

Exploring Georgians' Attitudes towards Reconciliation with the Abkhaz and South Ossetians¹

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Abstract

How do Georgians perceive conflicts in Abkhazia and South Ossetia? To what extent do respondents' socio-demographic, contextual, and attitudinal characteristics associated with their willingness to reconcile with the Abkhaz and South Ossetians? Literature shows that in post-conflict contexts, exposure to prior hostilities is associated with reduced support for reconciliation. We find that in the case of Georgia, the effect of the exposure to the conflict is somewhat consistent with theory. Moreover, we find a strong association between pro-Western attitudes and the perception of Russia's positive role in the conflict.

Introduction

Conflicts in Abkhazia and South Ossetia² had been one of the bloodiest episodes of otherwise relatively peaceful dissolution of the Soviet Union. Tracing their roots to the post-Great War political cleavages of the Russian Revolution (Welt, 2014), these "frozen" territorial disputes have "melted"

¹ Data used in this paper were collected by CRRC-Georgia in 2019 and 2021. The 2019 wave of the survey was funded by a joint National Science Foundation/Research Council UK grant (NSF Award #1759645; ESRC Award #ES/S005919/1). The 2021 data was collected through CRRC-Georgia's own Omnibus survey program.

² Here and below we use term "South Ossetia" instead of "Tskhinvali region" to facilitate clarity. The usage of the term does not necessarily imply authors' position on the territory's political status.

several times since the early 1990s. Accompanying military hostilities yielded large-scale displacement of civilians, leading to ethnic cleansing of much of the disputed territories. Travel between Georgia proper and Abkhazia and South Ossetia are restricted (Venhovens, 2021) and primarily is limited to ethnic Georgians who reside in Gal(i) for Abkhazia and Akhagori/Leningor district for South Ossetia. Despite such restrained exposure and contrary to what might be expected, opinion polls show that on average, ethnic Georgians still feel relatively close to ethnic Abkhaz and Ossetians, the groups that they fought in the early 1990s (Caucasus Research Resource Centers, 2020) than with other ethnic groups such as Armenians, Azerbaijanis, Turks, Kurds, etc. Despite this careful optimism for conflict transformation, less is known about how the country's population feels about specific aspects of reconciliation or whether such attitudes might convert into reconciliation.

Post-conflict reconciliation is a multifaceted concept in which social scientists struggle to suggest a precise definition (Dyrstad et al., 2011). In its simplest explanation, reconciliation implies transforming conflict relations between adversaries into a friendly and constructive one (Bar-Simantov, 2004). As per Brounéus (2008), reconciliation also involves acknowledging previous sufferings experienced by adversaries and searching for a path for sustainable peace. Still, some voices challenge the established understandings of reconciliation (Hughes, 2018) as contradictory, trying to negotiate past historical sufferings with hypothetical future shared society (p. 3).

As argued by Bakke et al. (2009), a crucial component of reconciliation lies in intergroup forgiveness, that is, in the process of the reduction of antagonistic feelings towards the adversary and the readiness to understand and engage with the representatives of the perceived perpetrator (Cehajic et al., 2008). While various studies (for example, by Hewstone et al., 2014) have shown that direct post-conflict contacts foster the chances of forgiveness, results are inconclusive in other contexts (Bakke et al., 2009). Furthermore, openness towards intergroup reconciliation is negatively associated with prior experiences of conflict (Hewstone et al., 2006; Tellez, 2019; Voci et al., 2015) and ingroup victimization (Wohl & Branscombe, 2008).

Conflicts in Abkhazia and South Ossetia are generally understood as ethno-territorial (e.g., as argued in De Waal, 2018). Nonetheless, another meaningful dimension of the conflict is its geopolitical framing as an overshoot of global tensions between Russia and the West (Toal & Merabishvili, 2019). Georgia's designation of Abkhazia and South Ossetia as "occupied territories" and the subsequent legal framework effectively pushes the Georgian understanding of these conflicts from an intra-state into a greater geopolitical scale, involving Russian federation. Moreover, declared pro-Western

attitudes have become a banner for subsequent Georgian governments and even found their place in the elite and popular identity (Amashukeli et al., 2016).

To investigate whether the attitudes of Georgians around reconciliation and territorial concessions are affected by (geo)political rhetoric around “occupied territories,” we develop the following preliminary hypotheses. First, we hypothesize that:

H1A: Exposure to and experience of the conflict is negatively associated with the respondents’ openness to agree to territorial concessions.

H1B: Exposure to and experience of the conflict is negatively associated with the respondents’ willingness to reconcile.

Next, we argue that:

H2: Pro-Western attitudes are negatively associated with the concessions and positive perception of Russia’s role in the conflict.

The aims of this conference paper are twofold. First, it presents a descriptive analysis of Georgians’ attitudes towards various components involving reconciliation and conflict resolution, thus giving a voice to ordinary Georgians whose opinions are often absent in policy discussions on conflicts. Using cross-sectional data collected in 2019 and 2021, we show that attitudes towards reconciliation and conflict resolution in Georgia have been a rather stable independent of survey mode (face to face and via telephone) and time. Next, we proceed with evaluating the hypotheses outlined above. We explore various socio-demographic and attitudinal variables predicting attitudes towards conflict transformation and reconciliation among Georgians. We find that exposure with the conflict measured with the distance from the Abkhazia and South Ossetia border are negatively associated with forgiveness and models of concessions if it involves abandoning the pursuit for membership in NATO. Attitudinal factors such as respondents’ pro-Western leanings are associated with the negative perception of Russia’s role and reluctance to abandon NATO membership.

Data and Methods

The analysis present in this paper is based on two surveys conducted in Georgia in 2019 and 2021. The 2019 data comes from a nationwide survey conducted by CRRC-Georgia under the auspices of the joint National Science Foundation/Research Council UK grant. Fieldwork was administered between November 14-December 17, 2019. In this survey, interviews were conducted using the Computer-Assisted Personal Interview (CAPI) face-to-face method in Georgian, Armenian, and Azerbaijani languages. Households were sampled using a multistage stratified cluster sampling

method, while respondents were selected randomly using the Kish grid protocol. The April 2021 data come from a nationwide telephone survey which was part of CRRC-Georgia's Omnibus survey program conducted with the organization's funds. Respondents for this survey were selected using Random-Digit-Dial (RDD) method and interviewed using the live interview method in Georgian, Armenian, Azerbaijani, or Russian. Data from both surveys were weighted to match the population counts of various demographic groups according to the 2014 National Census of Georgia. Overall, 1,579 respondents were interviewed in 2019, while 1,236 complete interviews were collected in the 2021 survey.

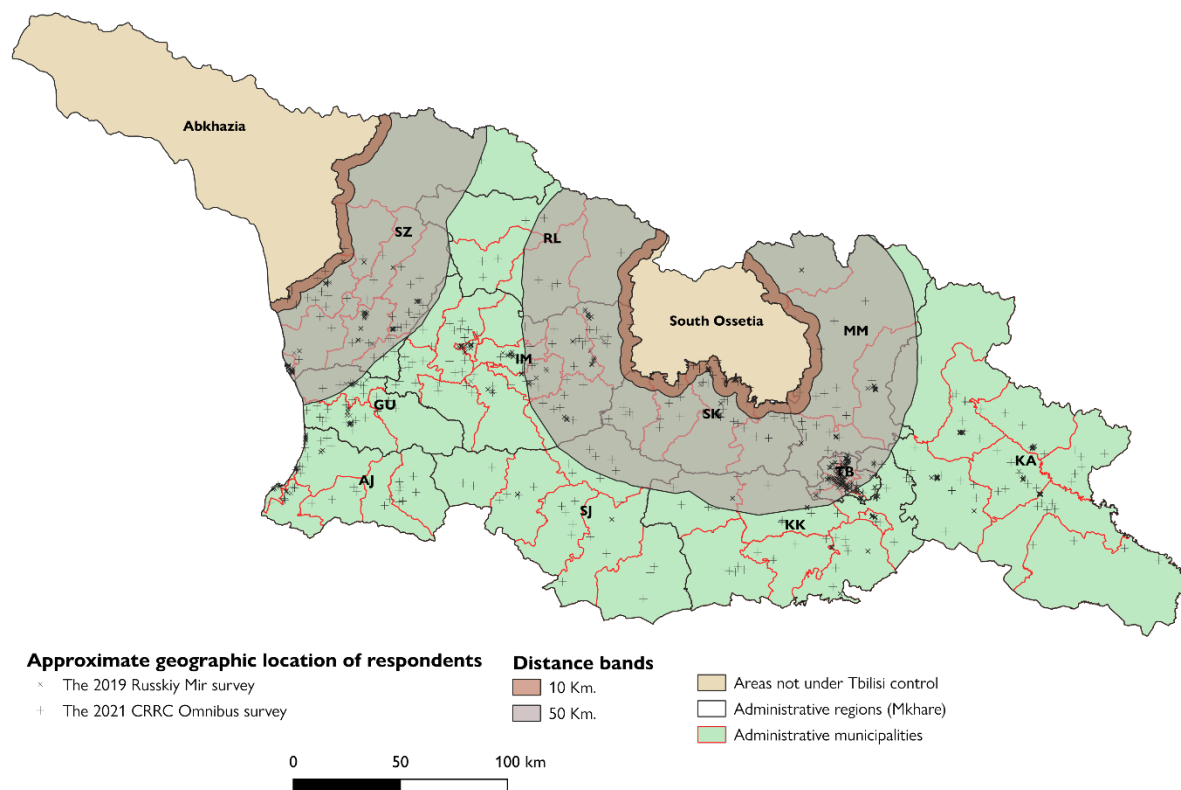


Figure 1: Outline map of fieldwork areas and distance bands from the Abkhazia/South Ossetia border

Both surveys asked a similar battery of questions that assessed respondents' attitudes towards various aspects of the conflict in and reconciliation with Abkhazia and South Ossetia (see annex 1 for detailed question wording) using a five-point agreement/disagreement scale items.

These items evaluated respondents' feelings towards concessions (recognizing independence, forgetting about the return of displaced people from Abkhazia and South Ossetia, supporting a narrative about the Russian occupation of Georgia's territories), forgiveness, and the roles played by national and international actors.

For confirmatory statistical analysis, we used binary regression models with survey weights and robust standard errors. Options “Completely agree” and “Agree” were coded into ones, while the rest was grouped into zeros to avoid potential pitfalls of listwise deletion of “Don’t know” answers. Below we present two sets of models. The first set of models is intended for descriptive analysis and for comparison to earlier research results. Dependent variables as controls use socio-demographic and geographic controls such as respondent’s gender, age, education, ethnicity (national identity), and settlement type. We incorporate logged distance from Abkhazia and South Ossetia border as measures for exposure to the conflict. Such measures account for the exposure that might emerge due to proximity to the conflict zone (for instance, spillover of military actions as happened during the war in 2008, or the so-called Borderization process). Notably, most of Georgia’s conflict-displaced population (~70%) resides within 50 kilometers from Abkhazia and South Ossetia border (MIARG, 2014). In addition to these variables, the 2021 model also includes a variable measuring whether the respondent or their household member had been displaced since 1989 as a result of armed conflicts. In the second part of our analysis, we include a set of attitudinal variables measuring pro-Western attitudes, namely, support for Georgia’s membership in the European Union and the perception of Western culture as a threat.

To facilitate better interpretation of results, we report predicted probabilities. We calculate probabilities per each category of the variable of interest while keeping other covariates at their mean values. In the case of distance variables, we back-transform logged values and calculate probabilities for 10- and 50-kilometer distance bands (Figure 1).

Results

Georgians’ attitudes towards reconciliation: results of descriptive analysis

Overall, the results of both surveys indicate that attitudes towards reconciliation and conflict resolution are stable. Only about 14% of Georgians in the 2021 telephone survey and 15% in the 2019 face-to-face survey agreed to the statement that Georgia should recognize the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia and seek friendly relationships with these entities (Figure 2). Fifteen percent of the interviewees in the 2021 survey were convinced that the Russian government is interested in the peaceful resolution of the conflict, while only 11% agreed to the same in 2019. About a quarter of respondents in 2021, five percentage points fewer compared to 2019, believed that it is best to forget return and focus on the future. In the April 2021 survey, more than half of Georgians (51%) agreed that declaring 20% of the country occupied by Russia makes reconciliation difficult. In the survey conducted in 2019, about 56% thought the same. Such patterns are at odds

with a common state-endorsed narrative regarding occupied territories that highlights the role of Russia, thus downplaying other sides of the conflict.

While general trends were held between the two surveys, minor differences were in the case of questions that asked about the Georgian government’s role in the conflict, about forgetting past hostilities, and about abandoning the pursuit for NATO membership in exchange for Abkhazia and South Ossetia. About ten percentage points fewer Georgians (60%) in the April 2021 survey believed that it is better to forget things that happened in the past between nations and think about the future together as opposed to the 2019 survey. Sixty-one percent of Georgians in April 2021 thought that the Georgian government is interested in the peaceful resolution of conflicts, a ten-point decrease compared to 2019. While only a handful of Georgians agreed to the statement that Georgia should abandon NATO in exchange for Abkhazia and South Ossetia (15%), it was a seventeen percentage point decrease in the proportion of Georgians who approved the same in 2019.

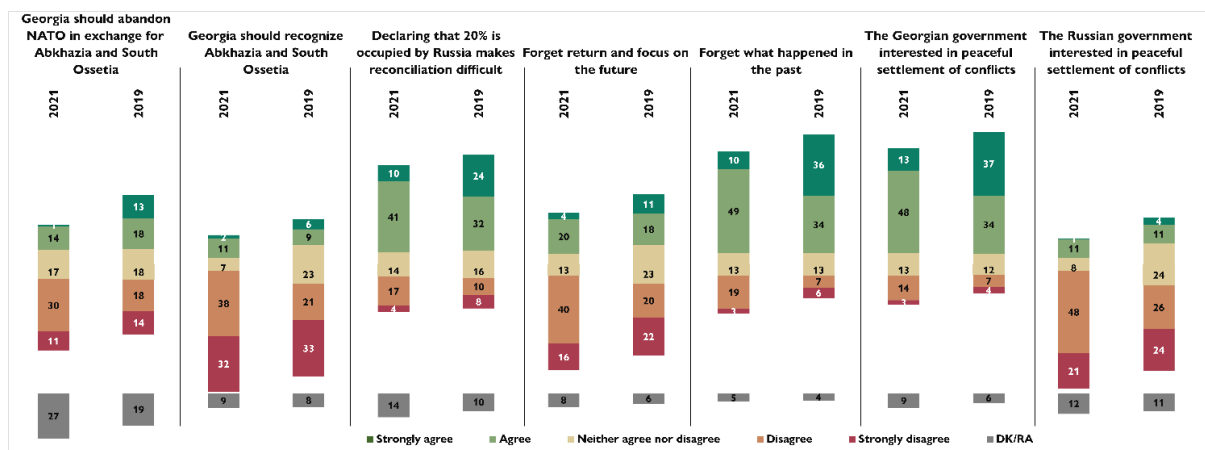


Figure 2: “I will read out several statements. [Using this card], please tell me, how much do you agree or disagree with each of the items” (%).

How do Georgians representing various socio-demographic groups feel about various aspects of reconciliation? The analysis below reports the sets of binary logistic models that control the respondent’s gender, age, education, settlement type, ethnic identity, and geographic location from the boundaries of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. We fit these models separately for the 2021 and the 2019 datasets to account for possible changes in the attitudes of the subgroups across time. In the analysis below, we report predicted probabilities to facilitate better interpretation of regression estimates (complete regression results are presented in Table 1). In the analysis that follows, we discuss differences between socio-demographic groups that are always statistically significant at conventional (95%) significance levels.

According to the results of the 2019 dataset, men (38%) were more likely to agree to the statement that Georgia should abandon the pursuit for NATO in exchange for Abkhazia and South Ossetia (Figure 3) than women (25%). So did the representatives of the older than 55 age cohort (35%) compared to the youngest group (25%) and rural Georgians (36%) in comparison with Tbilisi residents (24%).

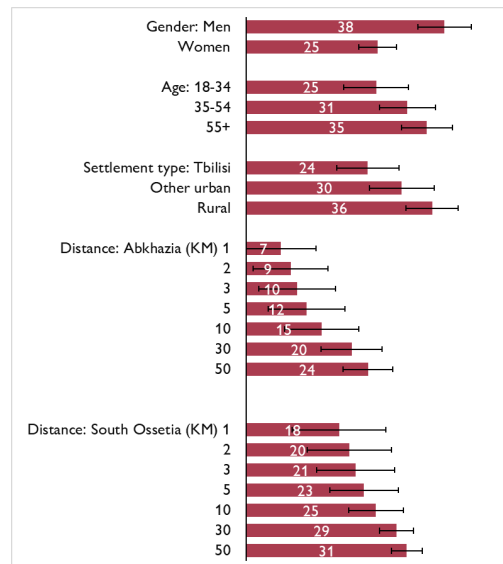


Figure 3: Predicted probabilities of agreeing with the statement that Georgia should abandon NATO in exchange for Abkhazia and South Ossetia (the 2019 *Russkiy Mir* survey). Error bars denote 95% confidence intervals.

Notably, the distance from Abkhazia and South Ossetia borders was positively associated with accepting abandoning NATO in exchange for the country's breakaway regions. Georgians who resided closer to the Abkhazia and South Ossetia border had the lowest probability of agreeing with the statement: the predicted probability of someone who lived about five kilometers from the Abkhazia border was 12%, while the probability of agreeing to the statement for someone residing in 50 Kilometers from the Abkhazia border was 24%. Similarly, respondents residing near the South Ossetia border were more likely to agree to the statement than those living deeper in Georgia proper. In the close vicinity (5 kilometers from the border), about 23% agreed to the statement that Georgia should abandon NATO in exchange for Abkhazia and South Ossetia, while for someone living about 50 kilometers from the South Ossetia border, the probability of agreeing to this statement was about 31%. In sum, respondents who live closer to Abkhazia and South Ossetia and thus, having a larger exposure to the conflict are most opposed to the idea of abandoning the pursuit of NATO membership. While finding this as somewhat counterintuitive, we hypothesize that such attitudes might be linked with the popular and elite understanding of the West as a security provider for Georgia (Bolkvadze et al., 2014).

While fewer Georgians supported the recognition of Abkhazia and South Ossetia across survey waves, there were meaningful differences between the representatives of different socio-demographic groups. In the 2019 survey, those with higher education had a mere 9% probability of supporting such proposition, while those with no higher education degree were almost twice as likely to support the idea (17%). Notably, ethnic minorities had a 26% probability of supporting the independence of Georgia’s breakaway regions, while ethnic Georgians had only a 13% chance of supporting the idea. Respondents younger than 35 had about a 20% chance of supporting the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, while older respondents had about a 12% chance of supporting the idea. There were fewer differences among Georgia’s demographic groups in the 2021 wave of the survey, except gender. Women had about a 15% chance of supporting the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, while men had a 10% probability of thinking the same.

On the question about whether Georgians should forget about return and just focus on the future, only a minority in both waves agreed to the statement. Ethnic minorities were more likely to think so than ethnic Georgians. In the 2019 wave of the study, minorities had about a 46% chance of supporting the idea, compared to a 27% chance for ethnic Georgians. In the 2021 survey, minorities had a 38% probability of believing that it is better to forget return, while ethnic Georgians had only a 21% chance of thinking so. Among others, in the 2021 survey, respondent’s education was another significant predictor. Those with higher education degrees were less likely to agree to the statement with about 19% probability, while those without higher education had about a 25% chance of supporting the idea of settling on forgetting about the return.

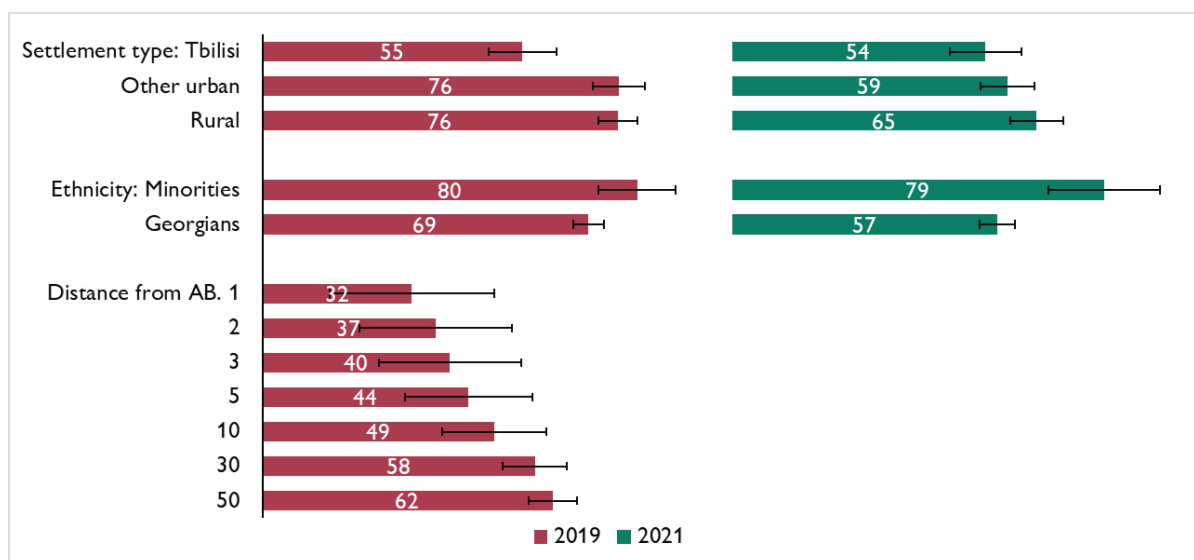


Figure 4: Predicted probabilities of agreeing with the statement that For peace among nations is better to forget about what happened in the past and think about the future together (the 2019 Russkiy Mir survey and the 2021 April CRRC Omnibus study). Error bars denote 95% confidence intervals

Ethnic minorities and Georgians outside Tbilisi have more conciliatory attitudes when it comes to agreeing to the opinion that it is better to forget about the past and build a common future (Figure 4). In the 2019 survey, ethnic minorities had about an 80% chance of saying that it is better to forget about what happened in the past and think about the future together as opposed to the 69% chance for Georgians. As of the 2021 Omnibus survey, minorities scored about 79% probability of thinking the same while Georgians had a substantially lower chance of 57%. While the majority of Georgians held reconciliatory views in both surveys, Tbilisi residents had a relatively lower chance of agreeing to the statement, about a 55% probability in the 2019 wave and 54% in the 2021 survey. Georgians outside the capital had about a 76% chance of agreeing on the statement in the 2019 survey. As of 2021, residents of Georgia's urban centers other than Tbilisi had a 59% chance of agreeing that it is better to forget about the past, while rural Georgians had a 65% chance of agreeing to the same statement.

Notably, as expected, those who reside in the close vicinity of Abkhazia were less likely to support the idea of forgetting. Those living about a 5-kilometer distance from the Abkhazia border had about a 44% chance of thinking so. In contrast, respondents living about 50 kilometers from the border had a 62% of agreeing to the statement. Legacies of the wars and their consequences of closed borders and separation from families and properties are frequent reminders and are associated with the reduced chances of thinking collectively about the future.

The majority of Georgians believe that the country's government is interested in the peaceful resolution of conflicts. In both waves, rural residents are more supportive of the idea as opposed to the respondents from Tbilisi and other urban areas. Tbilisi residents had about 64% of agreeing to the statement in 2019, compared to the 55% chance in the 2021 April survey. Georgians from other urban areas had a 69% chance in 2019 and a 58% probability in 2021. Rural residents had a 78% predicted probability of agreeing to the statement in the 2019 dataset, while the respective value in 2021 tallied to 68%.

Geographic distance is an important factor (proximity to the conflict zone) in considering that the Georgian government is interested in the peaceful resolution of the conflicts. In the 2019 survey, the closer the respondent lived to the South Ossetia border, the less likely was the agreement to the statement. A respondent living 5 kilometers from the border had about a 63% chance of supporting the idea instead of a 71% chance for someone who lived about 50 kilometers from the South Ossetia border. Proximity with Abkhazia was a significant predictor of such attitudes in the 2021 survey.

Respondents living about 5 kilometers from the Abkhazia border had about 40% predicted probability of considering that the Georgian government is interested in the peaceful resolution of the conflict. Those residing about 50 kilometers from the border had about a 55% chance of thinking so.

Evaluating the association between pro-Western attitudes and views on reconciliation – hypothesis 2

Pro-Western attitudes are strongly associated with views on the conflict (Table 2). Those who perceive Western culture as a threat to the traditional Georgian way of life are more likely to endorse statements against the majority understanding of conflict transformation and reconciliation in the country (Figure 5). They show about a 40% chance of agreeing that Georgia should abandon NATO in exchange for Abkhazia and South Ossetia instead of only a 22% chance of those who disagree that Western culture is a threat. In other words, more Western-oriented people are consistent in prioritizing incorporation into Western institutions. Respondents who believe that Western culture is a threat have a significantly higher probability of agreeing that Georgia should recognize the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia (17%) than those who do not believe in the threat of Western culture (11%). The former also has a higher chance of agreeing that it is better to forget return and focus on the future (36%) than those who dismiss the threat of the Western culture (24%).

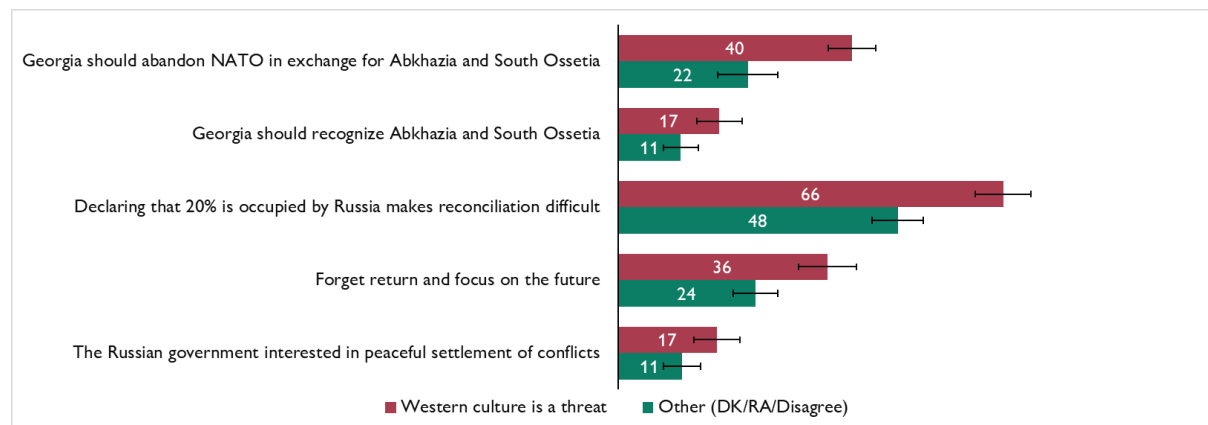


Figure 5: Predicted probability of agreeing with the statement. Error bars denote 95% confidence intervals.

Notably, respondents thinking that Western culture is a threat have about a 66% chance of agreeing with the statement that declaring that 20% of Georgia is occupied by Russia makes reconciliation difficult. They are also more likely to consider that the Russian government is interested in the peaceful resolution of conflicts. The Putin administration has portrayed itself as a defender of traditional values (e.g., against same-sex marriages), and it is consistent that Georgians who share

these conservative beliefs agree that stereotyping the vexed territorial question as a Russian occupation is not helpful in ending the conflict (Wilkinson, 2014).

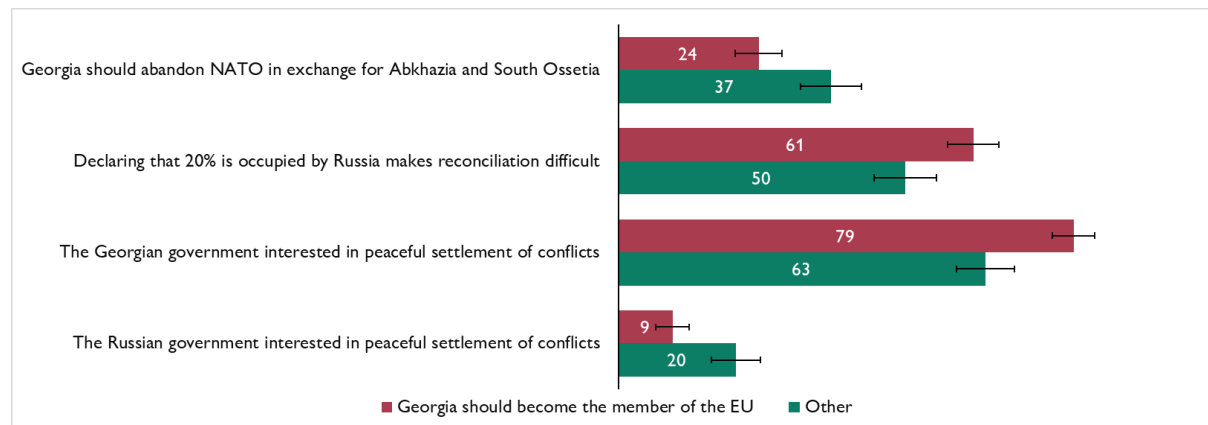


Figure 6: Predicted probability of agreeing with the statement. Error bars denote 95% confidence intervals.

Support for Georgia’s membership in the European Union is a good predictor of respondents’ attitudes towards reconciliation and conflict resolution. When controlling for respondents’ socio-demographic and geographic characteristics, EU supporters have a lower probability (24%) of supporting the statement that Georgia should abandon NATO in exchange for Abkhazia and South Ossetia than those who do not believe that Georgia should become a member of the EU (37%). EU supporters are more likely to believe that the Georgian government is interested in the peaceful resolution of the conflict (79%) and less likely to endorse the same statement about the Russian government (9%). Interestingly, those who endorse Georgia’s EU membership are more likely to believe that declaring Georgia’s 20% as occupied by Russia makes reconciliation efforts difficult.

Conclusion and Discussion

Attitudes towards reconciliation and conflict resolution among Georgians are stable over two surveys and conducted using two different modes. These views held despite the two surveys used different modes of interviewing (face-to-face in 2019 versus telephone in 2021) and were conducted seventeen months apart that saw such dramatic events as the COVID-19 pandemic and disputed parliamentary elections in early 2021. A relatively small share (on average, 9% in 2019 and 12% in the 2021 survey) of item-nonresponse, that is, “Don’t know”s and refusals, hint that the majority of Georgians have made up their mind relative to the conflicts in Abkhazia and South Ossetia and possible resolutions.

Concerning socio-demographic divides, few are important in predicting variables of interest in both waves. Nonetheless, respondents’ education, place of residence, and reported ethnic identity (Georgian or not) seem to be significantly associated with attitudes on the agreement to the political

recognition of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, forgetting about past hostilities while looking to the future, and whether the Georgian government plays a positive role in the conflict.

We find mixed evidence supporting our first set of hypotheses. Overall, variables measuring the distance from Abkhazia and South Ossetia (and potential exposure to the conflict) are more meaningful predictors in the 2019 wave dataset than in 2021. This might be a function of the sensitivity of the questions in a phone survey. Still, respondents' residence in close vicinity of the Abkhazia border was negatively associated with the variables measuring forgiveness. Respondents close to both borders were less open to the compromise if it involved abandoning the pursuit for membership in NATO. Thus, our findings somewhat concur with the evidence from other contexts (e.g., Bosnia-Herzegovina as attested in Dyrstad et al., 2011), especially relative to the experience of conflict.

The survey results generally support our second hypothesis. Respondents who are pro-Western (that is, support Georgia's membership in the European Union) and do not perceive Western culture as a threat are more likely to disagree with abandoning NATO membership in exchange for the return of the territories not under the control of the Tbilisi authorities. Such pro-European attitudes are negatively associated with the perception of Russia's role as positive in the conflict. Moreover, those perceiving Western culture as a threat are more likely to support concessions such as recognizing the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia and forgetting about the return of these territories.

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Annex 1: the exact wording of conflict battery items

1. "If Russia offers to stop supporting Abkhazia and South Ossetia in exchange for Georgia abandoning its quest for NATO membership, we should accept this deal."
2. "Georgia should recognize Abkhazia and South Ossetia as independent states and seek to establish friendly relations."
3. "Declaring that 'Russia occupies 20% of Georgia' ultimately makes reconciliation between Georgians, Abkhaz and Ossetians more difficult."
4. "People displaced from their homes are victims, but now it is best to forget return and focus on the future."
5. "For peace among nations is better to forget about what happened in the past and think about the future TOGETHER"
6. "The Georgian government is interested in the peaceful settlement of Georgia's territorial conflicts."
7. "The Russian government is interested in the peaceful settlement of Georgia's territorial conflicts."

Annex 2: regression tables

	Abandon NATO membership		Recognize Abkhazia & S. Ossetia		Declaring that 20% is occupied makes reconciliation difficult		Best to forget return and focus on the future		Forget what was in the past		Georgian govt. interested in peaceful resolution		Russian govt. interested in peaceful resolution	
	2019	2021	2019	2021	2019	2021	2019	2021	2019	2021	2019	2021	2019	2021
Female	0.622***	-0.413	0.213	0.491*	-0.075	-0.329*	0.223	0.148	0.028	-0.277	0.071	-0.116	-0.184	-0.17
	-0.15	-0.21	-0.22	-0.23	-0.14	-0.15	-0.16	-0.18	-0.16	-0.14	-0.16	-0.15	-0.2	-0.26
Age: 35-54	0.299	0.49	-0.726**	-0.09	0.167	0.002	-0.027	-0.339	0.326	0.206	0.178	-0.012	-0.285	0.006
	-0.21	-0.26	-0.25	-0.3	-0.18	-0.19	-0.21	-0.24	-0.21	-0.17	-0.2	-0.19	-0.27	-0.31
Age: 55+	0.470*	0.301	-0.593*	-0.306	0.16	-0.061	-0.01	-0.296	0.221	0.212	0.266	0.113	0.034	0
	-0.2	-0.26	-0.23	-0.27	-0.17	-0.19	-0.2	-0.23	-0.18	-0.18	-0.19	-0.19	-0.24	-0.29
Has higher education	0.081	-0.039	-0.689**	-0.537*	-0.279	-0.192	-0.326	-0.360*	-0.003	-0.154	-0.112	0.269	-0.311	-0.562*
	-0.17	-0.2	-0.24	-0.23	-0.15	-0.14	-0.17	-0.17	-0.17	-0.15	-0.16	-0.14	-0.22	-0.23
Ethnic Georgian	0.152	-0.252	-0.886**	-0.173	-0.07	-0.064	-0.842***	-0.277	-0.555*	-0.906**	-0.192	-0.385	-0.55	-0.717
	-0.26	-0.43	-0.28	-0.47	-0.22	-0.33	-0.23	-0.36	-0.27	-0.33	-0.26	-0.34	-0.29	-0.4
Employed	0.145	0.365	0.189	-0.004	0.001	-0.238	0.163	0.075	0.252	-0.019	0.096	0.185	-0.134	-0.205
	-0.17	-0.23	-0.23	-0.26	-0.15	-0.16	-0.17	-0.2	-0.17	-0.15	-0.17	-0.16	-0.23	-0.27
Displaced due to conflicts since 1989		-0.075		-0.21		0.185		-0.448		-0.056		0.077		0.011
		-0.29		-0.39		-0.24		-0.3		-0.25		-0.25		-0.4
Urban	0.335	0.067	0.031	0.145	-0.16	0.067	-0.14	0.108	0.936***	0.202	0.239	0.121	0.304	0.185
	-0.24	-0.26	-0.31	-0.31	-0.2	-0.2	-0.23	-0.24	-0.22	-0.21	-0.22	-0.2	-0.33	-0.32
Rural	0.604**	-0.143	0.037	0.425	-0.027	0.053	-0.192	0.276	0.923***	0.456*	0.665**	0.539*	0.434	-0.133
	-0.21	-0.32	-0.25	-0.33	-0.18	-0.21	-0.2	-0.26	-0.2	-0.21	-0.21	-0.21	-0.28	-0.36
Logged distance from Abkhazia border	0.381***	-0.054	-0.047	0.132	0.017	0.115	-0.025	0.012	0.340***	0.148	-0.036	0.263*	-0.03	0.26
	-0.11	-0.2	-0.1	-0.15	-0.08	-0.12	-0.1	-0.16	-0.09	-0.15	-0.11	-0.11	-0.11	-0.15
Logged distance from South Ossetia border	0.193*	-0.212	0.069	0	0.08	-0.222*	0.102	-0.062	0.102	0.001	0.168*	-0.043	-0.06	0.163
	-0.08	-0.17	-0.11	-0.16	-0.07	-0.09	-0.08	-0.12	-0.08	-0.1	-0.08	-0.1	-0.09	-0.17
Constant	-7.977***	1.214	-0.787	-3.501	-0.688	1.467	-0.911	-0.319	-4.768**	-0.753	-0.849	-2.231	-0.186	-6.01
	-1.87	-3.76	-1.86	-3.02	-1.55	-2.15	-1.79	-2.78	-1.69	-2.55	-1.87	-2.05	-1.92	-3.17
AIC	3550522	22998	2403213	219496	4058633	3860039	3536783	3047659	3494386	3707383	3488400	369281	249227	1969264
		78		7								0	6	
BIC	3550581	22999	2403272	219502	4058692	3860100	3536842	3047720	3494445	3707444	3488459	369287	249233	1969325
		39		8								1	5	

* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

Table 1: Binary regression models with demographic covariates. Note that displacement question was only asked in the 2021 wave.

	Abandon NATO membership	Recognize Abkhazia & S. Ossetia	Declaring that 20% is occupied makes reconciliation difficult	Best to forget return and focus on the future	Forget what was in the past	Georgian govt. interested in peaceful resolution	Russian govt. interested in peaceful resolution
Female	-0.548***	0.281	-0.095	0.267	0.042	-0.004	-0.054
	-0.15	-0.22	-0.15	-0.16	-0.16	-0.16	-0.2
Age: 35-54	0.213	-0.799**	0.12	-0.082	0.29	0.168	-0.397
	-0.21	-0.26	-0.19	-0.21	-0.21	-0.2	-0.28
Age: 55+	0.299	-0.697**	0.108	-0.101	0.169	0.309	-0.134
	-0.21	-0.24	-0.18	-0.2	-0.18	-0.2	-0.25
Has higher education	0.204	-0.636**	-0.244	-0.272	0.021	-0.135	-0.246
	-0.17	-0.24	-0.15	-0.17	-0.17	-0.17	-0.22
Ethnic Georgian	0.306	-0.824**	-0.227	-0.834***	-0.549*	-0.413	-0.344
	-0.28	-0.27	-0.23	-0.24	-0.28	-0.25	-0.29
Employed	0.161	0.19	-0.062	0.152	0.252	0.033	-0.071
	-0.17	-0.23	-0.15	-0.17	-0.17	-0.17	-0.24
Urban	0.265	-0.016	-0.159	-0.174	0.936***	0.302	0.25
	-0.24	-0.32	-0.21	-0.24	-0.23	-0.22	-0.34
Rural	0.590**	0.029	0.01	-0.197	0.938***	0.746***	0.407
	-0.21	-0.26	-0.19	-0.2	-0.2	-0.21	-0.28
Logged distance from Abkhazia border	0.428***	-0.014	0.031	-0.002	0.359***	-0.05	0.015
	-0.11	-0.1	-0.09	-0.1	-0.09	-0.11	-0.11
Logged distance from South Ossetia border	0.194*	0.058	0.052	0.09	0.095	0.142	-0.051
	-0.08	-0.11	-0.07	-0.08	-0.08	-0.08	-0.09
Georgia should join the EU	-0.537***	-0.222	0.529***	-0.068	0.015	0.805***	-0.860***
	-0.16	-0.2	-0.15	-0.16	-0.16	-0.16	-0.2
Western culture is a threat	0.885***	0.564**	0.782***	0.585***	0.349*	0.341*	0.521*
	-0.16	-0.21	-0.14	-0.16	-0.16	-0.16	-0.2
Constant	-8.773***	-1.239	-0.994	-1.268	-5.071**	-0.777	-0.837
	-1.85	-1.84	-1.59	-1.75	-1.73	-1.9	-1.95
AIC	3375544.5	2367926.6	3938335.4	3483980.1	3475807.3	3400703.2	2382460.5
BIC	3375614.2	2367996.3	3938405.1	3484049.8	3475877	3400772.9	2382530.2

* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

Table 2: Binary regression models with demographic and substantive predictors. The 2019 Russkiy Mir survey.