

**GOVERNMENT OF GEORGIA  
INTERAGENCY COMMISSION  
OFFICE OF THE STATE MINISTER OF GEORGIA FOR RECONCILIATION AND CIVIC EQUALITY**



**Report on the implementation of the National Concept for Tolerance and Civic Integration and 2014  
Action Plan**

April, 2015

**OFFICE OF THE STATE MINISTER OF GEORGIA FOR RECONCILIATION AND CIVIC EQUALITY**

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## Introduction

The National Concept for Tolerance and Civic Integration and Action Plan for 2009-2014 is a significant instrument in the implementation of the state policy towards ethnic minorities. This document was approved by the Decree No.348 of the Georgian Government on May 8, 2009. The Office of the Minister for Reintegration became responsible for developing, coordinating and reporting on ethnic minority policy. For the purposes of better coordination, a State Commission was created through Decree No.14 on July 3, 2009 by the Office of the State Minister for Reintegration.

The Commission consists of the leadership and responsible employers from the Office of the State Minister for Reconciliation and Civic Equality as well as the members of various governmental agencies, ministries and organizations, Tbilisi City Council, and government representatives from the three ethnic minority populated regions. The following agencies are involved in the work of the Commission:

- Office of the State Minister of Georgia for Reconciliation and Civic Equality;
- Ministry of Culture and Monument Protection of Georgia;
- Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Affairs of Georgia;
- Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure of Georgia;
- Ministry of Justice of Georgia;
- Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia;
- Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs of Georgia;
- Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia;
- Administration of the President of Georgia;
- National Security Council;
- The Public Defender of Georgia;
- The Central Election Commission of Georgia;
- Tbilisi City Council;
- Kvemo Kartli Governor's Administration;
- Samtskhe-Javakheti Governor's Administration;
- Kakheti Governor's Administration;
- Georgian Public Broadcaster;
- The Teachers' Professional Development Center;
- The National Assessment and Examination Center;
- The National Parliamentary Library of Georgia

This report reflects the activities implemented by the State within the six strategic directions envisaged by the Concept and Action Plan - the rule of law, education and state language, media and access to information,

political integration and civic participation, social and regional integration, culture and preservation of identity. The Administration of the President, the National Security Council and Tbilisi City Council did not participate during the reporting period of the implementation of the Action Plan. In 2014 the "National Concept for Tolerance and Civic Integration and Action Plan for 2009-2014" came to term and the Office of the State Minister started developing a new strategy and action plan for the coming years. For this purpose an independent group of experts and the Office of the State Minister for Reconciliation and Civic Equality jointly prepared the assessment document on the implementation of the National Concept for Tolerance and Civic Integration and Action Plan for 2009-2014. The positive and negative trends observed throughout the implementation of the concept were reflected in the document. Recommendations were also developed. All the positive results are reflected in the new Strategy and Action Plan while the flaws and shortcomings will also be taken into account. During the evaluation period The United Nations Association of Georgia (UNAG) was actively supporting the Office of the State Minister for Reconciliation and Civic Equality in the implementation of the activities within the scope of UNAG's Advancing National Integration (ANI) program, which is being implemented with the financial support of USAID.

## I. Rule of Law

The activities in the direction of Rule of Law were implemented by the Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Internal Affairs, as well as Regional Administrations from regions densely populated by ethnic minorities.

Various activities were implemented during the reporting period which aimed at achieving the goals defined, including: the adoption by the Parliament of the Law on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination, and the approval of the Human Rights Strategy and Action Plan, where the the protection of ethnic minority rights is one of the significant sections of the document.

### *Registration of the Roma People*

The Public Service Development Agency, the Ministry of Justice, and the NGO "Center for Innovation and Reform" have continued the registration of the Roma. The table below shows the statistics for 2014:

Case Category	Total	Closed Cases	Cases in progress
Determination of Citizenship	13	13	0
Status of non-citizens	12	12	0
Birth Certificate	36	36	0

<b>Total</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>0</b>
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***Raising awareness of ethnic minorities on anti-trafficking issues***

During 2014, the Ministry of Justice, along with the Interagency Commission Against Human Trafficking, the International Organization on Migration, and NGO "Migration Center," conducted informational meetings in ethnic minority populated regions on the threats associated with illegal migration and various protective measures in this regard.

Nine such informational meetings were held in Marneuli, Borjomi, Akhaltsikhe, Akhalkalaki, Ninotsminda, Gardabani, Tsalka and Sartichala. In total, 268 ethnic minority representatives participated in the event.

During the reporting period the Ministry of Internal Affairs was actively implementing an ethnic minority equality protection policy. The following activities were conducted in this regard:

- Changes were made to the Academy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia about the existing programs, including the addition of training courses "Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination" and "Personal Data," through which the Ministry of Internal Affairs and its staff is trained to act;
- The study of topics such as "Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination" were added to the Academy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia graduate program, and the special role of the police in the fight against all forms of discrimination was emphasised;
- Significant attention was given to the issues such as violation of human equality, racial discrimination, and the prohibition of discrimination during the teaching process. A special training course titled "Police in a Multi-ethnic Society" was included in the training programs for neighborhood police, and border and patrol police officers.

In July 2014, in the framework of the memorandum signed between the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Public Defender's Office, a seminar was held for the students of the Academy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia which was dedicated to the protection of the rights of persons with disabilities.

***Activities carried out by the Regional Administrations of ethnic minority populated areas (Samtskhe-Javakheti, Kvemo Kartli, Kakheti region)***

During the reporting period, the response to ethnic minority appeals in the Samtskhe-Javakheti regional administration and municipality were in accordance with the procedures established by law.

Ethnic minority representatives were given verbal responses in either their native language or in a language they could understand.

In 2014, 57 ethnic minority representatives appealed - to the Samtskhe-Javakheti Governor's administration with various issues. The referrals were mostly related to requests for social assistance.

During the reporting period, active work was being done to develop the Samtskhe-Javakheti Social Economic Development Strategic Action Plan. For this purpose five working groups were formed and ethnic minority representatives were involved in the work within these groups.

There were periodical informational meetings held between the residents and local government officials in the Kvemo Kartli region, Dmanisi, Tetrtskaro, Gardabani and Tsalka municipalities in order to inform the residents on new legislation, more specifically in the area of anti-discrimination regulations.

## II. Education and State Language

During the reporting period, various programs and projects were implemented by the Ministry of Education and Science and subordinate public law entities.

### *Linguistic education- Quality education*

The National Curriculum Department of the Ministry of Education and Science has developed a sub-program "Linguistic Education and Quality Education" which aims to support the enhancement of the quality of linguistic education in both Georgian and non-Georgian schools.

The following events took place for the improvement of the linguistic education of national minorities:

- Focus groups were organized for both large and small minority language teaching issues. These groups consisted of the parents of ethnic minority students, native language teachers, and representatives of non-governmental organizations. The research topics consisted of issues related to teaching of native languages, and the goal was to identify the opinions of the interested parties on native, state and foreign language teaching related issues and taking these opinions into account when developing the teaching modules for native languages.
- An Advisory Council was established to improve the concept development with regards to minority language teaching education and the advancement of the final package of amendments to the national curriculum on native language teaching. This package was presented to decision-making entities.

The following changes were decided with regards to the learning-teaching of native languages:

- Development of standards and related programs for ethnic minority native languages for non-Georgian language general education institutions (Azerbaijani, Armenian and Russian). Providing national standards and programs in the learning-teaching of native languages will support the activation of such programs as: the development and approval of textbooks in minority native languages, the development

of university courses for ethnic minority native language teachers, the creation of professional standards for the teachers of above mentioned subjects, supporting the development and implementation of educational-training programs for the professional development of current teachers, and the implementation of a certification mechanism.

- Developing standards and subject programs in the native languages of small ethnic minority groups in Georgian language general education institutions. These languages include: Chechen-Kist, Assyrian, Kurmanji, Avar, Udi, Ossetian, and Greek.

***Bilingual education***

In December 2014, the Department of the National Curriculum of the Ministry of Education and Science finalized development of the first version of resources for conducting bilingual classes for 7th grade in fine arts and biology in non-Georgian language schools. The content of these resources is based on the standards of the national curriculum method - bilingual teaching (Content and Language Integrated Learning) technologies. In this sense, it is a new type of resource, innovative in its nature.

***“Teaching Georgian as a Second Language” program***

The program "Teaching Georgian as a Second Language," aims to promote the teaching of the Georgian language and the professional development of Georgian language teachers, which is being implemented in the non-Georgian language schools of Akhalkalaki, Ninotsminda, Tsalka, Bolnisi, Dmanisi, and Gardabani municipalities.

The new selected trainers and teachers go through 50 hours of "Georgian as a second language teaching methods," five hours of "ethnic and religious tolerance," as well as an intensive Azerbaijani or Armenian language course and they are assigned to ethnic minority populated villages in Samtskhe-Javakheti, Kvemo Kartli and Kakheti. In addition to hourly rates, these teachers receive a salary of 1, 000 GEL paid from the program.

In June 2014, a contest was held to attract new staff (Georgian language teachers). Only certified teachers were selected in 2011-2014. They were sent to the Samtskhe-Javakheti and Kvemo Kartli Regions. 15 Certified teachers of Georgian language were selected in 2014. Currently, the program employs 88 trainer-teachers.

The results of the final school exams 2011-2014

2011	2014
Did not pass 9%	Did not pass 4%

Medium 46%	Medium 39%
High 45%	High 57%

### *Georgian Language Clubs*

Beside teaching Georgian, the teachers are conducting trainings for local teachers and organizing various extra curricular activities (such as New Years, summer and fall celebrations, days dedicated to poets and writers, religious/national holidays, exhibitions, contests, and performances).

After a teacher arrives at a village, a "Georgian Language Club" is formed. Entrants, teachers, students, parents and other members of the community can join the club. The task of the teachers involved in the program is to conduct trainings for local Georgian language teachers, contribute to their professional development and introduce them to changes in the education system.

In order to arrange the clubs and effectively conduct the learning process, the Teacher's Professional Development Center equips the schools involved in the program with the necessary audio-video equipment and visual learning materials.

According to the October 2014 data, 3,545 participants were involved in the “Georgian Language Clubs” within the 90 ethnic minority populated schools in the scope of the “Teach Georgian as a Second Language” program:

<b>Students</b>	<b>2625</b>
<b>Teachers:</b>	
• Georgian Language	220
• Other Subjects	264
Total:	<b>484</b>
<b>Members of community</b>	<b>436</b>

### *Exchange and Twinning Programs*

In 2014, within the scope of the “Teach Georgian as a Second Language” program, 65% of the participants (compared to 5% in 2011) planned and implemented exchange programs. Armenian and Azerbaijani schools conducted twinning programs with Georgian schools from various regions.

Trainers and teachers sought out partner schools in different cities (Tbilisi, Gurjaani, Gori, Rustavi, Telavi, Zestafoni, Khashuri, Chakvi, etc.) and organized exchange activities, such as visiting and staying with each

other for a week, attending classes, joint concerts/performances, trying new food, and visiting Georgian Orthodox, Armenian Apostolic churches, mosques and other cultural monuments.

### ***Program “Georgian Language for Future Success”***

In order to achieve the goals set forth in the “Georgian Language for Future Success” program, the Teachers’ Professional Development Center worked in two main directions in 2014: sending teachers to non-Georgian language schools and developing learning materials.

In 2014, within the framework of the program, the sending of teachers to non-Georgian language schools happened in two phases:

1. At the end of 2013, 23 participants were selected as a result of the competition and in January of 2014 they went through an intense training on professional skills and modern methods of teaching the Georgian language. After the training, the selected teachers were allocated to non-Georgian language schools in the Samtskhe-Javakheti, Kvemo Kartli and Kakheti regions.
2. A contest was announced in June of 2014 within the framework of the program and 81 participants were selected as a result:
  - 53 Assistant teachers in Georgian language;
  - 17 History teachers;
  - 11 Geography teachers.

Before traveling to the regions, all participants went through trainings on the following modules:

- Professional skills in conducting a class;
- Teaching methodologies/ integrated teaching of language and subject for Georgian as a Second Language;
- Teaching English.

In December of 2014, 210 assistant teachers were involved in the program. The main work of the participants in the regions consisted of:

- Assistance to local teachers in respective subjects- planning and conducting classes;
- Implementing extracurricular activities;
- Formulating Georgian language/history and Geography clubs;
- Teaching Georgian to host families.

### ***Providing Georgian language teaching materials for non-Georgian language students***

In 2011-2014, within the scope of the “Georgian Language for Future Success” program, primary, basic and secondary I-XII grade Georgian language textbooks were developed for non-Georgian language students. A group of authors prepared the modern standard textbooks, during the preparation of textbooks editors artists

and designer-typesetters were involved. The textbook complete set includes a student textbook, the student's notebook, a teacher's manual and an audio CD.

In 2014 the I-XII grade Georgian language textbooks were distributed at the request of non-Georgian language schools.

***The free electronic teaching project for Georgian language***

On the initiative of the Ministry of Youth and Sports, in close cooperation with the educational internet portal [www.teach.ge](http://www.teach.ge), a free e-learning project for learning Georgian was implemented. With the aim of simplifying the Georgian language learning process, a special learning module was created on the website for ethnic minorities living in Georgia. Also Russian-Georgian and Azerbaijani-Georgian online-learning lessons were uploaded, the programs are available and anyone can access for free after registration on the website.

***National learning olympics***

During the 2013-2014 academic year, the National Olympics were held in all educational institutions, including non-Georgian language schools. The National Olympics were held in Armenian, Azerbaijani and Russian languages in the above-mentioned schools; meaning that non-Georgian language schoolchildren were also able to take part in the Georgian language Olympics.

Georgian language (non-Georgian language schools)	1 572
Subjects (in Azerbaijani language)	1 146
Subjects (in Armenian language)	1 415
Subjects (in Russian language)	757

As a result of the third round, the winners were announced, among them ethnic minority representatives. Specifically, there were three Armenian language students and one Azerbaijani language student among the Georgian language competition winners.

***Final School Exams***

During the 2013-2014 school year the following number of students received certificates for general education completion:

Armenian language students- 615

Azerbaijani language students- 492

Russian language students- 743

### ***Improving access to higher education for ethnic minority representatives***

During the 2014 national exams, within the “4+1” program, on the basis of the Azerbaijani and Armenian language overall skills test results, the following were granted the opportunity to continue their education in Georgian higher education institutions:

- Based on the Azerbaijani language general skills test results- 456 entrants;
- Based on the Armenian language general skills test results- 217 entrants.

Based on the results of the Azerbaijani and Armenian language general skills test results, the following were financed by the National education grants in the 2014 national exams:

- Based on the Azerbaijani language general skills test results- 96 entrants;
- Based on the Armenian language general skills test results- 89 entrants.

From those that passed the Armenian language general skills test, one entrant was accepted to the academic program, and from those who passed the Azerbaijani language general skills test 12 entrants were accepted, from which one received a 50% grant. One entrant passed the Abkhazian language and literature test.

It has been two years since the Ministry of Sports and Youth Affairs of Georgia started conducting the fast typing and logic competitions. For the purpose of popularizing Georgian language and writing, a webpage was created ([www.ka.msy.ge](http://www.ka.msy.ge)), where the school-aged youth have the opportunity to participate in fast typing marathons. The winners are given certificates and various gifts.

## **III. Media and Access to Information**

### ***Public Broadcasting***

During the reporting period, the Georgian Public Broadcaster continued implementing the activities laid out in the Action Plan. On Channel 2 of the public broadcaster, there were daily live shows “National News” in five minority languages (Abkhazian, Ossetia, Armenian, Azerbaijani, and Russian).

Since October 2014, every day, except weekends, at 23:00 on Channel 2 the Russian language TV program ‘Real Time’ aired, which is organized by the Channel 2’s “National News” production team. The informational-analytical program ‘Real Time’ («Настоящее время») Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty and Voice of America is a joint project in Georgia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova and Ukraine with the

cooperation of public and private broadcasters. The program is based on the principle of impartiality and provides the audience with an interesting analysis of the current political developments in the world.

On the International Day of Tolerance, on November 16, 2014, the Public Defender’s Office, at the decision of the National Minority Council, awarded the program “Moambe” on Channel 2 with the year’s “Tolerance Award”.

***Broadcast radio***

National minority language broadcasting also aired on “Radio One” in 2014. Currently, an audio compilation of news from “Moambe” airs in national minority languages. Additionally, a radio program is broadcasting in Kurdish once a week alongside news broadcast in Abkhazian, Ossetian, Azerbaijani, Armenian and Russian languages.

***Talk Show “Our Yard”***

Talk show "Our Yard" from October 1, 2013, changed its format, and in 2014 was broadcasted four times a week as a complete series on the different ethnic and religious groups living in Georgia. The show’s creative team also made films which described the traditions and holidays of Dukhobors, Azerbaijanis and other ethnic and religious minorities of Georgia. Shows were also made about the world-famous film director Sergei Parajanov, as well as other successful people of non-Georgian origin. 40 programs of “Our Yard” were aired throughout the year.

Time allocated to ethnic minorities by the Georgian Public Broadcaster

<b>Format of Show</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Duration (Min.)</b>	<b>Amount/month</b>	<b>Total Hours</b>
TV Informational	National News	55	11	262
Radio Informational	National News	55	11	262
Radio Informational	Georgian Weekly	20	12	16
Informational-Analytical	“Real Time” (Freed-Public Broadcasting)	30	3	39
<b>Total Annual hours</b>				<b>579</b>

### ***Printed media***

For the 2014 "National Minority Culture Support Program" the Ministry of Culture and Monument Protection of Georgia continued financial support for print media including the Armenian "Vratsan" (12 number), Azeri "Gurjistan" and the Russian-language newspapers "Svobodnaia Gruzia" and "Vecherni Tbilisi" as printed by the printing press of ethnic minority regions.

## **IV. Political Integration and Civic Participation**

During the reporting period the Central Election Committee of Georgia (CEC) actively continued working on creation of an equal opportunity electoral environment for the voters representing national minorities and, in this regard, a number of activities were carried out.

### ***Informing the voters representing national minorities***

- For the first time, the CEC Coordination and Management Department organized informational meetings in 16 public schools of Samtskhe-Javakheti, Kakheti and Kvemo Kartli regions for young first-time voters representing ethnic minorities. The events were held specifically for the 2014 Elections of Representative and Executive bodies of local Self-government with the help of the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia.
- The students were given information about the history of elections, electoral administration, electoral procedures and the local government elections.
- Students representing ethnic minorities from Samtskhe-Javakheti State University and I.Gogebashvili Telavi State University participated in debates held in Karl Popper Debate format on the topic of "The role of elections in the development of a democratic State."
- From 15<sup>th</sup> May, 2014 according to the order of the CEC, the Georgian Public Broadcaster began translating the "Election TV Digest" in Armenian and Azerbaijani languages. 10 informational and advertising videos were translated into Armenian and Azerbaijani languages and shown by the Georgian Public Broadcaster and regional televisions of Samtskhe-Javakheti and Kvemo Kartli.
- Information about the voting procedures on the day of the election was published in the Armenian and Azerbaijani newspapers "Vrastan" and "Gurjistan".
- The banner "Ethnic Minorities" on the official web-site of CEC ([www.cesko.ge](http://www.cesko.ge)), containing electoral material about the self-government elections of 15 June 2014, was translated into Armenian and Azerbaijani languages.

- The Voters' List data published on the website was available in Armenian and Azerbaijani languages for the ethnic minority electorate living in regions densely populated by ethnic minorities.
- 42 operators, including four ethnic minority representatives speaking in Armenian and Azerbaijani languages, worked in the CEC Call-Center and provided information about election issues to the electorate and all interested bodies.
- With the purpose of identifying problems that prevented ethnic minorities from voting, and in order to ensure their civic, political and social integration – the Coordination and Management Department of CEC held meetings with the local population living in Gardabani, Marneuli, Bolnisi, Dmanisi, Sagarejo, Lagodekhi and Akhaltsikhe villages.
- The CEC organized trainings on electoral issues for members of the Ethnic Minority Commission of the Public Defender's Office.

### ***Projects financed within the framework of the grant contest***

Within the grant contest the LEPL Center of Electoral Systems Development, Reforms and Trainings financed 10 non-governmental organizations working on ethnic minority issues. With the cooperation of the CEC, six non-governmental organizations were financed by the International Fund of Electoral Systems (IFES) with the purpose of raising awareness and spreading information among the voters representing ethnic minorities. *(Geography of the projects: Samtkhe-Javakheti – Adigeni, Akhaltsikhe, Aspindza, Borjomi, Akhalkalaki, Ninotsminda; Kvemo Kartli – Tsalka, Dmanisi, Tetrtskaro, Bolnisi, Marneuli, Gardabani; Shida Kartli – Khashuri, Kaspi, Gori, Kareli; Kakheti – Akhmeta, Telavi, Kvareli, Lagodekhi, Sagarejo, Sighnaghi, Dedoplistskaro, Gurjaani).*

### ***Translating electoral documentation in the languages of ethnic minorities***

- 340 polling stations were formed in 12 electoral districts in regions of densely populated by ethnic minorities. Ballot papers in Georgian and Azerbaijani languages were prepared and printed for 203 polling stations in nine districts (Proportional – 176900; Majoritarian – 176900; Governor – 176 900); for 133 polling stations of seven electoral districts (Proportional – 69 600; Majoritarian – 69 600; Governor – 69 600); electoral ballot papers in three languages (Georgian, Armenian, Azerbaijani) were printed for the four polling stations in Marneuli electoral district (Proportional – 3 000; Majoritarian – 3 000; Governor – 3 000). Additionally, the following material was translated and printed in Armenian and Azerbaijani languages: the Voters' List, posters displaying the building where the elections were to be held, procedures of election, flyers of the electorate, and rules for filling in the ballot paper.
- The following material was translated and printed in Armenian and Azerbaijani languages for 1522 Armenian and 898 Azerbaijani members of the electoral committees of districts: guidelines for the members of the Precinct Election Commission, instructions for the commission chairman, functions of the Voters Flow Regulation Commission member, authority of the Precinct Election Commission

Secretary on the election day, functions of the Voters Registration Commission member, functions of the Ballot box and Special envelopes, Supervising Commission member, and functions of the accompanying Commission member of the mobile ballot box. The Precinct Election Commission training-film “Procedures on the Election Day” was available with subtitles. Trainings for commission members were held in their first language.

The electoral documentation was translated with the financial support of the International Fund of Electoral Systems (IFES) in cooperation with the Central Election Committee.

## **V. Social and Regional Integration**

During the reporting period, the Ministry of Health, Labor and Social Affairs planned and carried out an informational campaign for ethnic minorities about the State programs on Health and Social Affairs: Village doctor program, Hepatitis C program, health of mothers and children, public health, emergency medical care, and social protection.

### ***Informational Campaign***

Priority directions of the state programs carried out in 2014 were determined, and corresponding projects were developed in order to raise awareness and spread information among the non-Georgian language population. Informational flyers and posters covering various topics were prepared and printed. Brochures in Georgian (300 000 pcs), Azerbaijani (5 000 pcs) and Armenian (5 000 pcs) languages were prepared and distributed about the re-establishment of the prescription drugs system.

Informational booklets “What we need to know about Anthrax” (Siberian sore) (9000 in Georgian, 7000 in Azerbaijani and 4000 in Armenian languages) and “What we need to know about Brucellosis” (10 000 in Georgian, 15 000 in Azerbaijani and 500 in Armenian languages) were prepared in order to avoid acute inflectional animal diseases –Anthrax and Brucellosis. The material was distributed in medical institutions in Georgian regions compactly populated by Azerbaijanis and Armenians. Also, informational meetings with at-risk groups were held. The translated material, together with the Georgian version, was uploaded to the official website of the Ministry of Health, Labor and Social Affairs ([www.moh.gov.ge](http://www.moh.gov.ge)), and the printed material was displayed in the reception of the Ministry.

82 programs of Building and Equipping Ambulatories in various regions of Georgia ended in 2014. In total, 12 new ambulatories were built in regions populated by Azerbaijani and Armenian residents: six ambulatories in Kvemo Kartli (Marneuli, Bolnisi, Dmanisi, Tetrtskaro, Tsalka, Gardabani) and six ambulatories in Samtskhe-Javakheti (Akhaltsikhe, Adigeni, Ninotsminda).

### ***Infrastructural Rehabilitation***

In the reporting period, the Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure of Georgia carried out the following works:

- Action Plans of the Strategies for the Development of Regions Densely Populated by Ethnic Minorities were developed.
- Infrastructural rehabilitation investment projects were developed and their implementation was supported.
- The Rural Development Program continued and its implementation was monitored.
- Support of development of cross-border cooperation continued.

Implemented Projects (Regional Development Fund):

- Kvemo Kartli – 81 investment projects worth 14 789 000 GEL;
- Samtskhe-Javakheti – 34 projects worth 12 657 987 GEL;
- Kakheti (Lagodekhi and Akhmeta Municipalities) – 13 projects worth 4 379 000 GEL.

The following road construction works were carried out according to the data provided by the Roads Department of Georgia:

- Kvemo Kartli – 10 projects worth 17 936 000 GEL;
- Samtskhe-Javakheti – 4 projects worth 12 736 300 GEL;
- Kakheti (Lagodekhi and Akhmeta Municipalities) – 4 projects worth 5 016 000 GEL.

The value and number of projects implemented by the water supply company:

- Samtskhe-Javakheti – 2 projects worth 10 730 737 GEL
- Kvemo Kartli – 3 projects worth 3 290 451 GEL;

The implementation of the Village Support Program continued throughout 2014. The budgetary financial support of the program amounted to 50 million GEL and was spent on works deemed necessary for the prioritized social-economic needs of villages, specifically: improvement of the local infrastructural units and also the agricultural field. In regard to specific villages, the purposeful usage of the sum was determined as a result of village assembly, public discussions and surveys. The program envisioned the active participation of the local population.

With the aim of the creation and development of small agricultural farms and associations, during the reporting period, regional development agencies frequently held thematic meetings, trainings and seminars for local entrepreneurs, which included ethnic minority representatives.

## **VI. Culture and Preservation of Identity**

The reporting period was marked by various events held in support of culture. These help sustain the identity of ethnic minorities whilst protecting and developing their cultural heritage. Festivals, contests, exhibitions

and commemoration evenings were held together with intercultural dialogue format meetings, literary-educational presentations and more.

In terms of protection, development and popularization of the culture of Georgian ethnic minorities, as well as their integration into Georgian culture, the Ministry of Culture and Monument Protection of Georgia supported a number of projects under the “National Minorities Support” program in 2014.

Several governmental events were held in order to celebrate the 26 century-long friendship of the Georgian and Jewish people, among them:

- A concert was held in the LEPL Shota Rustaveli Professional State Theatre in celebration of the 26 century-long Georgian-Jewish friendship; the Jewish Ethnographic-Historical Museum named after D. Baazov opened; and the project “26 Centuries” was prepared in an electronic format which portrayed all the outstanding events from the historical and cultural relationship between the Georgian and Jewish people.
- The “Azerbaijani Hand-knitted Carpets” project was held in the Cultural Center named after Mirza Patali Akhundov.
- A bilingual collection of poems “Mountains – My Cradle” by classic Ossetian writer Napi Jusoit was published in Georgian and Ossetian languages;
- The book ‘A Hundred Great Georgians,’ about the life and work of one hundred famous Georgians that had historical significance, was published in the Azerbaijani language.
- The preparatory stage of international music contest “Tukvision” was supported.
- The catalogue “Veinakhian Art,” which brings together Veinakhian cultural traditions and various artefacts of the applied arts, was prepared for publishing.
- Two albums: “Armenian painters of Georgia in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century” and “Illustrations of Old Tbilisi” were prepared for publishing on the initiative of the cultural-educational center “Hairtun.”
- Classic and Folk concerts were held during the multi-ethnic festival “Under One Sky”.
- Around 30 musicians from four countries participated in four concerts held within the Caucasian Jazz Festival.

### ***Activities implemented by the National Parliamentary Library of Georgia***

During the reporting period The National Parliamentary Library of Georgia actively cooperated with the Civic Integration Unit of the Office of the State Minister for Reconciliation and Civic Equality, the Tolerance Center of the Public Defender’s Office and with the Association of Ethnic Minorities living in Georgia.

As a result of close cooperation with the partner organizations, a total of 21 events were held in the National Library in 2014: paintings and photo exhibitions, concerts and book presentations among them. Unique materials about the national minorities, protected in the funds of the National Library, were exhibited during the events. Noteworthy events include the “Georgian – Circassian Dialogue,” a Sergo Parajanov film screening, an event dedicated to the 70<sup>th</sup> year since the deportation of the Ingush nation, a remembrance evening of the Chechen and Ingush people, a remembrance evening dedicated to Ariel Sharon, a presentation of the translations of books by Ketevan Davrishevi, an evening dedicated to Frunzik Mkrtchian, and a concert dedicated to the creative works of Ian Hammer.

### ***Activities implemented by the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs of Georgia***

The Ministry conducted a number of programs and projects during the reporting period:

- 540 young representatives of ethnic minorities from Samtskhe-Javakheti, Kvemo Kartli and Kakheti regions attended international sport tournaments in Water Polo, Rugby and Judo held in Tbilisi.
- International Youth Football Festival ‘Meskheti 2014’ was held in Akhaltsikhe with 400 young members of 14 teams from various Georgian regions participating; two teams from Armenia and Azerbaijan were also invited.
- Festival ‘Magic Flute’ was organized in Tsalka, master classes and rehearsals were held daily for the young flutists.
- A study tour ‘Young Peace Express’ for Georgian and Ossetian students was organized; during which up to 20 participants visited five countries (Turkey, Greece, Macedonia, Serbia, and Kosovo) and became familiar with the lifestyle of European students.
- Training in ***Interpersonal skills and communication management*** was conducted with the participation of up to 50 Armenian, Azerbaijani, Kurd, Kist, Russian and Chechen young people. The Kvareli Training Center of Justice conducted training in Project Management; 120 young representatives of ethnic minorities participated in trainings and seminars organized within the project ***‘Young People without Barriers.’***
- In order to raise the awareness among youth representatives of ethnic minorities about the Georgian European integration process, the program ***‘Together for the European Choice’*** was implemented, informational meetings and seminar-discussions were held within the framework in municipalities of Akhalkalaki, Akhaltsikhe, Ninotsminda, Adigeni, Aspindza and Borjomi, with up to 500 participants joining the program.

## **VII. Activities implemented by the Office of the State Minister of Georgia for Reconciliation and Civic Equality**

The Office of the State Minister for Reconciliation and Civic Equality was actively involved in the process of implementation of the National Concept for Tolerance and Civic Integration and Action Plan 2014. During the reporting period, the Office of State Minister for Reconciliation and Civic Equality managed the work by the Interagency Commission: extended sessions of the commission were held, thematic working group meetings about the education, state language, media and information accessibility were organized, and recommendations and suggestions were developed. Working in the thematic working groups allowed various non-governmental organizations, experts and employees working on the above-mentioned issues to engage in the process. The Office of the State Minister for Reconciliation and Civic Equality, together with the Interagency Commission, prepared and presented the report on the Action Plan 2013 and the Action Plan for 2014.

The Office of the State Minister for Reconciliation and Civic Equality, together with a group of independent experts, prepared an assessment document on the Implementation of the National Concept for Tolerance and Civic Integration and Action Plan for 2009-2014. All the positive results revealed during the assessment

process will be reflected in the new Strategy and Action Plan, and the flaws and weaknesses will be taken into consideration. The assessment document was presented to the Interagency Commission, Ethnic Minority Council, experts, international organizations and the diplomatic corps. Discussions regarding the document were held in regions (Akhalkalaki, Marneuli, Dmanisi), involving non-governmental organizations, community leaders, governmental representatives and local population. The assessment document has been translated in English and Russian languages; the electronic version has been displayed on the website of the Office of the State Minister for Reconciliation and Civic Equality. Preparation for publishing the document was carried out.

During the reporting period, a number of meetings in the direction of education were held with youth living in Kvemo Kartli, whereby they were informed about the “4+1” program. Working meetings were held in Marneuli, Dmanisi, Gardabani, Akhalkalaki and Tbilisi with teachers and students of non-Georgian language schools and Georgian language centers, as well as with their parents and representatives of non-governmental organizations.

In June 2014 the Office of the State Minister for Reconciliation and Civic Equality, together with the National Assessment and Examinations Center, organized pre-testing of the entrants in Marneuli. 250 young people living in the Kvemo Kartli participated.

During the reporting period, specific attention was paid to the young representatives of ethnic minorities, as they are one of the main target groups of all strategic directions of the concept.

- Young people actively participated in various cultural and study events and excursions. Up to 50 Azerbaijani students visited historical monuments in Kakheti; up to 20 students from Kvemo Kartli visited the National Museum of Georgia; students from Pankisi Gorge visited the Ethnographic Museum in Tbilisi; and literary-historical and study events were held during this period in the public schools of Karajala and Duisi villages.
- Young people are particularly interested in informational meetings with representatives of various governmental offices as they have the opportunity to learn about the work of various governmental agencies, listen to what the decision-makers have to say about topical issues, and share their opinions with them. In 2013-2014, State municipalities organized trips for young people from Kvemo Kartli and Samtskhe-Javakheti during which they visited the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs, Teachers’ Professional Development Center “Teacher’s House,” the Office of the State Minister for Reconciliation and Civic Equality, and the Academy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia;
- During the reporting period, the Office of State Minister for Reconciliation and Civic Equality organized and participated in lectures and seminars for the students of Institutions for Higher Education of Georgia from Tbilisi and the regions. Lectures, seminars and discussions were held in the State Teaching University of Samtskhe-Javakheti and the Tbilisi State University. Some of the topics included: diversity and tolerance, ethnic minority rights in Georgia, and governmental policy in the direction of the civic integration.
- **The EU-Georgia Association Agreement** The Office of the State Minister of Georgia on European and Euro-Atlantic Integration, together with the Office of the State Minister for Reconciliation and Civic Equality carried out an informational campaign for ethnic minorities about the Georgian Euro-integration. Throughout 2014, informational material was prepared and spread in the languages of ethnic minorities (Armenian, Azerbaijani, Abkhazian, and Ossetian). A meeting was held with the non-

Georgian language students in the Tbilisi State University during which they were informed about the Georgian Euro-integration process. The Office of the State Minister for Reconciliation and Civic Equality announced an essay competition “Euro-integration and I” for the beneficiaries of the “4+1” program. The competition intended to demonstrate the views and approaches of young people in the direction of the European choice. The jury selected the three best essays and the winners were awarded and their essays published in newspapers “Vrastan” and “Gurjistan.” Informational meetings about the Euro-integration of Georgia were held for media representatives from Kvemo Kartli, Kakheti and Samtskhe-Javakheti.

Throughout the reporting year, in order to study the current conditions and problems of the locals, employees of the Office of the State Minister for Reconciliation and Civic Equality visited the Pankisi Gorge and Choeti village of Dedoplistskaro municipality in Kakheti.

Members of the Interagency Commission participated in international events aimed at exchanging experience among various countries. In September 2014, with the support of the European Union program TAIEX, an exchange visit took place to South Tirol. In the framework of the visit, experience in the fields of education, state language teaching and accessibility of information about ethnic minorities was exchanged.

Frequent thematic meetings and fruitful cooperation among the Office of the State Minister for Reconciliation and Civic Equality, the Interagency Commission and the Ethnic Minority Council of the Public Defender’s Office are notable. During the reporting period, the Office of the State Minister for Reconciliation and Civic Equality closely cooperated with the civil sector, international organizations, accredited diplomatic corps, and local and international experts.

During the implementation process of the Action Plan, the Office of the State Minister led communication with the local population in regions, with self-governing bodies and with non-governmental organizations on a regular basis; the Office was receiving regular information from the population and took action in respect of those recommendations and appeals it received.

The representative of the State Minister in Kvemo Kartli coordinated the work of the Office in the region.

During the reporting period the Office of the State Minister for Reconciliation and Civic Equality congratulated their national and religious holidays to the representatives of local, ethnic and religious minority groups as well as diplomatic corps.