

Georgia



General Information



Population

3.714.000 (World Bank 2020)

3.728.600 (GEOSTAT 2021)



Immigration

79.368 (UN DESA Immigrant Stock 2020)

89.996 (GEOSTAT 2020)



Emigration

861.077 (UN DESA Emigration Stock 2020)

74.264 (GEOSTAT 2020)



Working-age population

2.396.506 (World Bank 2020)

1.447.200 (GEOSTAT 2020)



Unemployment rate

12.1% (World Bank 2020)

21.9% (GEOSTAT 2018)



GDP

15.892 bn, current prices USD (World Bank 2019)

11300 bn, current prices GEL (GEOSTAT 2021)



Refugees and IDPs

Refugees:

1.111.350 (UNHCR Mid-2020)

Asylum seekers:

1.324 (UNHCR Mid-2020)

IDPs:

287.141 (UNHCR 2020)



Citizenship

By Birth: No

By Descent: Conditional

Dual Citizenship: No

Years of Residency: 5



Territory

69.700 km² (CIA World Factbook)

Migration Authorities

Responsible Body

State Commission on Migration Issues

Line Ministries

Ministry of Internal Affairs

Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA)

IDPs, Labor, Health & Social Affairs

Agencies

Department of Migration, Repatriation & Refugee Issues

State Security Service

Key Policy Documents

Migration Strategy of Georgia 2021-2030

Migration Strategy of Georgia 2016-2020

2018 Law on Vocational Education

2016 Law on International Protection

2015 Law on Labour Migration

2014 Law on the Legal Status of Aliens and Stateless Persons

2014 Organic Law on Georgian Citizenship

Migration Strategy of Georgia 2013-2015

2013-2020 Vocational Education and Training Development Strategy

2011 Law on Compatriots Residing Abroad and Diaspora Organizations

2008 Law on Occupied Territories

2006 Law on Combating Trafficking in Persons

Relevant Publications

ENIGMMA 2 Case Study: Profile of Georgian Diaspora and Migrant Communities

Study: Georgian Diaspora and Migrant Communities in Germany, Greece and Turkey

Policy Brief: Circular migration schemes in Georgia

Georgia Migration Profile 2017

Georgia Migration Profile 2015

Georgia Extended Migration Profile 2013

Georgia Extended Migration Profile 2011

For the past two decades, Georgia has been facing a negative net migration. Political instability, security threats, but most importantly socio-economic challenges have continued representing key push factors for emigration. The propensity to emigrate remains high among the youth. According to the **National Statistics Office of Georgia**, between 85.000 and 95.000 persons, half of whom were 15-39 years of age, left the country in 2013-2018 annually. The number of emigrants peaked at 105.107 persons in 2019, but then dropped by nearly a quarter to 74.264 in 2020, following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The most populous Georgian communities reside in Russia, Greece, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, the US and Armenia. In 2020, the total number of Georgians living abroad amounted to **861.077**, representing approximately 22% of Georgia's overall population. It is expected that Georgia may lose another **150.000** in population by 2030 resulting from higher emigration rates among other reasons.

Remittances constitute a significant 13% of Georgia's GDP (2019). Nevertheless, **studies suggest** that their impact on the country's economic development is rather limited. In terms of total volume, Russia, which still hosts close to **450,000 Georgian nationals**, remains the largest source of remittances to Georgia. However, the share of remittances from across the EU has been on the rise.

Since the introduction of visa-free travel with the EU in 2017, the number of Georgian nationals in the Union has rapidly increased. In 2018-2020, Greece, Italy, Spain, Germany, France and Poland hosted the majority of Georgian nationals with **valid residence permits** issued for family, work and other purposes. Italy and Poland have been issuing most permits for remunerated activities. Moreover, Poland also attracted a substantial number of Georgian migrants within its **simplified circular migratory schemes**, which allow Georgian citizens to work in Poland for six months within a 12-month period. Following the signing of the respective bilateral agreement between Germany and Georgia in 2020, Georgian labour migrants have also been coming to Germany for **seasonal employment in the agriculture sector**. Outside the EU, another popular destination for Georgian seasonal migrants is Turkey.

While the gender composition of Georgian migrants is balanced, certain **feminisation** concerning EU destinations, i.e. Italy and Greece, has been observed. According to an **OECD study**, most Georgian migrants possess a higher-than-average education level. Migration for educational purposes, especially towards Germany, Ukraine, Armenia and the US, has been on the rise in recent years.

Along with regular flows, irregular migration to the EU has also increased. The number of Georgian nationals refused entry, foremost at the border with Germany and Poland, increased from **875 in 2016 to 4.690 in 2019** (2.065 in 2020). The number of those illegally present, especially in Germany, has doubled since 2016 reaching **10.165** persons in 2020. The return rate of irregular Georgian migrants from the EU exceeded 67 % in 2018, but declined to 52 % in 2020. In absolute terms, both the number of Georgians ordered to leave and those actually returned was the highest in 2019 (16.450 and 8.830 persons respectively). Germany and France implemented most returns. Overall, Georgia has been respecting the implementation of the readmission agreement with the EU, agreeing to over **95 % of readmission requests** received in 2018. The established AVRR programme supports

ENIGMMA Working Paper: Estimates for Georgian migrants in Turkey

Report: An overview of the Mobility Partnership in Georgia and Moldova

Report: The state of migration in Georgia

returnees with various reintegration assistance, such as financial, medical or business development support. In addition to the EU, Georgia concluded readmission agreements with Ukraine, Switzerland, Norway, Denmark, Moldova, Montenegro, Belarus, and Iceland. Negotiations with other countries are ongoing.

The worldwide stock of refugees from Georgia has slightly increased in recent years to reach 7,562 persons in 2021, with half of them residing in France. Within the EU, France has also recorded a spike in [asylum requests](#) submitted by Georgians in 2018-2019, which followed the adoption of visa-free travel. To [stem unfounded asylum claims](#), many EU countries added Georgia to the list of safe countries of origin. Meanwhile, the Parliament of Georgia introduced amendments to the Criminal Code and launched an information campaign to combat the abuse of visa-free regulations.

Usually considered a source country of migration, Georgia has witnessed a significant inflow of foreign nationals. According to the [National Statistics Office](#), their number has amounted to 92,458 in 2013 as compared to approximately 90,000 in 2020. The newly established English-language certificate programmes have attracted many [international students](#), in particular from [India, Azerbaijan, Iraq, Iran and Nigeria](#). Other immigrant groups include labour migrants, family members, entrepreneurs, refugees, and former Georgian citizens who mostly come from Russia (37,267 persons in 2020) as well as Armenia, Ukraine and Azerbaijan.

Georgia hosts over [1,700 refugees](#) originating mostly from Iraq, Syria, Ukraine and Russia. Whereas the humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan suggests a potential increase in the number of refugees coming to Georgia, it could represent a transit country rather than the final destination. Meanwhile, the unfolding Russia-Ukraine war may result in increased [migration and refugee flows](#) to Georgia from these two countries. Georgia also features some [260,000](#) internally displaced persons (IDPs) from the occupied regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

Since the initiation of the European Neighbourhood Policy in 2003, Georgia has significantly progressed with developing and improving its migration policy framework and governance. This process was largely linked to the implementation of the Visa Liberalisation Action Plan (VLAP) as well as the country's Migration Strategies 2013-2015 and 2016-2020. The newly released Migration Strategy for 2021-2030 builds on the previous documents and determines the key strategic directions in migration policy based on research, evidence and experience. Georgia's Migration Strategies also reflect and build on the [2015 European Agenda on Migration](#) and the [United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#), highlighting Georgia's active role in regional and international cooperation on migration. Other strategic documents and agreements between Georgia and the EU provide additional guidelines on the further development of migration management and the competent institutions in Georgia.

Georgia endorsed the Global Compact for Migration in 2018. The country is actively cooperating with international organizations to continue the GCM implementation in compliance with all relevant national and international legal frameworks.