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MIGRATION TRENDS IN GEORGIA: KEY DYNAMICS FROM 2012 TO 2024

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SUMMARY

This policy brief presents a comprehensive analysis of migration trends in Georgia from 2012 to 2024, with a particular focus on disaggregated patterns by citizenship, gender, and age. Over the past decade, Georgia has witnessed structurally divergent migration trajectories for Georgian and foreign nationals. The defining feature of this period has been the persistent net emigration of Georgian citizens, accompanied by a consistently positive net immigration of foreign citizens.

Between 2012 and 2021, emigration of Georgian citizens steadily outpaced immigration, resulting in sustained net negative migration. A brief interruption occurred in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic, when global travel restrictions suppressed outward flows and temporarily reversed the trend. However, this positive balance proved short-lived. From 2021 onward, the outflow of Georgian nationals resumed and intensified, peaking in 2023 with 163,140 emigrants – more than doubling the number observed in 2021. This dramatic rise was overwhelmingly driven by a surge in the net emigration of children and youth, particularly in the 0–19 age group, which accounted for 63,567 individuals, contributing to 89% of Georgia's total net emigration in 2023. Within this group, 10–14-year-olds were especially overrepresented in emigration, with nearly 35,000 children of this age group leaving the country in a single year. The reasons behind this exodus remain unclear, as data on school terminations, asylum applications, and residence permits offer only partial or insufficient explanation.

In contrast, foreign citizens have contributed positively to Georgia's net migration balance throughout the observed period, except for a temporary dip in 2020. A sharp uptick in immigration occurred in 2022, coinciding with Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine. This led to a substantial influx of individuals from Russia, Belarus, and Ukraine, many of whom were likely fleeing conflict and conscription. The trend continued into 2023 and 2024, though at gradually declining volumes. From 2015 to 2024, the largest net immigration flows were recorded from the Russian Federation (+97,090), Ukraine (+27,152), and Azerbaijan (+14,251).

Disaggregated analysis by age groups shows that Georgian citizens under 55 consistently experience net emigration, with the 15–19 age group exhibiting the highest average net outflows. This trend suggests that Georgia is losing substantial segments of its young and potentially economically active population. In contrast, net migration becomes positive or only marginally negative among citizens aged 55 and above, indicating lower emigration propensity in older cohorts or a modest degree of return migration. On the other hand, for foreign citizens, net immigration is most pronounced among 20–39-year-olds.

The findings presented here underscore the complexity of Georgia's migration profile, which is shaped by both long-term structural patterns and event-driven shocks such as the COVID-19 pandemic and Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Additionally, the brief explores migration trends of Georgian citizens specifically to the European countries, highlighting a growing reliance on legal migration pathways such as residence permits and asylum applications. Following the COVID-19 pandemic, Georgian asylum applications to the EU peaked in 2022, particularly to France and Germany. At the same time, the number of long-term residence permits held by Georgian nationals increased steadily, with employment and family-related factors emerging as the primary reasons. This indicates a shift toward more formal and structured migration to Europe, especially for labor-related purposes.

GENERAL MIGRATION FLOWS AND NET MIGRATION BALANCE

Over the past decade, migration patterns in Georgia have undergone important shifts, shaped by a complex interplay of domestic developments and global events. Examining long-term immigration and emigration trends reveals both persistent structural patterns - such as sustained emigration among Georgian citizens and immigration of foreign nationals – and sharp disruptions, including those triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic and geopolitical crises like Russia's war in Ukraine. The following analysis offers a high-level overview of these dynamics, setting the stage for a more detailed, disaggregated exploration in the sections that follow.

Chart 1 illustrates the long-term trends in immigration and emigration for both Georgian and foreign citizens. Between 2012 and 2021, emigration of Georgian citizens consistently outpaced immigration, reflecting sustained outflows. This dynamic was temporarily reversed in 2020, when emigration dropped sharply - falling to nearly 50 thousand - due to global travel restrictions and pandemic-related disruptions. In contrast, many Georgians deciding to return home resulted in a rare moment of positive net migration for Georgian citizens in that year (Chart 2).

From 2021 onward, migration patterns begin to change significantly. Immigration of Georgian and foreign citizens began to rise, while emigration also increased but at a much faster pace for Georgian citizens. This culminated in 2023, when emigration of Georgian citizens surged to over 163 thousand individuals - a sharp spike compared to about 80 thousand in 2021- driven primarily by an unprecedented rise in outflows among the children of school age (as shown in Chart 5 described in section 3 below). The most recent data for 2024 suggests a move towards the pre-2023 patterns, resulting in a modest positive net immigration of Georgian citizens.

Chart 1. Immigration and emigration flows of Georgia and foregn citizens
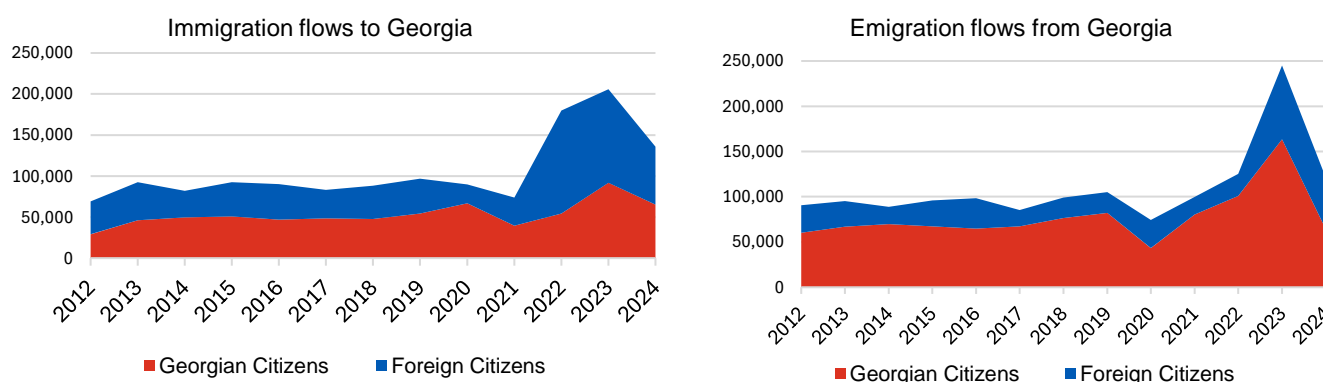
Source: Authors' charts based on Geostat data receivable from the Border Police

Chart 2, which tracks net migration trends separately for Georgian and foreign citizens, reinforces this narrative. Georgian citizens have experienced consistently negative net immigration – with emigration exceeding immigration - throughout most of the period, with the only exceptions of 2020 (direct consequence of pandemic-related factors) and a mild improvement in 2024 (with net immigration accounting to 842 individuals).

Chart 2. Net immigration of Georgian and foreign citizens to Georgia
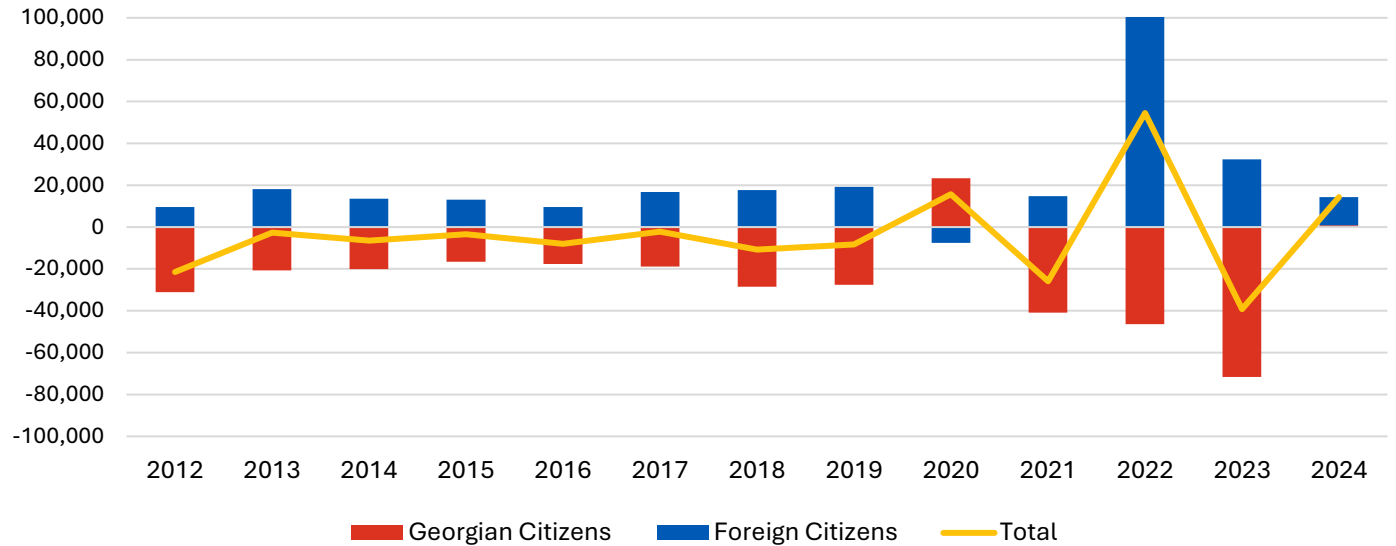
Source: Authors' charts based on Geostat data receivable from the Border Police

Foreign citizens have shown a consistently positive net immigration pattern, except for 2020. A striking shift occurs in 2022, when net immigration of foreign citizens to Georgia surged sharply, coinciding with the onset of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine. This increase reflects the influx of mostly Russian, Belarusian, and Ukrainian citizens (as shown in Chart 10 described in Section 4) who might have arrived in Georgia either fleeing conflict or avoiding military mobilization. The elevated inflow continued into 2023, albeit at a slightly lower level.
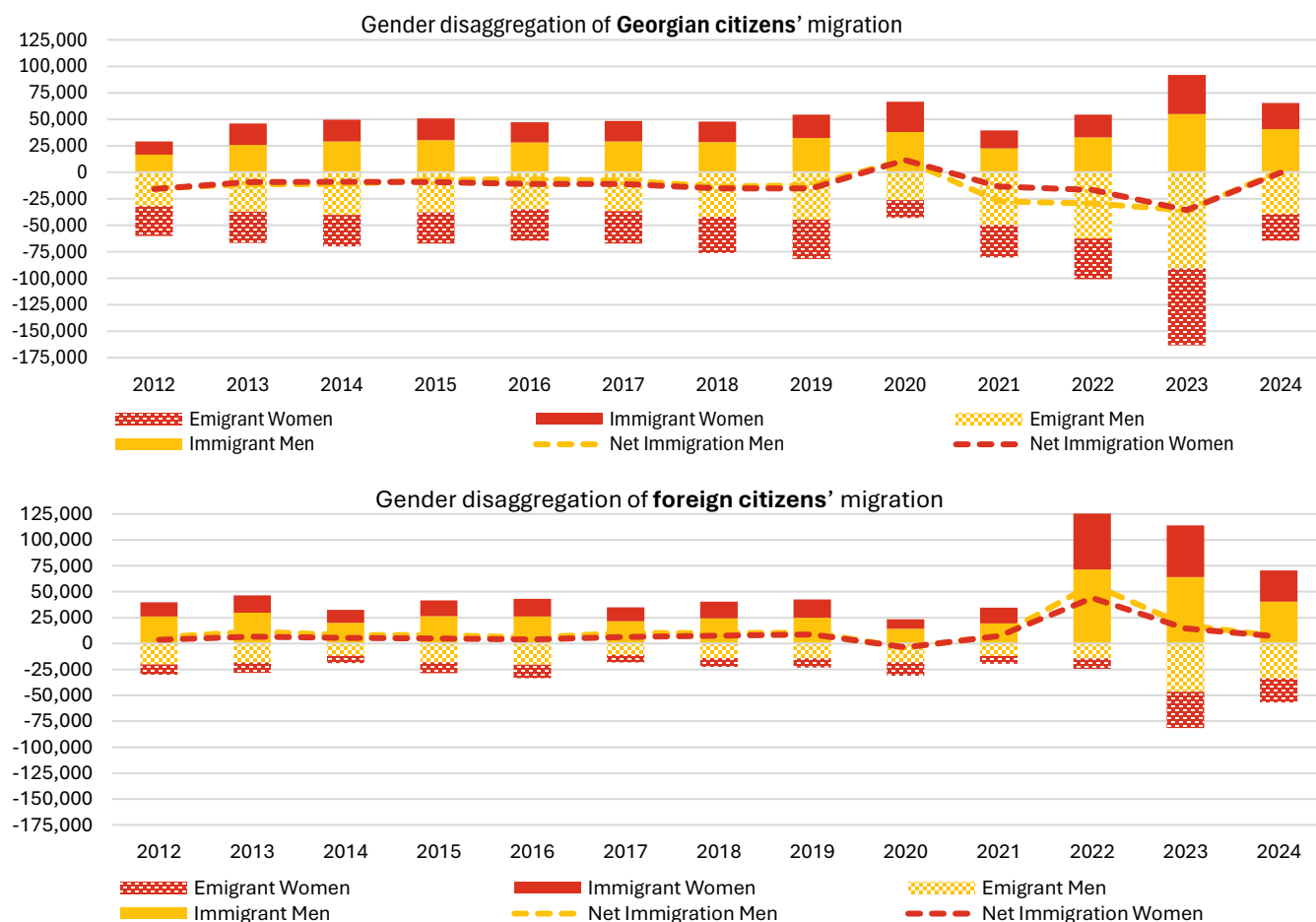
GENDER DISAGGREGATION OF MIGRATION FLOWS

Chart 3 below explores the gender composition of migration flows among both Georgian and foreign citizens between 2012 and 2024. Among Georgian migrants, men have historically outnumbered women.

The net migration trend for both Georgian men and women has remained consistently negative throughout most of the period, with the most significant net outflows occurring in 2021-2023. At the 2023 peak, Georgia saw an annual net emigration of 35.9 thousand men and 35.7 women.

When comparing net emigration of Georgia's male vs female citizens, we observe several distinct periods. While net emigration of women was surpassing that of men during 2015-2019 period, 2021-2022 period saw a much higher pace of net emigration among male citizens (57 thousand vs 30 thousand). In 2023 and 2024 the gender gap has significantly narrowed.

For foreign citizens, gender differences are also pronounced, with migrant men outnumbering migrant women. However, net immigration has consistently been positive for both genders, with a slight predominance of male net immigration in years of higher inflow – especially in 2022, when the Russia's invasion of Ukraine prompted a large spike in arrivals.

Chart 3. Gender disaggregation of Georgian and foreign citizens' migration
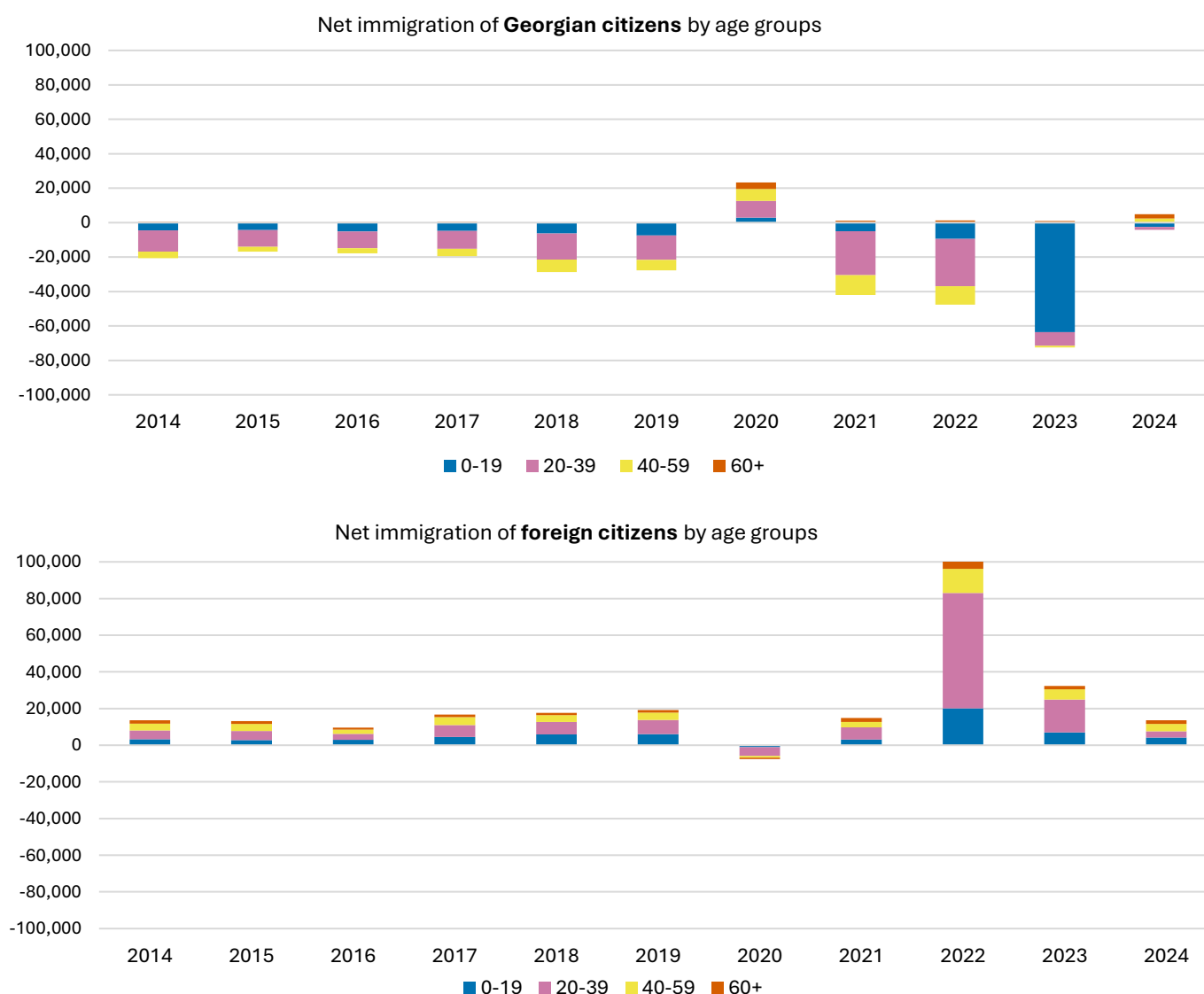

Source: Authors' charts based on Geostat data receivable from the Border Police

AGE DISAGGREGATION OF MIGRATION FLOWS

Chart 4 provides insights into net immigration by age groups for Georgian and foreign citizens between 2012 and 2024. Net immigration flows of foreign citizens reveal that the 20-39 age group is the most prominent among immigrants to Georgia, accounting for an average of 50% of total net immigration during the 2014–2022 period. A significant spike occurred in 2022, when net immigration surged across nearly all age groups, marking a sharp deviation from previous years. This rise was especially pronounced in the 20-39 and 40-59 age categories, which together accounted for the bulk of the increase. The surge coincides with the onset of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

Chart 4. Net immigration of Georgian and foreign citizens by age groups

Net immigration of **Georgian citizens** by age groups

Net immigration of **foreign citizens** by age groups

Source: Authors' charts based on Geostat data receivable from the Border Police

Similar to the foreign citizens, among Georgian migrants, the highest emigration rates are observed among individuals aged 20 – 39 across most years. This age group has consistently constituted the most mobile segment of the population, reflecting possibly both education and employment-related migration trends.

Migrants in this age group accounted for an average of 59% of total net emigration during the period 2014–2022.

A particularly unusual and striking deviation occurred in 2023, when the 0-19 age group experienced a sharp spike in net emigration. This age group, which typically shows lower levels of migration, registered an exceptionally large net outflow (63,567 individuals accounting for 89% of the total net emigration in 2023), driven mainly by children aged 10-14, as detailed further in Chart 5.

Chart 5 presents narrowly disaggregated data by age categories. As it shows, the age distribution shape of immigration often mirrors that of emigration - peaking around the same age group in most years. During the 2014–2022 period, migration flows were relatively stable on average (see Appendix 1 for further disaggregation of the years), however, 2023 marked a stark departure from this pattern. A pronounced spike in emigration occurred among youth aged 10-14, with around 35,000 children of that age leaving the country. Meanwhile, the 2023 distribution also reveals that emigration among older working-age groups was notably subdued in 2023, which contrasts with historical averages. This anomalous pattern of children emigration suggests a need for further data analysis that is presented in Section 3.1. below. However, the analysis did not reveal any clear or conclusive drivers behind the spike, indicating that further monitoring and data collection may be necessary.

In 2024, the pattern returned to historical norms - net migration for the 0-19 age group stabilized, and migration once again became concentrated among individuals aged 20-39. Emigration and immigration among Georgian citizens appear now more balanced, resulting in positive net immigration in 35+ aged populations.

Chart 5. Distribution of Georgian migrants by age category
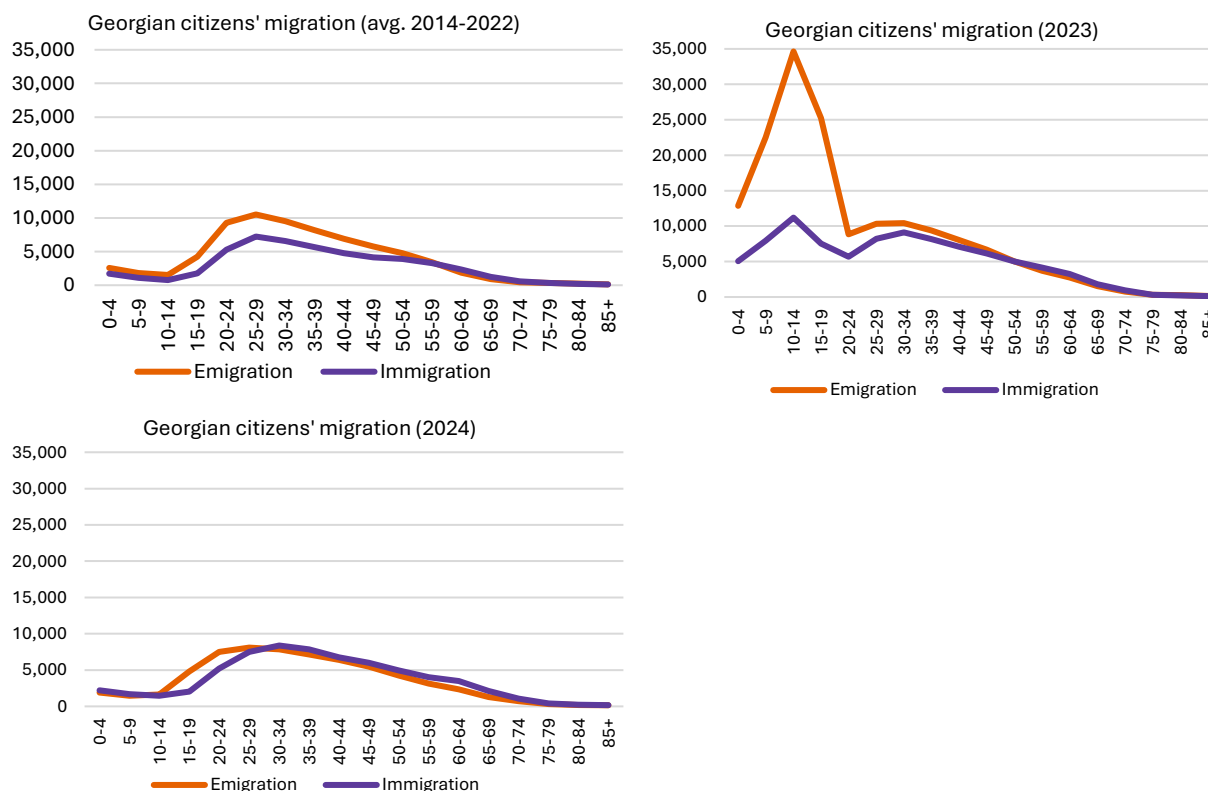
Source: Authors' charts based on Geostat data receivable from the Border Police

Chart 6 further depicts net immigration of Georgian citizens per 1,000 residents, averaged over the period of 2015–2024, offering a normalized view of how intense net emigration has been across narrow age groups relative to their respective population size. These rates reinforce the overall pattern of persistent net outflows of Georgian migrants for all age groups under 54 with a peak observed for youth aged 15 to 19 years old. At the same time, for the citizens above 55 net migration is either positive or insignificantly negative.

Chart 6. Net immigration of Georgian citizens per 1000 resident (average for 2015-2024)
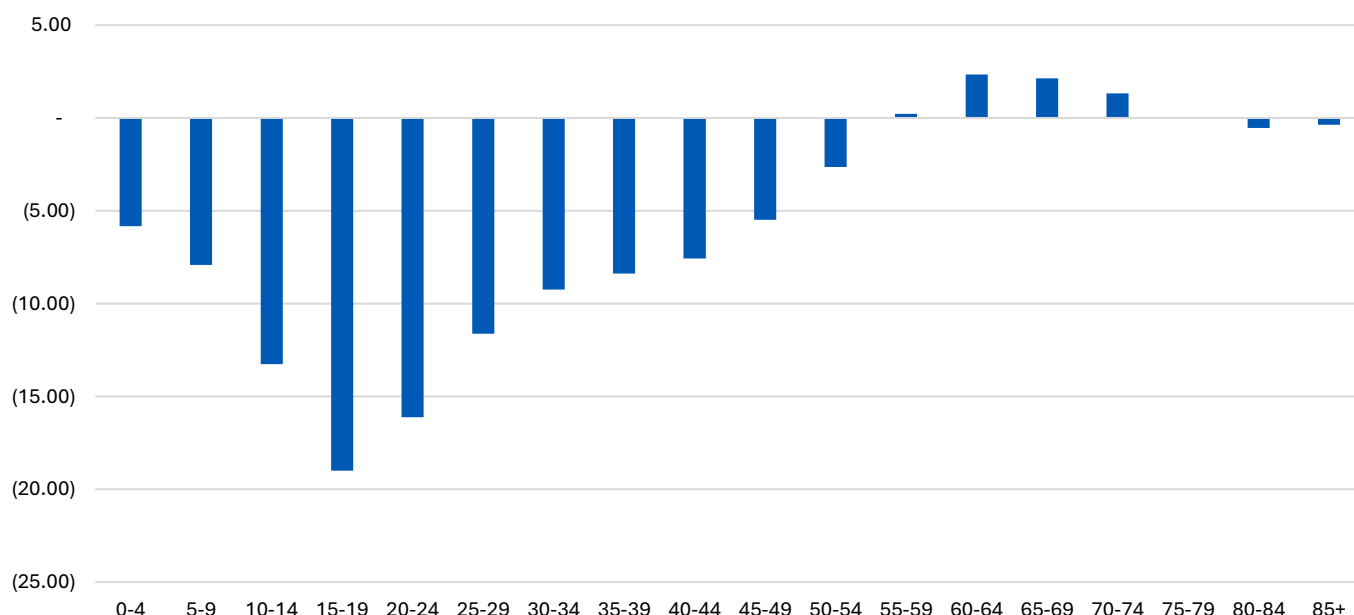

Source: Authors' charts based on Geostat data receivable from the Border Police

TRACING THE 2023 SURGE IN GEORGIAN CHILDREN EMIGRATION

The unusual trend in child emigration discussed above highlights the need for a more detailed analysis of the potential underlying factors. We considered the dynamics of Georgian pupils' status terminations at secondary schools, asylum applications and the issuance of residence permits to the Georgian citizens in the EU and other European countries. However, the analysis presented below does not reveal any definitive causes for the surge and may provide only partial correlations.

We begin by reviewing the annual number of pupils whose status was suspended or terminated (Chart 7). The recent spike to 14,911 during the 2022–2023 academic year may offer a partial explanation but does not come close to explaining a much higher surge in children's net emigration.

Chart 7. Number of pupils whose status was suspended/terminated, 2013-2024
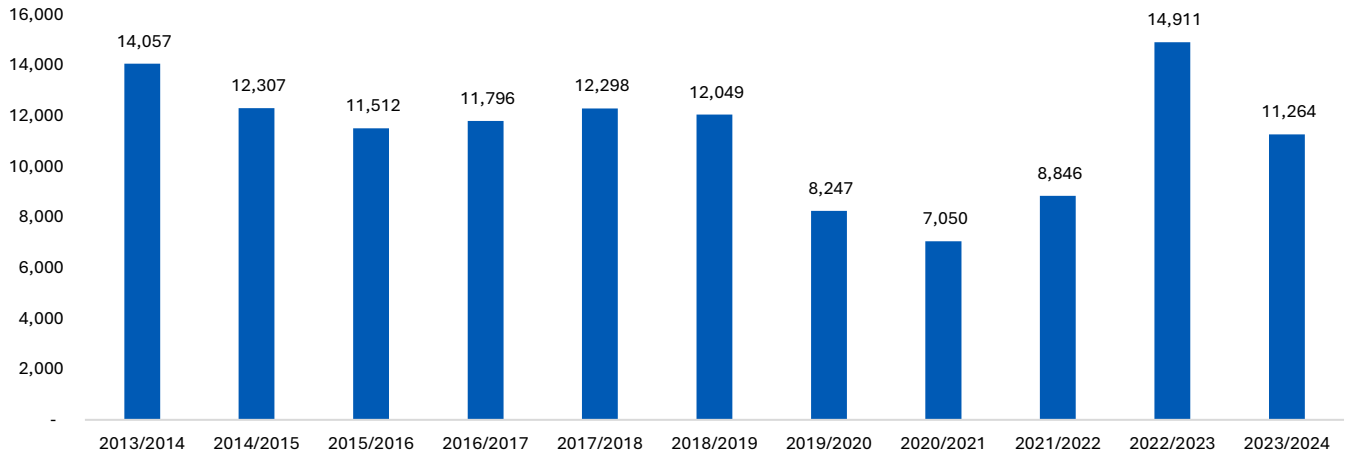
Source: Geostat

Next, we examine the trends in asylum applications submitted by Georgian nationals under the age of 18 in EU and other European countries. As Chart 8 shows, there was a notable increase in applications in 2022 and 2023, reaching 6,790 and 6,365 respectively - representing the highest numbers over the past decade. However, while these figures indicate a rise in child asylum applications abroad, the increase is an order of magnitude less compared to the spike in overall child emigration recorded in 2023.

Chart 8. Less than 18-year-Old Georgian Asylum Applicants in the EU and Other European Countries, 2015-24
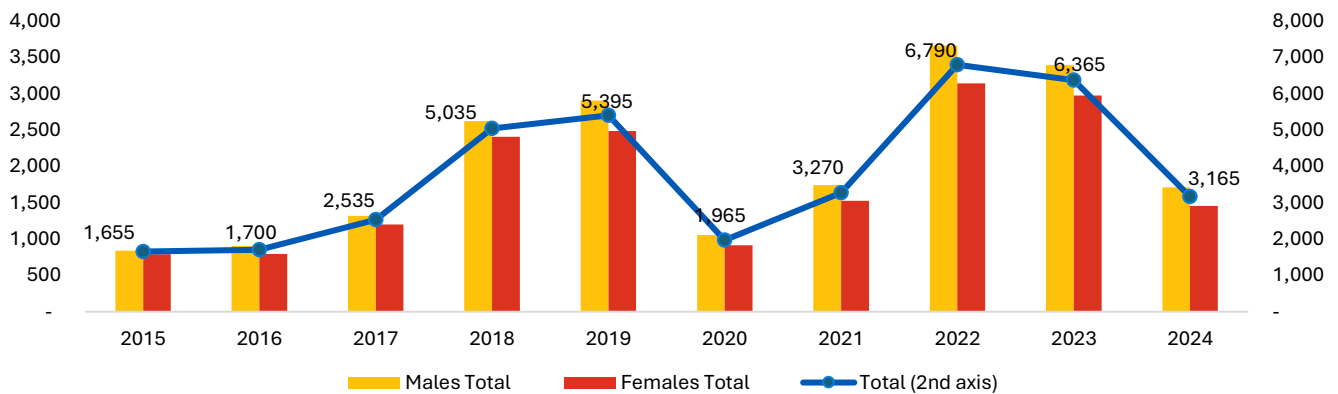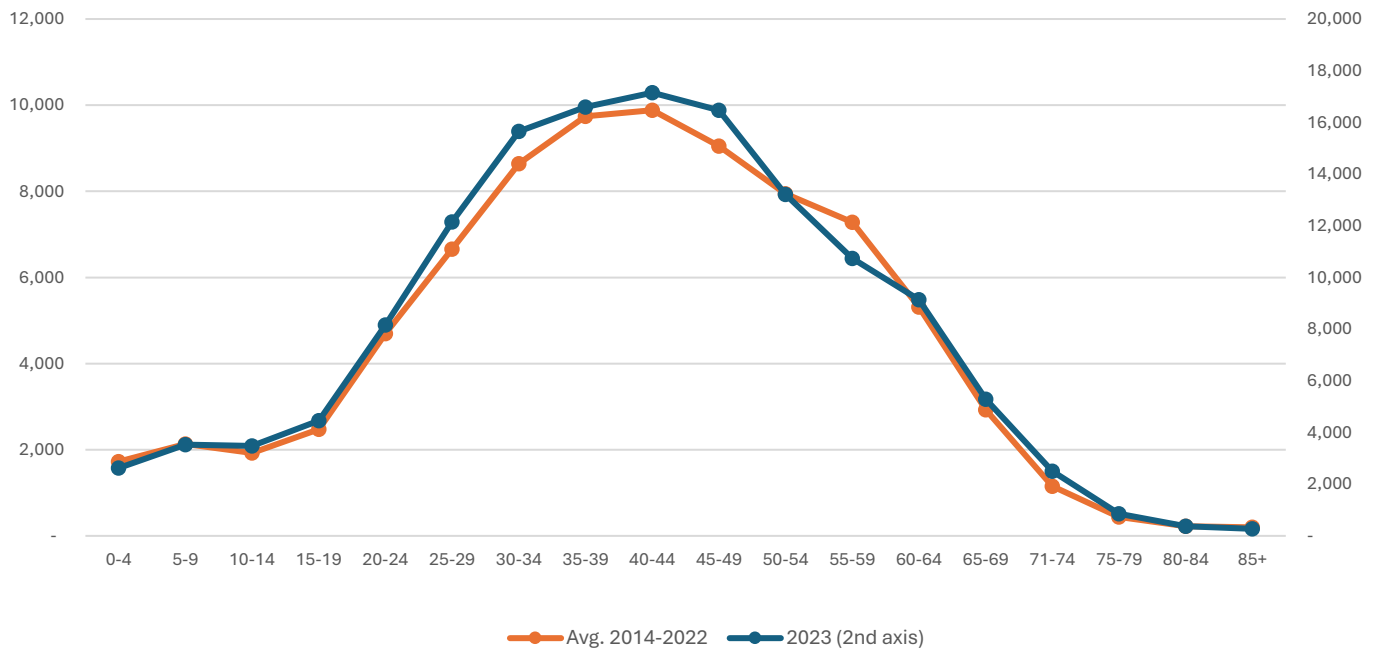

*Note: Other countries include Iceland, Norway, Liechtenstein, UK, Montenegro, and Switzerland.
Source: Eurostat

Chart 9 further illustrates Georgian citizens that hold residence permits in the EU and other European countries. The data shows that in 2023, the number of permits holders that are children aged 0–19 increased by approximately 6,000 compared to the average for the 2014–2022 period. This increase, while notable, still does not come close to accounting for the overall rise in child emigration observed that year. In addition, the distribution of residence permits issued in 2023 closely mirrors the average pattern observed between 2014 and 2022, indicating no significant deviation in 2023 in terms of the age distribution for the permit holders. This is in contrast with the age distribution of net emigration, as demonstrated in Chart 5 above.

Chart 9. Residence permits issued to the Georgian citizens in the EU and other European countries* by age groups

*Note: Other countries include Iceland, Liechtenstein, and Switzerland
Source: Eurostat

To summarize, the emigration surge of individuals under 19 years old remains mostly unexplained and warrants further research.

DISTRIBUTION OF FOREIGN CITIZEN MIGRANTS BY AGE GROUP AND CITIZENSHIP

In the following sub-section, we examine the age distribution of non-Georgian citizens who have immigrated to Georgia over the past decade disaggregated further by citizenship. Specifically, we focus on the top 13 foreign nationalities that have contributed the most to immigration and emigration flows in recent years. These include citizens of the Russian Federation, Ukraine, Türkiye, Azerbaijan, India, Armenia, Belarus, Iran, the United States, China, Israel, Kazakhstan, and Greece. The analysis is based on the data from 2015 to 2024 and is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Age distribution of foreign citizens immigrating to Georgia, total sum of 2015-2024 and shares of corresponding age groups

Citizenship/ Age Group	Russian Federation	Ukraine	Türkiye	Azerbaijan	India	Armenia	Belarus	Iran	USA	China	Israel	Kazakhstan	Greece
0-4	7%	7%	5%	8%	1%	8%	6%	4%	14%	1%	5%	8%	6%
5-9	5%	7%	3%	5%	1%	4%	4%	5%	7%	0%	5%	7%	4%
10-14	3%	6%	2%	3%	1%	3%	2%	4%	5%	0%	4%	6%	3%
15-19	3%	4%	3%	12%	42%	3%	2%	6%	4%	1%	15%	5%	3%
20-24	10%	8%	10%	11%	36%	7%	18%	8%	9%	10%	21%	11%	5%
25-29	16%	13%	12%	11%	7%	14%	25%	15%	11%	15%	9%	14%	5%
30-34	14%	13%	12%	10%	4%	12%	20%	18%	10%	16%	7%	14%	6%
35-39	9%	11%	12%	8%	3%	10%	11%	13%	8%	14%	6%	11%	6%
40-44	6%	8%	12%	6%	2%	8%	5%	9%	7%	13%	5%	7%	6%
45-49	5%	6%	10%	5%	1%	7%	2%	7%	6%	14%	4%	5%	7%
50-54	5%	5%	8%	6%	1%	7%	2%	5%	5%	10%	4%	4%	7%
55-59	5%	4%	5%	5%	0%	7%	1%	3%	4%	4%	4%	3%	9%
60-64	4%	3%	3%	4%	0%	5%	1%	2%	4%	1%	4%	2%	9%
65-69	3%	2%	2%	3%	0%	3%	0%	1%	3%	0%	4%	1%	10%
70-74	2%	1%	1%	1%	0%	2%	0%	0%	2%	0%	2%	1%	7%
75-79	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	4%
80-84	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	3%
85+	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%
Total Immigration, person	209,230	50,666	46,195	33,087	30,745	26,063	22,579	17,302	13,368	13,075	10,356	8,626	5,818

Source: Authors' charts based on Geostat data receivable from the Border Police

In the past decade, the highest volume of immigration to Georgia has been observed from the Russian Federation, Ukraine, and Türkiye.

Beyond overall volumes, country-specific age patterns reveal important insights into the nature and reasons of migration. A particularly distinctive profile is observed for India, where immigration is concentrated in younger age groups. Specifically, 42% of Indian immigrants were aged 15–19 and 36% were aged 20–24. These numbers coincide with the fact that many Indian citizens in Georgia are international students enrolled in Georgian higher education institutions.

Another interesting observation is the age structure of immigrants from Greece. Unlike most other countries in the dataset, where immigration is concentrated in younger working-age groups, a significant share of immigrants from Greece are aged 60 and above.

Migration from the United States shows a moderate peak in the 0–4 age group, which may reflect the return of Georgian families who had children abroad and subsequently moved back to Georgia. Meanwhile, immigration from most other countries exhibit a relatively balanced distribution across age groups, reflecting more typical patterns of labor or family-related migration.

As for the foreign citizens emigrating from Georgia (Table 2), the highest numbers are recorded for nationals of the Russian Federation, Türkiye, and Armenia.

Table 2: Age distribution of foreign citizens emigrating from Georgia, total sum of 2015-2024 and shares of corresponding age groups

Citizenship/ Age Group	Russian Federation	Türkiye	Armenia	Ukraine	Azerbaijan	India	China	USA	Belarus	Iran	Israel	Kazakhstan	Greece
0-4	7%	5%	5%	6%	7%	2%	13%	14%	5%	4%	22%	8%	6%
5-9	6%	3%	4%	6%	5%	2%	1%	8%	5%	5%	4%	9%	5%
10-14	4%	2%	3%	5%	3%	1%	0%	6%	3%	5%	4%	8%	4%
15-19	4%	3%	2%	5%	6%	6%	1%	6%	2%	5%	5%	5%	4%
20-24	8%	8%	6%	7%	15%	51%	6%	8%	13%	8%	16%	8%	6%
25-29	15%	11%	16%	11%	12%	21%	15%	11%	25%	12%	12%	13%	6%
30-34	14%	12%	13%	13%	10%	6%	14%	9%	20%	15%	5%	13%	6%
35-39	10%	12%	11%	12%	8%	4%	11%	8%	13%	14%	5%	12%	7%
40-44	6%	12%	9%	8%	7%	3%	11%	7%	6%	10%	4%	8%	6%
45-49	5%	10%	7%	7%	6%	2%	13%	6%	3%	8%	4%	5%	7%
50-54	6%	9%	8%	6%	6%	1%	9%	4%	2%	6%	4%	4%	6%
55-59	5%	6%	7%	5%	6%	1%	4%	4%	1%	4%	4%	3%	7%
60-64	5%	4%	5%	4%	4%	0%	1%	3%	1%	2%	4%	2%	8%
65-69	3%	2%	2%	2%	3%	0%	0%	3%	0%	1%	4%	1%	7%
70-74	2%	1%	1%	1%	2%	0%	0%	2%	0%	1%	2%	1%	6%
75-79	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%	4%
80-84	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	3%
85+	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%
Total Emigration, person	112,140	31,960	24,746	23,514	18,836	17,421	11,536	9,972	9,043	8,853	7,699	4,226	4,034

Source: Authors' charts based on Geostat data receivable from the Border Police

One of the distinct age-related trends is observed for India, where 72% of emigrants fall within the 20-29 age range (specifically, 51% aged 20–24 and 21% aged 25–29). This mirrors the pattern observed in the immigration data and reinforces the interpretation that many Indian nationals are students who stay in Georgia temporarily for educational purposes. Their eventual return upon completion of studies is thus reflected in the emigration statistics.

A noteworthy deviation from typical age distribution patterns is observed in the case of China, where 13% of emigration by Chinese citizens from Georgia occurred in the 0–4 age group. A similar pattern is observed for Israel. 22% of Israeli emigrants from Georgia between 2015 and 2024 were aged 0–4, the highest share in this age category among all nationalities. For both countries the net immigration for 0-4 age group is significantly negative, which is in stark contrast to overall positive net immigration from these countries.

Citizens of the United States also show a notable share (14%) in the 0–4 age group among emigrants. However, unlike the patterns observed for China and Israel, this likely reflects return migration, as immigration in this same age category is also relatively high for the US.

For countries such as Russia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Ukraine, and Türkiye, emigration is concentrated among the 25–44 age range. In contrast, Greece and Kazakhstan exhibit more even distributions across both younger and middle-aged groups, though their total emigration numbers remain relatively small.

Analysis of net migration flows between 2015 and 2024 confirms that Georgia has experienced a positive net immigration of foreign citizens over the past decade. With few exceptions in specific age groups, the overall balance between immigration and emigration is positive for all countries. As shown in Table 3, the highest net inflows are recorded from the Russian Federation (97,090 persons), followed by Ukraine (27,152), Azerbaijan (14,251), Türkiye (14,235), Belarus (13,536), and India (13,324).

Table 3: Net immigration, total sum of 2015-2024, person

| Country of Citizenship	Net migration, person, total sum of 2015-2024
Russian Federation	97,090
Ukraine	27,152
Azerbaijan	14,251
Türkiye	14,235
Belarus	13,536
India	13,324
Islamic Republic of Iran	8,449
Kazakhstan	4,400
USA	3,396
Israel	2,657
Greece	1,784
China	1,539
Armenia	1,317

Source: Authors' charts based on Geostat data receivable from the Border Police

MIGRATION IN GEORGIA DURING RUSSIA'S WAR IN UKRAINE

The migration data for foreign citizens depict several interesting insights in the yearly trends. From 2012 to 2019, immigration and emigration numbers remained relatively stable, with net immigration fluctuating between 9,000 and 20,000 persons. However, the numbers show significant shift since 2020. In 2020, net migration became negative first time during the observation period, which was most likely caused by the COVID pandemic.

A drastic increase in migration occured in 2022, when the number of immigrants reached more than 125,000 people, with low emigration rate, leading to sharp increase in net immigration. Number of immigrants slightly decreased in 2023 and continued declining in 2024. At the same time, net immigration also decreased due to higher emigration rates and reached almost 13,000 in 2024.

Chart 10. Migration of foreign citizens, 2012-2024
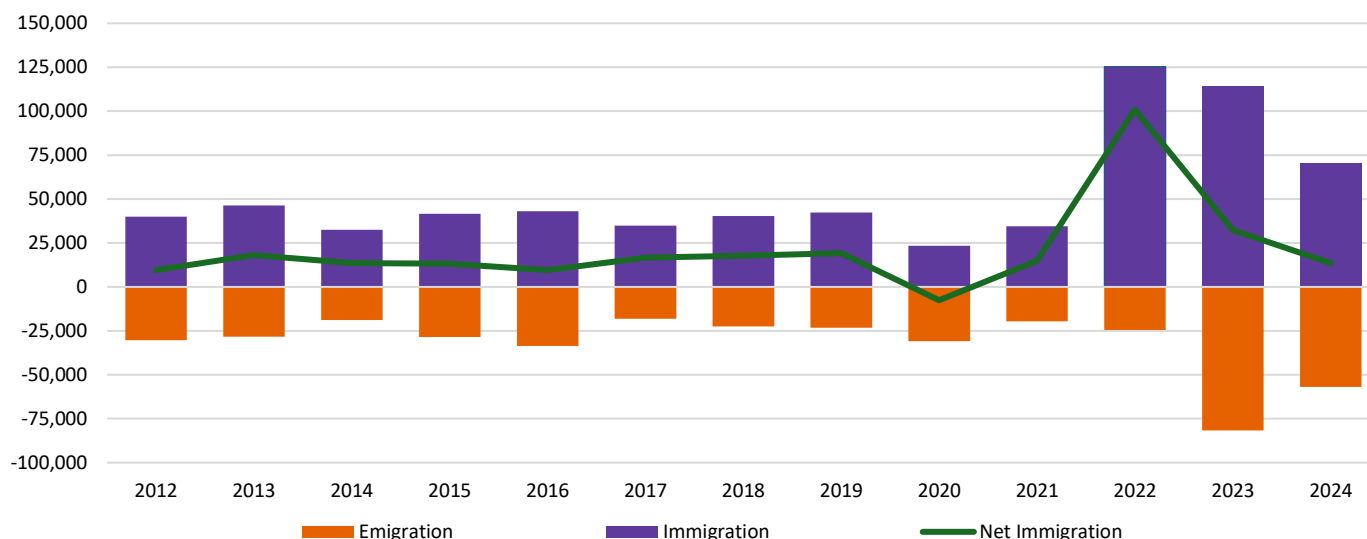
Source: Authors' charts based on Geostat data receivable from the Border Police

The influx of non-Georgian immigrants results from Russia's invasion of Ukraine that began at the end of February 2022. The aggregate data of 2022-2024 migration flows reveals that top 3 countries by number of immigrants and net immigration to Georgia were Russian Federation, Ukraine, and Belarus.

Chart 11. Migration flows by foreign citizens, aggregate of 2022-2024
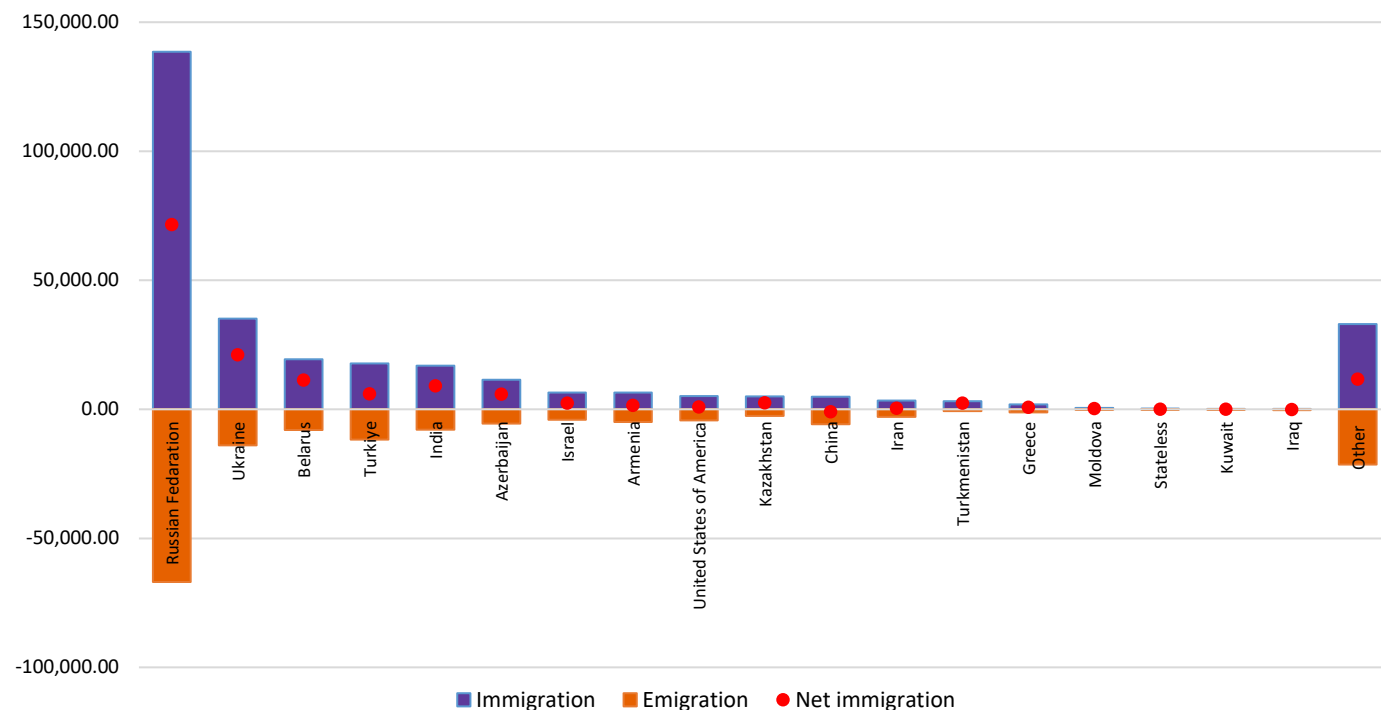
Source: Authors' charts based on Geostat data receivable from the Border Police

A significant change of migrant composition can be observed during the 2022-2024 period. Comparing the aggregate data of 2012-2021 to the aggregate data of the 2022-2024 shows that the share of these top 3 countries has significantly increased in the total number of foreign immigrants (from 32% to 62%), as well as in the number of emigrants (from 30% to 55%) and net immigration (from 38% to 71%).

The graphs below (Chart 12) show the share of different age groups in the total number of immigrants, comparing two periods: 2015-2021 and 2022-2024. The graphs show varying results for the countries.

For Russian citizens, the share of immigrants in 20-39 age groups increased significantly during 2022-2024 compared to the previous period. On the other hand, the shares of all older age groups exhibit a decline.

For Belarus no significant difference can be observed in age distribution between two selected time periods, with the only exception of increased contribution from the 20-29 age groups.

The opposite picture is observed for Ukraine. The share of all age groups between 19-35 declined compared to the 2015-2021 time period, while children and youth between 0 and 19 years constituted a higher share in the total number of immigrants during 2022-2024.

Chart 12. Immigration from Belarus, Russian Federation and Ukraine, by age groups

Immigration from Belarus, by age groups

Immigration from Ukraine, by age groups

Immigration from Russian Federation, by age groups

Source: Authors' charts based on Geostat data receivable from the Border Police.

Notably, although the graphs illustrate immigration figures, similar trends are also evident in the net migration data for each country.

GEORGIAN CITIZENS IN EUROPE

In this section, we examine the scale and nature of emigration from Georgia to European countries through the lens of two key indicators: asylum applications and residence permits issued to Georgian citizens.

Chart 13 shows a sharp increase after the COVID-19 for Georgian asylum applications to the EU, peaking at 28,460 in 2022 before declining to 14,785 in 2024. France and Germany emerged as the top destinations, with France receiving the highest number of applications from 2018 onward. Italy also saw a steady rise, particularly after 2020.

**Chart 13.** Georgian asylum applicants to EU and top 5 host countries, 2015-2024
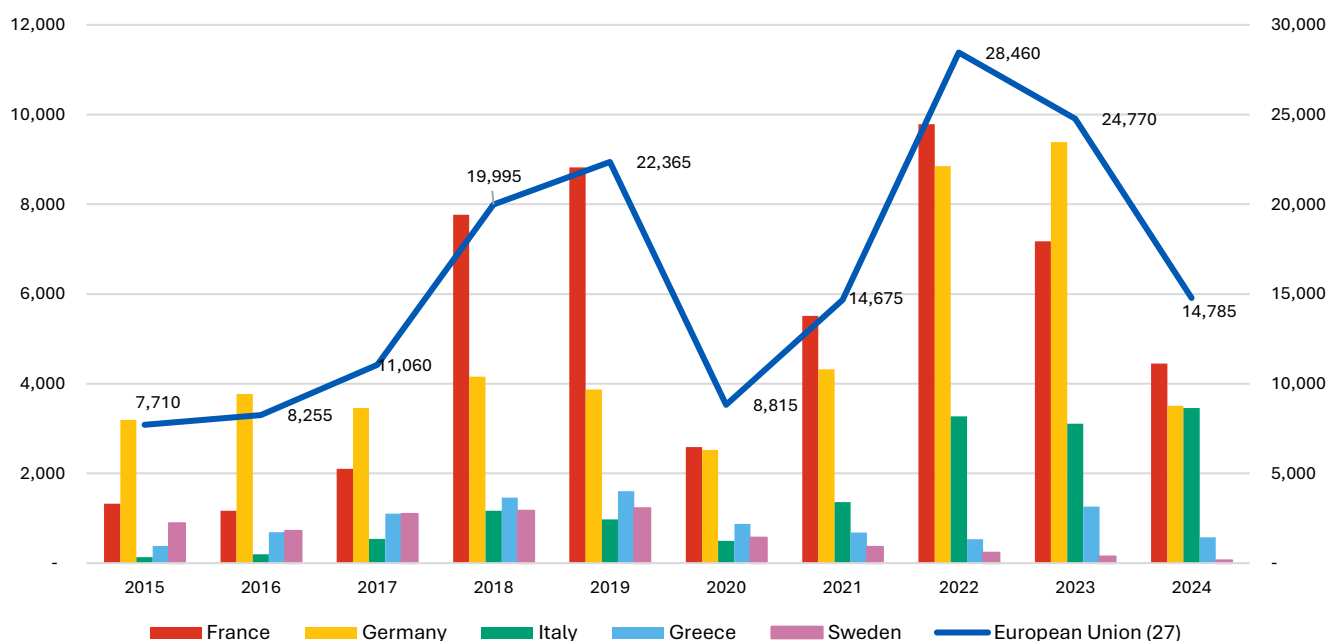
Source: Eurostat

Chart 14 below illustrates the number of Georgian citizens holding residence permits in the EU and other European countries between 2014 and 2023, categorized by reasons such as family, employment, education, protection status, and others. The total number of permits (blue line) shows a steady upward trend over the period, increasing sharply after 2020 and peaking at over 150,000 in 2023.

Employment and family reasons have consistently been the leading categories throughout the period, each accounting for a significant portion of residence permits annually. Employment-related permits saw substantial growth starting in 2020, rising sharply in 2021 and 2022, and remaining high in 2023 -suggesting an increase in labor migration. Education permits remained relatively stable and modest, while refugee and subsidiary protection statuses remained consistently low in comparison.
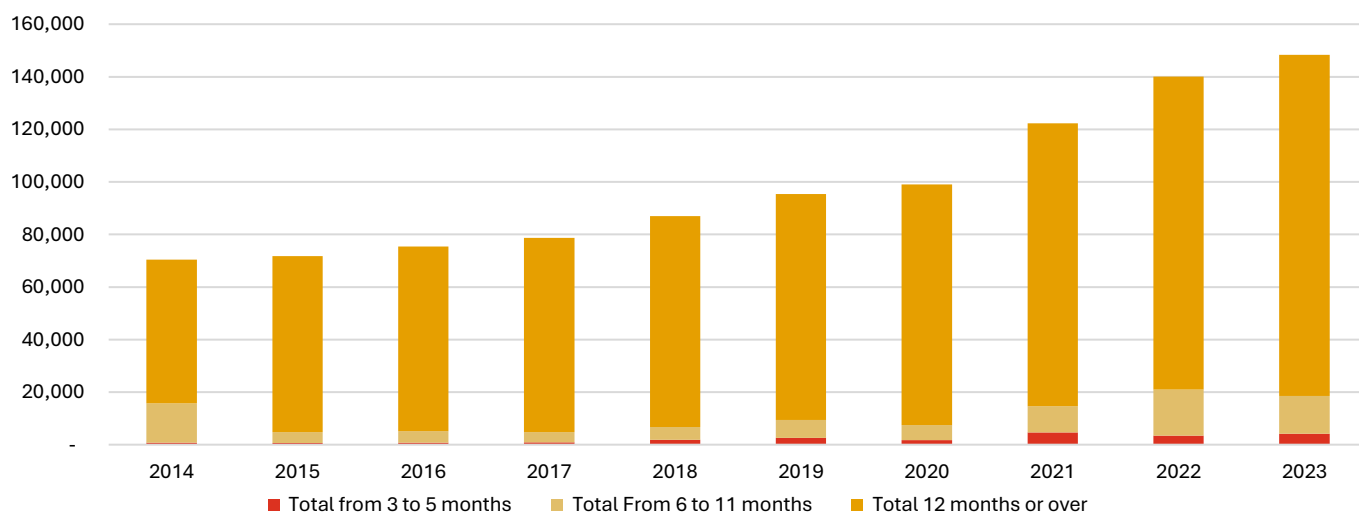
Chart 14. Residence Permits held by Georgian Citizens in the EU and Other European Countries* by Reason, 2014-2023
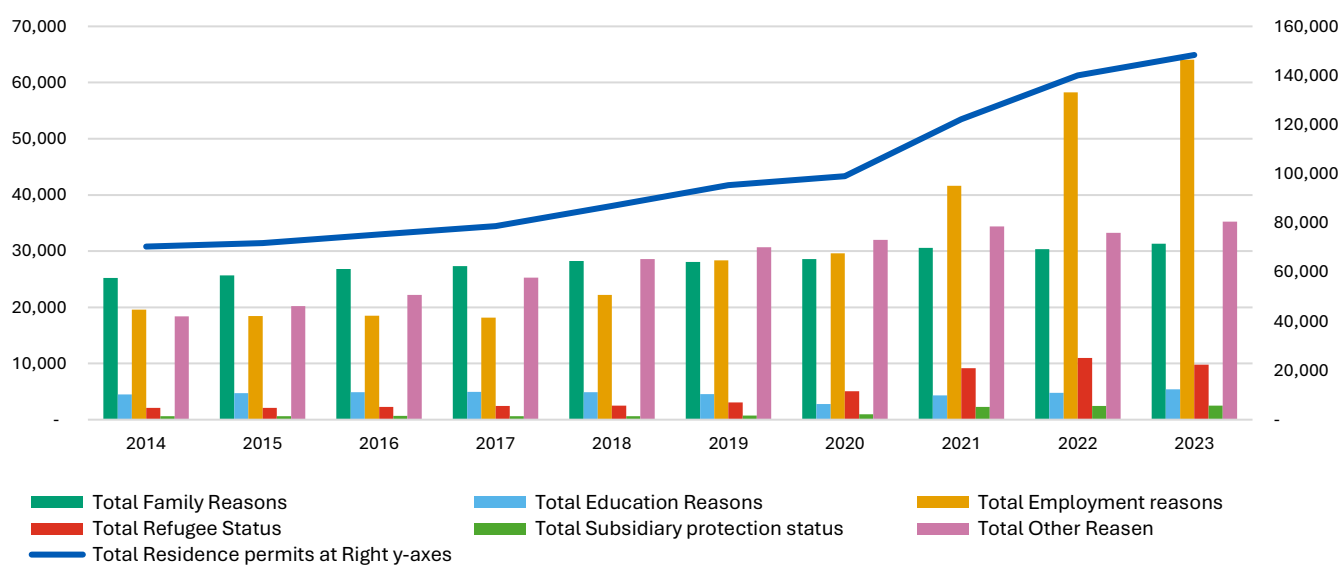
*Note: Other countries include Iceland, Liechtenstein, UK, and Switzerland
Source: Eurostat

Chart 15 displays the number of residence permits held by the Georgian citizens in the EU and other European countries by duration of the permit from 2014 to 2023. The data is disaggregated into three categories: permits lasting 3-5 months, 6-11 months, and 12 months or more.

Chart 15. Residence Permits held by the Georgian Citizens in the EU and Other European Countries* by Length of the permit, 2014-2023
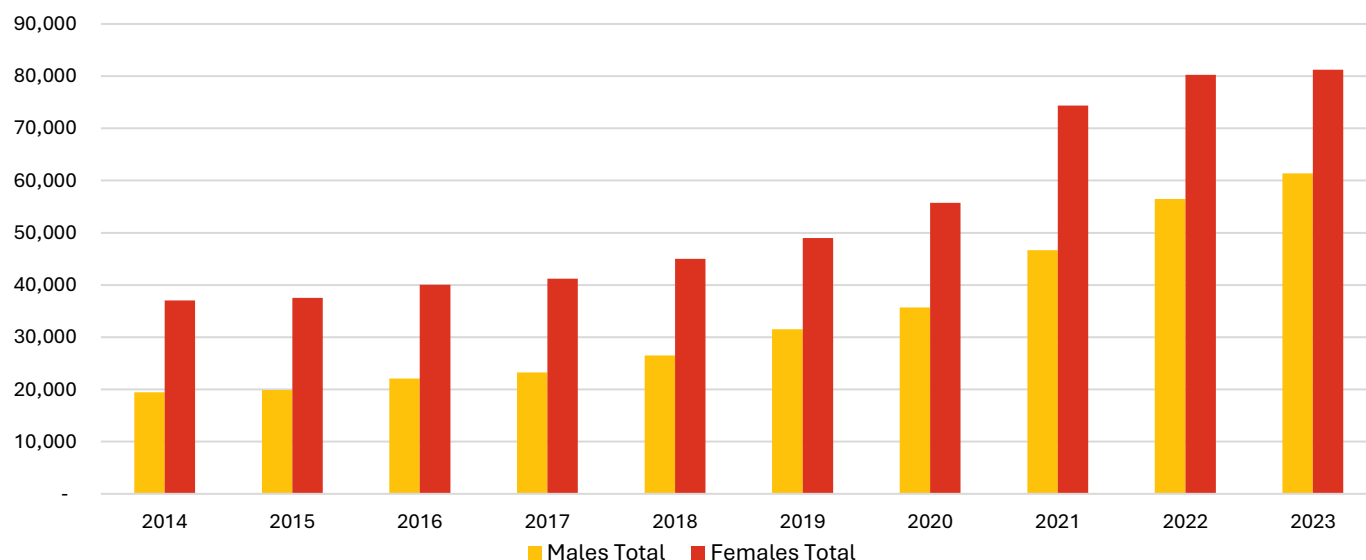

*Note: Other countries include Iceland, Liechtenstein, UK, and Switzerland
Source: Eurostat

The most notable trend is the steady and substantial increase in long-term permits (12 months or over), which dominated throughout the entire period. Starting at around 55,000 in 2014, the number of long-term permits grew steadily, peaking at nearly 130,000 in 2023. Permits valid for 3-5 months and 6-11 months

represent a relatively small share of the total throughout the period, with modest growth reported for both types of permits.

Chart 16 presents the number of residence permits held by Georgian citizens in the EU and other European countries by sex. From 2014 to 2020, the number of permits issued to both sexes increased gradually, but females consistently hold more permits than males throughout the entire period.

Chart 16. Residence Permits Issued to the Georgian Citizens in the EU and Other European Countries* by Sex, 2014-2023

*Note: Other countries include Iceland, Liechtenstein, and Switzerland
Source: Eurostat

A sharp increase is observed between 2020 and 2021. This surge was driven by a notable rise in both male and female migration, though the increase was steeper among female applicants, who continued to outnumber males in subsequent years. By 2023, women hold about 57% of permits.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion we present 10 defining features of migration trends in Georgia observed in the last decade:

1. A historically persistent pattern of net emigration has been observed among Georgian citizens with individuals aged 20-39 consistently being the most mobile group-driven largely by labor and education-related migration until a sharp one-time deviation in 2023.
2. 2023 marked an anomalous surge in the net emigration of children and youth aged 0–19, who accounted for 63,567 individuals – representing 89% of Georgia's total net emigration that year.
3. Female emigration of Georgian citizens outpaced male emigration during 2015-2019, but the trend reversed in 2021-2022 when male emigration surged.
4. Net migration rates per 1,000 residents highlight the negative outflows among Georgians aged 54 and under with highly disproportionate contribution from youth. At the same time net migration for those aged 55 and over is either positive or only slightly negative.
5. Net emigration of Georgian citizens increased between 2021 and 2023, followed by a shift to minimal net immigration in 2024.
6. Consistently positive net immigration of foreign citizens to Georgia, with the highest net inflows recorded from the Russian Federation, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Türkiye, Belarus, and India.
7. Foreign citizens show the highest net immigration in the 20-39 age group, reflecting labor and education-driven mobility.
8. A sharp uptick in immigration occurred in 2022, coinciding with Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine. This triggered a substantial influx of individuals from Russia, Belarus, and Ukraine, continuing into 2023 and 2024 at gradually declining volumes.
9. The growing number of Georgian citizens holding long-term residence permits in the EU-driven largely by employment and family reasons – suggests that Europe is becoming an increasingly important destination for structured, legal migration from Georgia.

Finally, a sharp rise in asylum applications – peaking in 2022 – indicates that a portion of emigration also occurs through more precarious or irregular channels, especially toward countries such as France and Germany.

Appendix 1. Distribution of Georgian emigrants and immigrants by age groups, 2014-2024
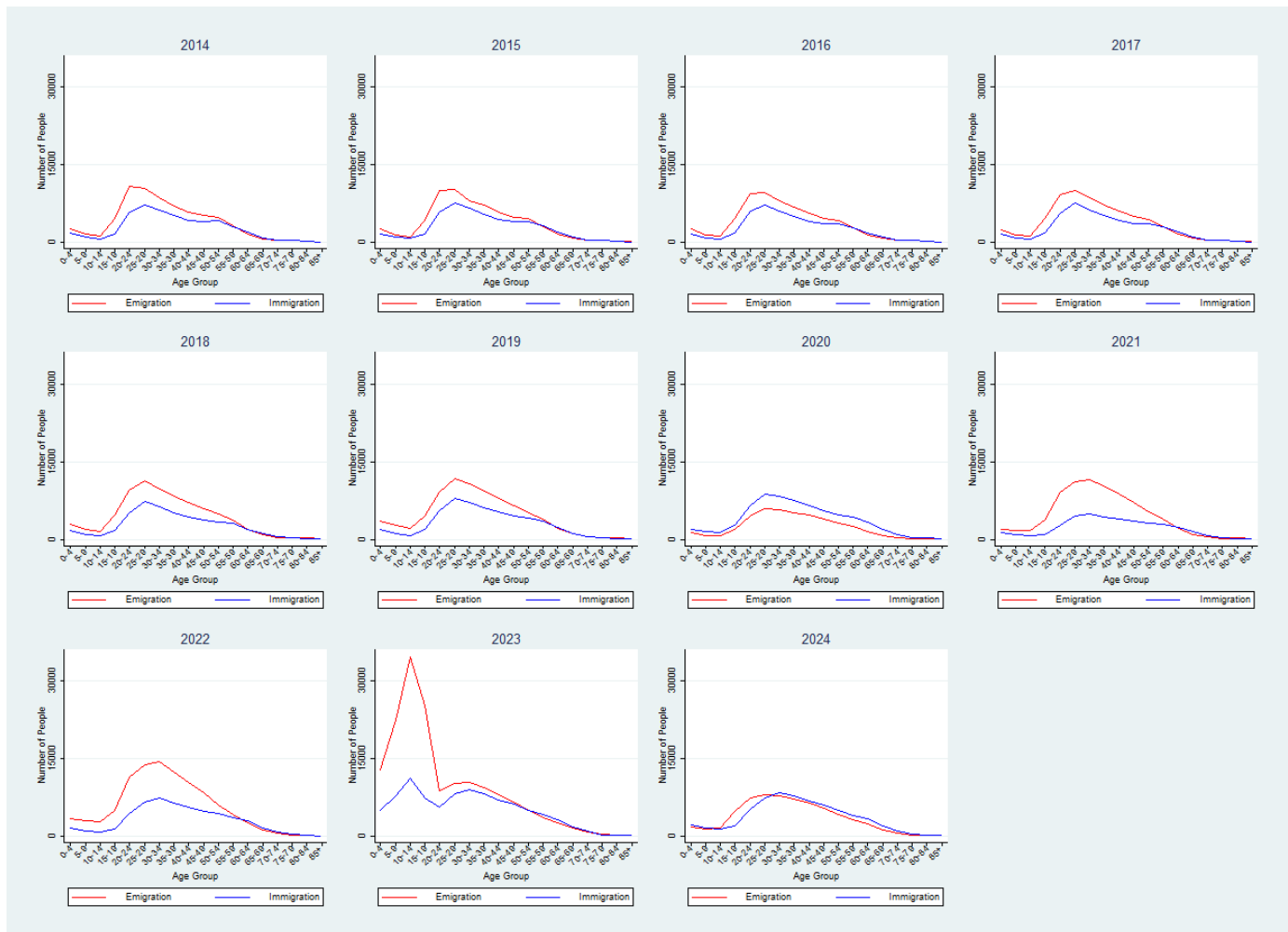
Source: Authors' chart based on the data from the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia - Border Police