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INSTITUTIONAL REGULATION OF ECO-MIGRATION POLICY IN GEORGIA

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ABSTRACT

Purpose - The main aim for our research is gaining knowledge of institutional regulation of eco-migration processes in Georgia and, consequently, evaluating the state politics of eco-migration, so as to show off what improving changes can be considered in coming years exactly in the above-mentioned direction.

Design/methodology/approach - The research design is based on the institutional approach to studying migration processes. And the empirical analysis was based on the information collected as a result of the study of archival-state documents and interviews in eco-migrant populated areas. The survey was conducted from March 12 to September 25, 2022.

Findings - Outcome of our research underlines that the development of institutional provision of eco-migration processes has gone through the different stages during the last centenary in Georgia. As if from the side of government appropriate policy is worked out, however, the research showed that it is necessary to establish a systematic and transparent approach to eco-migration and resettlement by the state, the implementation of which should become the prerogative of both the central government and the municipal administration, which should probably happen in the near future.

Originality/value - The scientific novelty of our work is that, for the first time, we studied the historical context of the state policy of eco-migration, the goals of the state policy of eco-migration, the strategy of the state policy of eco-migration and the legal basis of the legal regulation of eco-migration as a process.

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Introduction.

The dangerous natural processes caused by geographical factors in Georgia time by time underline the essence of intensive migration of a permanent character on the agenda, which requires the institutional provision of eco-migration processes from the government. Due to the forecasted or already occurring natural disaster, the lack of material resources, the difficulty of building up agriculture, the lack of having permanent work, the desire to improve living conditions, migration processes from the mountainous villages of different regions of Georgia took place with periodic intensity from the 30s of the 20th century, which had intra-regional characteristics. And from the second half of the 20th century, especially in its last period, the interregional compact emigration of the population from the naturally affected or naturally unstable zones started and it mainly took place in 19 administrative units of Georgia. Among them Meskheta-Javakheti, Kartli, Kvemo Kartli, Kakheti, some districts of Samegrelo and Guria region. Accordingly, based on the situation, the state was implementing certain actions, the purpose of which was to ensure the resettlement of the population affected by the disaster. Therefore, the aim of the research is to evaluate the institutional regulation of the eco-immigration process.

Basic questions of research.

What stages did the state policy of eco-migration go through during the Soviet and post-Soviet periods in Georgia and what are differences between them?

How is the implementation of the eco-immigration process ensured by the state from an institutional point of view?

What was the purpose of the resettlement of eco-migrants by the state?

What legislative basis is the regulation of eco-immigration processes based on?

How effective is the strategy of government's eco-migration?

What are the institutional problems for the implementation of the eco-migration state policy?

Literature review.

The special interest is noticed towards studying theoretical and practical issues about eco-migration in the contemporary stage of Georgian reality. The specific issues about eco-migration in a scientific level is fathomed and perceived by several authors: Trier and Turashvili (2007); Mushkudiani and Getiashvili (2011); Silagadze (2017); Matcharashvili (2008); Kukchishvili (2020); Leye (2012); Putkaradze (2006); Chumburidze *et al.* (2015). However, in the pointed works, the accent is partly made on studying the politics of eco-migration processes in Georgia. No attention has been paid to the study of institutional regulation of eco-migration.

The methodology of research.

The empirical basis of research is the study and analysis of the state strategy and legal-normative documents on eco-migration. Accordingly, the empirical research involved conducting research through document analysis and interviewing methods. Using the method of document analysis, we studied archival documents that we searched in the relevant funds of the recent history of Georgia and the state archives of Adjara. The analysis of archival documents helped us to study the historical context of the eco-migration state policy, in particular, we described the eco-migration process fully during the Soviet and post-Soviet periods, as well as revealed the peculiarities and identified the problems. For the evolution and study of eco-migration as a process, it was important to analyze public information requested from state agencies, which was based on the analysis of information requested from public institutions. In particular, we requested information from the Ministry of Labor Health Protection and Social Security of Georgia and Autonomous Republic of Adjara. The requested information was about:

1. State political documents of eco-migration, which consists of projects, accounts and statistical data.
2. List of state agencies which are taking part in realizing state policy of eco-migration.
3. Legislative documents of regulations of eco-migration processes, specifically laws, orders and decrees.

The use of qualitative methods made it possible to get in-depth and relevant knowledge about the state strategy of eco-migration and the regulatory legal framework, thus we made a detailed description of the state strategy and identified its shortcomings.

One of the most significant methodological way of the research was an interview, within interview, 12 representatives of state agencies were questioned. Within the framework and in-depth interviews the content side of questions consisted of:

1. What stages were gone through by the development of state policy of eco-migration?
2. What documents are made up by government in the direction of eco-migration processes?
3. What legal basis has the state developed for the state regulation of eco-immigration processes?
4. What targeted programs do the state implement in the direction of helping eco-immigrants?
5. What problems do eco-migrants face in the direction of adaptation and integration in local communities?
6. What status do people displaced by eco-immigration processes enjoy?
7. What kind of help did the eco-migrant receive from the state?
8. What should the state do to help eco-migrants?
9. What is the relationship between eco-migrants and the local government?
10. Did re-migration or reverse migration of eco-migrants take place? And if so, what was the reason?

The preliminary scientific information grasped by us and studying data was conducted by convent and event analysis methodology in the way of induction.

Secondary scientific information was also reflected in the research, in the form of studies conducted on a subject of interest to us. In this regard, we would like to highlight the research conducted with the support of the European Center for Minority Issues (Trier and Turashvili, 2007), as well as the research conducted within the framework of the Office of Democracy Institute (ODI)(2017) and a special report prepared by the Office of Public Defender of Georgia (OPDG)(2013). Based on the scientific information obtained as a result of the research, within the framework of the desk research, we used the methods of document analysis and monographic research.

Historical context.

As a result of the study of archival documents and field research in places inhabited by eco-migrants, the problem of eco-migration was determined from a systemic point of view, and it became the center of attention of the Georgian authorities from the second half of the 20th century. As a result of research in the process of field ethnographic research, we found that, in addition to natural disasters, the reason for migration was also an economic factor, which was also equated with labor migration, and this was connected with the deliberate policy of the Soviet government, when eco-migration was carried out in internal republics, The type of inter-regional agricultural settlement (Takidze, 1973). Accordingly, during the Soviet period, the resettlement of eco-migrants was carried out purposefully, systematically and in an organized manner, for which necessary and sufficient material and administrative resources were used.

By studying the archival documents, it is established that in the Soviet period, there has been three stages of eco-migration (which had both an economic and an ecological character). In the first stage (30s-50s of the 20th century), eco-migration, which was carried out within a specific region, had the character of labor migration, which was renewed and promoted by the government, in the second stage, in the second stage (60s-70s of the 20th century) had the nature of ecological and labor migration, while the third stage (the 80s of the 20th century, especially the second half) had a purely ecological nature and was actually connected with the activation of natural events, which coincided with the processes of the destruction of the Soviet structure responsible for the created difficult situation and the restoration of Georgia's state independence . At that time, the resettlement of the population in the regions of Georgia took place mainly from the two regions of Georgia, Adjara and Svaneti.

The national government that came to power as a result of the restoration of state independence of Georgia used eco-migrants as a necessary tool for demographic balancing on the agenda, which meant that eco-migrants were settled in the country's minority-populated and border regions, which aimed to “de-Georgianize” these regions. Like state actors, influential political organizations, such as the nationalist “Kostava Foundation” and “ Rustaveli Society”, bought houses abandoned by minorities, which were then distributed to ethnic Georgian eco-migrants. Relations between the newly settled eco-migrants and the local population were often extremely tense, which eventually ended in the sale or abandonment of the adopted homes and the return of the eco-migrants to their native regions (Lily, 2012).

During the administration period of Eduard Shevardnadze, the issue of eco-migrants was almost ignored. During the process of privatization of agricultural lands implemented in Georgia in 1992-1998, eco-migrants received plots of land on equal terms with the rest of the indigenous population. Funds allocated for the purchase of houses by the Shevardnadze administration in 1997-2002 became a source of extreme corruption. In 1998, the eco-migration monitoring procedures were defined for the first time by the decree on eco-migration, although the initial monitoring of ecological migration trends did not lead to any effective measures. (Lily, 2012). And after 2003, during the administration of Mikheil Saakashvili, several important measures were implemented to solve the problems of eco-migrants, in particular, the Ministry of IDPs, Resettlement and Refugees from the Occupied Territories of Georgia collected assessment data about the condition of houses in the mountainous regions, and in 2004, the state developed several new initiatives with eco-migrant houses About provision. However, the development of a sustainable and consistent state policy with appropriate resources did not happen in this period either (Lily, 2012). The situation was complicated by the fact that it was not possible to bring the processes related to eco-migration into the legal framework. Despite the vague legal protection mechanism in the national legal system, according to the official information received from the Ministry of IDPs, Resettlement and Refugees from the occupied territories of Georgia, in practice there is a system that more or less regulates the problems in this area (OPDG, 2013).

The definition of eco-migrant.

The analysis of the practice in Georgia after independence (April 9, 1991) shows that in Georgia eco-migrants are families who were resettled by the state decades ago, as well as families who request resettlement and those families who live in the risk zone. In other words, in Georgia, the concept (term) of eco-migrant includes both resettled and to-be resettled families and families belonging to the risk group, which indicates the state's indifferent attitude to this issue. It seems that independent Georgia adopted this practice from the Soviet period, since the use of the term eco-migrant in Soviet period Georgia in practice (but not in normative acts) began at the end of the 80s of the 20th century, when natural disasters intensified in some regions of the country and a large part of the population was forced to leave their homes. According to the study of archival documents, until the middle of the 80s of the 20th century, during the Soviet government, eco-migration took the form of an intra-republican agricultural tax (Takidze, 1973). and it was determined by economic and with the intervention of the state with the motives of labor migration (Ungiadze, 1983).

According to the report of the Public Defender of Georgia, the national legal system of Georgia does not provide a definition of who can represent a person forcibly displaced as a result of a natural disaster - an eco-migrant, and to which category of persons the mentioned legal status should be applied (OPDG, 2013).

In the normative acts of Georgia („About Local Self-Government" Organic Law of Georgia; Tax Code of Georgia; "On Approving the Regulations of the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories of Georgia, Resettlement and Refugees" Resolution #34 of the Government of Georgia; "Families Affected by Natural Events and Subject to Displacement (Eco-Migrants) Order No. 779 of November 13, 2013 of the Minister of Resettlement and Refugees on the Approval of the Resettlement Procedure for Persons Displaced from the Occupied Territories of Georgia;) the term "eco-migrants" is used, which is a person affected by natural disasters and subject to displacement. According to this definition, the national legal system of Georgia partially shares the recognized principles of United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (Unhcr., 2008). In particular, "United Nations Guiding Principles on Forced Displacement" approved by the United Nations in 1998. The concept of internally displaced person is defined in the mentioned document. Specifically: "For the purposes of these principles, internally displaced persons are persons or groups of persons who have been displaced or forced to leave their home or place of permanent residence to escape armed conflict, widespread violence, human rights abuses, and natural or man-made disasters." And at the same time, you will not cross an internationally recognized state border" (Unhcr., 2008). However, in this document, the concept of a forcibly displaced person carries a wider content than the definition given in the Georgian legislation, "a person affected by natural events and subject to displacement". As the report of the Public Defender of Georgia emphasizes, "due to the fact that eco-migrants are not included in the definition of a forcibly displaced person defined by the 1996 Law of Georgia on „Forcibly Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories of Georgia", the said status does not apply to them, and persons of this category cannot use the rights guaranteed by the same law with the mechanism of legal protection. The main purpose of special status is that legislation purposefully and fairly places the relevant person/or group of persons in a different legal position and ensures that he is protected by a different standard. Thus, it is necessary for persons displaced as a result of a natural disaster to have an appropriate status at the national legal level and an adequate protection mechanism depending on the status (OPDG, 2013)

From the point of view of international law, the state is not obliged to bring internally displaced persons under a separate status, because they, like other citizens of the country, already enjoy various rights recognized by the constitution. However, due to the fact that internally displaced persons, compared to other citizens, are in a different, specific situation, such as not having a place to live, not having a source of livelihood or limited availability, less employment prospects, problems of integration in a new environment, etc., they require support from the state. Only internally displaced persons from conflict regions benefit from such special state support (status) in Georgia, which contradicts the internationally recognized unified approach to social and legal protection of internally displaced persons. (ODI, 2017).

It should be noted that there is no binding legal document at the international level, which contains the definition of an eco-migrant and the obligations of the state to ensure the social protection of this category of persons. International organizations use different terminology for people displaced by natural disasters. Often, they are referred to as victims of natural disasters, victims of natural disasters, etc.

UNHCR (Unhcr., 2008) distinguishes ecological migrants from refugee according to the fact that unlike others -, people migrating because of ecological conditions'', have the hope from the

government to be helped. Since eco-migrants usually stay within the borders of their own country instead of crossing the state border - the latter is the main criterion for granting refugee status in international law - eco-migrants are bond with internally displaced persons. Indeed, in 1998, the proposed UN Guidelines on Forced Displacement, which are normative in nature and not legally binding, provide a definition of internally displaced persons that includes persons affected by natural disasters. In particular, it states that internally displaced persons are persons or groups of persons who have been expelled or forced to leave their home or place of permanent residence in order to escape armed conflict, general violence, human rights violations and natural or man-made disasters and, However, they did not cross the internationally recognized state border (Lyle, 2012).

State policy and programs of eco-migration.

As a result of the analysis of archival documents, information requested from public agencies and obtained as a result of interviews with representatives of relevant agencies, we can conclude that state support measures were also different in different periods of eco-migration. The study of the eco-migration state policy and programs showed that there is a different approach between the eco-migration state policy and programs of the Soviet government of Georgia and the government of independent Georgia. There is a different approach to the issue of eco-migration in the post-independence period during the administrations of Gamsakhurdia, Shevardnadze and Saakashvili. Modern politics is also completely different from them.

In the Soviet period, as we mentioned above, eco-migration took the form of intra-republican agricultural settlement (Takidze, 1973). At first, the government carried out intra-regional resettlement, and then inter-regional resettlement, for which the government had developed "prospective plans for the planned resettlement of families in collective farms of the Georgian SSR and Soviet farms"). In accordance with these plans, the state received relevant normative documents and resettlement was carried out according to the Council of Ministers of the Georgian SSR #154 of March 5, 1963, #399 of July 2, 1964, #279 of May 8, 1965, #181 of March 24, 1866, #200 of March 30, 1976, April 23, 1968 #177, April 3, 1969 #184, May 7 #259, January 21, 1970 #39, December 3, 1971 #588; Resolutions #411 of June 23, 1975, #103 of February 8, 1979 and Decree #404 of May 4, 1971, etc. Based on (Davitadze, 1972; Tsulukidze, 1975; Kifiani, 1975; Ungiadze, 1983). In the mentioned years, the resettlement of eco-migrants in the regions of Georgia was due, on the one hand, to the deterioration of the ecological situation and overpopulation in the highlands of the Ajara region (Ungiadze, 1983), on the other hand, to the lack of labor in the Soviet farms in the Guria region. and in collective farms (Chiqovani, 1974). Studying the archival documents shows that along with the organized, planned resettlement of eco-migrants, there was also an arbitrary resettlement of the population, which contradicted the resettlement instructions developed by the state. Otherwise, on the one hand, he could not benefit from the state aid program and was forced to return to the territory of his original residence (Tsulukidze, 1974). During this period, the state aid program for eco-migrants included the allocation of a home plot and material assistance in the construction of a residential house. However, as a precondition for all of this, the state made a condition for eco-migrants that two members of the family should work in the Soviet farm or collective farm. Otherwise, he would not have received help. In the second half of the 80s and the first half of the 90s of the 20th centuries. At that time, eco-migration had the character of both planned, organized and self-flowing/purchasing settlement. Accordingly, the state's approach to the issue of supporting eco-migrants was changing. In particular, in one case, the state provided planned, organized resettlement, which was expressed in financial support for the construction of residential houses, on the other hand, eco-immigrants could find a place to live, a house, and the state financially (by issuing a loan) helped in its purchase (Gogiashvili, 1989).

The study of the state strategy of eco-migration during the Soviet period shows that eco-migration was a new problem in Georgia during the Soviet period, although many things were done at the governmental level over the years and this issue was not left without normative regulation. The problem of displaced families affected by natural events coincided with the lack of labor in the Soviet farms and collective farms of Georgia, which called into question the fulfillment of the set state economic plans. Therefore, in order to solve the problems in this field and to develop the state policy, separate legal acts were periodically adopted, the majority of which were mainly related to the settlement of eco-immigrants in Soviet farms and collective farms lacking in labor. Moreover, one of the main

conditions for settlement and state material support was that at least two members of the migrant families had to be able to work and be employed in the Soviet farm or collective farm (Zoidze *et al.*, 2022).

As established by archival documents, actually during the Soviet period, eco-migration was meaningfully considered in the context of labor migration, as far as it was based on the state strategy, it had the character of internal republican agricultural resettlement-settlement. Based on this, the eco-migration policy was implemented by the state policy within the structure of the Council of Ministers of the SSR of Georgia, which was called the Labor Resources Utilization Committee from 1967, and the State Committee for Labor and Social Issues from 1979. In this form, it existed until 1991, when a new structure, the Department of Emergency Situations, was created, on the basis of which the Ministry of Refugees and Resettlement was created in 1993. Since 2004, after the abolition of the Ministry, the Department of Migration, Repatriation and Refugee Affairs was established in the structure of the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories of Georgia, Resettlement and Refugees, on the basis of which in 2013 the Agency for Provision of Livelihood Resources and the Agency for Social Services of IDPs and Ecomigrants were established. In 2019, on the basis of their union, a legal entity under public law was created - Agency for IDPs, Eco-Migrants and Livelihood Provision (Tikaradze, 2019). As it was revealed during the interview with the leaders of the mentioned agency, the structural optimization was due to the need to take effective steps on the part of the state regarding eco-immigration processes.

Until 2012, despite some steps taken by the government in terms of making positive changes in the field of eco-migration, these efforts were only spontaneous and were not integrated into a complex and well-financed state policy. In this period, one of the main shortcomings and problems of the state resettlement policy was the absence of accompanying programs for integration and strengthening in the new environment in the relocation (receiving) municipality. In 2003-2012, when the process of compact resettlement of eco-migrants was actively going on, no program was launched at the local, regional or national level to strengthen families living in a foreign environment (Institute of Democracy *et al.*, 2017)

At present, the main state body for the institutional provision of eco-migration processes in Georgia is the Ministry of Labor Health Protection and Social Security of IDPs from the occupied territories of Georgia, one of the functions of which is the obligation of the executive authorities in the field of social and legal protection, migration control and resettlement of persons forcibly displaced as a result of natural events. (Tikaradze, 2019).

In addition to the Ministry of Resettlement and Refugees, local self-governments also have certain obligations towards internally displaced persons from the occupied territories of Georgia. In particular, Article 42, Clause 4, Sub-Clause "F" of the Organic Law of Georgia "On Local Self-Government" indicates the trustee's obligation to periodically submit to the Governor (Mayor) information on the number of eco-migrants and the state of providing them with household and economic conditions. However, the law does not specify the purpose of obtaining the mentioned information. In addition, it is not specified what specific measures the head of the territorial body takes after receiving this information.

As the results of the field research confirm, according to the practice in Georgia until 2012, the opinion of families affected by natural events was less important when choosing their future place of residence. Affected families were resettled compactly in different areas, where they began to live in a completely foreign and new environment. Most of the families still do not own the house and land that were "transferred" years ago. In addition to all this, the state has never offered families targeted programs aimed at integration, settlement and creation of income sources.

Until 2014, the resettlement process had a legal prerequisite (order, protocol, contract, etc.) only in exceptional cases. Generally, the accommodation was not documented and various state institutions reimbursed only the costs of transporting the families - travel and transportation of things. As a result of the policy of compact resettlement of families subject to resettlement affected by natural events, we have obtained several municipalities in which the villages and districts of eco-migrants are represented as compact settlements (ODI, 2017).

As a result of the analysis of the documents of the local self-government bodies, it was found that out of 76 municipalities in Georgia, only 21 municipalities have eco-immigrant families who settled compactly in different periods. This refers to the municipalities where 20 or more eco-migrant families are settled, as well as those municipalities where the internal relocation of eco-migrants took place. In none of the mentioned 21 municipalities was there any program of integration of eco-migrants. No short-

term or one-time activities aimed at integration, financed within the budget of the municipality, were identified. In the direction of integration and strengthening of the resettled people, there was no national program, which the central government authorities explain by the fact that the issue of integration and strengthening of families affected by natural events that have already been resettled does not fall under the direct competence of any government institution operating in Georgia. During the field research, during meetings with resettled families living in different municipalities, many social problems were revealed and the fact was confirmed that the integration of these families was never a priority of local and central authorities, which is a provoking factor of social conflicts.

After the arrival of the Ivanishvili administration in 2012, the approach to eco-migration in the country changed. In particular, compact accommodation of families affected by natural disasters is no longer happening. The new system gives the affected family the opportunity to benefit from state budget funding within a certain limit and to purchase a house according to their wishes. Accordingly, a new government program was launched, which meant supporting housing for families affected by natural disasters and subject to housing, and was radically different from the practice of the previous period. However, according to the research, inter-regional resettlement of eco-migrants is no longer taking place during this period. There is a process of eco-migration within the region.

It must be said that the system of institutional provision of eco-migration, effective since 2015, is fairer and adapted to the interests and needs of the victim. Currently, two programs are operating at the level of the central government in Georgia, one is "accommodation of eco-migrant families in a safe environment" and the second program is "legalization of state-owned real estate". According to the program - resettlement of eco-migrant families in a safe environment", the victim chooses the housing by himself and within the program he will be given an amount of up to 25,000 GEL (expired in 2022) for the purchase of housing. The procedure for purchasing housing is as follows: a family affected by natural events applies to the municipality, which organizes a visit of the geological service to the place of residence of the affected family. If a conclusion is prepared that the affected family needs resettlement, the municipality or the affected family sends a corresponding application to the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons, Resettlement and Refugees from the Occupied Territories of Georgia, which will register the affected family in the unified electronic database. All families living in Georgia who need accommodation are registered in the unified electronic database. The unified electronic database has the function of assigning points to the registered families according to priority, based on which the families that should be financed in the first stage will be identified. The Ministry informs such families in the established form, according to which kind of procedures and deadlines they have the right to purchase a residential house (safe for eco-migrant families...). In 2019, 164 eco-migrants benefited from this program, and in 2020, 250 eco-migrants benefited from it (Tsotskolauri,2019).

Thus, at present, the state provides the organization of resettlement of eco-migrants within the framework of a special state program. includes what should be evaluated positively. However, it should be noted here that the existing legal regulation for the realization of adequate protection of persons displaced as a result of natural events is very general, scarce and unsatisfactory.

Legal base of the regulation of eco-migration.

Despite the fact that eco-migration is not a new problem in Georgia, nothing has changed in terms of solving the problems of displaced families affected by natural events over the years, and this issue still remains without a single, complete legal regulation.

The state tried several times to develop a systematic approach to the problem, but the problem remained a problem. After the declaration of independence of Georgia, the first normative act that was issued to solve the problem of disaster victims was the decree #67 of the President of Georgia of February 6, 1997, which approved the state program for solving socio-legal problems of families affected by disasters after 1987 and created the state commission for its implementation. The said decree was declared void in 2005 (Saakashvili, 2005).

The next step aimed at regulating the migration process and bringing it into the legal framework was the Decree #40 of the Government of Georgia dated June 3, 2004 "On the establishment of the State Commission for the Management of Natural Migration Processes from Mtiani Adjara to Tsalki, Akhalkalaki and Ninotsminda". However, this decree did not lead to effective measures. Later, the commission ceased to function so that it did not achieve any results.

Of course, the above-mentioned normative acts are not an exhaustive list of legal documents created in this regard, however, it should be noted that none of them have had an effective result in terms of developing a unified state policy and creating an appropriate legal base.

In terms of legal regulation of eco-migration, significant documents are: "On the approval of the regulations of the Ministry of Resettlement and Refugees, internally displaced persons from the occupied territories of Georgia" Resolution #34 of the Government of Georgia dated February 22, 2008, according to which the competence of the Ministry was to provide social and legal protection of displaced persons affected by natural events. and Order No. 779 of November 13, 2013 of the Minister of Internally Displaced Persons, Resettlement and Refugees from the Occupied Territories of Georgia. "On approval of resettlement criteria for families affected by natural events and subject to displacement and creation of a resettlement commission". With the mentioned steps, the state started to solve the issues of families affected by natural events and subject to displacement in a relatively systematic way (Darakhvelidze, 2013). It should also be noted that until 2014 resettlement was carried out spontaneously and without the issuance of legal acts, since 2014 this process has been subject to certain procedures. Thus, there is a need to organize the process as a document. Also an attempt to be legally perfect.

In 2020, the government of Georgia enacted a new rule that regulates the process of granting grants by the agency for the purpose of socio-economic integration of eco-migrants and provides them with access to sources of livelihood and defines the rights and duties of the subjects participating in this process (Tikaradze, 2020). However, as the analysis of the requested information from the Ministry showed, people with the status of IDPs, not eco-migrants, benefited from this rule.

Thus, it should be noted that even in the conditions of such a meager legal base, a number of issues are not fully implemented in practice (e.g., adaptation-integration programs), at the same time, certain rules and regulations regulating this or that issue developed in practice are not documented in any in the by-law. In this context, it is particularly important to study the process of adaptation-integration of eco-migrants in local communities and to evaluate state support programs in this direction, which is the subject of a separate study.

At the current stage, the domestic legislation of Georgia does not consider natural disasters as a sufficient basis for granting the status of a displaced person, which leaves ecological migrants without a protection mechanism in accordance with the Georgian national legislation. Accordingly, the absence of this type of legal status does not impose any responsibility on the state to provide the same assistance to eco-migrants as to internally displaced persons. It is necessary to eliminate this gap in the legislation, which indicates that in order to ensure the protection and safety of eco-migrants in Georgia, it is necessary to establish a broader definition of internally displaced persons in the current legislation of the country (in accordance with the 1998 UN guidelines) to include natural disasters as a criterion for the status of an internally displaced person. to receive as an alternative, a new law may be created and implemented exclusively to regulate the issues of eco-migrants.

Conclusions and recommendations.

The research showed that the development of institutional provision of eco-migration processes in Georgia has gone through different stages in the last hundred years. On the one hand, this was caused by the change in the socio-economic formation of the society, and on the other hand, by the state purposefulness of the eco-migration process itself.

The research established that during the Soviet period eco-migration went through three stages. Each stage was also characterized by different goals from the state. The eco-migration process of the first and second stages of the Soviet period acquired the form of internal republican agricultural settlement, thereby acquiring the hue of labor migration. At that time, the Soviet authorities decided to fill the shortage of labor resources in Soviet farms and collective farms, and in the third stage, during the same Soviet period, eco-immigrant resettlement also acquired a new content - the resettlement of eco-immigrants in minority-populated and border regions began, which had a special state purpose. The state completely preserved this determination even in the first (early 90s) years of the restoration of independence.

The research revealed that there is a significant problem from the state's point of view of the definition of an eco-migrant, which in our opinion is directly related to the creation of a legal base needed to ensure an effective legal protection system for eco-migrants. Considering the international experience, it is necessary to clearly define the legal status of this category of persons at the legislative level, in which it will be clearly stated which group of persons the said definition will apply to. In

addition, in order to establish an effective legal system, it is necessary to define clear institutional mechanisms and procedures for eco-migration at the legal level.

The study confirmed that the creation of a clear legal basis for the protection of the rights of eco-migrants by the state is an important basis for a sustainable eco-migration policy.

It is necessary for the state to establish a systematic and transparent approach to eco-migration and resettlement, the implementation of which should become the prerogative of both the central government and the municipal administration. That will allow the authorities to avoid social conflicts and reduce financial costs in the long term, and on the other hand, to facilitate the integration and development processes of eco-migration in local communities.

It is advisable for the government to develop and implement a state strategy on ecological migration. In the strategy, at the political level, clear mechanisms and procedures for temporary or permanent settlement, further adaptation-integration and provision of social conditions should be defined.

It has been shown again that it is necessary to create a legislative normative framework on the protection of the rights of ecological migrants, which will be a solid guarantee of the preparation of the Georgian Law on Ecological Migrants, which will ensure the protection of the rights of ecomigrants on the same principle as it is implemented in relation to internally displaced persons.

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