

According to the representatives of Tskaltubo, Samtredia and Terjola municipalities, the private company manages the transportation routes, which excludes the municipalities from this process because they do not have the leverage to make a decision.

According to the municipalities of Zestaponi, Sachkhere, Chiatura, Khelvachauri, Keda and Khashuri, the projects related to transport are not implemented at all as municipalities do not have their own public transport. The project of Khulo Municipality in this direction foresees cooperation with a private company which provides free transportation for population to fields - almost all the residents of the villages of the municipality move to such fields in summer.

Representatives of Kutaisi, Kobuleti, Lagodekhi and Kareli municipalities talk about infrastructure projects, namely - repairing the payment system, rehabilitation of bus stops, provision of outdoor lighting system, road improvement. A competition is planned to be announced in Gori, within the framework of which the issue of mobility in the villages will be resolved. And the projects of Batumi Municipality are connected to the transport policy.

“A transport corridor has been made, a lane for separate buses has been opened, 6 paid parking locations are open, municipal transport is subject to periodic renewal, and the development of a bicycle system has begun.” - Representative of Batumi Municipality.

### 10.3 The main problems and challenges of municipal transport policy

The main challenge<sup>60</sup> for municipalities is the operation of private transport<sup>5</sup>, which fails to meet the needs of all population.

There is a chaotic situation in terms of transport in the municipality, the traffic schedule, frequency, route, stops are unregulated.” - Zestaponi Municipality Representative.

“The main problem is that there is no municipal transport in the villages, and where it is available, it is not well-equipped. However, it is difficult to provide 60 villages with municipal transport from the budget of Chiatura.” - Representative of Chiatura Municipality.

In Sighnaghi, in the absence of municipal transport and in the conditions of private companies, the high price of transportation was also identified, accordingly for most part of the population movement becomes more expensive and they are restricted to move.

The challenge is also to identify movement-related problems by a number of municipalities. In particular, according to the representatives of Samtredia, Keda, Telavi, Khelvachauri and Sachkhere municipalities, they do not have any problems or challenges related to movement.<sup>61</sup>

Representatives of Kutaisi, Khulo, Kobuleti, Batumi, Lagodekhi, Gurjaani, Kvareli, Akhmeta and Gori municipalities name chaotic traffic as a problem, lack of adapted transport for people with disabilities, lack of budget and infrastructural needs such as parking and outdoor, parking.

“People with social problems need more transport. I can not say that more women are in need because they also drive cars. They use municipal transport only when going to administrative body. In the case of a private company, the municipality will not be involved in policy-making.



60. Chiatura, Zestaponi, Sighnaghi, Tskaltubo and Terjola municipalities

61. For example, according to the representative of Sachkhere Municipality, no one has addressed the problem of transportation and no one has raised this issue on the agenda.

However, the challenge is to identify gender aspects of mobility by municipal representatives. As a result of the focus group, it can be said that only Gurjaani municipality has a vision for gender-differentiated needs for movement, in particular, women in Gurjaani could not participate in the free state education program because the learning process lasted until late and the problem of child abandonment and transportation arose.

“The gender aspect was clearly visible here. Male family members don’t want that their wives to be transported by private drivers especially in the evening. Therefore, they are obstructing; if there is public transport, the trust of the population will increase and men will let women go out.” Gurjaani Municipality Representative.

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## 11. CONCLUSION

Mobility is one of the key markers of development. Freedom of movement for individuals and societies means the possibility of a better future, and such an opportunity is fundamentally important for a society to continue to develop and reduce poverty. The findings of the study clearly highlight the current trends in terms of mobility and show the barriers and obstacles that women face in 4 regions of Georgia during daily movement.

Mobility analysis shows that relocation policies are sporadic in the country and do not exist at all in most regions. It is important for people living in all regions to have equal employment opportunities and access to the labor market. The structural transformation of the economy caused by the coronavirus pandemic has recently had a negative impact on daily movement. While increased virtual mobility creates more flexible employment opportunities for the middle class living in the country, it has a negative impact on the social and economic mobility of people who do not have the accumulated human capital, opportunities and qualifications to participate in emerging employment areas.

In this regard, the present study is an important but insufficient source for accumulating knowledge on mobility in the country and it is necessary that the trends identified in the gender perspective, specific barriers to women’s movement be examined and considered in a broader context to enable mobility-related, consistent and develop a needs-based policy.

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## 12. RECOMMENDATIONS

### To the Government of Georgia:

- ▶ Collect and analyze mobility-related information at the central and municipal levels, including in the gender context, to better understand gender differences in daily movement and to properly plan and implement relocation policies;

### To local governments:

- ▶ Research existing barriers of movement, gaps and opportunities in the relocation system at the municipal level, including in terms of gender.
- ▶ Train relevant municipal services to raise awareness of gender aspects of mobility.
- ▶ Plan mobility policies, including social and urban transport schemes, to take into account the mobility potential and resources of the population;
- ▶ To adapt the transport services purchased through the tender to the needs of people with different abilities;
- ▶ The needs of women, and especially women with special needs, should be taken into account when arranging movement-related infrastructure (outdoor lighting, pedestrian paths, rest areas, stops, etc.).
- ▶ Involve women with different needs, including at the central and local levels, at all stages of decision-making on issues related to transportation and road infrastructure;

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## APPENDIX N1: GENERAL DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF THE SURVEY

Analysis of quantitative survey data (in four regions) revealed the following general demographic trends:

- ▶ The minimum share of the respondent under the age of 20 among the surveyed women (3.1%); 40-60 years old age group has the highest share (39.4%);
- ▶ In the four regions included in the study (Adjara, Imereti, Kakheti, Shida Kartli) the data are similar to the general trends;
- ▶ According to the overall data (70.6%), the majority of women respondents from the four regions surveyed are married;
- ▶ About 62% of respondents have dependents in the family - 31% of them are minor children, and about 15-16% - adult children and other family members. Of the four regions surveyed, Adjara had a relatively high proportion of respondents (35% - minor children and about 36% - adult children and other family members);
- ▶ Respondents' data on education show that respondents with secondary and higher education have an approximately equal share (37-39%). Only 26 respondents have incomplete secondary education.
- ▶ According to the overall data, slightly more than a third of the respondents are unemployed (35.7%). Most of the employed respondents are mainly either self-employed (small business, trade, etc.) (18.8%), or long-term employed (1 month +) in the public sector (22.7%). Approximately similar trends were observed in three of the four regions. However, it should be noted that half of the respondents in the Imereti region indicated employment status - unemployed;
- ▶ According to data from four regions, slightly more than half of the respondents live in rural areas (55.7%). However, the distribution of living space in different regions is different, for example, in Kakheti the share of rural residents is almost 65%, in Shida Kartli - 60.2%, and in Imereti urban and rural respondents have approximately equal share.
- ▶ Data on average monthly income indicate the low financial capacity of the women surveyed. 58.6% of the income is from 0 to 300 GEL per month. In this regard, Shida Kartli is especially noteworthy, where

65.7% of women surveyed indicate a minimum income (0-300 GEL), the average income of 21.1% is from 300 to 600 GEL per month, and income 600 - 1500 GEL per month, has 14% of respondents

- ▶ 58.4% of respondents do not belong to any of the listed vulnerable groups. In 13.3% of cases, a mother with many children is named, and in 12.5% - with a socially vulnerable status. The share of other named groups is negligible. It should be noted that 61 respondents were assigned to 2 vulnerable groups at the same time, and 18 respondents to 3 groups.

**Chart N1: Average daily income**

