



Refugee Documentation Centre (Ireland)
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Information on internal relocation and state protection in Georgia

The *US Department of State Country Report on Human Rights Practices* published in April 2011 states under the heading d. Freedom of Movement, Internally Displaced Persons, Protection of Refugees, and Stateless Persons:

“The law provides for full freedom of movement within the country, foreign travel, emigration, and repatriation for Georgian citizens, but this freedom was limited in practice by de facto authorities and Russian occupying forces. The government cooperated with UNHCR and other humanitarian organizations in protecting and assisting IDPs, refugees, returning refugees, asylum seekers, stateless persons, and other persons of concern.

Georgian law imposes limitations on foreigners moving into and out of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. It also imposes special requirements on persons conducting economic activities in the occupied regions. There were no reports the Georgian authorities unduly restricted any international humanitarian organizations in practice. Russian and Abkhaz de facto authorities limited international organizations' ability to operate in Abkhazia; Russian and South Ossetian de facto authorities blocked virtually all international organizations, including humanitarian organizations, from regular access to South Ossetia.” [...] (US Department of State (8 April 2011) *Georgia: Country Report on Human Rights Practices – 2010*)

A report from the *Country of Return Information Project* published in November 2008 states:

“There has been a crackdown on organised crime since the Roses Revolution in 2004. However, Georgian citizens seem not to trust the police forces, and sometimes prefer protection by the Mafia. However, the survey conducted by the Ministry of Internal affairs of Georgia in 2006 shows that citizens are overall satisfied by the work of police. 54% of respondents (all the respondents were from Tbilisi) stated that the police deal with the crimes “quite effectively”. Majority admitted that the relations between the police and society is “more or less good”.

Meanwhile, police faces serious challenges in Georgia. There are allegations of deaths caused by use of excessive (lethal) force by police and prison officials. Despite the reduction in allegations of torture and ill-treatment of persons in custody, reports of acts of ill-treatment by the police, especially during the arrest of suspects is still persistent.

The UN Human Rights Committee underlines the following problems in prison: overcrowding, poor rations and quality of food, inadequate access to natural light and fresh air, insufficient personal hygiene conditions, and the large number of deaths of prisoners allegedly due to the prison conditions that amount to ill-treatment in some

detentions facilities. International Human Rights organizations express the same concerns.

The same issues are stressed in the latest report of the Public Defender of Georgia. It also says that the facts of torture and inhuman treatment of detainees by the police forces reduced in the first half of 2008. However, the existing facts of torture have not been investigated effectively." (Country of Return Information Project (November 2008) *Country Sheet: Georgia*)

Under the heading 2.3.4.2 Judiciary the report states:

"Under Article 42 of the Georgian Constitution, "Everyone has the right to apply to a court for the protection of his/her rights and freedoms."120 Common courts adjudicate upon criminal, civil and administrative cases121 and decisions of the first instance court (regional or city courts) may be challenged before the appellate court and the Supreme Court of Georgia."

A report by the *UK Home Office* states under the heading Internal Relocation::

"If this category of claimants' fear is of the state authorities, relocation to a different area of the country is not feasible. The law provides for freedom of movement, and the government generally respected this in practice in areas under its control. However, freedom of movement was restricted by the de facto authorities in the separatist regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia," (UK Home Office (October 2008) – *Operational Guidance notes; Georgia*)

References

Country of Return Information Project (November 2008) *Country Sheet: Georgia*
<http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/pdfid/49afa13af.pdf>
(Accessed 6 September 2011)

UK Home Office (October 2008) – *Operational Guidance notes; Georgia*
<http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/pdfid/48f5a61d2.pdf>
(Accessed 7 September 2011)

US Department of State (8 April 2011) *Georgia: Country Report on Human Rights Practices – 2010*
<http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4da56dc6aa.html>
(Accessed 6 September 2011)

This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Refugee Documentation Centre within time constraints. This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please read in full all documents referred to.

Sources Consulted:

Amnesty International
BBC Monitoring
BBC News
Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ)
Ethnologue
Danish Immigration Services
European Country of Origin Information Network
Google
Human Rights Watch
Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada
IRIN
Lexis Nexis
Refugee Documentation Centre Query Database
Relief Web
UNHCR Refworld
UK Home Office
US Department of State