

**Disclaimer: Do not copy, cite, or distribute this pre-preprint.**

## **Public Administration in Countries in Conflict The Case of Georgia**

Eka Akobia  
Dean, Associate Professor  
Caucasus University  
Tbilisi, Georgia  
[eakobia@cu.edu.ge](mailto:eakobia@cu.edu.ge)

### **Abstract**

In trying to explain the effects of conflict on Georgia's public administration (PA) performance, this chapter argues that the roots of this conflict—that resulted in devastating violence in the Abkhazia and Tskhinvali regions in the early 1990s—are Soviet in nature. Violence and democratization are identified as the two most important variables affecting overall PA performance. PA system develops as a result of processes unfolding against the negative backdrop of Russia's incessant attempts to dominate Georgia's nation and State building processes, while European and Euro-Atlantic integration formats provide advanced framework for reforms. The qualitative and quantitative data analysed support the conclusion that the conflict and structural violence prevalent in the 1990s was supplanted with reforms and State-building from 2003 onwards, resulting in improved governance indicators. However, despite staggering progress, the ongoing tendency to centralize power and the practice of informal rule since 2014 openly endanger otherwise positive developments in public administration. The various periods analyzed show that Georgia, if it is to sustain continuity in growth and translate progress into effective State-building, must find a better model for public administration while containing lingering external threats. Overall, unabated democratization is deemed to be the key factor capable of containing violence and improving PA performance.

**Eka Akobia** studied international relations at Tbilisi State University (Ph.D., 2016), Baylor University (MA, 2004) and Hartwick College (BA, 2002). Since 2016 she has been Dean and Associate Professor of the School of Governance at Caucasus University. She is also a member of the steering committee of the Network of Institutes and Schools of Public Administration in Central and Eastern Europe (NISPAcee). Her research and teaching interests include European security, IR theories and the inter-relationship between public administration, democracy and security. She has eleven years of experience of public service at the Georgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and holds the diplomatic rank of Counselor.