# YOUNG PEOPLE
## IN GEORGIA

*An Overview Based on the 2014*
*General Population Census Data*
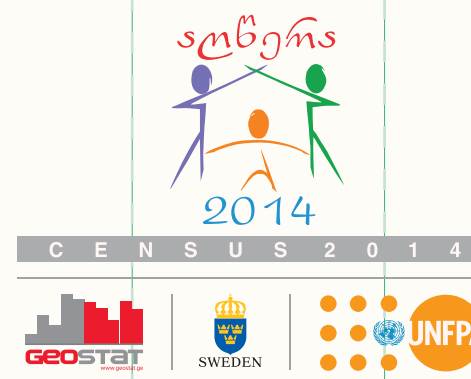
*Frank Eelens*

CENSUS 2014

GEOSTAT · SWEDEN · UNFPA

2017

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Tbilisi, Georgia

**Young People in Georgia**
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**Author: Frank Eelens**

**Frank Eelens**  (May 1st, 1954) started his career in 1984 when he received his PhD in demography from the Interuniversity Programme in Demography, at the Free University in Brussels. In his dissertation, he investigated the effect of duration of breastfeeding on infant and child mortality in sub-Saharan Africa. For over thirty years he has been involved in a large number of projects in the general field of population and development. His work has concentrated on providing technical assistance with all aspects of large scale demographic research projects (censuses and surveys), training and institutional development. In 1987, he joined the Netherlands Interdisciplinary Demographic Institute (NIDI) in The Hague where he became head of the Department of Population and Development and worked in countries such as the Solomon Islands, Yemen, Senegal, Bangladesh and Mali. In 1990- 1995 he provided technical assistance with the 1991 census in Aruba (Dutch West Indies) and helped reorganize the Aruban Central Bureau of Statistics. In 1998, he returned to Aruba and provided support with the 2000 and 2010 population censuses. Since 2012, Dr. Eelens works as an independent consultant. During the last years he has been involved in projects in Afghanistan, DPRK, Albania, Bosnia Herzegovina, Myanmar, Tajikistan, China and Kenya.

**Edited by: Thea Maisuradze**

**Translated into Georgian by: Maia Gvitidze**

Any statements and/or ideas expressed in the publication belong solely to the author and may not reflect the opinions of the UNFPA and Geostat. The UNFPA and Geostat take no responsibility for any inaccuracies.

Electronic version available at: http://georgia.unfpa.org

# Table of Contents

# List of Figures

# List of Tables

# List of Maps

# Preface

The National Statistics Office of Georgia and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Country Office in Georgia present: *Young People in Georgia: An Overview Based on the 2014 General Population Census Data.*

By its scale and content, the Census represents a unique source of data on the social, economic and demographic situation of the population in the country. As a result of the 2014 Census, the most current and accurate information has been collected on population size, its sex and age structure, employment, education, health, sources of income, housing and agricultural activities in Georgia. Using the Census 2014 data, the present report studies the situation of young people in Georgia, and the challenges they face and the opportunities they embody as they transition from youth to adulthood.

This report is another step by UNFPA to support the use of reliable population data and its analysis in the formulation of rights-based policies, including on youth, through cutting-edge analysis on population dynamics and its interlinkages with sustainable development.

# Acknowledgement

# Abbreviations

| | |
|---|---|
| **CDC** | Centers for Disease Control and Prevention |
| **DRH/CDC** | Division of Reproductive Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention |
| **Geostat** | National Statistics Office of Georgia |
| **GAR** | Gross Attendance Ratio |
| **IDP** | Internally Displaced Persons |
| **ILO** | International Labour Organization |
| **ISCO** | International Standard of Occupations |
| **MAFB** | Mean Age at First Birth |
| **MoLHSA** | Ministry of Labor, Health, and Social Affairs |
| **NCDC** | National Center for Disease Control and Public Health |
| **NEET** | Not in Education, Employment or Training |
| **PSA** | Population Situation Analysis |
| **SDGs** | Sustainable Development Goals |
| **SMAFB** | Singulate Mean Age at First Birth |
| **SMAM** | Singulate Mean Age at Marriage |
| **TFR** | Total Fertility Rate |
| **UN** | United Nations |
| **UNESCO** | United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization |
| **UNDESA** | United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs |
| **UNFPA** | United Nations Population Fund |
| **UNHCR** | United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees |
| **UNICEF** | United Nations Children's Fund |
| **USAID** | United States Agency for International Development |
| **WG** | Washington Group |
| **WHO** | World Health Organization |

# Administrative Map of Georgia

N
W E
S

km
90 60 30 15 0

**Russian Federation**

**Azerbaijan**

Lagodekhi

Qvareli

Akhmeta

Telavi

C. Telavi

Gurjaani

**Kakheti**

Sighnagi

Sagarejo

Dedoplistsqaro

**Mtskheta-Mtianeti**

Dusheti

Tianeti

Kazbegi

Gardabani

C. Rustavi

Tskhinvali Region

C. Mtskheta

**Tbilisi**

Mtskheta

Marneuli

Kaspi

Tetri Tsqaro

**Kvemo Kartli**

Bolnisi

C. Gori

Kareli

**Shida Kartli**

Gori

Khashuri

Tsalka

Dmanisi

**Armenia**

Oni

Borjomi

Ninotsminda

**Racha-Lechkhumi and Kvemo Svaneti**

Sachkhere

Chiatura

Ambrolauri

C. Ambrolauri

Kharagauli

Akhalkalaki

**Samtskhe-Javakheti**

Aspindza

Akhaltsikhe

Lentekhi

Tsageri

Tqibuli

Terjola

Baghdati

C. Akhaltsikhe

Adigeni

Mestia

**Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti**

Khoni

Tsqaltubo

C. Kutaisi

**Imereti**

Vani

Chkhorotsku

Martvili

Tsalenjikha

Samtredia

Abasha

Senaki

C. Zugdidi

Zugdidi

Khobi

Lanchkhuti

Chokhatauri

C. Ozurgeti

**Guria**

Ozurgeti

Kobuleti

Khulo

**Adjara A.R.**

Shuakhevi

Keda

C. Pori

C. Batumi

Khelvachauri

**Abkhazia A.R.**

**Turkey**

**Black Sea**

**Legend**

sattlements
- Capital
- Town

Municipal Boundary

Region Boundary

State Boundary

Black Sea

Territories not controlled by the Central Government of Georgia

# Key Findings

## Young People in Georgia

In 2014, approximately 21 percent of the population of Georgia (770,809 persons) were between the ages of 15 and 29 years of which 492,147 were between the ages of 15 and 24 years.

The number of young persons (15 − 29 years old) has dropped from 995 thousand in 2002 to 771 thousand in 2014.

Of the total 770,809 young people (15 - 29 years) in Georgia, roughly 60 percent (461,383) live in urban areas whilst 40 percent (309,426) live in rural areas.

In 2014, there were approximately 113.6 males for every 100 females at the age of 15, 107.6 males per 100 females at age 20 and 102 males per 100 females at age 27 for example. After the age of 22 the sex ratio falls into the normal sex ratio at birth.

Eighty-three percent of 15- 29 year olds in Georgia are Orthodox.

Compared to the rest of the population, more young people moved to other municipalities within Georgia during the last 5 years than persons of other ages did.

## Marriage, Fertility and Family Structure

Most people marry in their twenties. Between the ages of 25 − 29, 53.6 percent of males and 72.4 percent of females are married.

The mean age at marriage for all marriages (registered and unregistered) was equal to 22.9 years for females and 27.5 years for males.

The majority of young people are either single or formally married, a substantial group live together with a partner in a non-registered marriage.

Girls make up the largest proportion of early marriages (registered and unregistered). Particularly apparent is that girls between 15 and 18 years of age in rural areas are more likely to enter into a marriage than those in urban areas.

Only 0.7 percent of all young women age 15 at the time of the Census had one child. The Census only asked questions on fertility to women aged 15 years of age and older. The very low percentage of women aged 15 who gave birth suggests that the rate of childbearing before age 15 is very small.

The mean age at first birth was 26.3 years.

## Education

About three out of four young people in the age-group 15 − 17 years attend secondary education; 34.8 percent of those aged 18-20 years are attending university at the first level (Bachelor); and 3 percent of 22-24 year olds are pursuing a Master's degree.

There are more female students than male students.

From age 7 to age 13, the school attendance ratio is well above 99 percent; at age 14 it is 98.8 percent; among 18 year-olds 52.1 percent are still in school.

At the age of six, a child can expect to be in school for 13.7 years on average.

In the group of 15 − 24 year olds, more males than women are no longer following an education (56.9 against 53.0 percent). The same percentage of males and females are still in secondary education (22.4 percent).

The largest educational group of people 25 - 29 years of age and over is formed by those with a higher education (109 thousand). Currently, 755 thousand people in age group 25 -74 years of age have a higher education, while 482 thousand have a professional education.

Younger cohorts have higher levels of educational attainment than older cohorts.

More women than men aged 25-29 years attained a higher education: 44.1 percent versus 35.5 percent.

## Employment

Labour force participation is considerably lower for young women than for young men. At age 29, 81.3 percent of males are economically active, against 61.7 percent of females.

Youth unemployment in Georgia is high: among 15 – 24 years olds, 36.7 percent are employed. Among those 15-29 years the unemployment rate is 29.6 percent.

Young women face greater challenges to secure employment than men: 41.0 percent of all females in the age-group 15 – 24 are out of work versus 33.5 percent of males.

## Vulnerable Groups

In total, 107,638 persons were enumerated in the Census with a visual disability, among them 4,019 in the age-group 15 – 29. This means a prevalence of 0.52 percent, or more or less one in every two hundred young persons. The second most important limitation, both for the total population and among youth, is walking or climbing steps: 0.36 percent of persons 15 – 29 reported having a lot of difficulties or could not do this at all.

In the age group 15 – 29 a total of 40,030 youth are displaced, which constitutes 21.1 percent of all displaced people. Using the international definition of 15 – 24 years, then a total of 26,051 displaced young persons were enumerated.

Among all ages, the number of female IDPs is considerably higher than the number of males (102,865 against 86,774), but among youth, figures are much more alike.

The NEET-indicator is 37.2 percent for both sexes in age-group15- 29. The level for young females in this age-group is higher than for males: 42.7 percent against 32.0 percent.

# Introduction

This report will use information from the Population Census 2014 to present a comprehensive picture of the situation of youth in the ReThis report will use information from the Population Census 2014 to present a comprehensive picture of the situation of youth in the Republic of Georgia. The report is part of a wider initiative to present thematic reports on five key topics of interest: youth, gender, ageing, population dynamics and sex ratios. This Youth Report presents a unique opportunity to better understand the current situation of youth in Georgia and the transition from childhood to adulthood. Its overall goal is to produce demographic and socio-economic information to support evidence-based national planning and programming that is rights-based, age appropriate and gender sensitive. In addition, it seeks to appeal to a broad audience to create both interest and action on youth issues in Georgia.

The 2014 General Population Census was conducted during the period of November 5-19, 2014 and covered 82 percent of the whole territory of Georgia (57,000 km2) except Abkhazia, Georgia and Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia, Georgia (total area of 13,000 km2). The information in this report only refers to the areas covered by the Census.

Because of its scale and content, the Census represents a unique source of information on the social, economic and demographic situation of the population in the country. As a result of the 2014 General Population Census, the most updated information has been obtained on the population size, sex and age structure, employment, education, health, sources of income, housing and agricultural activities.

During the last decade, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) has been assisting the Government of Georgia in strengthening the capacity of the National Statistical Office with the objective to support the body of evidence for the formulation of rights-based policies, through cutting-edge analysis on population dynamics and its interlinkages with sustainable development. The 2014 General Population Census was conducted by the National

Statistics Office of Georgia (Geostat) with the support of UNFPA and the Government of Sweden.

## Definition of Youth

The transition from childhood into adulthood is a time of critical development characterized by rapid physical, cognitive and social changes. It presents a crucial stage in one's life which shapes the future of an individual and affects society as a whole. It is a time in which young people start gaining independence from their caregivers, build peer relationships, experience puberty and explore their sexuality. It is also a time in which important lifetime choices are made regarding marriage, childbirth, academics and choosing a career path. This report presents an opportunity to emphasize these transitions and describe how youth in Georgia deal with these changes.

The United Nations Secretariat defines youth and young people as persons between the ages of 15 and 24. Other concepts regarding this sub-group are also used within the UN-system: UNFPA, the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) differentiate between adolescents, youth and young persons. These organizations refer to persons between ages 10 and 19 as adolescents, between 10 and 24 as young persons and between 15 and 24 as youth (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA, n.d.).

In the Georgian National Youth Policy Document, a young person is defined as a person between the age of 14- 29 years and a young family is defined as a registered couple where both persons are young and aged between 14 - 29 years (Government of Georgia, 2014). For this report, the terms 'youth' and 'young people' will be used interchangeably and are defined as individuals between the ages of 15 and 29 years. To be in line with both national and international definitions, the youth age bracket will often be presented in two manners: 15 - 29 years and 15 - 24 years. Both the 15 - 29 and 15 - 24 year age brackets, when presenting the statistical tables, will often be presented in sub-groups of five-year brackets (e.g. 15-19, 20-24, 25-29). As such, the report will not only inform national decision-making, but will also allow for international comparison and the creation of linkages with the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG). Note that the Georgian

National Youth Policy has 14 years as the lower limit of the youth age-bracket, while this report uses 15 years. This is because almost all the Census tables are presented in 5-year age categories.

## National Priorities on Youth

The Georgian National Youth Policy (hereinafter referred to as the "the Youth Policy") was approved in 2014 by the Government of Georgia and is a comprehensive regulatory framework for the development of youth, aged 14-29 years in Georgia. Its implementation requires multi-stakeholder commitment and action from youth, state agencies, civil society, private sector, and local and international organizations. The goal of the Youth Policy is "*...encouraging establishment of relevant environment for a comprehensive youth development which will enable the youth to fully realize their potential and be actively involved in all the areas of the public life*" (Government of Georgia, 2014) (p. 2). To achieve this, the Youth Policy stipulates timely action by the State in the development, implementation and evaluation of the following areas:

**1. Participation**: create opportunities and youth involvement in social, economic, cultural and political spheres.

**2. Education, employment and mobility:** create opportunities for education, employment and professional growth for youth which is both appropriate and of high quality.

**3. Health:** establish a healthy lifestyle among youth and improve the quality of and access to medical care services which are youth-friendly in nature.

**4. Special support and protection:** awareness creation among young people regarding their civil rights and responsibilities; create an environment which is safe and secure for young people; rights protection of young people; and supporting young people with special needs.

The Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs of Georgia bears the responsibility in meeting the commitments made in the Youth Policy. The document also stipulates the importance of concerted efforts by other actors such as the Parliamentary Committee on Sports and Youth Affairs of Georgia, local municipalities, youth, youth organizations, stakeholders, international organizations, the media and researchers (Government of Georgia, 2014).

## Youth and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

Besides facilitating national planning and programming, this report also aims to provide information on the progress of youth-related topics included in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The 2030 Agenda was adopted in September 2015 and is a universal plan of action for people, planet and prosperity. It includes 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 targets which present an ambitious agenda to shift the world onto a path of resilience and sustainability. Youth play a significant role in achieving long-term sustainable development and therefore form an integral part of the development and implementation of this Agenda. In fact, many of the global challenges today are especially salient for children and youth. Therefore, ensuring meaningful youth participation at all levels of decision-making and programming, and creating an enabling environment for young people to be both partners and leaders in sustainable development will be key. In addition, with the 2030 Agenda explicitly stating the commitment of countries to leave no one behind, ensuring there is adequate attention placed upon adolescent girls and vulnerable populations is crucial (United Nations, n.d.).

Whilst all SDGs are relevant for youth development, specific indicators have been agreed upon which explicitly track progress for youth and young people. Those most relevant for this report include the adolescent birth rate, participation in education, employment or training and the proportion of youth married or in a union. All these indicators can be derived from the census and are presented in this report. Wherever possible they ware disaggregated by age and other characteristics.

## Youth Challenges in Georgia

The Georgian National Youth Policy stipulates actions which address the challenges faced by youth in Georgia. The policy aims to create social, economic, cultural and political opportunities for youth; to ensure education, employment and professional growth for youth of high-quality; to have a healthy youth population which has access to adequate medical care; and to shape a safe and secure environment in which youth know their civic rights and responsibilities, while their rights are protected and those with special needs receive support (Government of Georgia, 2014).

A National Youth Survey was conducted in Georgia in 2014. This study presents key evidence on some of the challenges faced by young people aged 15 - 29 years across all regions of Georgia (except for Abkhazia and South Ossetia). Despite recent positive developments in the country, the study reveals remaining gaps which hinder adolescents and young people to reach their full potential.

As mentioned in the analytical report of the National Youth Survey, the Integrated Household Survey conducted in 2012 showed that when it comes to poverty, households with one or more 15 - 29 year-old persons have a relatively higher poverty rate. According to the report, *"These indicators are 3-4 percentage points higher than the relative poverty rates of the population in whose households 15- to 29-year-olds do not live."* About a quarter of young people were living below 60 percent of the median consumption in 2012. When measuring poverty based on a cut-off point below the 40 percent of the median consumption, roughly 10 percent of young people are below this point. The poverty rate among young people living below 60 percent of the median consumption is larger in rural areas, where the poverty rate is 29.3 percent compared to 17.5 percent in urban areas. For the 40 percent median consumption, the percentages are 13.4 and 7.3, respectively.

The Youth Survey also showed that the highest unemployment rate among the working age population was among young people, standing at roughly 31 percent. Unemployment was not just restricted to young persons with low educational attainment. A third of unemployed young people had received

higher education. Unemployment among young people is two and a half times higher in urban areas than in rural areas. Employment among young men (53.3 percent) is more prevalent than among women (30.4 percent) (United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), 2014). When assessing the youth unemployment by gender one must consider the activity rates for both sexes, as young women or men who are not part of the labor force cannot be unemployed. According to the Youth Survey, 49.0 percent of women aged 15 – 29 and 71.3 percent of men of that age-group were economically active.

This report will build on the 2014 Youth Survey and other studies, and will present recent evidence on youth experiencing their transition into adulthood. Having a thorough insight of this transition, while considering the individual differences of young people, such as their background and personal characteristics, will facilitate an in-depth understanding of their situation.

## Overview of This Report

This report is the result of a close cooperation between the author and Geostat. In November, the author made a mission to Tbilisi and in discussions with Geostat and UNFPA the general content and methodology of the study was discussed. The study is largely based on the main tables of the census, but in addition many custom-made tables were produced which described the situation of young people in Georgia.

This report will include a total of five chapters covering various topics related to youth:

*Chapter 1: Young people in Georgia's population*
Georgia's demographic transition has resulted in a change in the proportion of young people compared to the total population. This chapter will cover a number of demographic and social components of Georgia's youth population such as age structure, regional distribution, religion, ethnic background and mobility and will compare the results with regional and international data as much as possible. The report will only briefly touch upon Georgia's skewed sex ratio as a separate thematic report will be dedicated to this.

*Chapter 2: Marriage, fertility and family structure*

With many young people starting to form new families and bearing children during their transition into adulthood, extensive coverage on this topic is provided in chapter two. Specifically, age at first marriage, cohabitation without a formal marriage bond and marriage dissolution of young people will be discussed. In addition, family formation and the onset of childbearing is covered in chapter two, including age at first child, teenage fertility, household composition, etc.

*Chapter 3: Education*

This chapter covers school attendance and education attainment by young people. Differences between sex, regions of residence and social background will be highlighted.

*Chapter 4: Young people and the workforce*

The transition from school to employment is an important step in any person's life, that usually takes place during a person's youth or young adulthood. In the report, an analysis will be made about employment patterns of young people, the age distribution of entry in the labour market and the degree and characteristics of unemployment.

*Chapter 5: Vulnerable groups*

The Georgian National Youth Policy Document discerns 18 groups of young people with special needs, ranging from young people with disabilities and young people who do not go to school, to young people living in mountainous regions and children of war heroes and disabled veterans. Not all of these groups will be dealt with in this report, because the Census did not collect data on most of their characteristics. The following vulnerable groups will be discussed:

• Young people with disabilities

• Young people who are refugees or internally displaced

• Young people who are neither in education or employment

# 1. Young People in Georgia

## 1.1 Key Demographic Indicators

The age-groups which will be focused upon in this report and interchangeably named 'youth' or 'young people' are ages 15 - 24 years and 15 - 29 years. This conforms the commonly understood international and national classifications of young people. The position of young people in the total population should be seen against the background of the age distribution of the total population.

*Figure 1.1* shows the population pyramid by 5-year brackets. In 2014, approximately 21 percent of the population of Georgia was between the ages of 15 and 29 years. There were 770,809 people in this age-group, of which 492,147 were between the ages of 15 and 24 years.

The current age distribution in Georgia is a function of past and current trends in fertility, mortality and international migration. The interaction between all three demographic phenomena has created

Georgia's irregular age distribution. Compared with many countries in the region, Georgia experienced its fertility transition fairly early. In 1960, the Total Fertility Rate (TFR) was around 3.0, while it is now estimated around 2.0 (Hakkert, 2017). During the last 25 years, life expectancy increased from 67 years for males and 75 years for females in 1990, to about 70 years for males and about 79 years for females (Hakkert, 2017). Migration has played a major part in shaping Georgia's current age-structure. After the collapse of the Soviet Union a massive migration stream started, caused by the departure of many ethnic minorities; emigration due to economic problems; and the displacement of people due to civil war and conflict.

The patterns of fertility, mortality and migration caused a multi-modal shape of the country's age structure. Age-groups $0-5$, $25-29$ and $50-54$ years are significantly larger than the adjacent age-groups. For instance, 278,662 people were enumerated between ages 25 and 29, against 226,022 between 15 and

*Figure 1.1: Population pyramid 5-year age brackets by sex*



Source: 2014 General Population Census
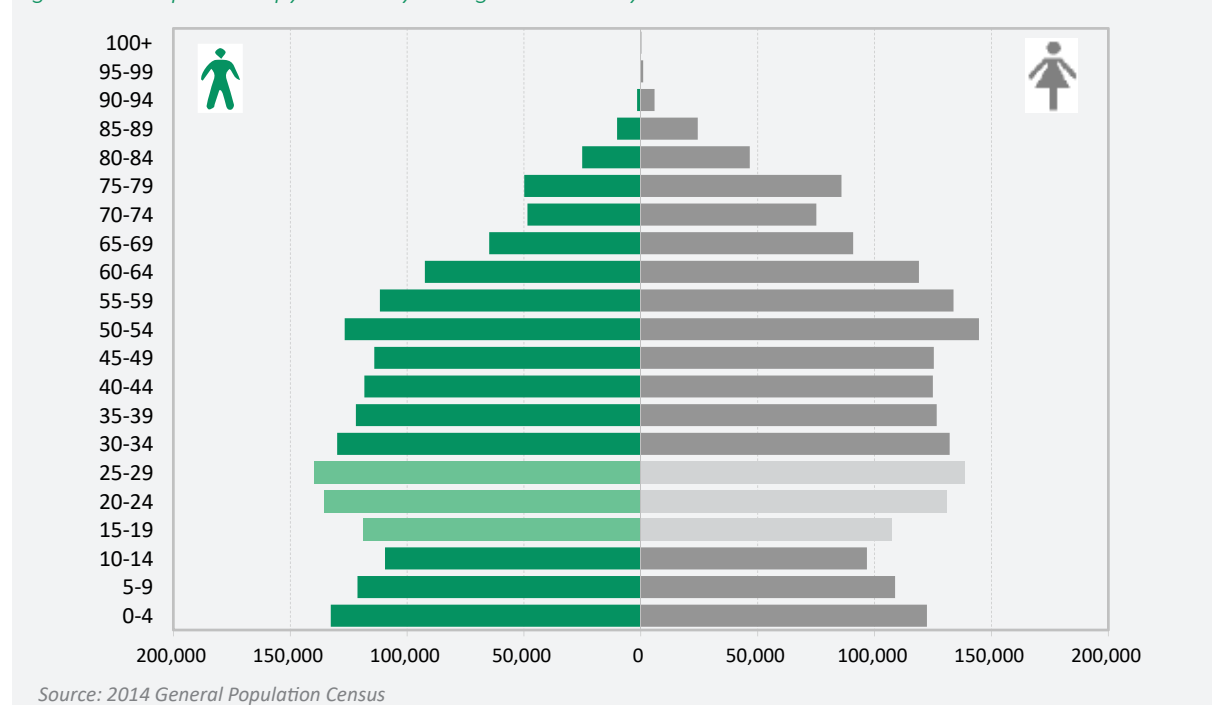
Figure 1.2: Number of young people aged 15 - 29 years, by five-year age brackets, 2002-2014



Source: 2014 General Population Census
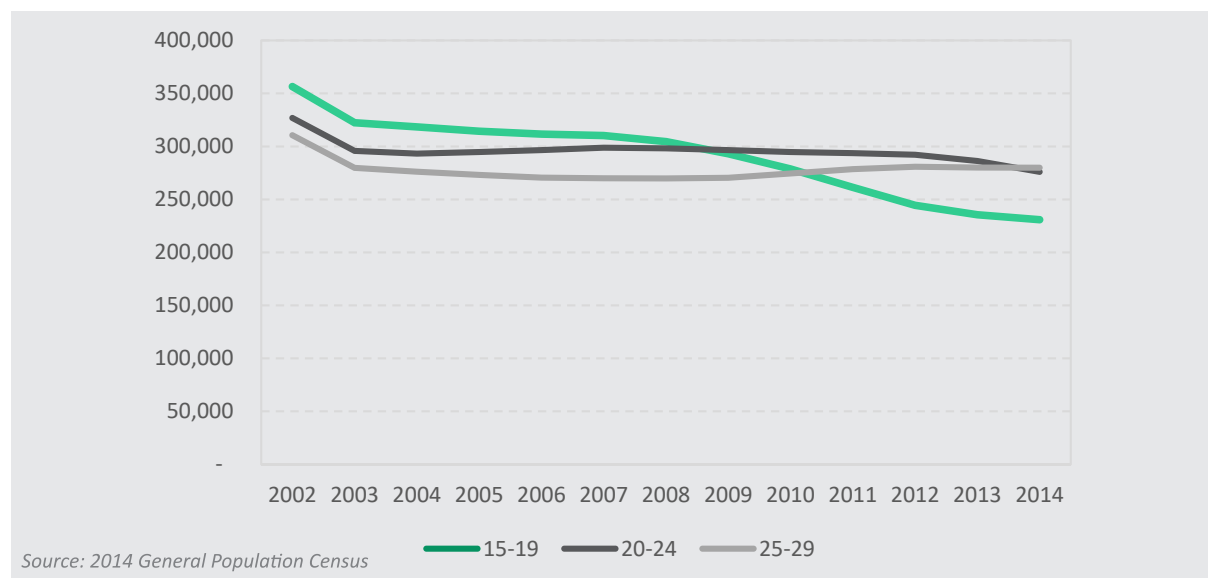
19 and 262,060 between ages 30 and 34. Note that the three modes in the age-structure are about 25 years apart, which is around the age women have their children. This, at least partially, explains the undulation in the age structure. It is normal that when a larger group of women are in age-groups where fertility is high, that the number of births at that moment is also higher and vice versa. Because of this pattern, the number of young persons (15 – 29 years old) has dropped from 995 thousand in 2002 to 770,809 in 2014. *Figure 1.2* shows that the reduction was most prominent in the age-group 15 – 19, which decreased from 357,145 to 226,022, a drop of 36.7 percent. Differences between single ages are quite large, with higher numbers above 20 and lower numbers below 20 (*Figure 1.3*). The highest number of young people were aged 23 years, numbering 59,836 young people. The lowest number of youth enumerated were aged 15 years (41,992). It is well possible that because of these undulations in the age-structure the number of young people will further decrease in the coming years, but at a certain moment, when the larger group of those who are now between 0 and 4 years will reach age 15, that the number of young people will slightly increase again.

Figure 1.3: Population pyramid, persons 15 - 29 years



Source: 2014 General Population Census
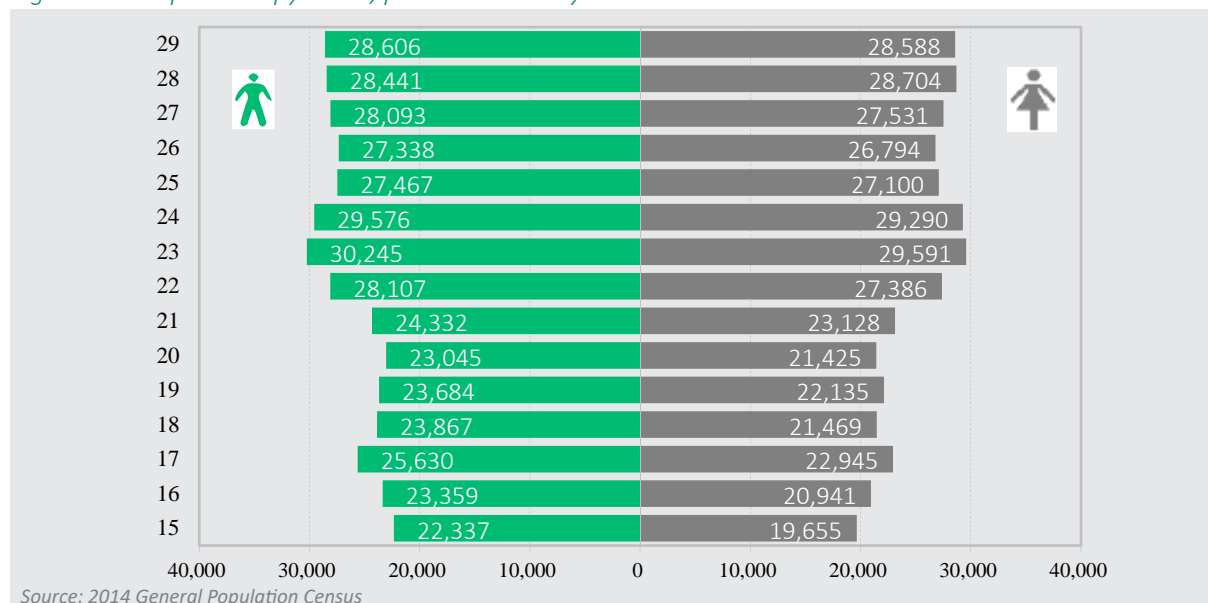
*Figure 1.4: Number of young people in Georgia*
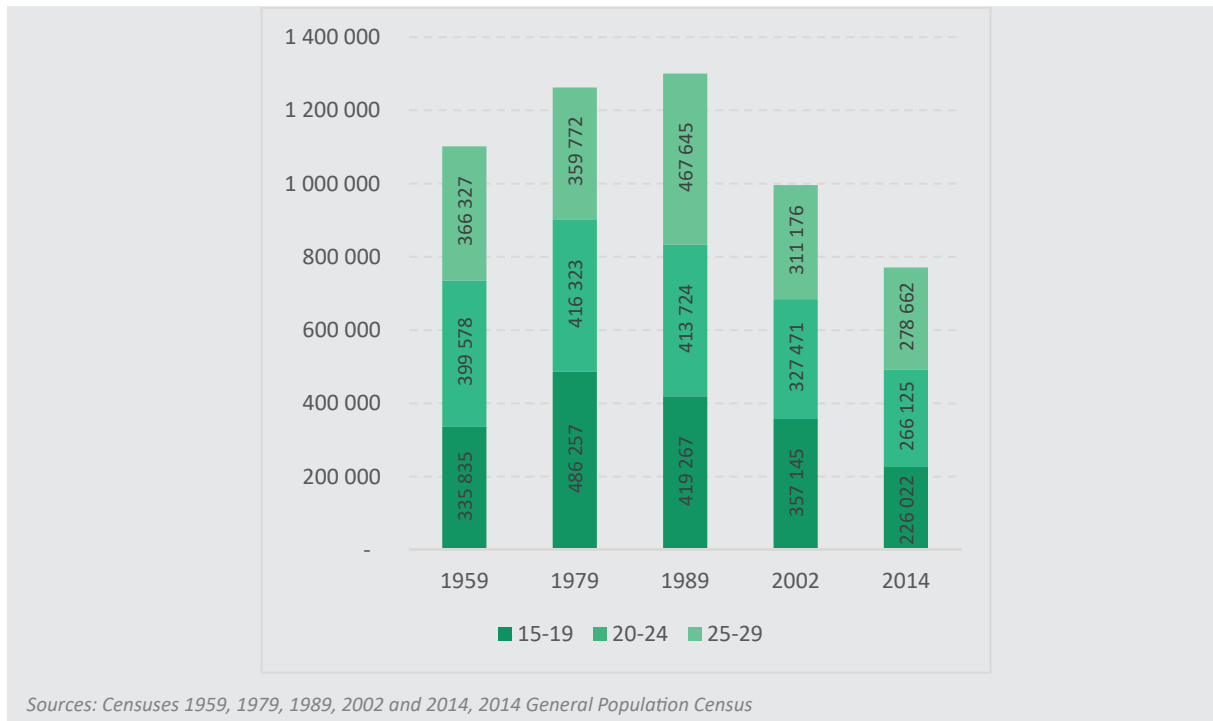
When comparing this to previous Censuses conducted in 1959, 1979, 1989 and 2002, it is clear that the population aged 15 - 29 years peaked in 1989 at 1.3 million young people. Since then, the population of 15 - 29 year-olds decreased by about 23 percent in 2002 and a further 23 percent in 2014 (*Figure 1.4*).

## 1.2    Regional Variation

*Map 1.1* presents a thematic map in which the population 15- 29 to total population is presented by region. The regions in Georgia with the smallest percentage of young people aged 15- 29 were Racha-Lechkhumi and Kvemo Svaneti (12.3 percent) and Guria (16.8 percent) and Samagrelo-Zemo Svaneti (17.2 percent) located in the North and Western parts of the country. The same three re-

gions also had the smallest youth population who were aged 15 - 24 years. Regions with the largest populations of young people aged 15 – 29 include Tbilisi (23.1 percent), Adjara A.R. (23.0 percent) and Kvemo Kartli (22.7 percent).

One would expect that regions with the lowest fertility would also be those with the smallest percentages of young people. *Figure 1.5* shows that this is not the case. On the contrary, it shows a clear trend where regions with the lowest TFR have the highest concentrations of young people. The lower percentages of young people are primarily caused by higher levels of internal migration in these regions. *Figure 1.6* shows that overall net migration is higher in those regions with high fertility. This higher net migration of young persons may be caused by a variety of reasons such as moving to urban centers to pursue higher education or internal or international migration to find work.

Figure 1.5: Regions of Georgia by percentage of people 15 - 29 years old and levels of TFR



Source: 2014 General Population Census
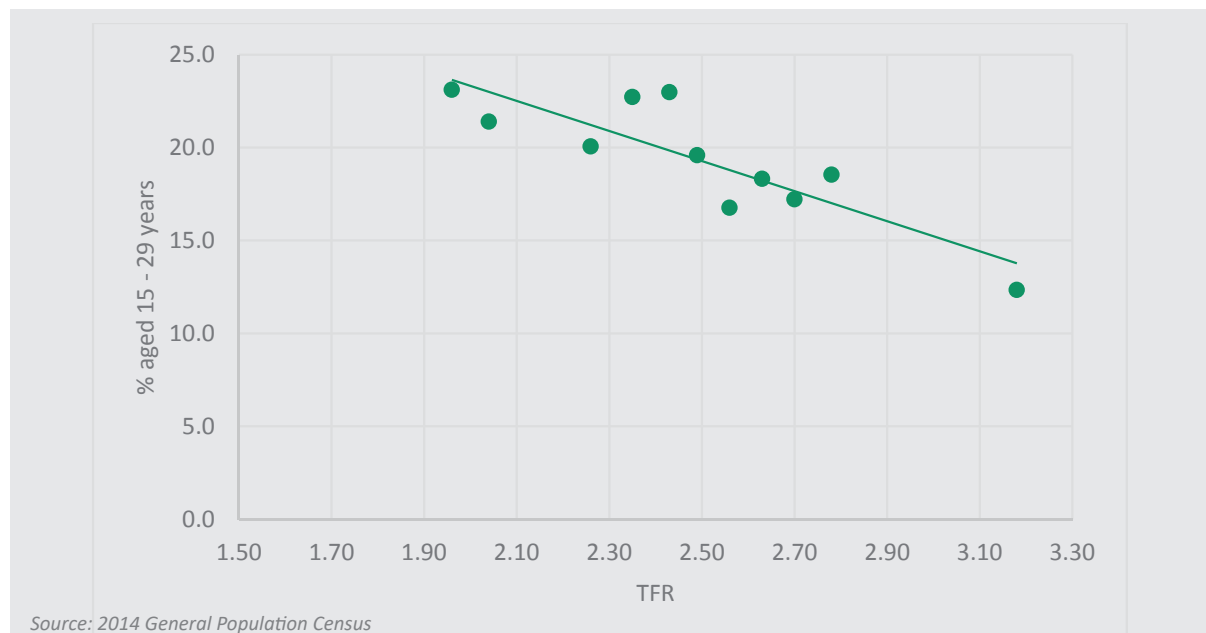
Figure 1.6: Regions of Georgia by net migration and levels of TFR



Source: 2014 General Population Census
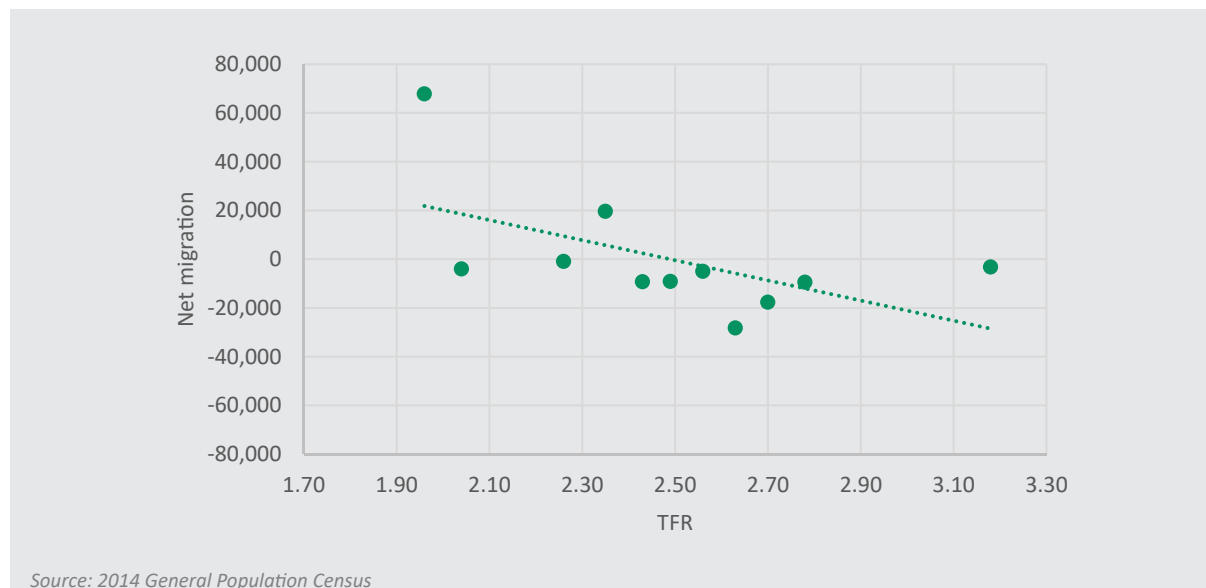
The *Map 1.2* shows a more detailed picture of the relative distribution by municipalities of young people aged 15 – 29 years, in the country. The map shows a high diversity in the relative distribution of young people. The proportion of young people in the total municipal population is as low as 10.6 percent in Ambrolauri in the Racha-Lechkhumi and Kvemo Svaneti region and as high as 24.6 in Khelvachauri in Adjara A.R.

*Map 1.1: Population 15 - 29 to total population by region Georgia,*

Russian Federation

Azerbaijan

Armenia

Turkey

Black Sea

Kakheti
18.5

Mtskheta-Mtianeti
20.1

Tbilisi
23.1

Kvemo Kartli
22.7

Tskhinvali Region

Shida Kartli
19.6

Samtskhe-Javakheti
21.4

Racha-Lechkhumi
and Kvemo Svaneti
12.3

Imereti
18.3

Samegrelo-
Zemo Svaneti
17.2

Guria
16.8

Adjara A.R.
23.0

Abkhazia A.R.

**Legend**

State Boundary

Black Sea

Territories not controlled by the
Central Government of Georgia

**Population 15-29 to Total Population**

0 - 12.3

12.4 - 17.2

17.3 - 18.5

18.6 - 20.1

20.2 - 21.4

21.5 - 23.1

km
0  15  30  60  90

*Source: 2014 General Population Census*

*Map 1.2: Population 15 - 29 to total population by municipality, Georgia,*

*Source: 2014 General Population Census*

## 1.3 Young People in Rural and Urban Areas

Among the total population, approximately 57 percent lives in urban areas and the remaining 43 percent in rural areas. Of the total 770,809 young people (15 - 29 years) in Georgia, roughly 60 per-cent (461,383) live in urban areas whilst 40 per-cent (309,426) live in rural areas. Approximately 23.1 percent of the total male urban population is between the ages of 15 - 29 years, whilst 20.6 percent of the total female urban population is in this age range. A slightly smaller proportion of the rural population consists of 15 - 29 year-olds, comprising of 21.2 percent of males and 17.8 percent of females (*Figure 1.7).*

## 1.4 Sex Ratio

Males between the ages of 15 and 29 years outnumber females in Georgia. Generally, a biologically normal sex ratio at birth ranges from 102 to 106 males per 100 females (World Health Organization, 2011). When considering the 0 - 29 year population in Georgia, the ratios for younger ages are considerably higher than the normal sex ratio at birth. In 2014, there were approximately 113.6 males for every 100 females at the age of 15 (*Figure 1.8).* Because most of these young people are likely to still have been in school or living with their families, the role of male migration curbing this ratio is unlikely. As age increases, the sex ratio decreases, standing at 107.6 males per 100 females at age 20 and 102 males per 100 females at age 27 for example. After the age of 22 the sex ratio falls into the normal sex ratio at birth. Reasons for this trend could be related to gender-biased sex selection which is caused by

*Table 1.1: Number of young people living in urban and rural areas, by age and sex*

|  | Georgia | | | Urban | | | Rural | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | Both sexes | Male | Female | Both sexes | Male | Female | Both sexes | Male | Female |
| 15-19 | 226,022 | 118,877 | 107,145 | 130,446 | 66,924 | 63,522 | 95,576 | 51,953 | 43,623 |
| 20-24 | 266,125 | 135,305 | 130,820 | 162,336 | 79,100 | 83,236 | 103,789 | 56,205 | 47,584 |
| 25-29 | 278,662 | 139,945 | 138,717 | 168,601 | 80,608 | 87,993 | 110,061 | 59,337 | 50,724 |
| Total | 770,809 | 394,127 | 376,682 | 461,383 | 226,632 | 234,751 | 309,426 | 167,495 | 141,931 |

*Source: 2014 General Population Census*

*Figure 1.7: Proportion persons 15 - 29 years old to total population, by urban/rural residency*



*Source: 2014 General Population Census*
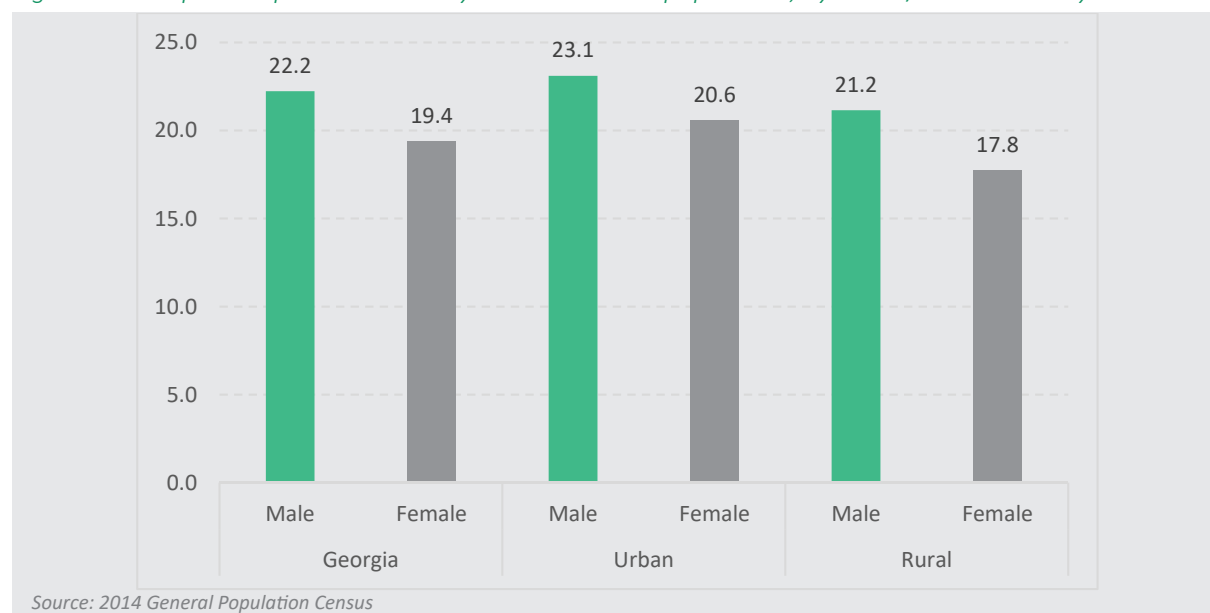
son preference and undervaluing of girls. A more in-depth understanding of this phenomenon in Georgia will be given in the thematic report on sex ratios. The Census thematic report on Population Dynamics indicated that Georgia has very large differences in rural and urban sex ratios, with a much lower urban sex ratio (85.9) than the rural equivalent (99.1) (Hakkert, 2017). These differences can also be observed among young people. In 2014, the sex ratio of 15 – 29 year-olds, living in rural areas was greater than in urban areas. For every 100 females, there were 96.5 males living in urban areas whereas there were 118 males for every 100 females living in rural areas.

*Figure 1.8: Sex ratios by single year of age (0 - 29 years)*



*Source: 2014 General Population Census*
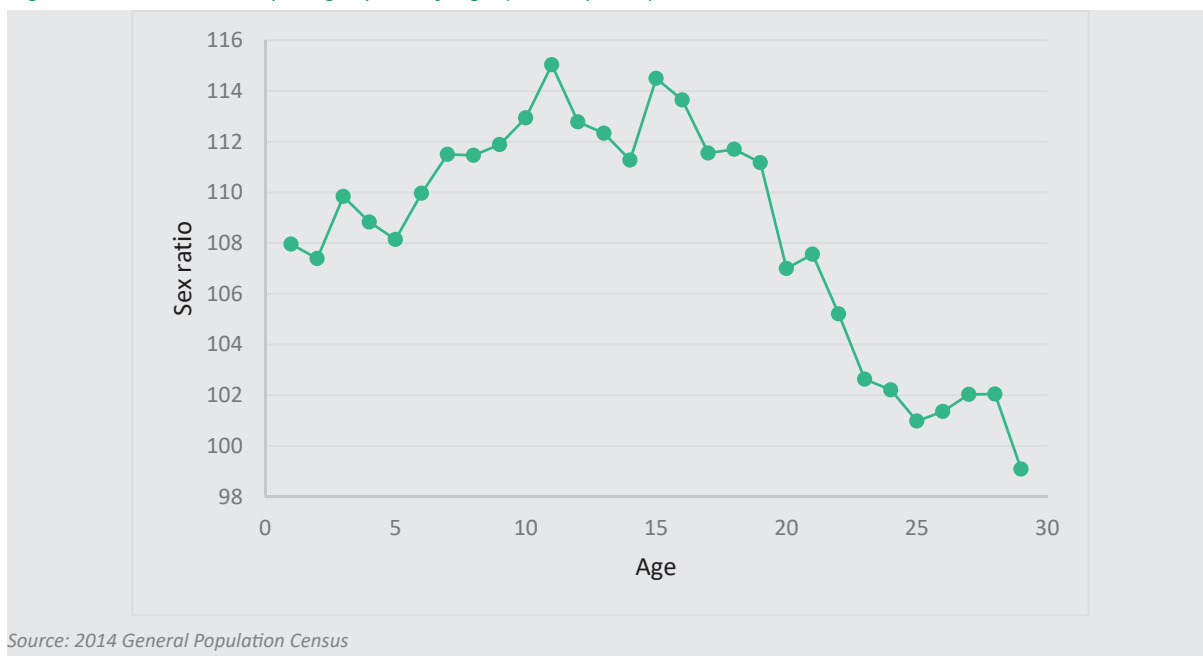
*Figure 1.9: Sex ratios for 15 - 29 year-olds by urban/rural residency*



*Source: 2014 General Population Census*
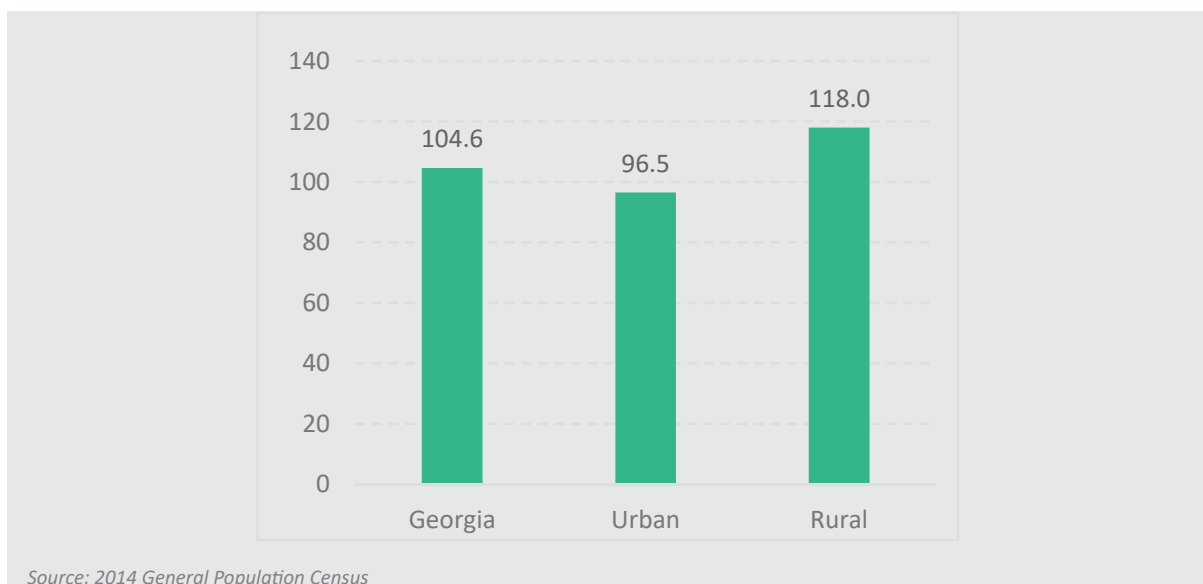
*Figure 1.10: Sex ratios for youth by age-group and urban/rural residency*



*Source: 2014 General Population Census*
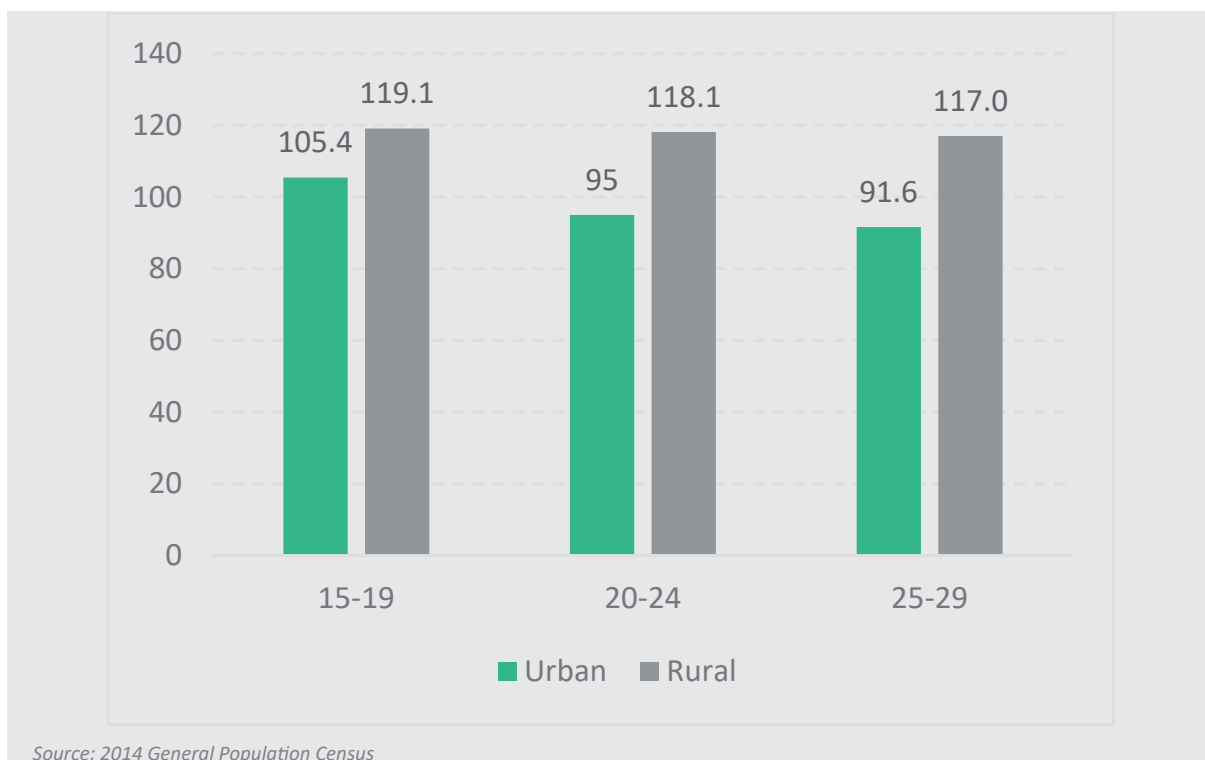
The large difference between sex ratios for youth between urban and rural areas seems to indicate that sex selective (internal and/or international) migration is taking place. Looking at the sex ratios between urban and rural areas for the three five-year age brackets among youth, an interesting pattern emerges (*Figure 1.10)*. While the sex ratio, i.e. the number of men per 100 women, remains high and almost the same in the three age-groups in rural areas; in urban areas, there is a clear decrease, from 105.4 in age-group 15 – 19, to 95.0 in age-group 20 – 24 to 91.6 in age-group 25 – 29. It is clear that the number of males relative to the number of females decreases among young people as they grow older. This is most probably due to a higher percentage of young men in urban areas who try to find their luck outside of the country. It is very unlikely that this is due to males migrating internally to rural areas, because this would have a positive effect on the sex ratio in rural areas. In rural areas,

from age 0 to age 30, sex ratios are consistently high. This is in line with the observation that sex ratios increased from a normal biological level in 1990 to about 112 – 114 since the beginning of this century (Guilmoto, 2015). The Census shows that in recent years, the sex ratio seems to have come down. Among children 0 – 1 year old, the sex ratio observed in the 2014 General Population Census was 108.0, which is still high, but lower than earlier levels. It is outside the scope of this report to make a detailed analysis of the causes of these patterns of sex ratios.

## 1.5 Dependency Ratio

The child dependency ratio is the ratio of the population aged 0-14 to the population aged 15-64. The ratio compares the number of 0- 14 year old children who are dependent upon the working age population (15- 64 years). According to the 2014 General Population Census it stood at 27.7. Although the age-group 0 -14 years falls

outside the scope of this report, it is important to include it as this sub-group will move into the youth category in the coming years and will in the future carry an important burden to support the dependent age-groups in society. A high child dependency ratio implies that higher investments are needed in schooling and other functions related to the well-being of children, such as immunization programs, mother and child care, day care centers, among others. The child dependency ratio is higher for males than females, 30.1 for the former and 25.6 for the latter. In urban areas, the ratio is higher for males than in rural areas. The female child dependency ratio is similar in urban and rural areas (*Figure 1.11*). In comparison with other neighboring countries, Georgia's child dependency ratio is relatively high[1]. Only Azerbaijan and Turkey have child dependency ratios which are above Georgia's 27.7 ratio, standing at 30.3 and 38.4, respectively (*Figure 1.12*). Despite its relatively high level in the region, the child dependency

ratio has come down significantly during the last fifty years. In 1959, the child dependency ratio in Georgia stood at 46.5 whereas in 2014 it was nearly halved to 27.7. The proportion of children compared to those above 15 years was 29 percent in 1959 compared to 18.6 percent in 2014.

The child dependency ratio is closely linked to the overall dependency ratio. The total dependency ratio takes into account those below the age of 15 and those above 65 years of age, both considered to be dependent population segments due to their common inactivity in the labor market. *Figure 1.13* shows that over the years, the child dependency ratio in Georgia has been decreasing at a more rapid pace compared to the total dependency ratio (*Figure 1.13*). Whilst the proportion of 0-14 year-olds is decreasing, Georgia's population above 65 years is increasing. About 7 percent of the total population was above 65 years in 1959 compared to 14 percent in 2014. As a result, old age de-

*Figure 1.11: Child dependency ratio by urban/rural residency*
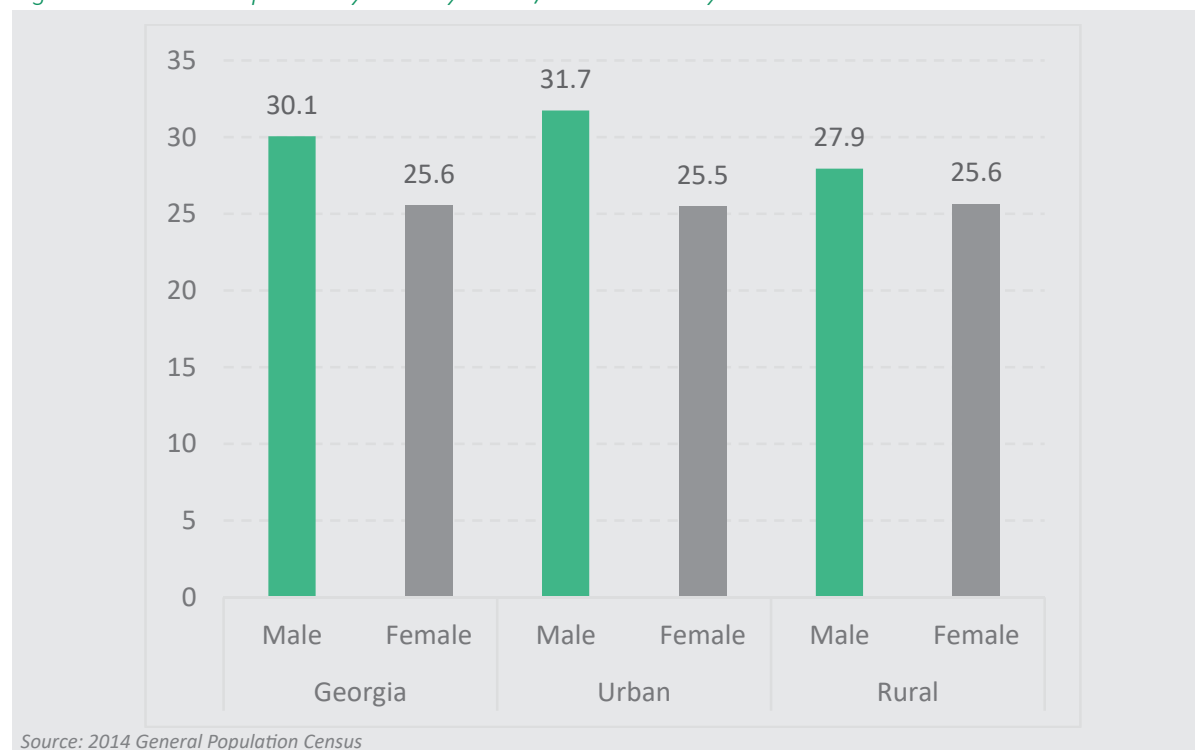
[1] *The author is aware that the comparison poses some problems because of differences in methods of calculating/estimating between these indicators. Therefore, the values should be seen as purely indicative of existing differences between these countries*

*Figure 1.12: Child dependency ratios, Georgia and surrounding countries, 2015*



*Source: United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, n.d.; Georgia data: Census (2014).*
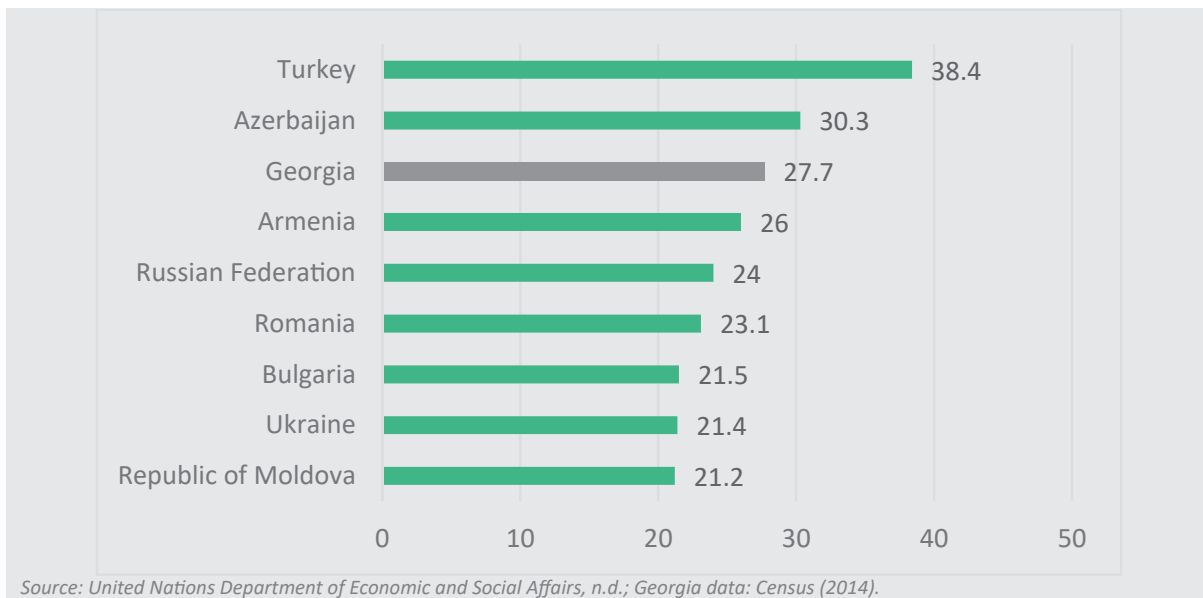
pendency will continue to rise. For the moment, the decline in the relative number of persons below the age of 15 is still larger than the relative increase in the number of persons above 65. Consequently, the total dependency ratio is still decreasing. However, in the coming years a point will be reached in which this pattern will be reversed, resulting in an increase of the total dependency ratio.

A change in the age composition of a population interacts with the life cycle of production and consumption. People who belong to the active age-groups normally produce more than they consume, while children and older persons, consume more than they produce. Therefore, a decrease in the relative number of dependent persons in a country can lead to a window of opportunity for more rapid economic growth. This phenomenon is commonly referred to as the "demographic dividend"[2]. For a country to reap its demographic dividend, measures should be taken in the fields of family planning, public health, education, governance, and

economic and labour market planning. Over the years, a number of countries have successfully harnessed their demographic dividend. Most notorious is the success of the four Asian Tigers (Hong Kong, Singapore, South Korea, and Taiwan). Given the fact that Georgia is still in the phase of declining dependency ratios, it would be advisable to study the depth of a possible demographic dividend for the country and to see what measures would have to be taken to generate the conditions to reap its fruits.

## 1.6 Ethnicity

A wide variety of ethnic groups are present in Georgia. By far the largest ethnic group in the country are Georgians: in the 2014 General Population Census, 3,224,564 persons indicated they were Georgians. The second and third largest groups were those who indicated they were Azeris (233,024) and Armenians (168,102). All other ethnic groups are much smaller: Russians (26,453), Ossetians (14,385), Yezidis (12,174), Ukrainians (6,034), Kists (5,697), Greeks (5,544) and Assyrians

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[2] *For an introduction of the demographic dividend the reader is referred to for instance: Mason A (2005). Demographic Transition and Demographic Dividends in Developed and Developing Countries. NIA, R01-AG025488-01, p.82. Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board; or, Bloom, D. E.; D. Canning and J. Sevilla (2003). The demographic dividend: a new perspective on the economic consequences of population change. RAND Population Matters Program MR-1274, Santa Monica CA.w*

*Figure 1.13: Dependency ratio, Georgia, Censuses 1959, 1978, 1989, 2002, 2014*



*Sources: the 1959, 1978, 1989, 2002, 2014 Censuses*
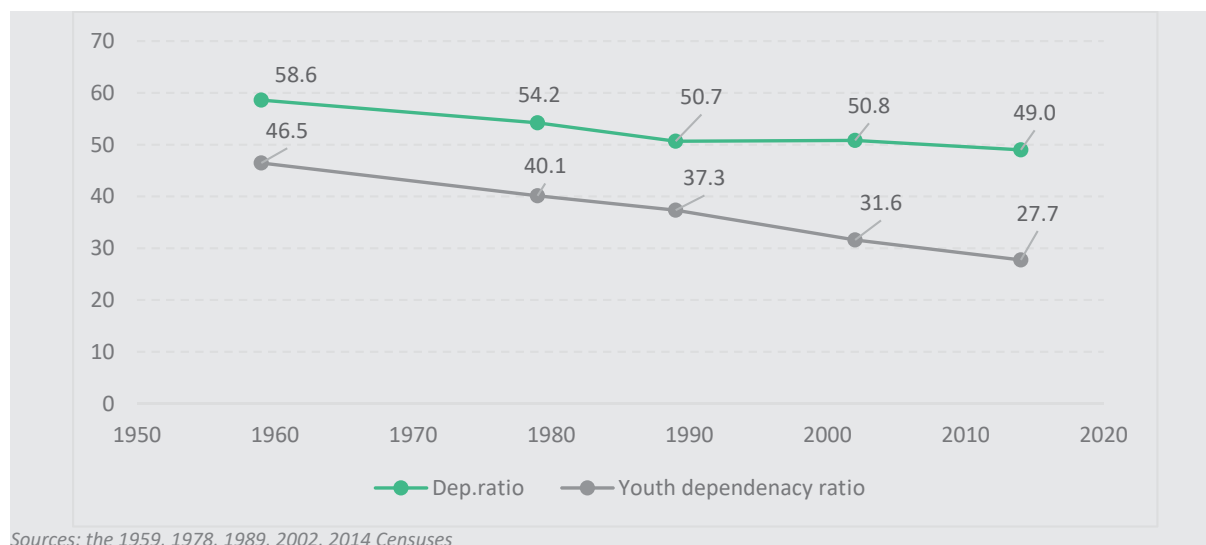
*Figure 1.14: Population 15 - 24 year old, to total population by ethnic group*



*Source: 2014 General Population Census*
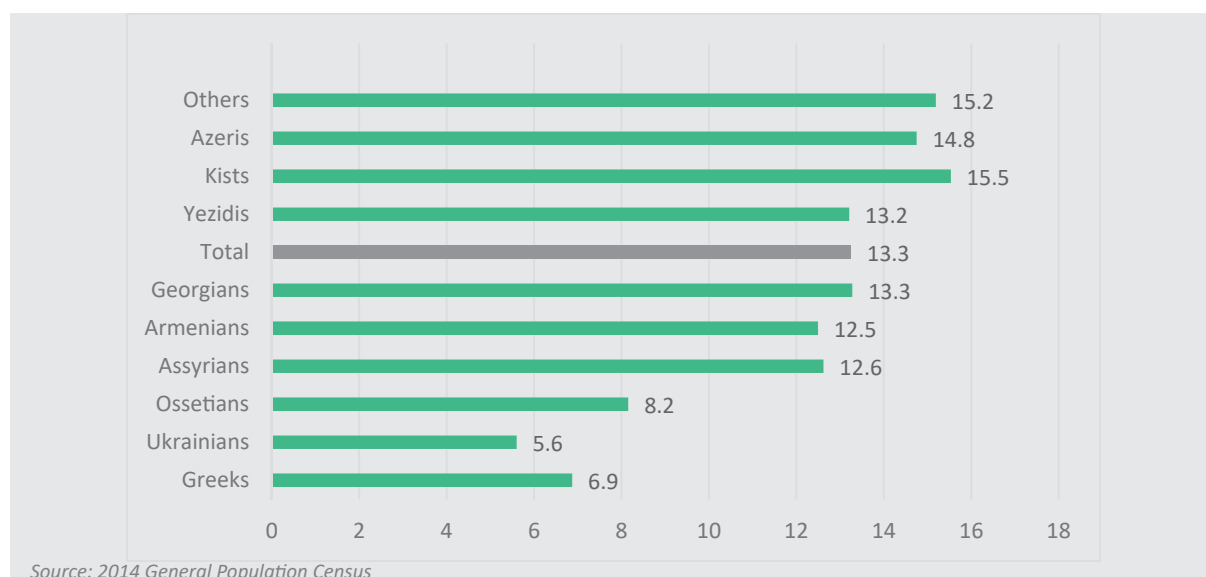
(2,377).The proportion of youth in each ethnic group varies widely. *Figure 1.14* shows the percentage of people 15 – 24 year old to the total population by ethnicity. The ethnic group among 15- 24 year olds with the largest proportion of young people are the Kists (15.5 percent) and the Azeris (14.8 percent). Obviously, with such a substantial proportion of the total population, the proportion of young Georgians comes very close to that of the total population (13.3 percent). Those with a Russian, Greek and Ukrainian ethnic background present a relatively small proportion of the young population compared to the total population in Georgia. An almost identical distribution can be observed for those 15 – 29 year old at the time of the Census. *Figure 11.5* shows the same indicator but for ages 15 – 29 years.

*Figure 1.15: Population 15 - 29 year old, to total population by ethnic group*



Source: 2014 General Population Census
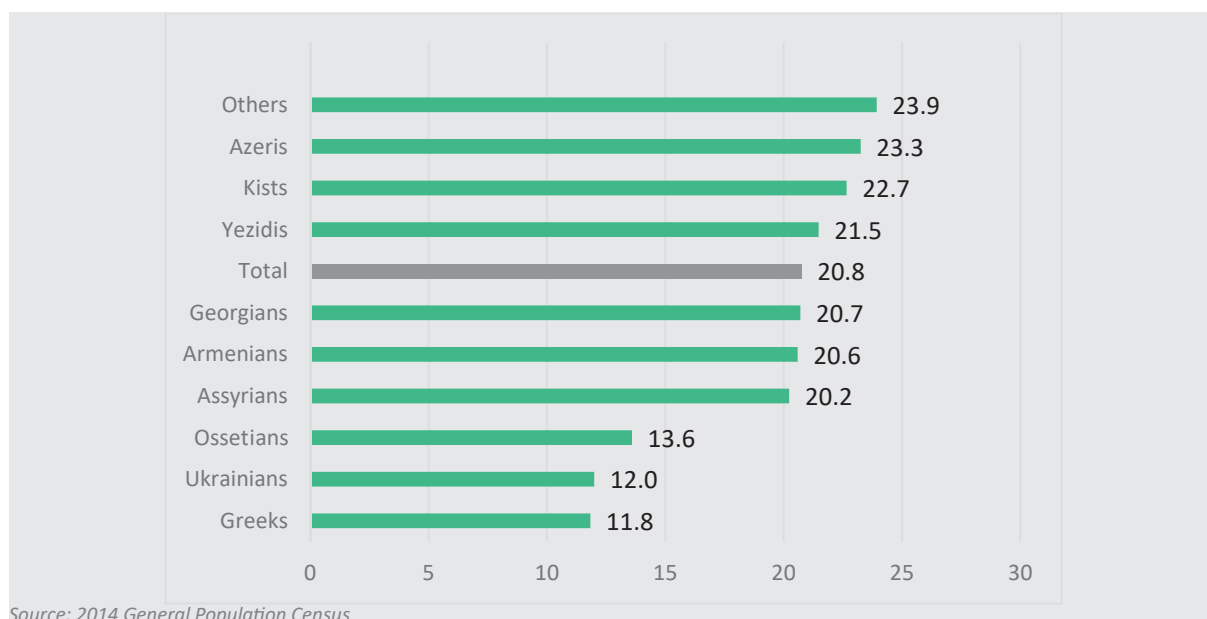
## 1.7 Religion

With the diverse ethnic composition of the population of Georgia comes a wide variety of religions practiced in the country. The majority of young people in Georgia between the ages of 15 and 29 years are Orthodox, amounting to 82.5 percent of all young people. The second and third most common religions are Muslims (11.6 percent) and Armenian apostolic (3.0 percent). Only about 0.4 percent indicated they practiced no religion (*Table 1.2*). Compared to the other age-groups, this distribution is very similar. Of the Georgian population, 83 percent is Orthodox, 11 percent is Muslim, 3 percent is Armenian apostolic and the remaining small portion of the population practices other religions. Approximately 0.5 percent practiced no religion.

Many countries across the globe, such as in Europe or the United States, have seen declines in organized religion over the last few decades, particularly among the younger segments of society. The above figures, however, show that this trend does not hold true for the Georgian population as young people still report very similar patterns of religion affiliation as the rest of society.

## 1.8 Mobility

In the past, internal migration in Georgia was mainly driven by tumultuous events of internal conflicts, natural disasters and wars. Next to these dramatic events people moved for economic and educational reasons. In the 2014 General Population Census, 1,142,011 persons were classified as lifetime migrants, i.e. persons whose municipality of birth was different from the municipality where they were living at the time of the Census. Internal lifetime migration was considerably higher for females than for males: 703,406 females against 438,605 males. During the last five years before the 2014 General Population Census (2010 – 2014), 162,933 persons moved from another municipality to the place of residence where they were enumerated: again, more female (101,962) than male (60,971) migrants were observed. Note that this was considerably lower than in the 2002 Census.

Compared to the rest of the population, more young people moved to other municipalities within Georgia during the last 5 years than other ages did. The highest level of mobility is observed be-

tween the ages of 20 and 24, with the number of females moving at that age being much higher than the number of males (*Figure 1.16)*. This means that due to their mobility, young people are the greatest creators of diversity in municipalities.

In the 2014 General Population Census, information on international emigration was collected on a special Migrant Form. However, serious concerns exist about the completeness of the information obtained through this form. Only 88,541 forms were collected. According to the Monograph on Population Dynamics in Georgia based on data of the 2014 General Population Census (Hakkert, 2017), between 2002 and 2014 roughly 1.15 million people left Georgia

*Table 1.2: Religious affiliation, by age and sex*

|  | 15-19 | 20-24 | 25-29 | 15 - 24 | 15 - 29 | percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Orthodox | 184,687 | 221,556 | 229,858 | 406,243 | 636,101 | 82.5 |
| Muslim | 28,242 | 29,308 | 32,169 | 57,550 | 89,719 | 11.6 |
| Armenian apostolic | 6,553 | 7,679 | 9,138 | 14,232 | 23,370 | 3.0 |
| Catholic | 1,088 | 1,202 | 1,399 | 2,290 | 3,689 | 0.5 |
| Jehovah's Witnesses | 922 | 946 | 893 | 1,868 | 2,761 | 0.4 |
| Yazidis | 518 | 586 | 632 | 1,104 | 1,736 | 0.2 |
| Other | 406 | 507 | 364 | 913 | 1,277 | 0.2 |
| None | 1,024 | 1,000 | 838 | 2,024 | 2,862 | 0.4 |
| Refused to answer | 562 | 754 | 748 | 1,316 | 2,064 | 0.3 |
| Not stated | 2,020 | 2,587 | 2,623 | 4,607 | 7,230 | 0.9 |
| Total | 226,022 | 266,125 | 278,662 | 492,147 | 770,809 | 100 |

*Source: 2014 General Population Census*

*Figure 1.16: Population who moved from other municipality during last 5 years, by age and sex*
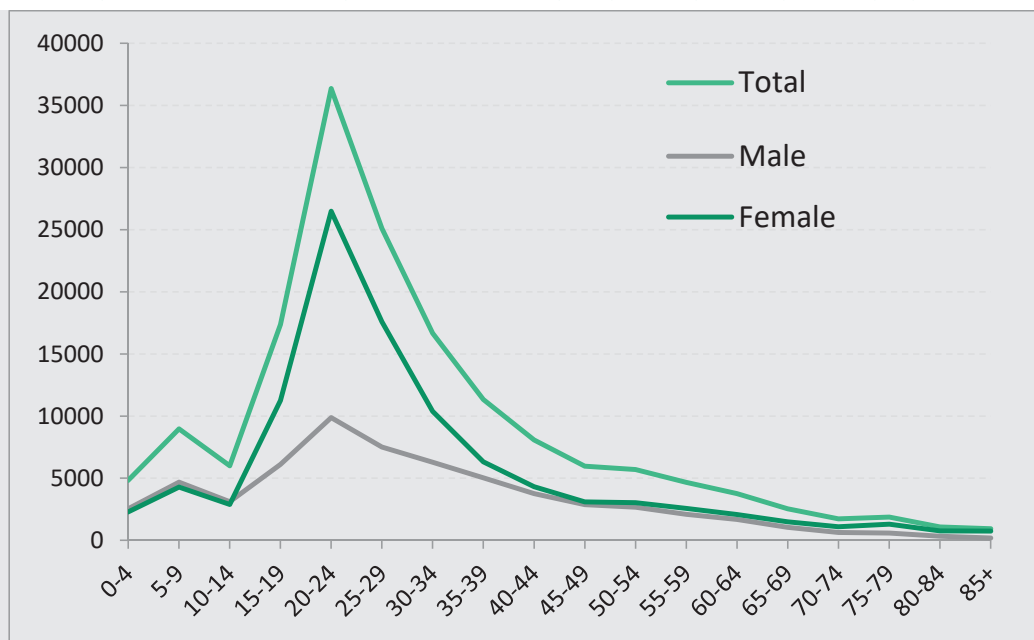


*Source: 2014 General Population Census*

for the duration of 6 months or more. This large difference shows that no true characteristics of young migrants leaving Georgia can be obtained from the Census Migrant Form. In terms of immigration, according to the Census, nearly 66,230 people indicated that their country of birth was different from Georgia. According to the 2014 General Population Census, 50,769 people moved from another country during the five years before the Census (*Figure 1.17)*. The population who moved from another country to Georgia during this period, exhibited a particularly young character. The largest group among the people moving to Georgia were those between the ages of 25 and 29 years, totaling 6,618 people. The number of male and female migrants in this age-group was almost the same: 3,284 and 3,334, respectively.

*Figure 1.17: Population who moved from other country during last 5 years, by age and sex*



*Source: 2014 General Population Census*
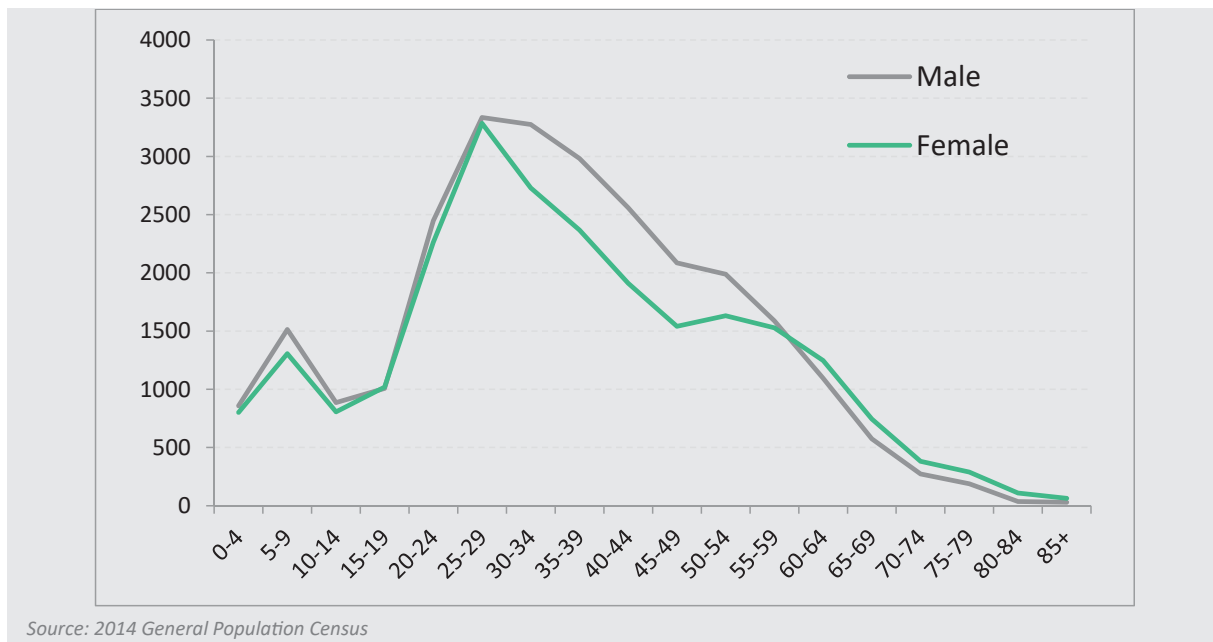
# 2. Marriage, Fertility and Family Structure

## 2.1 Marriage Pattern

Demographic events are important milestones in every person's life. Few are more important than the choice of a partner and entrance into marriage or a steady relationship. In most cases, these events take place during a person's youth and open the way to a new phase of life. Marriage is a transition that changes a person's way of life and social-economic situation.

For the analysis of marriage, it is somewhat problematic that – especially at young ages – the number of persons who did not answer the question on marital status is quite high. Out of a population of 3,022,475 people, 91,160 of those aged 15 years and above did not answer the question on marital status. However, this group of 'not stated' is highly skewed at young ages. Among the 41,992 persons who were 15 at the time of the Census, 34 percent (14,322) did not state their marital status. In the analysis, people with an unknown marital status were left out and percentages were calculated based on the sum of all known information. However, one should be aware that this may create a

bias, especially at young ages, for instance, if because of cultural sensitivity the marriage question would not be asked to young unmarried persons. Note that the result 'not stated' was higher among males 15-29 years (10.0 percent), than among females (6.8 percent) of the same age.

*Figures 2.1* and *2.2* show the percentages of young people by five-year age brackets and marital status for males and females. The graphs clearly show the differential marriage pattern between young males and females. Between ages 15 and 19, 96.5 percent of males are never married versus 85.6 percent of females. Most people marry in their twenties. Between the ages of 25 – 29, 53.6 percent of males and 72.4 percent of females are married. As the exposure to widowhood is very short at these young ages, the percentage of those widowed is very small. The number of males who are divorced between ages 25 and 29 is small (1.8 percent), but considerably higher for females. In age-group 25 – 29, 4.5 percent of females are divorced accounting for almost 1 in every 20 females.

*Figure 2.1: Males aged 15 – 29 years old, by marital status and 5-year age-groups*



*Source: 2014 General Population Census*
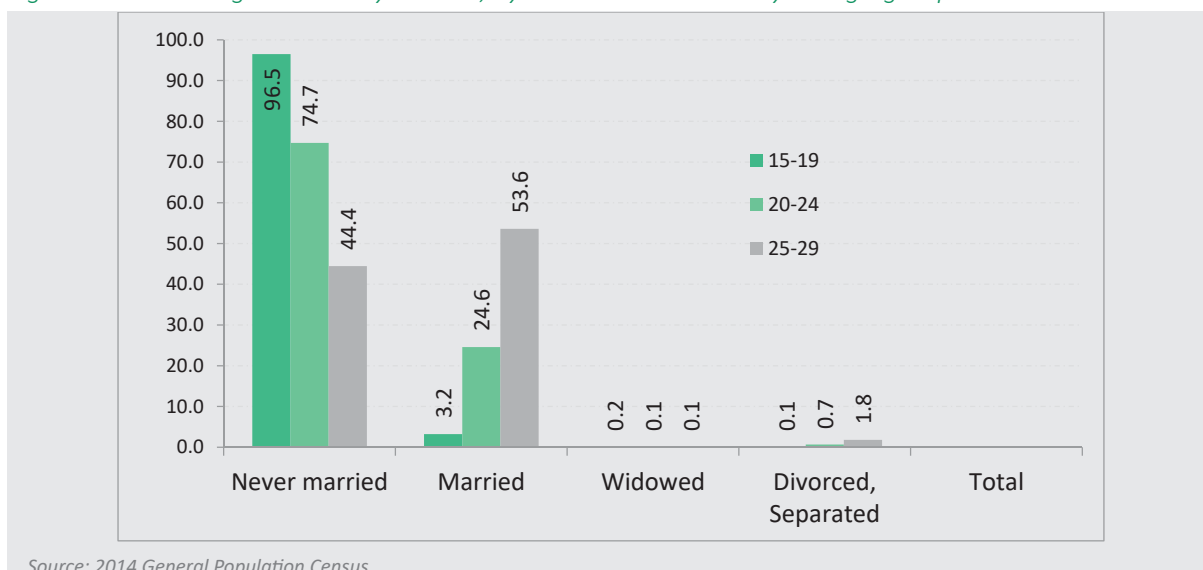
*Figure 2.2: Females aged 15 – 29 years old, by marital status and 5-year age-groups*
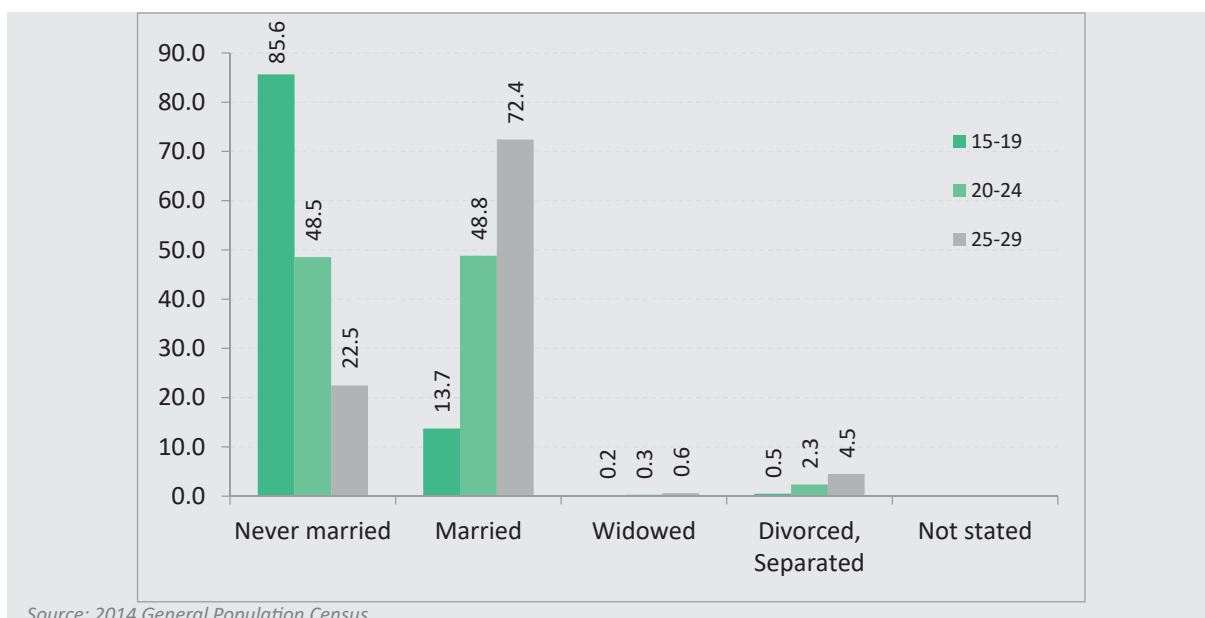


*Source: 2014 General Population Census*

In 1999, 2005 and 2010, three national surveys of women's reproductive health were organized to study the changes of reproductive behaviour in Georgia. The surveys showed that between 1999 and 2010 the percentage of married women between ages 15 and 19 dropped from 16 percent in 1999, to 12.0 percent in 2005 to 11.0 percent in 2010 (NCDC, MoLHSA, Geostat, DRH/CDC, UNFPA, USAID & UNICEF, 2012; CDC, NCDC & MoLHSA, 2005; and NCDC & MoLHSA, 2000). According to the 2014 General Population Census, an increase happened. Currently, 13.7 percent of women aged 15 – 19 in the Census reported to be married. However, as the Census now took both registered and unregistered marriages, it may well be possible that definitions were different between the four mea-

surement points. Also, as indicated before, as information on young females and their marital status was missing, this may have led to a bias.

*Figure 2.3* shows the married and never-married population aged 15- 29 years, by single years of age and sex. The graph indicates that as age increases, the population who is never married decreases whilst the proportion of those who are married increases. The figure clearly shows that women enter marriage at a younger age than men. At age 25, 66.1 percent of women are married against 42.8 percent of men. The 'Singulate Mean Age at Marriage' (SMAM)[3] is a commonly used demographic indicator. The mean age at marriage for all marriages (registered and unregistered) was equal to 22.9 years for females and 27.5 years for males, indicating an average difference of 4.6 years to enter marriage. For women, a difference of 2 years was observed between rural and urban place of residence (21.6 and 23.6 years respectively), while for men hardly any difference was noted (27.4 and 27.7 years respectively). Note that at age 29, 17.4 percent of females and 35.3 percent of males are still unmarried.

14. MARTIAL STATUS (FOR PERSONS AGED 15 YARES AND OVER OTHER THAN EXCEPTIONAL CASES)

☐ Married

is the marriage registered

☐ Yes  ☐ No

☐ Single

☐ Widowed

☐ Divorced

---

[3] *SMAM is a demographic method to calculate the average length of never married life for those who subsequently marry before age 50 and is calculated from the proportions never married in five-year age-groups from a Census or survey. The method was proposed by Hajnnal (1953).*

*Figure 2.3: Married and never-married population aged 15 - 29 years old, by single years of age and sex*
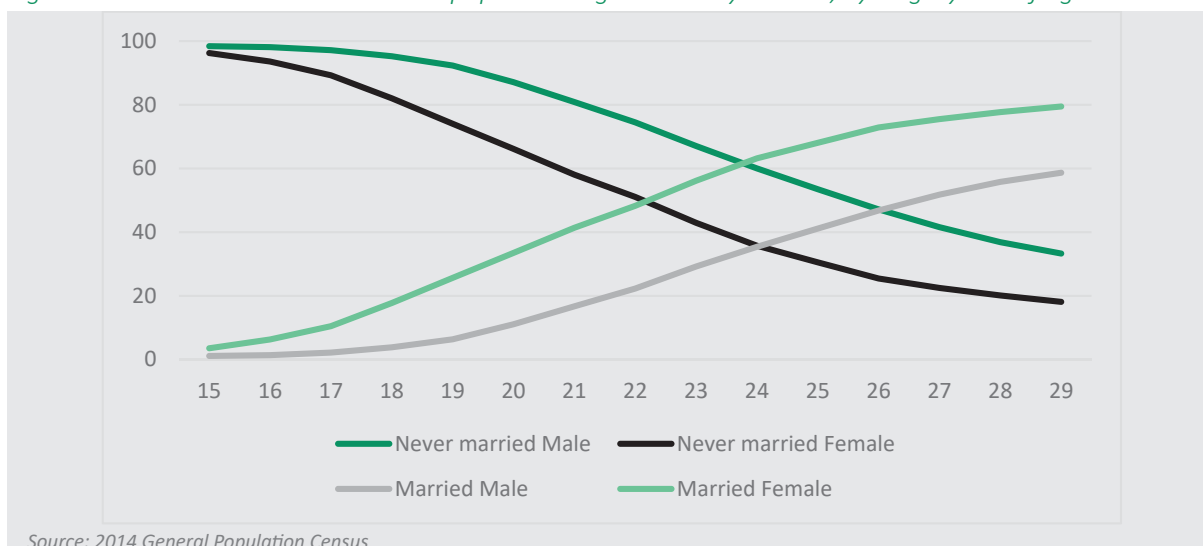


Source: 2014 General Population Census

When considering those who were never married by age and urban/rural status, it is noticeable that for both rural and urban areas the male population who never married is greater. The difference in this proportion is greatest in the age-group 20-24 years for both urban and rural populations. *Figure 2.3* clearly shows that females marry at a younger age than males, that minor difference exists between males in rural and urban areas, but that females in rural areas marry earlier than females in urban areas. Between 15 and 19 years, 90.1 percent of females in urban areas are never married, against 78.6 percent in rural areas. Between ages 25 and 29 these percentages are 25.4 and 17.4 percent, respectively.

*Figure 2.4: Percentage of 15 - 29 year olds who were never married, by sex and urban/rural residency*
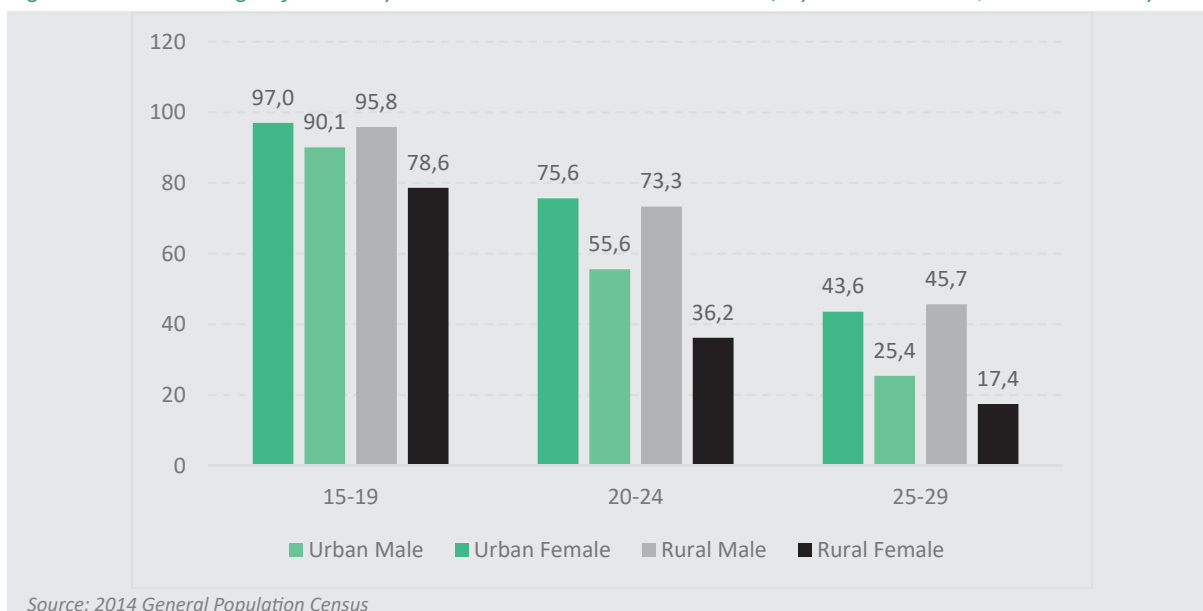


Source: 2014 General Population Census

## 2.2 Registered and Unregistered Marriages

Enumerators were instructed to fill in the marital status of every person above age 15. If the person indicated that he/she was currently married, then the question was asked whether the marriage was registered or not. An unregistered marriage could either be that the couple was living together without being formally married, or whether they were united in a common-law marriage. It is possible that a bias was introduced in this way, because some people may have indicated that they were not married when they were in fact living together on a permanent basis..

Between ages 15 and 29, 76,817 males and 128,609 females reported they were formally married and 25,891 males and 39,376 females indicated their marriage was not registered. This amounts to 13.1 percent of all married males and 13.3 percent of all married females aged 15 – 29. Among young people aged 15 – 24 this percentage is much higher, 32.2 for males and 28.3 percent for

females. This indicates that not registering marriage is much more common among the younger portion of youth. *Figure 2.5* shows the percentage of young married people who reported that their marriage had not been registered. The graph clearly shows that at the very young ages a clear majority of marriages were not registered. For instance, at age 17 almost 60 percent of married persons had not registered their marriage. At age 20 this was 35.1 percent. Looking at the graph one should realize that at the very young ages only very few people are married: in the whole country, 447 15-year olds were married, 718 16-year olds and 1,316 17 year olds. It is interesting that for all ages – except for age 17, which may be disturbed by small sample variability – the percentage of married young males that are in an unregistered marital union is somewhat higher than for young married females. At the end of their twenties, the percentages for both sexes become almost the same.

*Figure 2.5: Percentage of young people (15 - 29 years old, whose marriage was not registered, by sex*



*Source: 2014 General Population Census*

*Figure 2.6: Persons aged 15 – 29 years old, by age and sex and marital status*



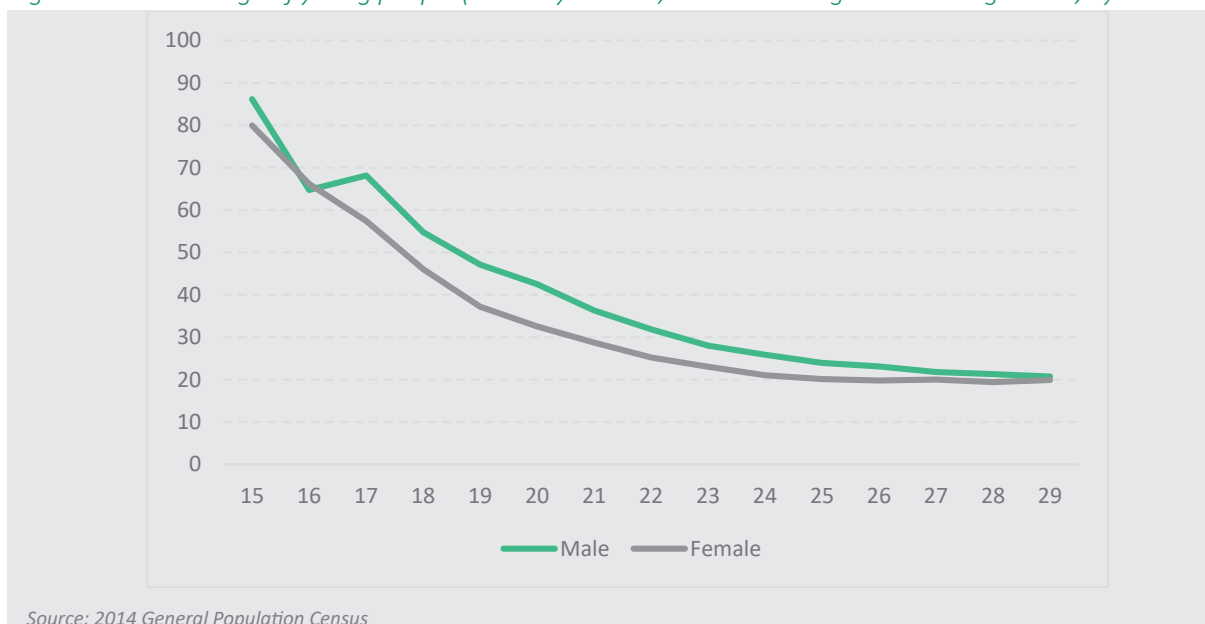| | Male | | | | | Female | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 29 | 3,502 | 13,384 | 9,817 | 4,904 | 16,895 | 4,192 | |
| 28 | 3,356 | 12,408 | 10,691 | 5,485 | 16,723 | 4,026 | |
| 27 | 3,111 | 11,179 | 11,806 | 5,891 | 15,456 | 3,871 | |
| 26 | 2,876 | 9,576 | 12,917 | 6,491 | 14,554 | 3,590 | |
| 25 | 2,606 | 8,278 | 14,654 | 7,879 | 13,702 | 3,451 | |
| 24 | 2,575 | 7,376 | 17,475 | 9,944 | 13,546 | 3,608 | |
| 23 | 2,311 | 19,687 | | 12,102 | 11,850 | 3,548 | |
| 22 | 1,835 | 20,127 | | 13,251 | 9,104 | 3,068 | |
| 21 | 1,317 | 18,556 | | 12,688 | 6,276 | 2,531 | |
| 20 | 932 | 18,728 | | 13,337 | 4,396 | 2,122 | |
| 19 | 590 | 20,068 | | 15,279 | 3,186 | 1,886 | |
| 18 | 384 | 20,101 | | 15,875 | 1,497 | | |
| 17 | 261 | 19,348 | | 16,658 | 1,055 | | |
| 16 | 123 | 16,551 | | 14,907 | 595 | | |
| 15 | 112 | 14,005 | | 12,960 | 335 | | |

35,000　25,000　15,000　5,000　5,000　15,000　25,000　35,000

- ■ Never married Male
- ■ Never married Female
- ■ Population in registered marriage Male
- ■ Population in registered marriage Female
- ■ Population in unregistered marriage Male
- ■ Population in unregistered marriage Female
- ■ Registration not stated Male
- ■ Registration not stated Female
- ■ Widowed Male
- ■ Widow Female

*Source: 2014 General Population Census*

*Figure 2.6* shows the absolute number of unregistered marriages. In this population pyramid, the number of young persons by sex and single years of age with their reported marital status is depicted. Although the majority of young people are either single or formally married, a substantial group live together with a partner in a non-registered marriage.

Demographers define the demographic transition as the decline in fertility and mortality that started in European countries in the 19th century and spread over to all countries in the world during the 20th century. Initially, researchers expected that by the end of the first demographic transition a new system with low and constant fertility and mortality would be generated, which ultimately would lead to a stationary population. The realization that this new equilibrium was not emerging, led to the idea that a new phenomenon was taking place. This was called the 'Second Demographic Transition', first introduced by Van de Kaa and Lesthaeghe in 1986. The Second Demographic Transition is brought about in many countries and caused by profound changes in norms and values related to social behaviour, with respect to marriage and fertility decisions. These changes resulted among others in sustained very low fertility in many European countries and a set of alternative living arrangements outside marriage and the general disconnection between marriage and procreation (Van de Kaa, 2002).

In a paper on marital trends in Georgia, Shinjiashvili (2006) observed that since the 1990s important changes took place in the pattern of nuptiality. The paper was based on qualitative and quantitative research, a.o. among 771 students in Tbilisi. The paper concluded that: *Contemporary type of marriage in Georgia is characterized by late marriages, decrease of the number of marriages, spread of cohabitation, low fertility, increase of extra marital births*. The conclusion by Shinjiashvili implied that Georgia had joined many other countries in Europe and has started its Second Demographic Transition. The Census shows that there is indeed some indication that Georgia has taken its first step towards a Second Demographic Transition: a) over the years, divorce rates have increased, 4.3 percent of females and 2.3 percent

of males 15 years of age and older were divorced in the 2014 General Population Census, b) a significant proportion of children are born out of wedlock (about one third of all children), and c) the percentage of young married persons that live in an unregistered union is substantial.

Despite these new emerging demographic trends, which are driven by changing social values, Georgia remains a traditional, conservative country in terms of family and reproduction. As UNFPA's Population Situation Analysis (PSA, 2014) showed, dissolution of marriage is generally not approved, and neither are single motherhood and pre-marital sex (80 percent disapproval). With current data, it is not possible to determine to what extent social change has had an impact on marriage behaviour. For instance, it is not possible to compare data from the 2002 and 2014 Censuses on registered and unregistered marriages, as no distinction was made in 2002 between registered and unregistered marriages. More research will be needed to unravel the current trends and to see to what extend Georgia's demographic system is changing.

## 2.3 Early Marriage

Early or child marriage is defined as "*the union, whether official or not, of two persons, at least one of whom is under 18 years of age. By virtue of being children, child spouses are considered to* be *incapable of giving full consent, meaning that child marriages should be considered a violation of human rights and the rights of the child"* (UNFPA, 2014).

According to Georgian law article 1108 of the Georgian Civil Code, the legal minimum age to enter into a marriage is 18 years. In 2014, those aged 16 and 17 were also able to get married upon consent of their parents or permission from the court in exceptional circumstances such as a pregnancy[4]. However, according to the amendments to the civil code made in 2015, since January 1, 2017 the legal minimum of age to enter into a marriage is 18 years without exceptions. According to the State of the World's Children 2016 report, approximately 17 percent of women between the ages of 20 and 24 in Georgia were first married or in union by age 18 (UNICEF, 2016)[5]. This Figure was based on the 2005 MICS report. More recently, in 2010 the Reproductive Health Survey[6] found that the percentage of women 20 – 24 who were married before age 18 was 14 percent[7]. It should be noted, however, that often child marriages go unregistered and therefore the problem is likely to be worse. In addition, those below the age of 16 cannot be officially registered at all. Early marriage is often correlated with a disruption in education, negatively impacting health and robbing the individual of long-term prospects- placing the individual in a vulnerable position early in life.

*Figure 2.7: Number of married population aged 15-18, by sex and rural/urban*



Source: 2014 General Population Census
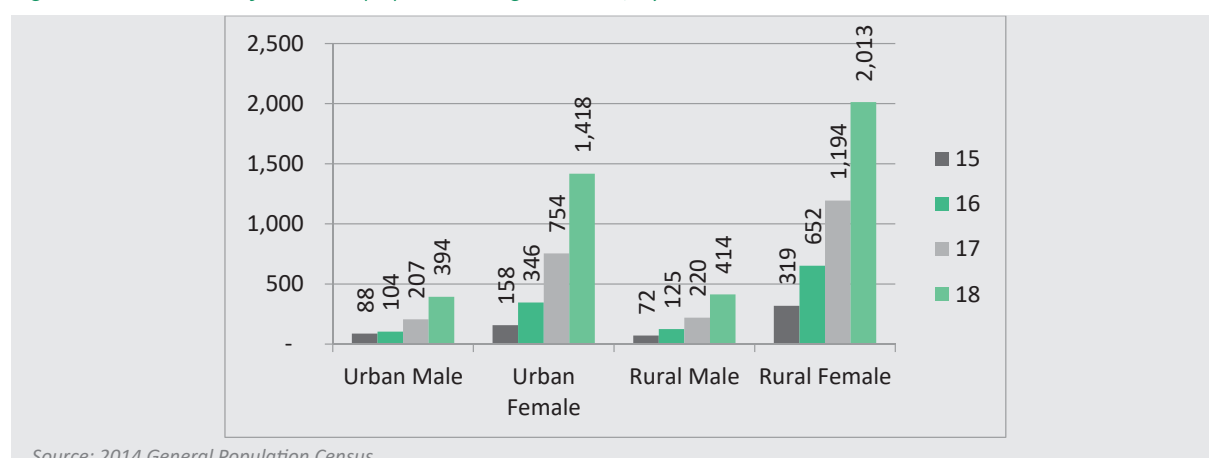
[4] United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) (2014). Child Marriage in Georgia (Summary). Retrieved from http://eeca.unfpa.org/publications/child-marriage-georgia-summary

[5] United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) (2016). The State of the World's Children 2016. Retrieved from https://www.unicef.org/publications/files/UNICEF_SOWC_2016.pdf

[6] National Center for Disease Control and Public Health (NCDC), Ministry of Labor, Health, and Social Affairs (MoLHSA), National Statistics Office of Georgia, Division of Reproductive Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (DRH/CDC) (2012). Reproductive Health Survey Georgia 2010: Final Report.

[7] As age at first marriage is not a core question for population censuses, no information on age at first marriage was collected in the census and consequently this indicator cannot be calculated from the 2014 General Population Census.

As *Figure 2.7* shows, girls make up the largest proportion of early marriages (registered and unregistered marriages). Particularly apparent is that girls between 15 and 18 years of age in rural areas are more likely to enter into a marriage than those in urban areas. At the age of 15, there were 158 urban females married compared to 319 in rural areas. For males, the number of marriages in rural versus urban areas are more or less similar. It should be noted that in the Census questions on marriage were restricted to all persons 15 years of age and older. No information is therefore available for persons younger than 15.

When considering the status of registration of the marriages among those aged 15-18, it is apparent that a larger proportion of this group is in an unregistered marriage than in a registered marriage. For 16 year-olds for example, there were 371 males and females in a registered marriage versus 718 in an unregistered marriage. For those aged 17 these numbers stood at 904 versus 1,316. The only exception is females at the age of 18 years, where 1,751 were in a registered marriage compared to 1,497 in an unregistered marriage.

*Figure 2.9* shows the proportion of the total population of 15- 18 year olds who are married by region. The largest proportion of 15-year olds who were married was in Kvemo Kartli, where 2.9 percent or 152 persons were married, well above the 1.5 percent national average. Among 16 and 17 year olds, Kvemo Kartli (5.6 percent and 8.7 percent) and Kakheti (4.9 percent and 7.2 percent) had the highest proportion of married individuals at those ages - significantly higher than the national figure (2.8 percent and 4.9 percent). In both regions, a higher proportion of Muslims are living, who in general have lower ages at marriage for women. The same regions also had the highest proportion of 18-year olds who were married, along with ShidaKartli and Guria. The lowest proportion of early marriages were seen in  Tbilisi, Mtskheta-Mtianeti, Racha-Lechkhumi and Kvemo Svaneti and Samtskhe-Javakheti.

In many countries with high proportions of early and child marriage often large differences in age exist between husband and wife, where older men sometimes marry very young girls. In Georgia, this is not the case. In 2015, 76 percent of married women under 18, were married to men who were younger than 25 and 96 percent were married to men under 30 (Hakkert, 2017).

*Figure 2.8: Population aged 15-18 in registered versus unregistered marriage, by sex*



*Source: 2014 General Population Census*
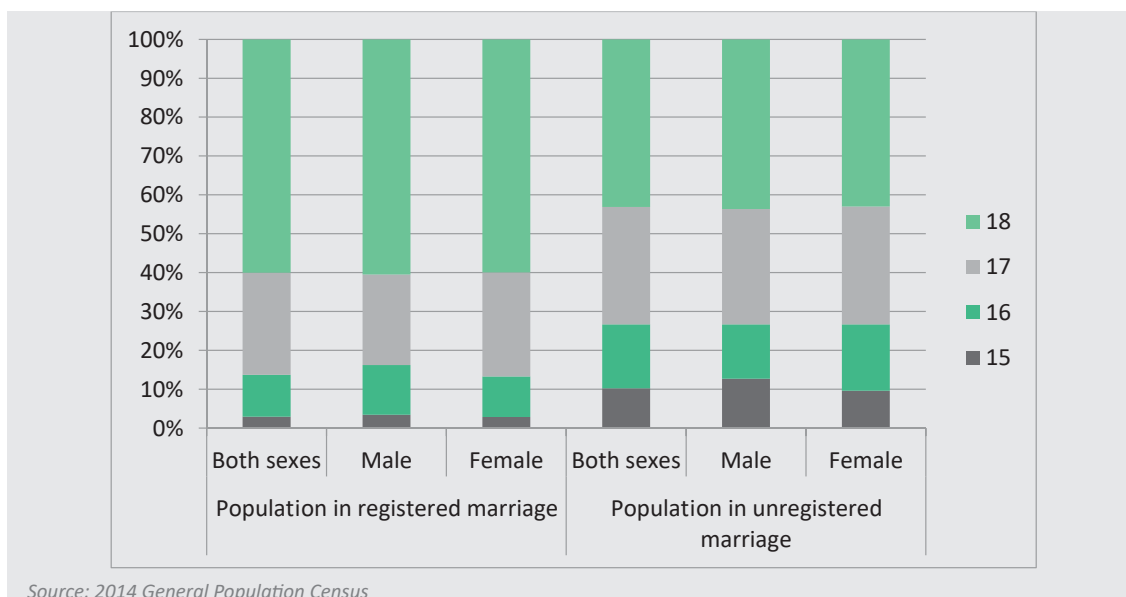
*Figure 2.9: Percentage of total 15 - 18 year-olds who are married, by age and region*



Source: 2014 General Population Census
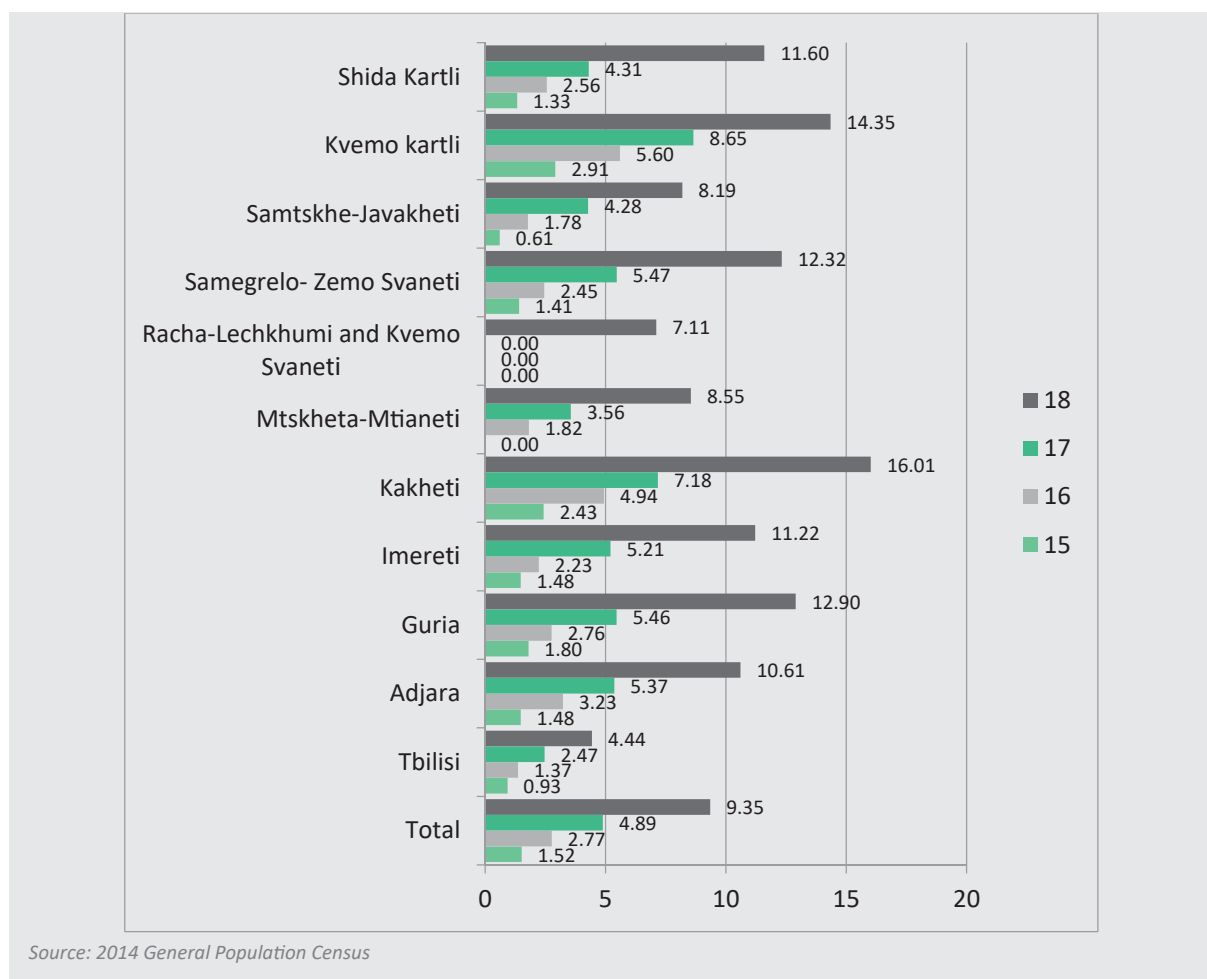
## 2.4 Childbearing

The analysis of fertility data of the 2014 General Population Census and other data resulted in a wide margin of uncertainty while no exact estimation could be given about the Total Fertility Rate (TFR). Hakkert (2017) concluded that the TFR 'is in the order of 2.0' (Hakkert, 2017). In this section, the report will not look as much into the total-fertility, but will concentrate on the childbearing experience of young women. *Figure 2.10* summarizes childbearing experience of young women between 15 and 29 years old in Georgia. For each single age-group the percentage of the number of live births is depicted. Only 0.7 percent of all young women age 15 at the time of the Census had one child. The Census only asked questions on fertility to women aged 15 years of age and older. The very

low percentage of women aged 15 who gave birth suggests that childbirth before age 15 is negligible.

With each additional year in age, the percentage of women who had ever given birth increases. At age 18, 8.0 percent had given birth to one child and 1.3 percent already gave birth to two children. About a quarter of women who had turned twenty during the year before the Census had already given birth at least once. For those aged 25, somewhat more than a third were still childless, while 31.2 percent had given birth to one child, 27.9 percent to two children and 4.2 percent to three children. A very small fraction of 0.3 percent gave birth to four children.

According to the WHO (2016), births to adolescent mothers account for 11 percent of all births worldwide, but account for 23 percent of the burden of

*Figure 2.10: Percentage of women with number of live births by age of mother*



Source: 2014 General Population Census
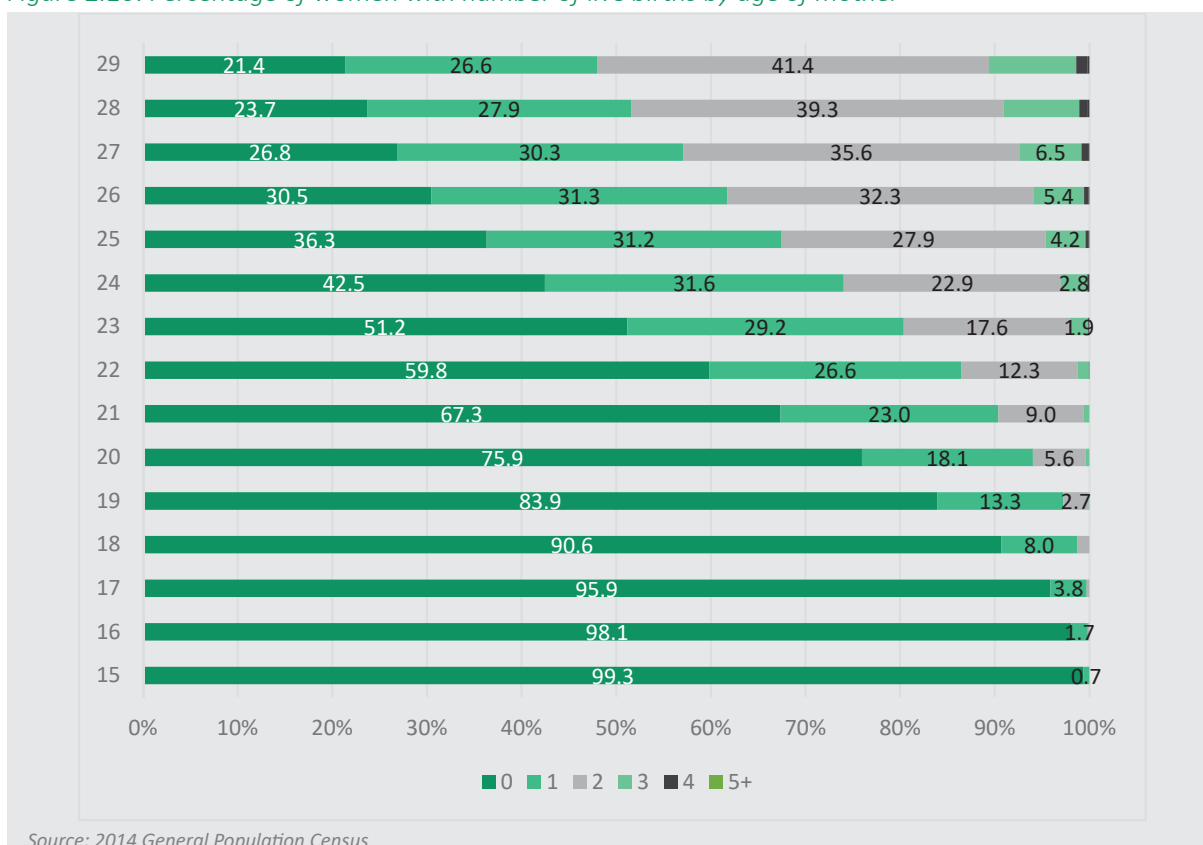
disease due to pregnancy and childbirth. Childbirth at a very young age poses serious health risks for both mother and child. It is the second leading cause of death among girls aged 15 to 19 years globally, due to pregnancy and childbirth complications, with unsafe abortions being an important contributor to this. The younger a mother is at the time of delivery, the higher the chance of maternal mortality. Worldwide, babies born to mothers below age 20 have a 50 percent higher probability of dying than babies born to mothers 20 – 29 years old. According to the 2014 World Health Statistics report, the global adolescent birth rate stood at 49 per 1,000 girls among 15-19 year old girls representing a stark decline since 1990 (WHO, 2016). To address maternal deaths, it is crucial that unwanted and early pregnancies are avoided. Vital in this matter is ensuring access to contraceptives, safe abortion services in accordance with the law and quality post-abortion care (WHO, 2016). Besides having a significant impact on the health of the young mother and child, the negative economic and social consequences are also considerable.

Many girls who become pregnant at a young age drop out of school or discontinue further education. As a result, this creates fewer skills and opportunities for the future and creates an economic cost for both the individual and society (WHO, 2014).

It is impossible to calculate adolescent fertility rates (i.e. fertility of women aged 15 – 19 years of age) based on the 2014 General Population Census. This is because in the Census only the number of children ever born was asked and not the number of children born in the period of 12 months before the Census, which is not a core UN-recommendation. In the case of children ever born, children cannot be linked to age of mother at the time the child was born. According to the report on 'Reproductive Behaviour and Needs of Young Women in Georgia' (Ross, 2012), the adolescent fertility rate in 2010 was 39 children per 1,000 women. This figure was based on the Reproductive Health Survey Georgia 2010, Final Report (NCDC, 2012). Compared to the two earlier reproductive health surveys (1999 and 2005) adolescent fertility has come down: in 2005

*Figure 2.11: Adolescent fertility rate (births per 1,000 women ages 15-19), Georgia and countries around the Black Sea*
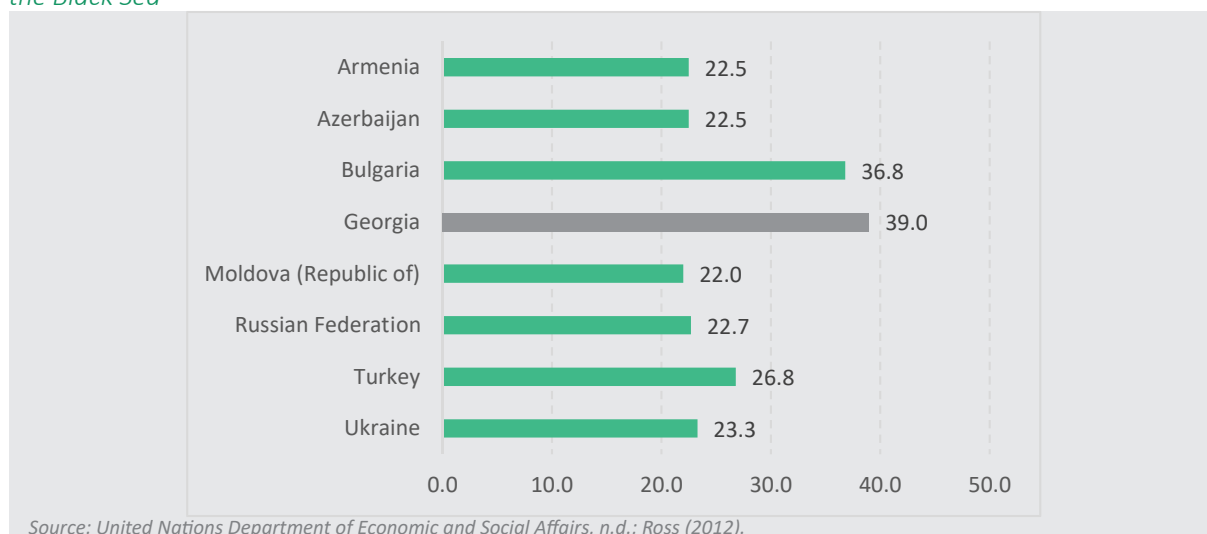
adolescent fertility still stood at 47 children per 1,000 women aged 15 – 19 years and in 1999 the rate was 65 per thousand (Ross, 2012).

Georgia's adolescent fertility is high compared to surrounding countries. *Figure 2.11* shows that in fact, adolescent fertility is highest among all countries around the Black Sea. A number of countries have around the same low adolescent fertility Armenia (22.5 per thousand women aged 15 – 19 years), Azerbaijan (22.5), the Republic of Moldova (22.0), the Russian Federation (22.7) and Ukraine (23.3). Bulgaria comes closest to Georgia with an adolescent fertility rate of 36.8 per thousand. Note that all these figures refer to 2015, while the figure for Georgia refers to 2010. Given the downward past trend it is possible that the level for Georgia in 2015 was also somewhat lower than 39 births per thousand women 15 – 19 years old.

The birth of a first child is a central transition in a woman's life and is for most young mothers and fathers a life changing experience. An important indicator to measure the timing of this event is the mean age of the mother at the moment of birth of her first child. Normally, the age at first birth is calculated from birth history frequencies, but as only information on children ever born was collected in the Census, this is not possible. For the calculation of the mean age at marriage the Singulate Mean Age at Marriage was used (see above), using the never/ever married dichotomy.

In fact, any ever-never age-related dichotomy can be calculated using the same methodology as the SMAM. A straightforward extension is the Singulate Mean Age at First Birth (SMAFB) (Bongaarts, 2015). Moreover, as SMAM and SMAFB are based on the same methodology and assumptions, the difference between both indicators is a measure of the average interval between first marriage and first birth (Booth, 2001). SMAFB was calculated for Georgia as a whole and for a number of subcategories. Results are presented graphically in *Figure 2.12*.

The mean age at first birth, according to the 2014 General Population Census, was 26.3 years. In the previous section on marriage it was shown that the SMAM was 22.9 years for females. This means that the waiting time for having a first child after marriage is 3.4 years. In the monograph on Population Dynamics in Georgia, Hakkert (2017) states that in a country like Georgia the first birth normally occurs one or two years after marriage. The results from this analysis suggest that in fact the waiting time for the first birth is significantly longer.

*Figure 2.12* shows that quite large differences exist within Georgia in terms of the onset of fertility. Women in rural areas on average start having children almost 3 years earlier than women in urban areas (24.5 years against 27.3 years). The same differences exist between the country's administrative regions. Women

*Figure 2.12: Singulate mean age at first birth by background characteristics of women*
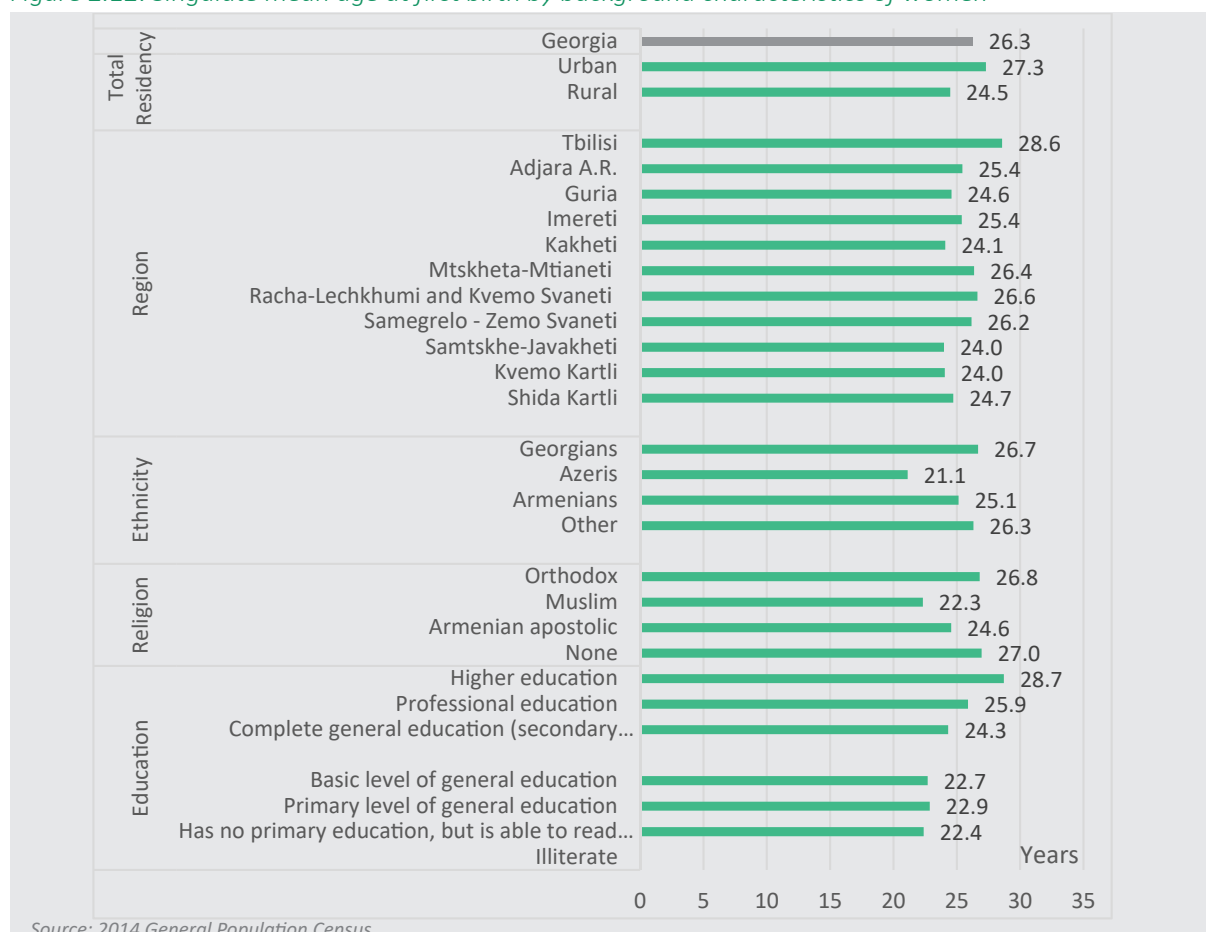


Source: 2014 General Population Census

in Tbilisi on average start having children much later than in the rest of the country (28.6 years). Kakheti, Samtskhe-Javakheti and Kvemo Kartli are the regions with youngest mothers. In these regions women on average start having children 4.5 years before women in Tbilisi. As Georgians constitute the majority of the people living in the country, their age at first birth is close to the national average. Azeri women have their first child on average 5.6 years earlier than Georgian women. The fact that most Azeri's follow Islam, is reflected in the low age at first birth for Muslims (22.3 years). The small group with no religion and Orthodox Christians have the highest Singulate Mean Age at First Birth (27.0 and 26.8 years, respectively.) It should not come as a surprise that people with higher education also have the highest SMAFB (28.7 years). For each lower educational level, the average age at first birth drops. The youngest age is among women with no primary education, but who were able to read. On average, they have their first birth at age 22.4 years old. No SMAFB could be calculated for illiterate women, as

there were insufficient number of cases.

## 2.5 Household Composition

A young person's health and well-being is closely connected to the family and household environment in which he/she lives. For instance, single parenthood can constrain a person to pursue work while having sufficient time for child care. This can have a direct effect on household income and may increase the risk of poverty and deprivation. Children who grow up in households or institutions without any of the parents being present face extra problems. *Figure 2.13* depicts the percentage of persons aged 0 to 29 by the presence of their parents in the household. It is interesting to see that in Georgia until age 12 about 5 percent of all children live without their parents. At age 0, 85.6 percent of children live in a household were both parents are present. By age 15, this has declined to 73.9 percent, at that age, 14.9 percent only have their mother present and 3.6 only have

their father present. After age 15, the percentage of young persons who live without their mother or father is increasing. This is obviously because many young people move out of the house to go study or to form their own family. Between age 23 and 24, half of the youngsters live without their parents. However, even in their late twenties a significant proportion of people continue to live with their parents. At age 28, about 30 percent live in the same household with one or both their parents: 20.3 percent live together with both of their parents, 8.2 live together with their mother and 1.8 live together with their father.

The number of one-person households among youth remains very small. The percentage of males and females between ages 15 and 29, who live in a one-person household is respectively 2.4 percent and 1.9 percent. Up to age 18, the percentage of persons in a one-person household is very small, but at age 18, the age at which young people leave the house to pursue a tertiary education,

it jumps to 2.6 percent for males and 2.8 percent for females. The percentage of females who live on their own is slightly higher up to age 21. This is consistent with the fact that young women have a higher participation in higher education. After age 21, the percentage of males who live on their own remains more or less at the same level between 2.5 and 3.0 percent, while the percentage of young women who live on their own drops to around 1.5 percent.

A large proportion of children and youth live in non-nuclear households, out of a total of 1,457,628 persons in the age-group 0-29 years, 596,919 live in a nuclear household[8], 844,290 live in a non-nuclear household and 16,419 live in a one-person household. It is interesting that the proportion of children and young people changes as they grow older. At age 0, only 27.6 percent of children live in a nuclear household. This percentage steadily increases to 51.4 percent at age 16 and then starts to decline gradually to reach 39.4 percent at age 29.

*Figure 2.13: Persons aged 0 - 29 by presence of parents in the household*
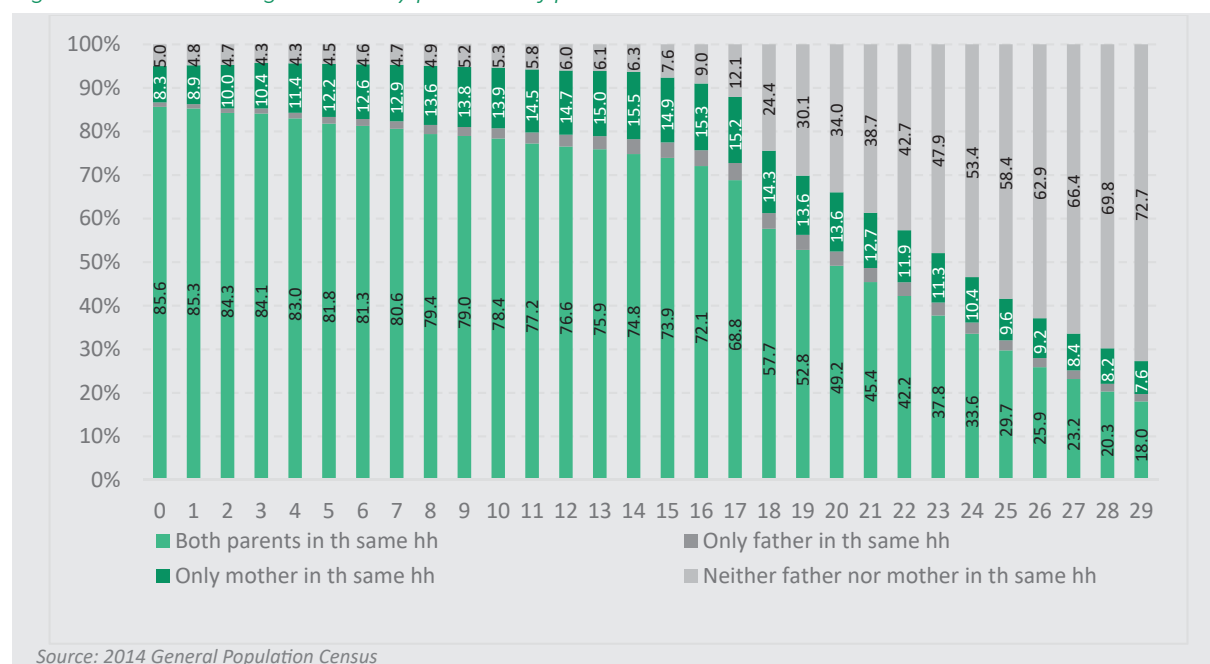


*Source: 2014 General Population Census*

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[8] A nuclear household consists of one of the following types: (a) A married couple without children; (b) A married couple with one or more unmarried children; (c) A father with one or more unmarried children; (d) A mother with one or more unmarried children. (United Nations. 2008).

*Figure 2.14: Percentage of persons 15 - 29 years old living on their own, by sex*



*Source: 2014 General Population Census*
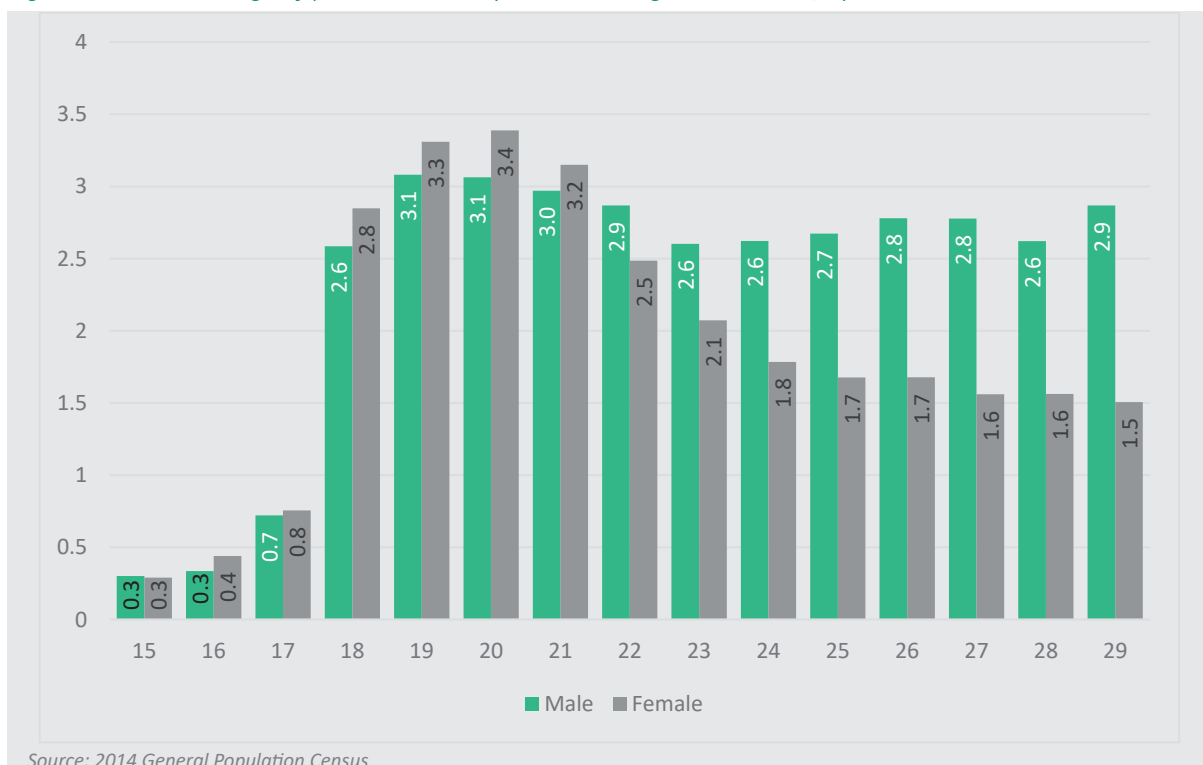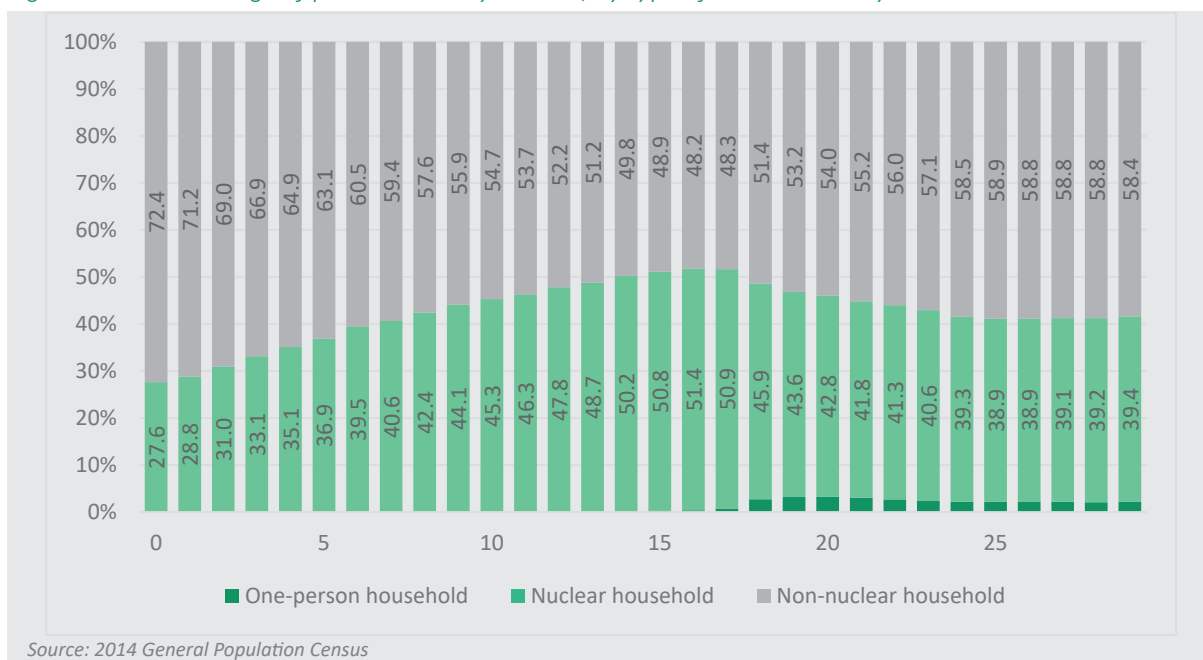
*Figure 2.15: Percentage of persons 0 - 29 years old, by type of household they live in*



*Source: 2014 General Population Census*

# 3. Education

Education transforms lives and is the cornerstone of a society's present and future development. Ensuring access to education is key to empowering young generations to become strong leaders in the economic, social and political spheres of communities and the country as a whole. The government of Georgia recognizes the importance of education for the further development of the country. The principles and priorities of the education system were laid down in the 2004 National Goals of General Education, which was approved by the government in resolution #84/10/2004, and by the General Education Law, which was adopted in 2005 (UNESCO, 2015). Primary and basic education are mandatory in Georgia. The Education Law stipulates that the government provides free general education during 12 years of study. Parents receive a voucher for each school aged child (Article 22). It is important to note that the rule not only applies to Georgian citizens: *'The funding determined by this article shall apply to citizens of Georgia, the persons having neutral ID cards, neutral travel documents or temporary ID cards, aliens (including the citizens of foreign countries with the status of compatriot living abroad), stateless persons and persons with refugee or humanitarian status'* (Article 22.7). The law provides measures to create inclusive education, in which pupils with special educational needs are involved in the general education process together with their peers.

In the 2014 General Population Census, three questions were asked about the educational status of each individual: 1) Does he/she go to a preschool institution? (For preschool-aged persons), 2) Are you currently studying in an educational institution? and 3) Highest level of completed education (For persons aged 10 years and over). The first question falls outside the scope of this analysis, as it is directed to very young children. The second question can provide information on school attendance of youth while the third shows their educational attainment.

## 3.1 School Attendance

Attendance ratios are indicators to monitor the attendance of the school-age population in the educational system. The net attendance ratio shows the degree of participation in a given level of schooling of children belonging to the official age-group corresponding to that specific level of education. Three net attendance ratios were calculated: a) secondary school attendance ratio: the number of students vin secondary school divided by the number of persons aged $15-17$ years; b) bachelor net attendance ratio: the number of students following a bachelor education divided by the number of persons aged $18-20$ years; and c) Masters net attendance ratio: number of students doing their Masters divided by those aged 22- 24 years. *Figure 3.1* shows these net attendance ratios for males, females and both sexes. In Georgia, education after primary school is divided between basic general education (3 years after primary) and secondary education (3 years after basic education).

*Figure 3.1* shows that about three out of four youngsters in the age-group $15-17$ years attend secondary education. Attendance is somewhat higher for females than for males: 76.7 percent against 73.0 percent. This results in a gender parity index[10] of 1.05 for secondary education. In the age-group $18-20$ years, 34.0 percent of youngsters are attending university at the first level (Bachelor). The gender parity index for this level equals 1.32, indicating that 132 young females between 18 and 20 years old follow a Bachelor education for every 100 young males. Among youth 22 to 24 years old, 2.8 percent are involved in education leading to a Master's degree. Also, at this level the attendance ratio for women is higher than for men implying a gender parity index of 1.38. The surplus of female students over male students in Georgia is not exceptional. According to Eurostat, in the 28-member states of the European Union, 54.3 percent of all tertiary students are female. The percentage of female tertiary students was higher for those studying for Master's degrees (57.4 percent) than for those studying for a Bachelor's degree. The highest percentages of tertiary female students can be found in Poland, Sweden and the Baltic countries, where close to 60 percent of students were female (Eurostat, 2015).

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[9] In addition to the net attendance ratios, it is also possible to calculate the gross attendance ratios. The gross attendance ratio (GAR) is the total number of students attending a given school level - regardless of age - expressed as a percentage of the official school-age population for that level. As this ratio is less easy to interpret (and can even be higher than 100 percent) it was not calculated for this analysis.

[10] The gender parity index is defined as the is the ratio of the number of female students enrolled at a specific level of education to the number of male students in that level.

*Figure 3.1: Net attendance ratios by educational level and sex for youth*
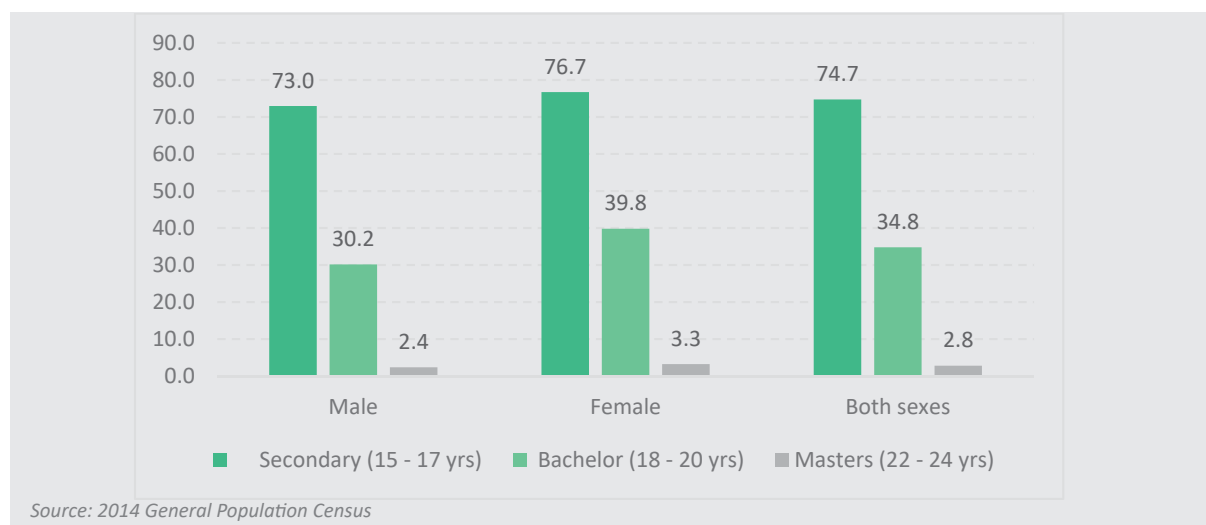
## 3.2 School Life Expectancy

School life expectancy allows to show how many years an individual at a certain age will spend in education during the rest of his/her life. The school life expectancy is a similar indicator to the life expectancy. It is equal to the sum of the net school attendance ratios for each single year of age. The age-specific net attendance ratios are calculated by dividing the number of students of a particular age who are in school by the number of persons in the population of that same age. The measure makes use of period attendance ratios and not cohort data.

*Figure 3.2* shows the age-specific net school attendance ratios by sex and single years of age for persons older than six. The last category '31+' includes all people aged 31 and older. The graph shows that from age 7 to age 13, the age-specific attendance ratio is well above 99 percent, at age 14 it is still 98.8 percent. After age 14 attendance starts to drop significantly. At the age of 18, 52.1 percent are still in school. Between ages 18 and 22, attendance ratios are higher for females than males. The difference between the sexes is greatest at age 19, when 49.9 percent of females are still in school compared to 37.4 percent of males. These age-specific attendance ratios allow for the calculation of the school life expectancy which can be computed from any exact age. *Figure 3.3* depicts these school life expectancies for ages 6, 10, 15 and 20 for males, females and for both sexes.

*Figure 3.2: Age-specific school attendance ratios, by sex and single years of age*
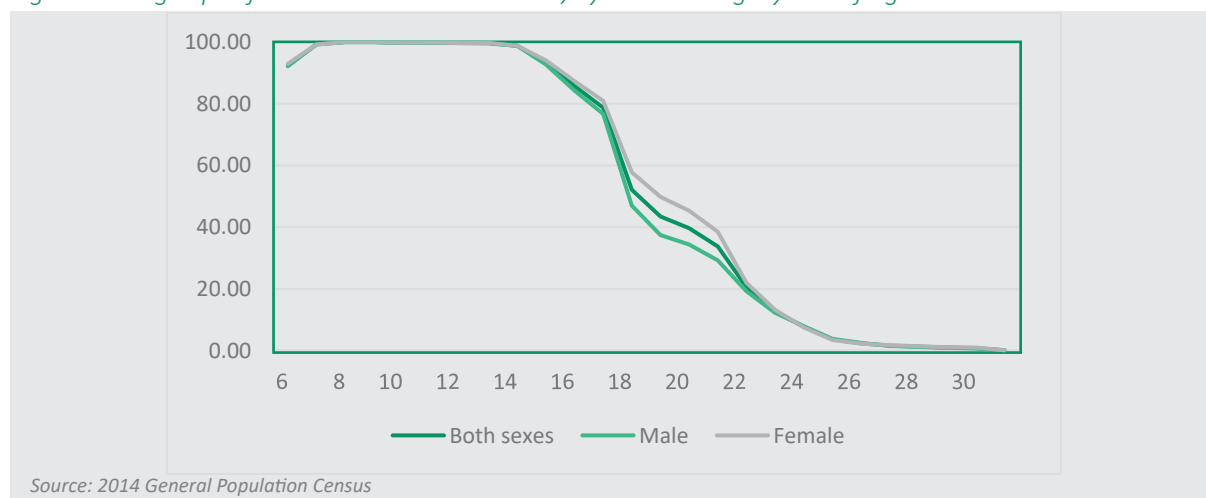
At the age of 6, a child in Georgia can expect to be in school for 13.7 years on average. The expectancy is slightly higher for girls (14.0 years) than for boys (13.4 years). Also, at the ages of 10, 15 and 20 years, female school life expectancy is somewhat higher than male school life expectancy. At the age of 10, girls can expect to be in school for anoth-er 10.1 years, against 9.5 years for boys. The fact that almost all children stay in school until they are fourteen years old means that at age 15 the school life expectancy is exactly 5 years less than for 10 year olds. As many youngsters leave school be-tween 15 and 20 years, expectancies are just over 1 year when they turn twenty.

*Figure 3.3: School life expectancy by sex and age (6, 10, 15 and 20 years)*



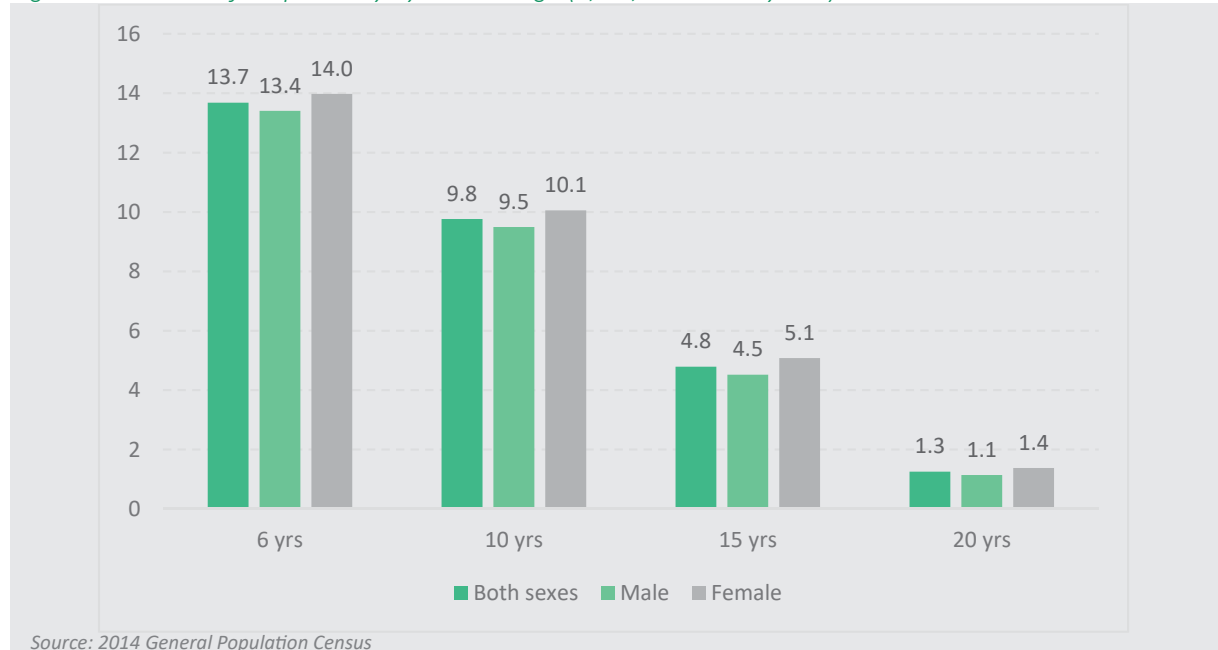*Source: 2014 General Population Census*

*Figure 3.4: International comparison school life expectancy (primary to tertiary)*



*Source: 2014 General Population Census; United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), n.d.*
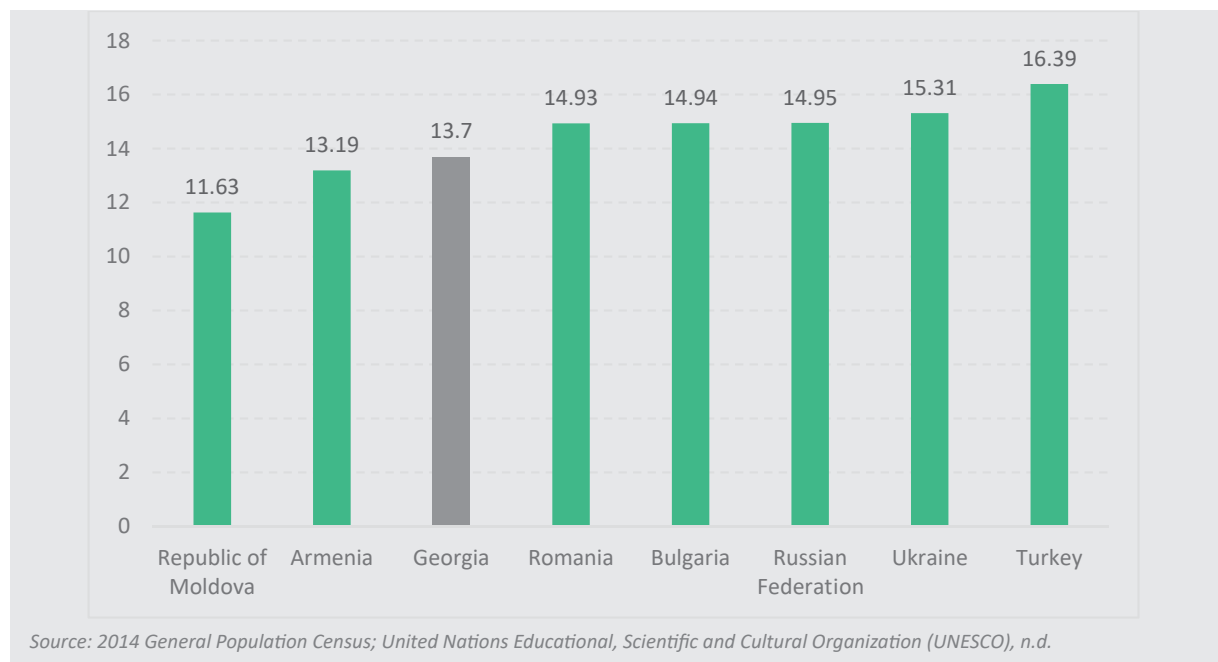
*Figure 3.4* presents an international comparison in school life expectancy with the countries in the region for which data is available. However, some caution should be given to this comparison arising from the definitional differences between countries. The Technical Guidelines for Education Indicators (UNESCO, 2009) warn that 'Caution is required when making cross-country comparisons; neither the length of the school year nor the quality of education is necessarily the same in each country. In addition, as this indicator does not directly take into account the effects of repetition, it is not strictly comparable between countries with automatic promotion and those allowing grade repetition'. Another problem could be that in some countries pre-primary is considered part of schooling and in other countries it is not. Compared to its neighbours, Georgia is somewhat situated at the lower end together with Armenia and the Republic of Moldova. Moldova scoring the lowest with 11.6 years. At the high end, Turkey stands out with a school life expectancy of 16.4 years. This number for Turkey is somewhat doubtful as it refers to 2014, while in 2013 it was a full 2 years lower (14.4 years).

## 3.3 School Attendance by Type

For policy making, it is important to know the distribution of youth across the various levels of education they were following at the time of the Census. A distinction was made between the international and national age division of youth (15 – 24 and 15 – 29 years) and by sex. In the group of 15 – 24 year olds, somewhat more males than females are no longer following an education (56.9 against 53.0 percent - *Figure 3.5*). The same percentage of males and females (22.4 percent) are still in secondary education. The percentage of females enrolled in a Bachelor program is somewhat higher than for males (14.2 and 17.8 percent, respectively), but at the Master's level or certified programs more males than females are enrolled (3.7 and 1.2 percent, respectively). When expanding the age selection to 29 years (*Figure 3.6*), it is apparent that most individuals in the 15- 29 year age category were not studying in an educational institution anymore at the time of the Census.

## 3.4 Educational Attainment

The highest level of education reached by an individual is defined as educational attainment. Typically, an individual's educational attainment is strongly influential to his or her prospects on the labour market and social position in later life. In addition, higher educational attainment is linked with a healthier life, less violence and crime, more civic engagement, and other factors related to sustainable development. Due to such significance,

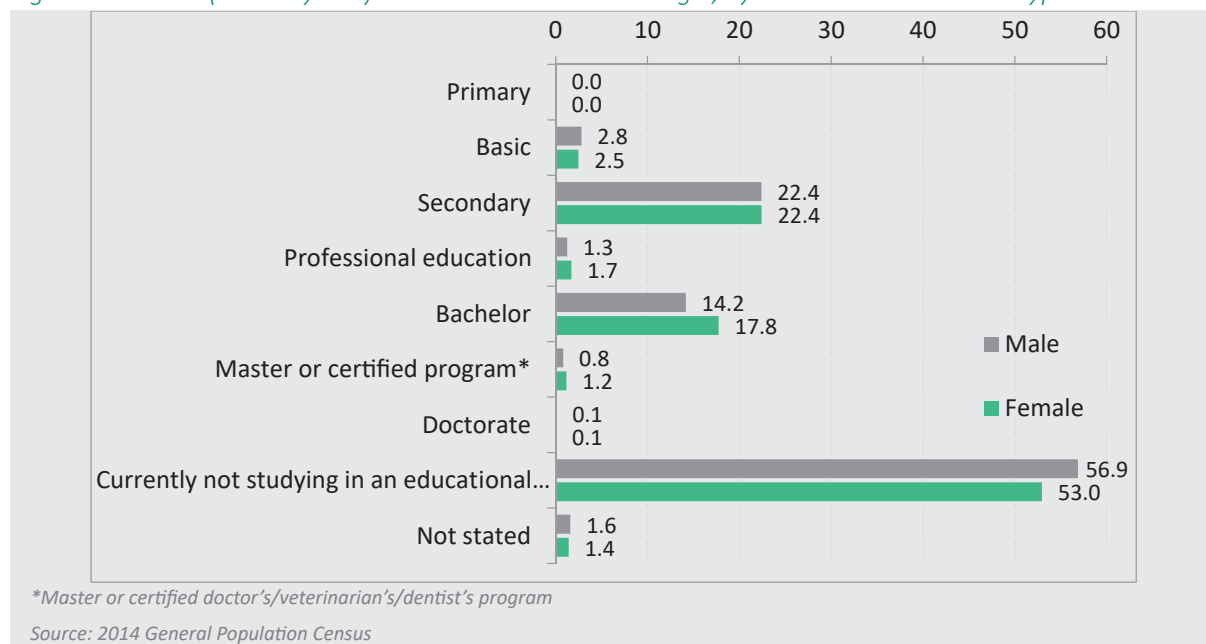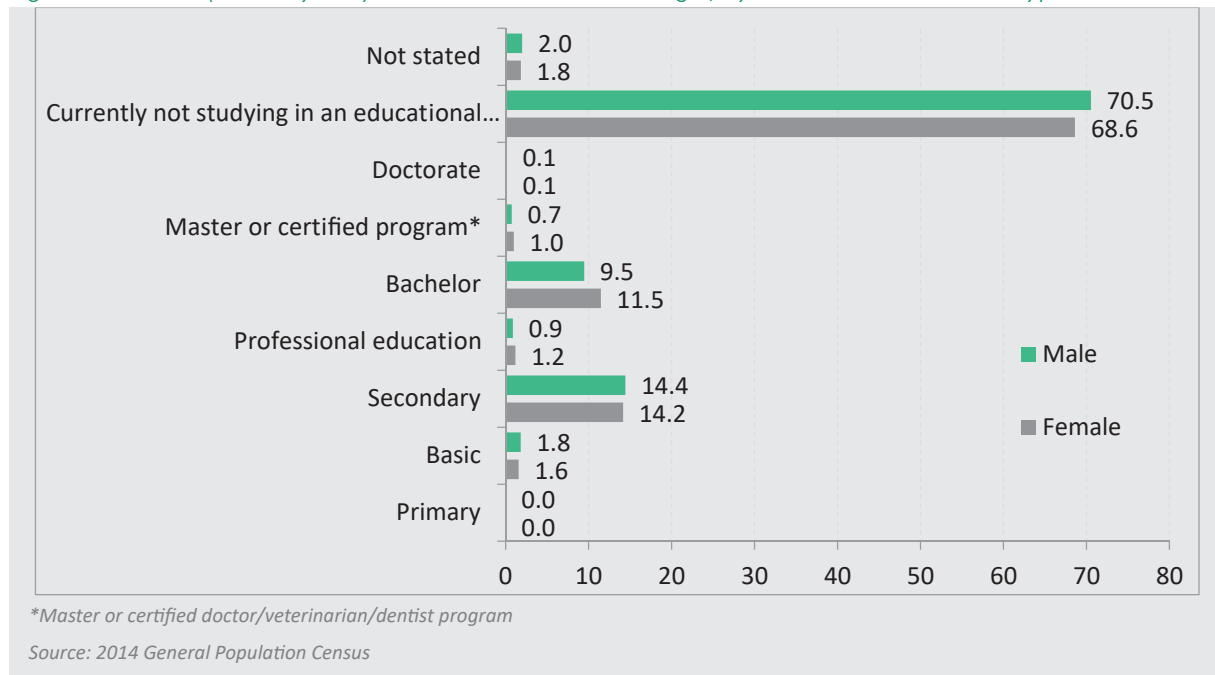*Figure 3.5: Youth (15 - 24 years) school attendance in Georgia, by Gender and Education type*



*Master or certified doctor's/veterinarian's/dentist's program*

*Source: 2014 General Population Census*

*Figure 3.6: Youth (15 - 29 years) school attendance in Georgia, by Gender and Education type*



*Master or certified doctor/veterinarian/dentist program*

Source: 2014 General Population Census

education plays an important role in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. In this light, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development stipulates in Target 4.4.: *"By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship"* is an important target for the SDGs (UNESCO, n.d.).

The question on educational attainment in the 2014 General Population Census contained an unusual combination of answer categories because the category 'illiteracy' was included. The inclusion of illiteracy as a separate category means that the answer categories to the question on educational attainment are no longer mutually exclusive. People that in the past had followed education but who, because of an illness or an accident, could no longer read and/or write could be classified in two categories, i.e. the level they followed in the past or their current status 'illiteracy'. Therefore, this question cannot really be used to estimate the level of illiteracy in the country, and consequently, no analysis on illiteracy among youth was made in this report.

To plan Georgia's future labor force, it is important to know the educational attainment of Georgia's population. *Figure 3.7* shows the absolute number of people by educational attainment and sex. The figure shows separately the educational attainment of the population 25- 29 years and 30- 74 years and above.

The number of persons with no primary education is very low in Georgia. For all persons 25 – 64 years of age, about 5 thousand indicated they had no primary education but could read and write and about 6 thousand reported to be illiterate. The largest educational group of people 25- 29 years of age and over is formed by those with a higher education (109 thousand). Currently, 755 thousand people in age group 25 -74 years of age have a higher education, while 482 thousand have a professional education.

The 2014 General Population Census showed that younger cohorts have higher levels of educational attainment than older cohorts. *Figure 3.8* shows the percentage of people with higher education by sex and broad age-groups. Obviously, at younger ages the percentage of persons with higher education is low or non-existent, simply because people did not have the opportunity yet to finish their education. If we look at the percentage of people 25 – 29 years old who have finished higher education (39.8 percent), it is about the same as for those in age-group 30 – 39 years but considerably higher than for those between the age of 40 and 49 (33.7 percent). At older ages percentages are even lower. Higher educational attainment is considerably higher for females than

*Figure 3.7: Number of persons by educational attainment (25 - 29 years and 30 – 74 years)*



Source: 2014 General Population Census
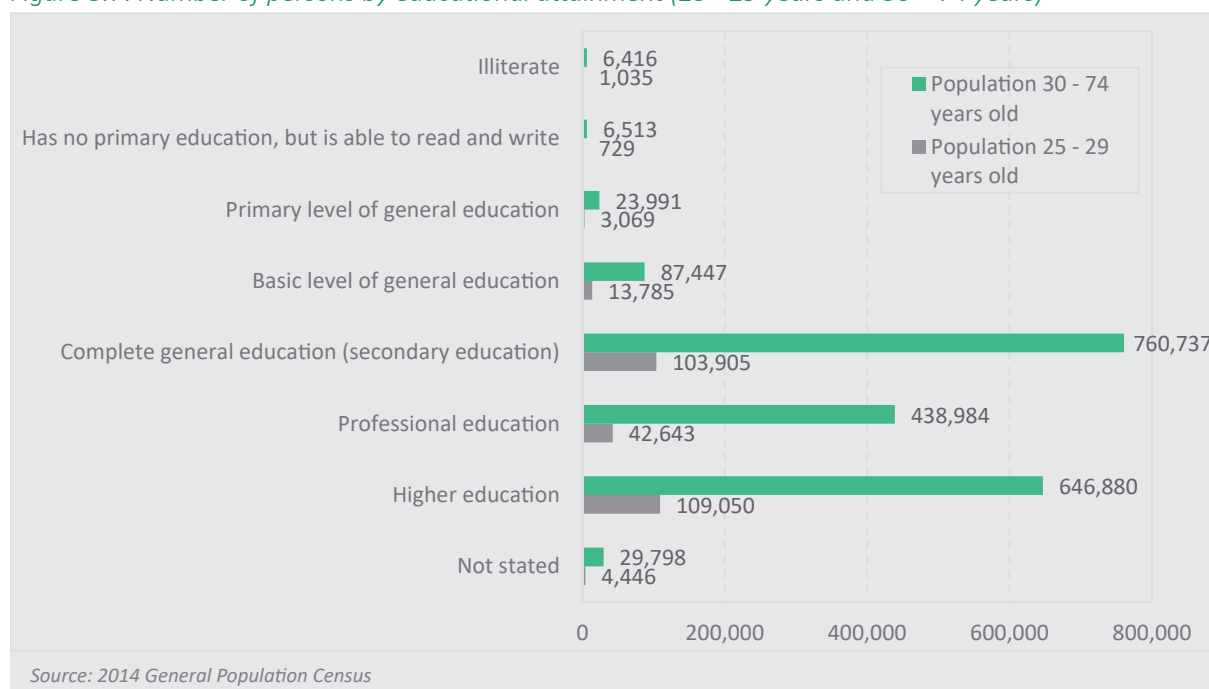
for males. In the age-group 25 – 29 years, 44.1 percent of all women have a higher educational diploma versus 35.5 percent of males, a difference of 8.6 percent. It is noteworthy that the difference between males and females becomes smaller in the older cohorts. In the age-group 30 – 39, the difference is 6.2 percent. Between age 50 and 59, the difference is almost non-existent and above age 60 the percentage of males with a higher education is bigger than the percentage of females.

The trend of higher female educational attainment is not restricted to advanced education alone. Also at the professional educational level females score higher than their male counterparts. Age-groups 20 – 24 and 25 – 29 years both have higher percentages for females than for males (*Figure 3.9*). In terms of overall levels, older cohorts had higher professional levels. This is caused by a clear shift among young people from studies at the professional level to higher education.

*Figure 3.8: Percentage of persons by higher educational attainment by sex and age*



Source: 2014 General Population Census
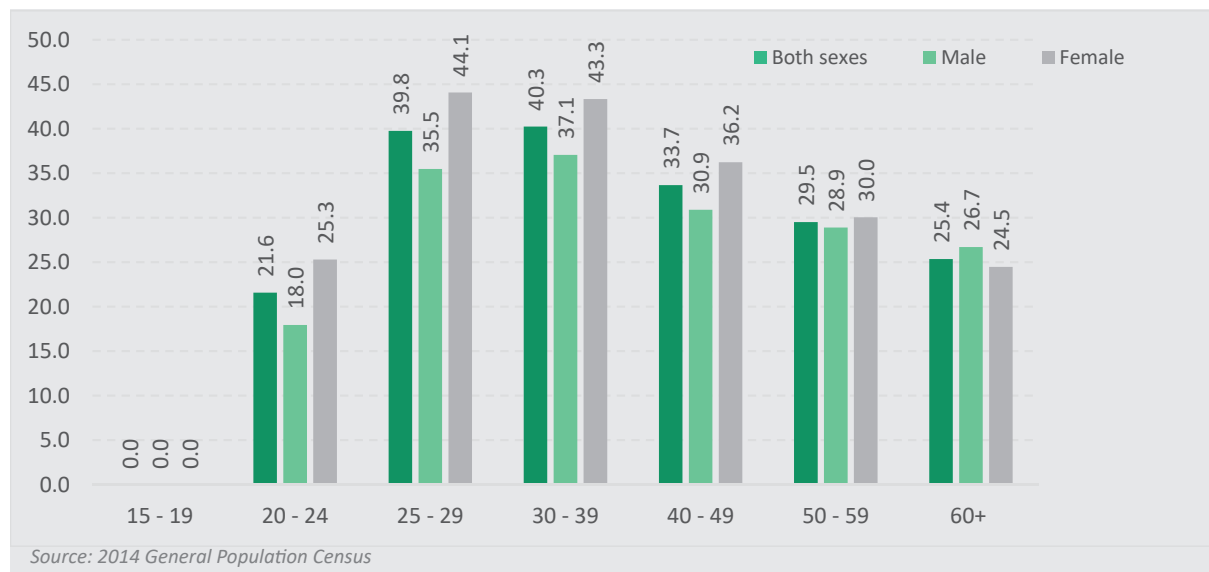
*Figure 3.9: Percentage of persons by professional educational attainment by sex and age*



Source: 2014 General Population Census
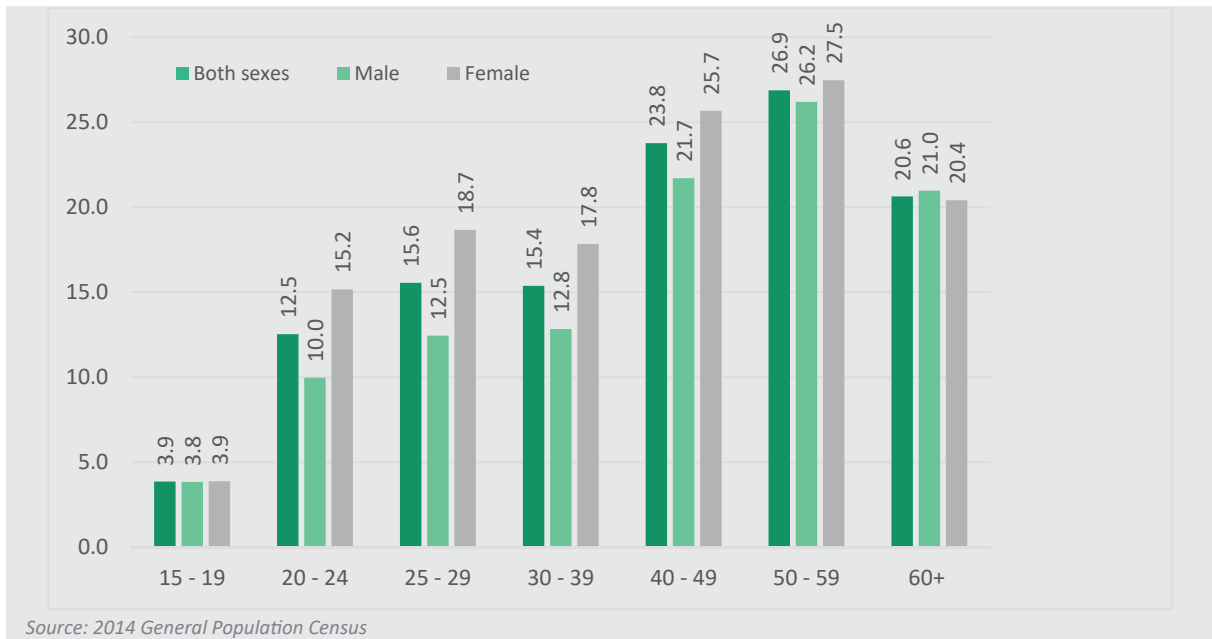
*Figure 3.10* and *3.11* depict the educational attainment of urban and rural populations by age in Georgia. For urban populations, it is clear that younger generations are more educated than older generations. For example, about half of the age-group 25-29 or 86 thousand individuals had a higher education, compared to 40 percent of 60 - 64 year olds (45 thousand). As for the rural population, the youngest generations are also the ones with the highest education, though this only accounts for about 20 percent. The most common type of education attained in rural areas is secondary education, while in urban areas it is higher education.

*Figure 3.10: Urban population 25 years of age and over by age and educational attainment*



Source: 2014 General Population Census
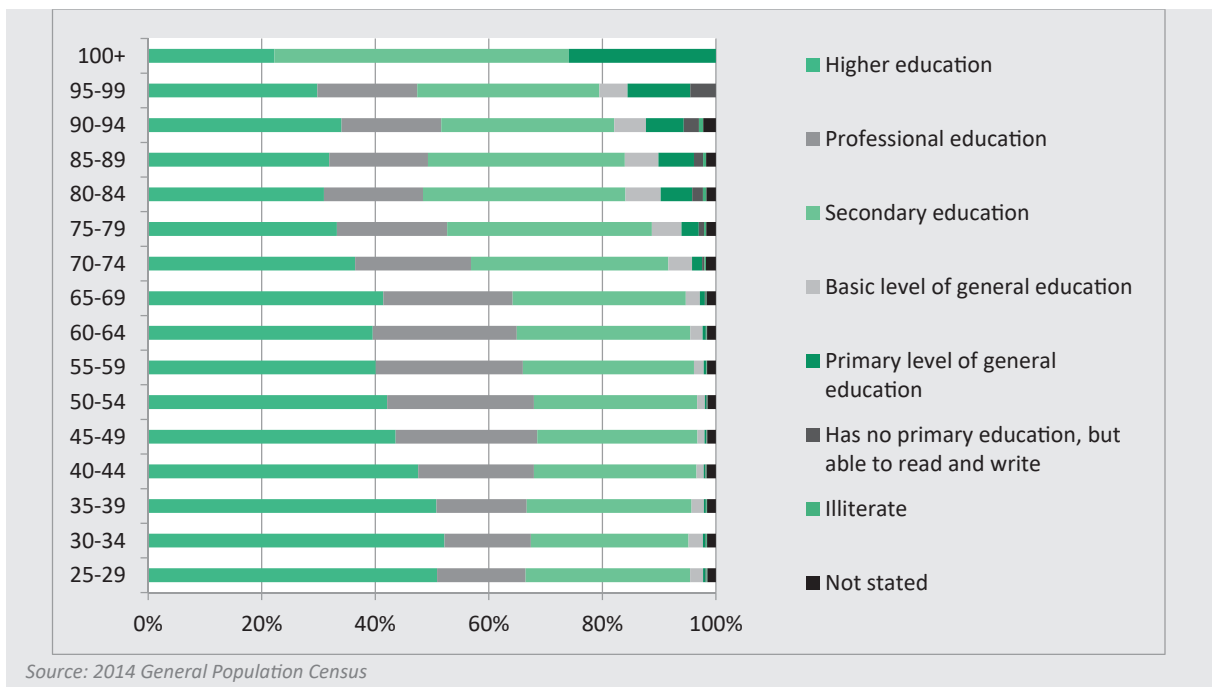
*Figure 3.11: Rural population 25 years of age and over by age and educational attainment*
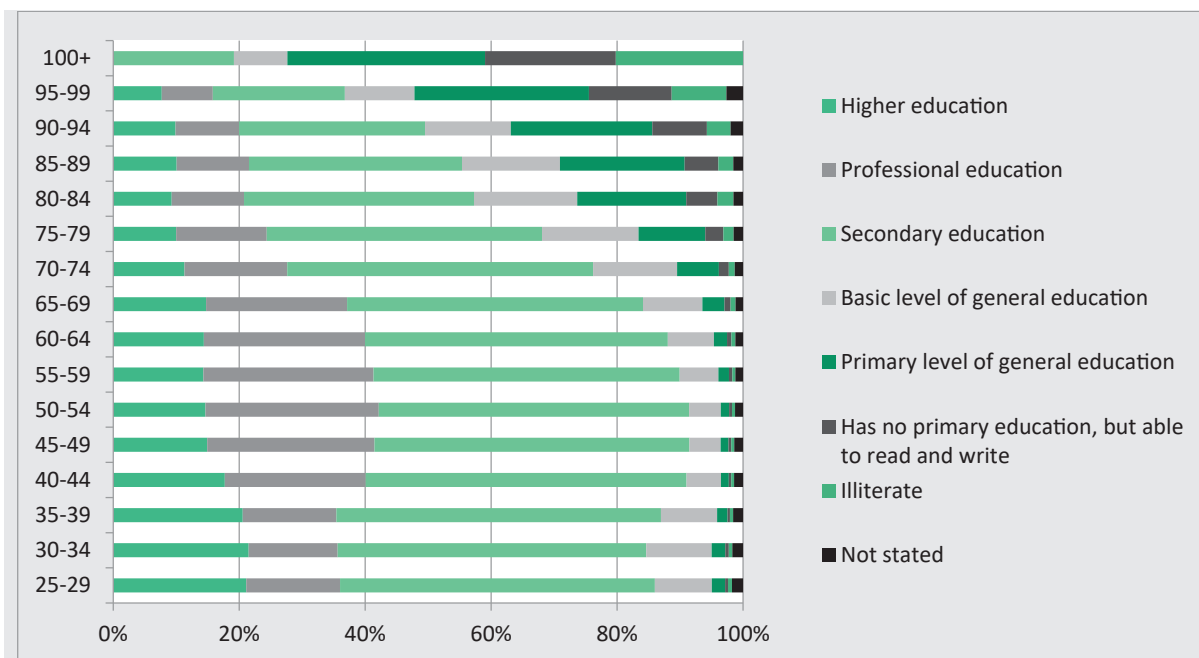


Source: 2014 General Population Census

# 4. Young People and the Workforce

The passage from education to employment can be rather challenging for young people. Finding employment upon finishing school in a highly competitive labour market can be both an exciting and frustrating phase for many. The Census data provides a wealth of information on this topic.

## 4.1 Economic Activity

According to international definitions, economically active persons are those who are employed plus those who are unemployed. The Census enumerated 1,924,773 persons 15 years of age and older who were economically active and 992,641 persons who were economically inactive, which comes to an activity rate of 66.0 percent. In rural areas, the activity rate was considerably higher (74.3 percent) than in urban areas (59.5 percent).

*Figure 4.1* depicts the age-pattern of the active and inactive population in five-year age-groups above age 15. A typical activity pattern with few people in the active state between ages 15 and 19 can be observed. During their twenties, young people rapidly start to enter the labour force. Af-

ter age 55, many people withdraw from the labour force and only very few remain at higher ages.

The age at which young people enter the labour force is depicted in *Figure 4.2.* At age 15, 5.9 percent of all persons are economically active. The number for males is just slightly higher than for females (6.6 against 5.1 percent). After age 15, labour force participation rates[11] increase rapidly. The fastest increase takes places between ages 17 and 19: at age 17, the age specific activity rate jumps from 15.3 percent to 31.0 percent at age 18, and adds another 10.2 percent between age 18 and 19. In general, males enter the labour force at an earlier age than females. This is consistent with the fact that females have a higher representation in tertiary education. The median age to enter the labour force for both sexes is 20.4 years. The difference in the median age between males and females is 2 years: by age 19.5, 50 percent of males have entered the labour force, for females this is 21.5 years. Labour force participation is considerably lower for young females than for young males. At age 29, 81.3 percent of males are economically active, against 61.7 percent of females.

*Figure 4.1: Number of persons by 5-year age-groups and activity status*
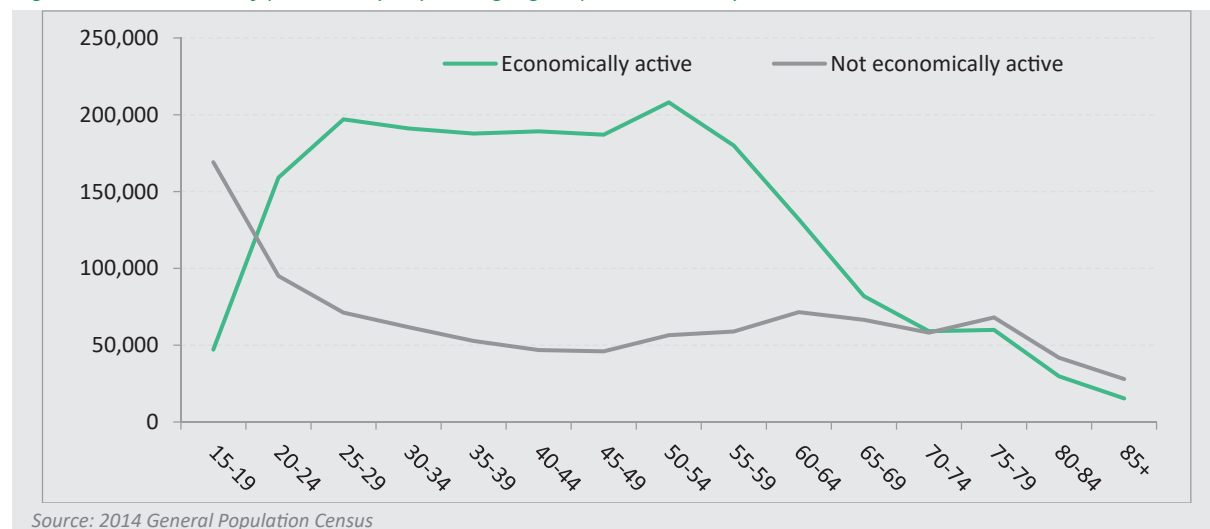


Source: 2014 General Population Census

*Figure 4.2: Age-specific activity rates by single years and sex for youth*

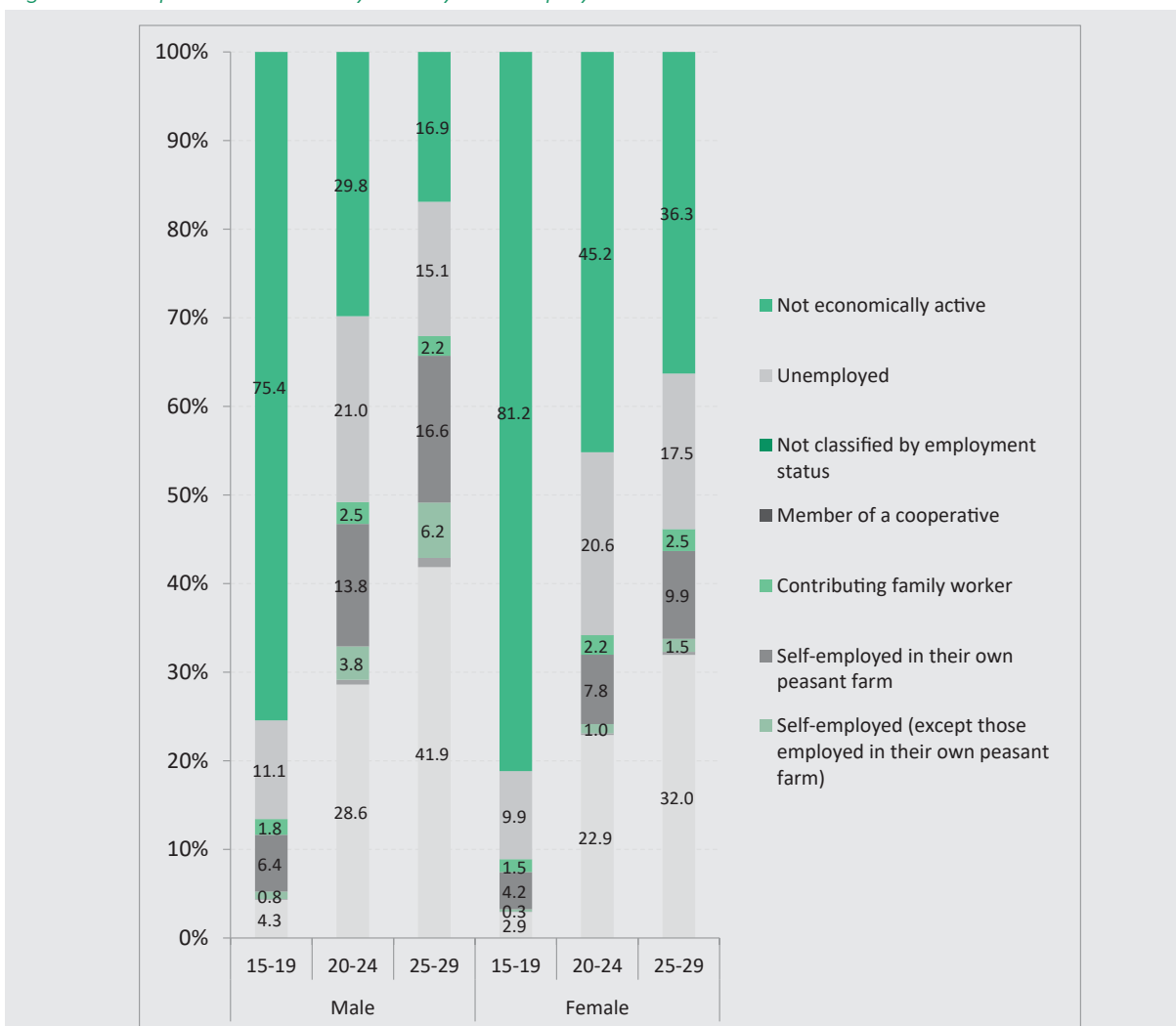*Figure 4.3: Population 15 - 29 by activity and employment status*

*Figure 4.3* provides a detailed overview of the activity status of all persons 15 – 29 years old by five-year age-groups and sex, according to their detailed activity status. Between 15 and 19 years old, 75.4 percent of males and 81.2 percent of females are not economically active. For those who are economically active, the largest part is unemployed (11.1 percent of all males and 9.9 percent of all females). One can see the substantial difference in economic activity between young males and females at the age-groups of 20 – 24 and 25 – 29. At the age-group 25 – 29, the percentage of inactive females is more than twice as large as for males (36.3 against 16.9 percent). A significant group of young people continues to work in agriculture: at age 25 – 29, 16.6 percent of males and 9.9 percent of females work as self-employed farmers. However, the largest group of employed young people work as employees. The graph also clearly shows the large group of youths that are unemployed. As this is a topic of significant social importance the next section deals with this in greater detail.

## 4.2 Youth Unemployment

For many young persons, the step from school to the labour force is difficult and many are initially unsuccessful with entering the labour market. A recent report published by the ILO dealt with the global crisis of youth employment[12]. During the height of the economic depression in the years 2007 – 2010, youth unemployment was very high, though has somewhat recovered since then. Between 2012 and 2014 youth unemployment hovered around 13.0 percent. Globally, an estimated 73.3 million young people were unemployed in 2014. Although it has improved, still 36.7 percent of the global unemployed population were youth, while they constitute only one sixth of the total world population.

According to the definition of the International Labour Organization (ILO): *"unemployment covers people who are: out of work, want a job, have actively sought work in the previous four weeks and are available to start work within the next fortnight; or out of work and have accepted a job that they are waiting to start in the next fortnight'.* The unemployment rate is a headline labour market indicator and calculated as *'expressing the number of unemployed persons as a percentage of the total number of persons in the labour force'*[13]. The total number of persons in the labour force being the sum of those who are employed and those who are unemployed. In the Georgian 2014 General Population Census, the ILO definitions were followed.

Unemployment in Georgia is high. According to the Census, 16.1 percent of the labour force is out of work. Women have higher unemployment than men: 19.0 percent against 13.6 percent. The 2014 General Population Census showed that youth unemployment is a serious social problem in Georgia. Between ages 15 and 29, 120 thousand persons are unemployed, among those 15 – 24 this is 76 thousand (*Table 4.1).* Among 15 – 24 years old youngsters, 36.7 percent are unemployed, among those 15-29 years the unemployment rate is 29.6 percent. Young females seem to have more problems than men: 41.0 percent of all females in the age-group 15 – 24 are out of work, against 33.5 percent of males.

Age-specific unemployment rates show that unemployment is at its peak at age 18 for both males and females. In fact, at this age more than half of all youngsters are out of work: 57.5 percent of all 18-year-old females are unemployed and 47.8 percent of all males. After age 18 unemployment rates gradually decrease but stay well above 10 percent for both sexes until age 60 for women and age 52 for men. The pattern of higher female unemployment occurs from age 17 till age 62, after this age unemployment is about the same for both sexes.

*Table 4.1: Youth unemployment 15 - 29 years and 15 - 24 years, by sex*

|  | Youth unemployment (15 - 29) | | | Youth unemployment (15 - 24) | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | Male | Female | Both sexes | Male | Female | Both sexes |
| Unemployed | 59,925 | 59,638 | 119,563 | 39,533 | 36,189 | 75,722 |
| Labour force | 229,918 | 173,409 | 403,327 | 118,022 | 88,293 | 206,315 |
| Unemployment rate | 26.1 | 34.4 | 29.6 | 33.5 | 41.0 | 36.7 |

Source: 2014 General Population Census

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[12] International Labour Organization (2015), Global Employment Trends for Youth 2015: Scaling up investments in decent jobs for youth / International Labour Office – Geneva: ILO, 2015.
[13] International Labour Organization (n.d.) Unemployment Rate. Retrieved from: http://www.ilo.org/ilostat-files/Documents/description_UR_EN.pdf ; last accessed July 31, 2017

*Figure 4.4: Age-specific unemployment rates, by sex*
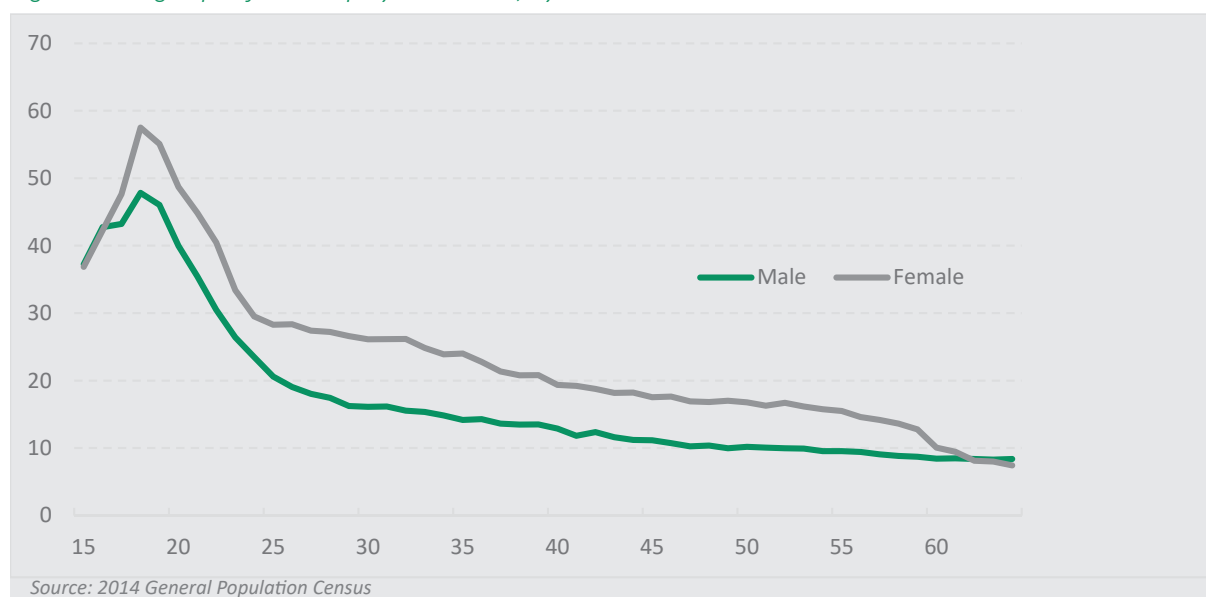
Georgia scores highest in youth unemployment, compared to its surrounding countries. *Figure 4.5* shows the youth unemployment rates, based on international figures from the World Bank (World Statistics, n.d.). Armenia has a youth unemployment rate that is comparable to Georgia, but all other countries have levels that are much lower. Among all countries in the graph, the Republic of Moldova has the lowest unemployment rate (12.2 percent), followed by the Russian Federation (13.7 percent).

Large differences exist between the various regions in Georgia in terms of youth unemployment. *Figure 4.6* shows that youth unemployment is highest in Tbilisi, where 38.3 percent of all persons 15 – 29 year old are unemployed. This is considerably higher than the national average of 29.6 percent. Other regions that score higher than the national unemployment rate are: Mtskheta-Mtianeti (34.6 percent), ShidaKartli (31.7 percent), and Imereti (30.9 percent). The lowest level of youth unemployment was observed in Racha-Lechkhumi

*Figure 4.5: Youth unemployment (15 - 24 years old) for surrounding countries [14]*
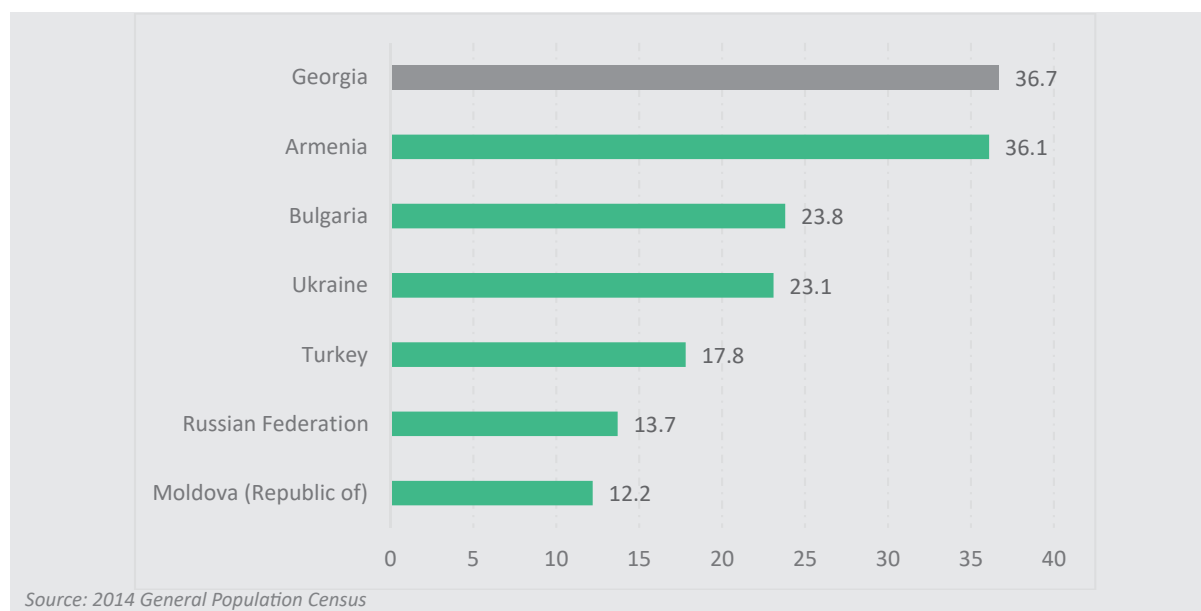
[14] *Data for Romania were not available. All figures refer to 2014, except for Armenia and Moldova for which data refer to the year 2013.*

*Figure 4.6: Youth unemployment rate (15 - 29 years) by region*



Source: 2014 General Population Census
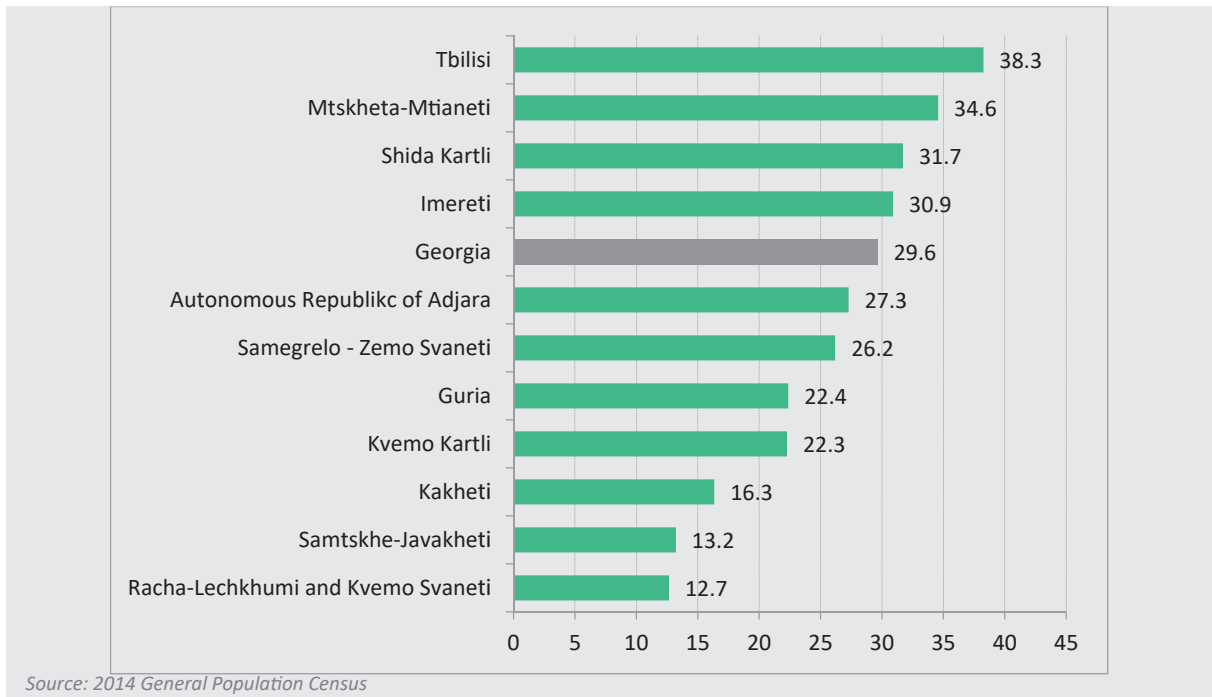
and Kvemo Svaneti, where 12.7 percent of all young persons aged 15 – 29 years old were out of work. Note that this is three times lower than in Tbilisi. Levels of youth unemployment are also relatively low in Kakheti and Samtskhe Javakheti compared to the overall national rate. In both regions youth unemployment is well below 20 percent.

*Table 4.2* gives more detail about the age and sex composition of youth unemployment in Georgia's regions. Of all the different groups presented in the table, young females in Tbilisi, aged 15 – 19 are worst off: 76.5 percent of the workforce in this group were unemployed at the time of the Census. At the time of the Census 6,612 young women between ages 15 and 19 were in the labour force in Tbilisi, a staggering 5,056 of them were unemployed. Next to Tbilisi some other specific groups show very high unemployment. In a few other cases unemployment was higher than 50 percent. Groups that score higher than the national average of 38.3 percent are indicated in green in the table. It should not come as a surprise that age-group 15 - 29 has high unemployment. Their young age implies a) that they do not have high education attainment and b) still lack work experience. Note

that in many cases unemployment is also very high for persons in the age-group 25 – 29. Only one group in the whole graph has an unemployment rate below 10, i.e. males and females in Racha-Lechkhumi and Kvemo Svaneti.

Youth unemployment is closely linked to educational attainment. *Figure 4.7* shows the youth unemployment rates for the different educational levels. Young persons who have completed general education (secondary education) have the highest unemployment. About a third of them were out of work at the time of the 2014 General Population Census. Also, persons who had professional education or the basic level of general education have unemployment rates above 30 percent. Persons with higher education have an unemployment rate of 23.3 percent, about the same level as persons with a primary level of education. The groups of persons without primary schooling is very small. Only a few hundred persons between 15 and 29 years of age form part of this group. Not too much value should therefore be attached to the lower unemployment rates for those with no primary education and those who are illiterate.

*Table 4.2: Youth unemployment rate by age-group and sex and per region*

| Region | Age | Both sexes | Male | Female |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Tbilisi | 15 - 19 | **74.9** | **73.6** | **76.5** |
| | 20 - 24 | **42.2** | **40.8** | **43.7** |
| | 25 - 29 | 27.1 | 23.7 | 30.8 |
| | Total youth | 38.3 | 36 | **40.7** |
| Autonomous Republic of Adjara | 15 - 19 | **44.6** | **42.9** | **46.7** |
| | 20 - 24 | 30.2 | 27.3 | 33.9 |
| | 25 - 29 | 20.7 | 16.8 | 25.7 |
| | Total youth | 27.3 | 24 | 31.5 |
| Guria | 15 - 19 | 28.9 | 29 | 28.7 |
| | 20 - 24 | 24.5 | 22.4 | 27.7 |
| | 25 - 29 | 19 | 16.6 | 22.4 |
| | Total youth | 22.7 | 20.8 | 25.4 |
| Imereti | 15 - 19 | **43.3** | **39.3** | **49.1** |
| | 20 - 24 | 34.4 | 29.5 | **41.4** |
| | 25 - 29 | 25.1 | 20.1 | 32.2 |
| | Total youth | 30.9 | 26 | 37.7 |
| Kakheti | 15 - 19 | 24.4 | 23.5 | 26.4 |
| | 20 - 24 | 18.9 | 15.2 | 26.1 |
| | 25 - 29 | 12.3 | 9.3 | 17.6 |
| | Total youth | 16.4 | 13.4 | 21.9 |
| Mtskheta-Mtianeti | 15 - 19 | **53.9** | **50** | **60.6** |
| | 20 - 24 | 39 | 34.7 | **45.5** |
| | 25 - 29 | 25.9 | 22.1 | 31.3 |
| | Total youth | 34.5 | 30.8 | **40.2** |
| Racha-Lechkhumi and Kvemo Svaneti | 15 - 19 | 16.2 | 13.3 | 22.8 |
| | 20 - 24 | 17.4 | 15.6 | 20.7 |
| | 25 - 29 | 8.2 | 8.2 | 8.1 |
| | Total youth | 14.4 | 13.7 | 15.8 |
| Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti | 15 - 19 | 37 | 34.4 | **41.1** |
| | 20 - 24 | 29.1 | 27.1 | 32.2 |
| | 25 - 29 | 21.3 | 17.9 | 26.1 |
| | Total youth | 26.1 | 23.4 | 30.1 |
| Samtskhe-Javakheti | 15 - 19 | 20.1 | 19.5 | 20.9 |
| | 20 - 24 | 14.8 | 13.1 | 17.2 |
| | 25 - 29 | 10.4 | 8.5 | 13 |
| | Total youth | 13.3 | 11.7 | 15.5 |
| Kvemo Kartli | 15 - 19 | 31.6 | 31.2 | 32.3 |
| | 20 - 24 | 25.5 | 23 | 29.2 |
| | 25 - 29 | 17.1 | 13.1 | 23.2 |
| | Total youth | 22.3 | 19.4 | 26.7 |
| Shida Kartli | 15 - 19 | **48.6** | **43.8** | **57.8** |
| | 20 - 24 | 34.6 | 28.6 | **44.5** |
| | 25 - 29 | 25.2 | 19.3 | 34.6 |
| | Total youth | 31.7 | 26.1 | **41.1** |

*Source: 2014 General Population Census*

*Figure 4.7: Youth unemployment rate (15 - 29 years) by level of education*



*Source: 2014 General Population Census*
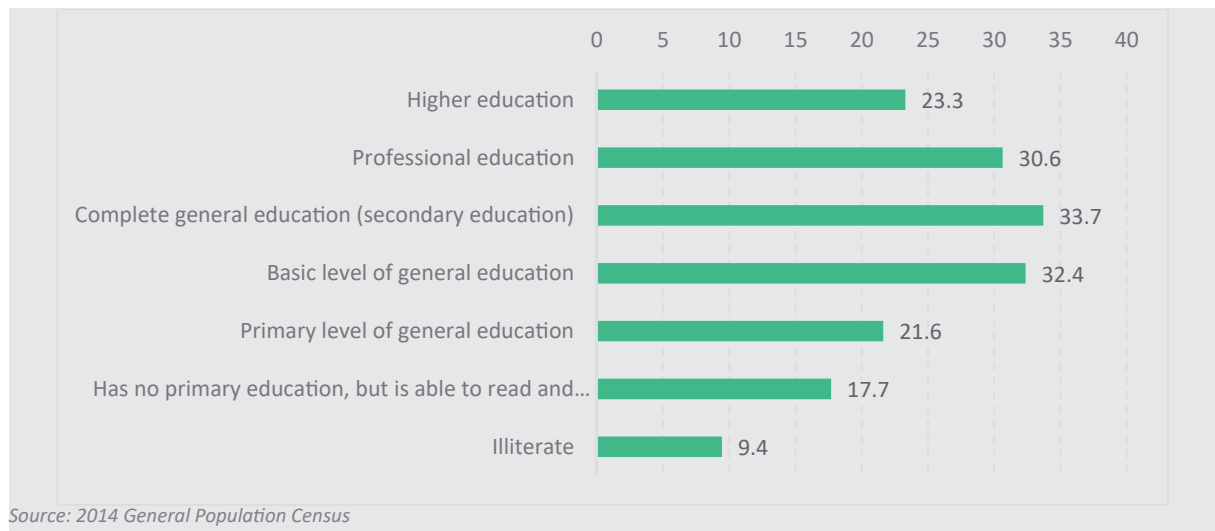
## 4.3 Occupation

The Census collected information on the type of occupations of young people. Occupations were coded according to the 'International Standard of Occupations (ISCO)'[15]. *Figure 4.8* shows the occupational categories which have the largest share of Georgia's working youth. The most common occupational category, among both male and females aged 15 – 29 in Georgia, is 'subsistence agricultural and fishery worker.' A total of 78,473 young people was working in this occupational group, 47,950 males and 30,523 females. This group is by far the most numerous, containing more workers than the next four groups combined. The second largest category was 'other associate professionals and personal and protective service workers' (23,137) and personal and protective service workers (17,418). Many young people take up advanced occupations: more than 11 thousand corporate managers are below 30, more than 8 thousand young persons are working as teaching professionals and 16 thousand are working as other professionals.

*Figure 4.8: Top 10 of occupational categories with largest share of 15 - 29 years old*



*Source: 2014 General Population Census*

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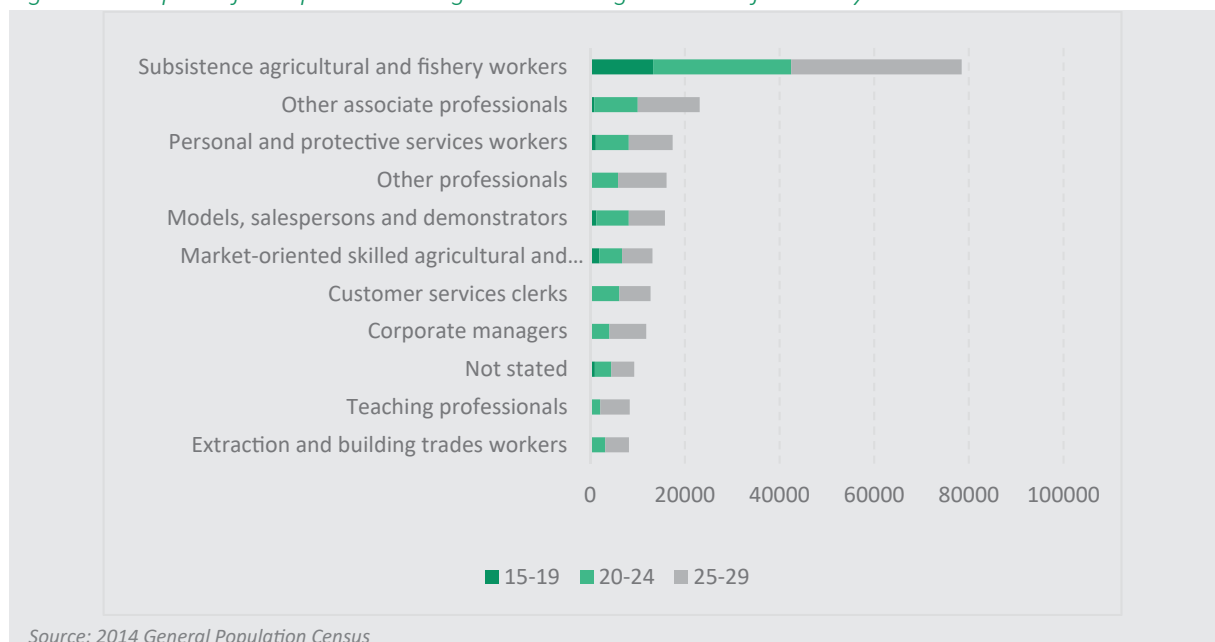
[15] *The International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO) is a system, developed by the International Labour Organization (ILO) to classify and aggregate information on occupations from Censuses and surveys. For detailed information about ISCO, the reader is referred to the website of ILO: http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/stat/isco/isco08/index.html   last accessed: July 31, 2017*

To improve the position of women in society, it is necessary that young women move into positions of excellence and leadership. For all ISCO-categories, female to male ratios were calculated. To see in what occupational categories women outnumber men the 10 occupational categories with the highest ratio were brought together in a bar chart (*Figure 4.9)*. The graph clearly shows how young females take a prominent position in highly professional jobs. The four occupational categories which have the highest female to male ratio all require highly skilled, well-educated personnel. The group of young life science and health professionals consists of more than five times more females than males. Teaching professionals and life science technicians and related associate professionals all count more than four times more females than males. Despite the higher education of women, the gender pay gap in Georgia is still quite high and stood at 40 percent in 2015. The gender pay gap is defined as the difference between men's and women's average earnings from employment expressed as a percentage of men's average earnings (Khitarishvili, 2015).

In general, 'managers' has been a male dominated occupation. Although still more young males than females occupy the positions of corporate and general manager, the Census information shows that also in this field women take a more prominent position. The female to male ratio in these categories was 90.2 percent for corporate managers and 73.8 percent for general managers, among those 30 years and older, the ratios are respectively 53.4 and 63.7 percent (not shown).

In the Census, a total of 1,614,325 persons indicated they were working, out of which 283,764 were in the age-group 15 – 29 years, accounting for 17.6 percent of the total working population. The percentage of young people in each occupational category shows what type of labour attracts young new members to the labour force. The highest proportions of young people can be found in the group of 'customer services clerks', where young people constitute more than half of all who perform these jobs. The armed forces consist of almost 40 percent of young persons. At occupations that require higher levels of education, 'other professionals' count about one in four young people

*Figure 4.9: Top 10 occupational categories with the highest female to male ratio (15 – 29 years)*
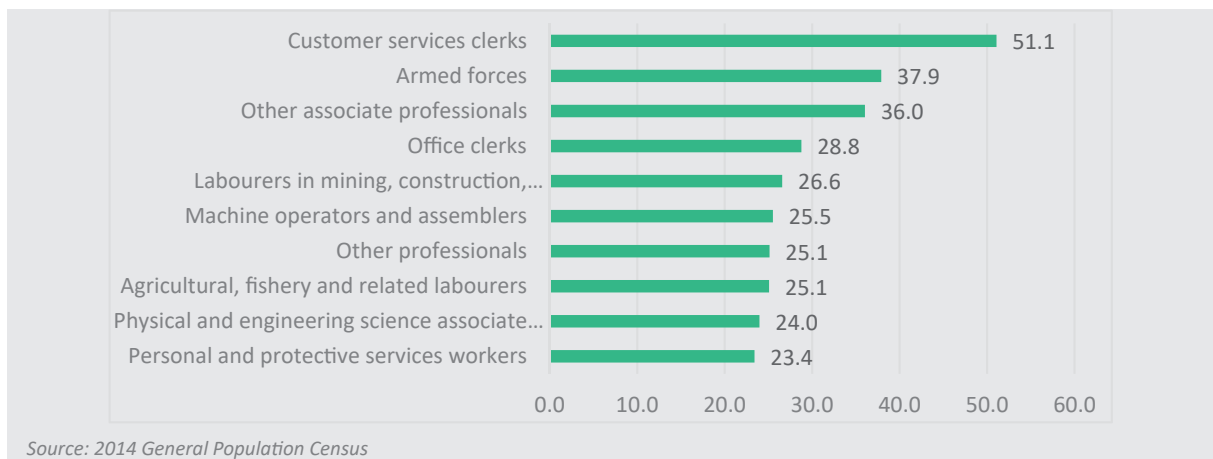
in its ranks, as does the group of 'physical and engineering science associate professionals'.

Not only do young people suffer from high unemployment because of a lack of experience and fewer skills compared to many adults, globally they are often found in jobs of lesser quality. For young people to develop their full potential on the labour market they have to be involved in decent work from the onset of their professional career. According to the ILO, decent work *'involves opportunities for work that is productive and delivers a fair income, security in the workplace and social protection for families, better prospects for person-al development and social integration, freedom for people to express their concerns, organize and participate in the decisions that affect their lives and equality of opportunity and treatment for all women and men'.* The ILO has developed a large set of indicators to measure decent work, ranging from decent working times, to equal opportunities and safe work environment (International Labour Organization, 2013). Unfortunately, as it is not a core census topic, the Census does not have the capacity to measure whether young people are involved in decent work in Georgia and more research in this area is needed in the future.

*Figure 4.10: Percentage of people 15 - 29 as part of the total in occupational category*



| Occupational category | Percentage |
|---|---|
| Customer services clerks | 51.1 |
| Armed forces | 37.9 |
| Other associate professionals | 36.0 |
| Office clerks | 28.8 |
| Labourers in mining, construction,… | 26.6 |
| Machine operators and assemblers | 25.5 |
| Other professionals | 25.1 |
| Agricultural, fishery and related labourers | 25.1 |
| Physical and engineering science associate… | 24.0 |
| Personal and protective services workers | 23.4 |

*Source: 2014 General Population Census*

# 5. Vulnerable Groups

## 5.1 People with Disabilities

People with disabilities in Georgia are still met with significant stigmatization and negative attitudes. Results from a study conducted by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) (2015) showed that 41 percent of Georgians hold negative attitudes towards people with disabilities. UNICEF further noted that *"stigmatization is rooted in four core perceptions: that these children are 'abnormal', that disability is a threat or contagious disease, that the children are dependent, and that religious and cultural norms justify negative attitudes"* (UNICEF, 2016). Furthermore, it is common in many countries that the formal education system also discriminates against children with disabilities, placing them at a stark disadvantage from an early age (Bines & Lei, 2011). Internationally, such attitudes in combination with poor support from state institutions often impede people with disabilities' development and quality of life from an early age.

In the Census, disability was investigated by using a set of six short questions developed by the Washington Group (WG), which are used to determine disability status. The definitions are in line with recommendations from the UN and allow for international comparability (United Nations, 2008). The guiding principle of this measurement framework is equity in opportunities for all, which questions the way in which persons with disabilities can participate in activities such as

education, employment, housing or family life, to the same extent as those without a disability (Madans & Loeb, 2013). From a policy perspective, as mandated in the Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (CRPD), this is of crucial importance to ensure social participation and equal rights or equitable access to opportunities (Madans, Loeb, and Altman, 2011, 2, 5).

The Georgia Census questions covered all six core domains of functioning as defined by the Washington Group, namely seeing, hearing, walking or climbing steps, remembering or concentrating, communicating and self-care (*Figure 5.1*). Responses indicated to whether any of these health problems interfered with the individual's daily activities. The answer categories included 'no difficulty', 'some difficulty', 'a lot of difficulty', 'cannot do it at all' and 'refused to answer.' By use of these responses, people with disabilities in this report are defined as those who have a lot of difficulty with one and/or more activities or who cannot do an activity at all. This is according to the WG-recommendation that "*the sub-population disabled includes everyone with at least one domain that is coded as a lot of difficulty or cannot do at all*" (Washington Group, 2010, 2).

Disability is very much age dependent. *Table 5.1* shows the percentage of people with a specific type of disability for broad age-groups. For each type of limitation, it is clear that prevalence is much higher for persons above age 65, than for

*Figure 5.1: Disability questions in the 2014 Georgia Census*

| 20. FROM THE LISTED ITEMS DO YOU HAVE ANY HEALTH-RELATED PROBLEM, WHICH INTERFERES YOU IN YOUR DAILY ACTIVITY? | No Difficulty | Some Difficulty | A lot Of Difficulty | ☐ Refused to answer Cannot do it at all |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1) Seeing | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 2) Hearing | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 3) Wailding or climbing steps | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 4) Remembering or concentriting | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 5) Communicating | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 6) Self-care | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

the other age-groups. Persons aged 15 – 29 have somewhat higher levels than children below age 15, but significantly lower than persons between 30 and 64. The disability with the highest prevalence rate is seeing, 2.9 percent of all people in Georgia indicated they had lots of problems or could not see at all, in the 15 – 29 age-group this was 0.52, or more or less one in every two

hundred persons. In total, 107,614 persons were enumerated in the Census with a visual disability, among them 4,019 were in the age-group 15- 29. The second most important limitation, both for the total population and among youth, is walking or climbing steps: 0.36 percent of persons 15 – 29 reported having a lot of difficulties or could not do this at all.

*Table 5.1: Limitations by type and broad age groups*

| | Seeing limitation | Hearing limitation | Walking or climbing steps limitation | Remembering or concentrating limitation | Communicating limitation | Self care limitation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 0-14 | 0.31 | 0.13 | 0.30 | 0.18 | 0.22 | 0.32 |
| 15-29 | 0.52 | 0.18 | 0.36 | 0.26 | 0.27 | 0.32 |
| 30-65 | 2.01 | 0.56 | 1.34 | 0.49 | 0.43 | 0.61 |
| 65+ | 12.62 | 6.75 | 9.19 | 3.06 | 2.27 | 4.91 |

*Source: 2014 General Population Census*

*Figure 5.2a: Young versus elderly males with limitations (a lot of difficulty or cannot do it at all), percentage of total*
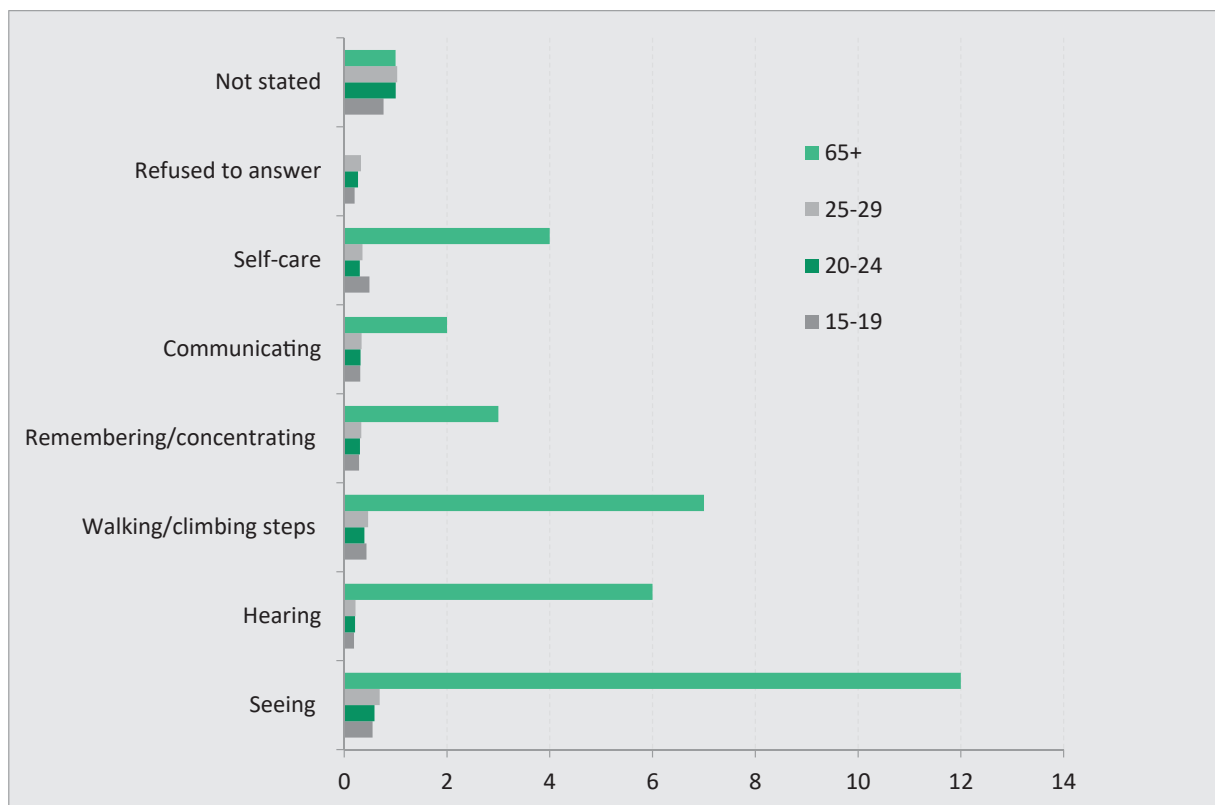


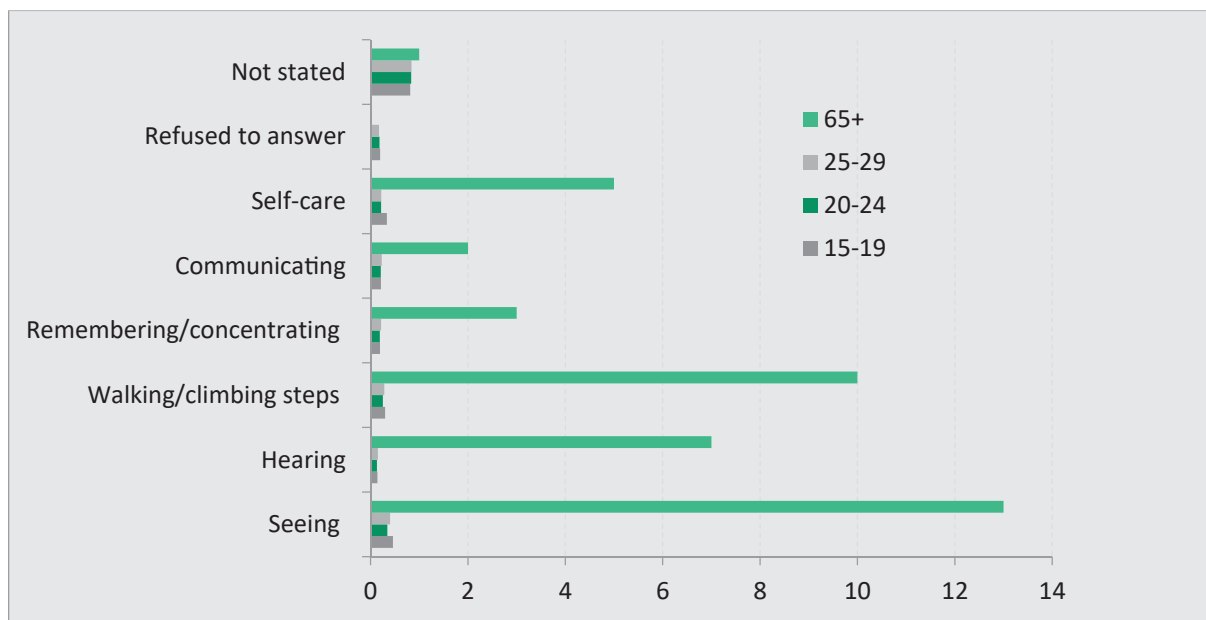*Source: 2014 General Population Census*

*Figure 5.2b Young versus elderly females with limitations (a lot of difficulty or cannot do it at all), percentage of total*



Source: 2014 General Population Census

## 5.2 Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the development of the country was affected by civil unrest and armed conflict, which created large streams of internally displaced persons. According to Tukhashvili (2013), who based the estimates on the 2003 Census by the separatist authorities of Abkhazia, 309 thousand persons (59 percent of the total population) left Abkhazia.

*Table 5.2* presents the number of young IDPs in Georgia according to the Census. In the age group 15 – 29, a total of 40,030 youth are displaced, which constitutes 21.1 percent of all displaced people. Using the international definition of 15 – 24 years, then a total of 26,051 displaced persons were enumerated. Among all ages, the number of females is considerably higher than the number of males (102,865 against 86,774), but among youth, figures are much more alike. Only slightly more females than males are present.

*IDP/refugee questions in the 2014 Georgia Census*



**10. IDP OR REFUGEE STATUS**
10.1 Are you IDP or refugee?   Yes   No

**10.2 Where Are you IDP or refugee form?**

**(Municipality, Self Governing city)**          **(Country)**

Source: 2014 General Population Census

*Table 5.2: Number of IDPs in Georgia aged 15 – 29 years by age and sex, 2014 General Population Census*

|  | 15-19 | 20-24 | 25-29 | 15 - 24 | 15 - 29 | All ages |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Male | 6,670 | 6,341 | 6,617 | 13,011 | 19,628 | 86,774 |
| Female | 6,363 | 6,677 | 7,362 | 13,040 | 20,402 | 102,865 |
| Total | 13,033 | 13,018 | 13,979 | 26,051 | 40,030 | 189,639 |

Source: 2014 General Population Census

According to United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), young displaced people are often confronted with more limited access to education, including secondary education and higher education. In many places, especially young females face additional challenges to access education and achieve success (UNHCR, 2013). The 2014 General Population Census shows that in Georgia young displaced persons did not face lower attendance ratios compared to the total young population. Attendance ratios were calculated for primary education in the age-group 6 − 11 years, for basic education (12 − 15 years) and for secondary education (15 − 18 years). In none of the three categories could any significant changes be observed (*Figure 5.3*). However, the Census was in no position to evaluate the school performance of displaced young persons, vis à vis others. To do this, a specific study should be set up.

## 5.3 Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET)

Youth unemployment is included in the Sustainable Development Goals. Target 8.6 of the SDGs states:

*'By 2020, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training'*. Another SDG-target (8.b) directly deals with the problem of youth employment: '*By 2020, develop and operationalize a global strategy for youth employment and implement the Global Jobs Pact of the International Labour Organization*' (United Nations, n.d.). To monitor progress, the Statistical Commission proposed to calculate the 'Percentage of youth (aged 15 − 24) not in education, employment or training'. This indicator is often referred to as NEET: Not in employment, education or training.

When calculating the NEET for young persons based on the Census, there is a slight bias as the Census only looked at formal education. Full time non-formal training - which should be part of the NEET- was not covered. Therefore, using only formal education, the NEET may be somewhat overestimated.

The NEET-indicator is 37.2 percent for both sexes in age-group 15- 29. The level for young females in this age-group is higher than for males: 42.7 percent against 32.0 percent. *Figure 5.4* displays the

*Figure 5.3: Percentage of persons attending school by type and IDPs status*



*Source: 2014 General Population Census*
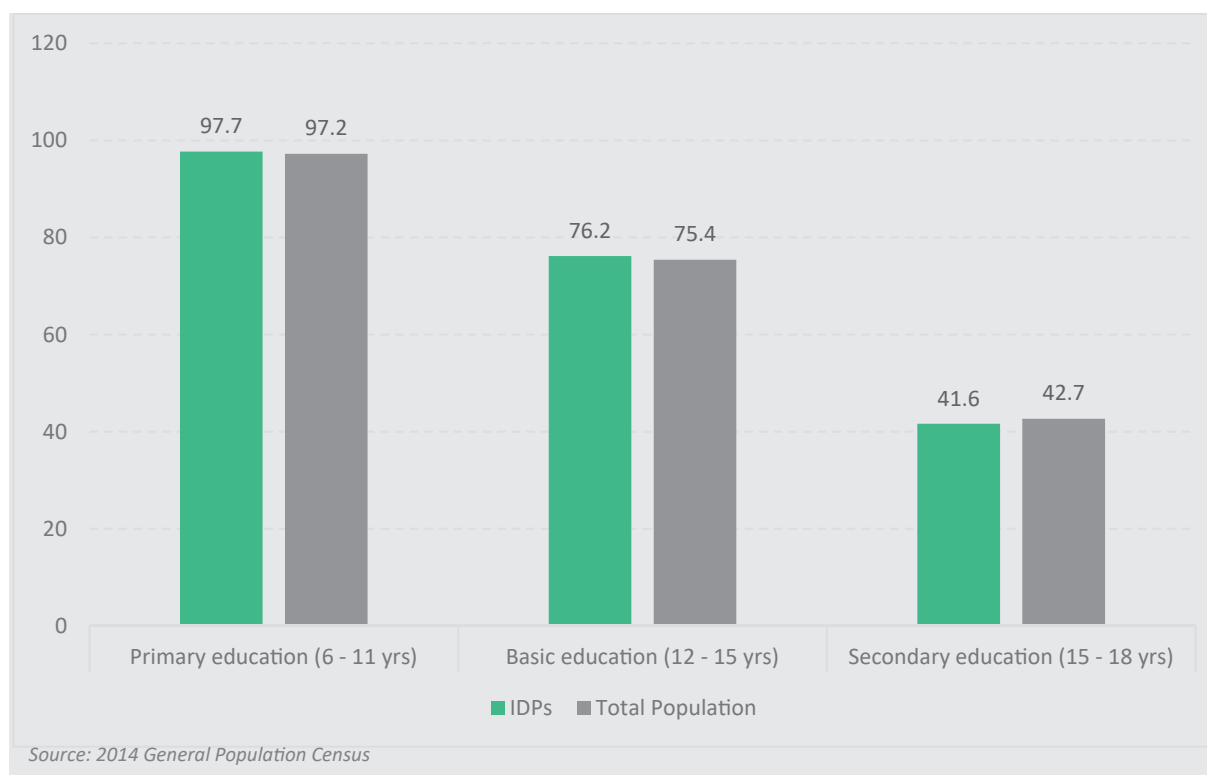
age-specific NEET-indicator for youth by sex. At age 15 the NEET is still below 10 percent, as most youngsters are still in school. Between ages 15 and 20 there is a sharp increase in the percentage of both males and females who are neither in employment or education. At age 20, the NEET-indicator is almost at 40 percent for young males and females. After that age, there is a clear separation between the sexes. While the percentage of males who are neither in employment or education drops to 31 percent at age 29, the percentage for females continues to rise to 54 percent. This trend, together with the higher unemployment of young females, is a clear indication of the difficult position of young women on the labour market.

The NEET age pattern among young persons in rural areas is quite different from the pattern in urban ar-

eas (*Figure 5.5*). Before age 22, the NEET-indicator is higher in rural areas than in urban areas. At age 19 the difference is highest with a NEET of 49.7 percent in rural areas and 33.9 percent in urban areas. After age 22, however, the levels cross and while the NEET drops in rural areas, it remains consistently high in urban areas. At the end of their twenties, the NEET is almost 50 percent for urban youth, while it dropped well under 40 percent for rural youth. It is hard to say what exactly caused this drop, though probably this is due to the fact that rural youth find it easier to get involved in agricultural work, than urban youth to find work in other sectors of the economy. Being not in employment of education for a long time may carry serious risks. The longer a person is both out of work and education the more likely it is that he/she becomes 'unemployable'.

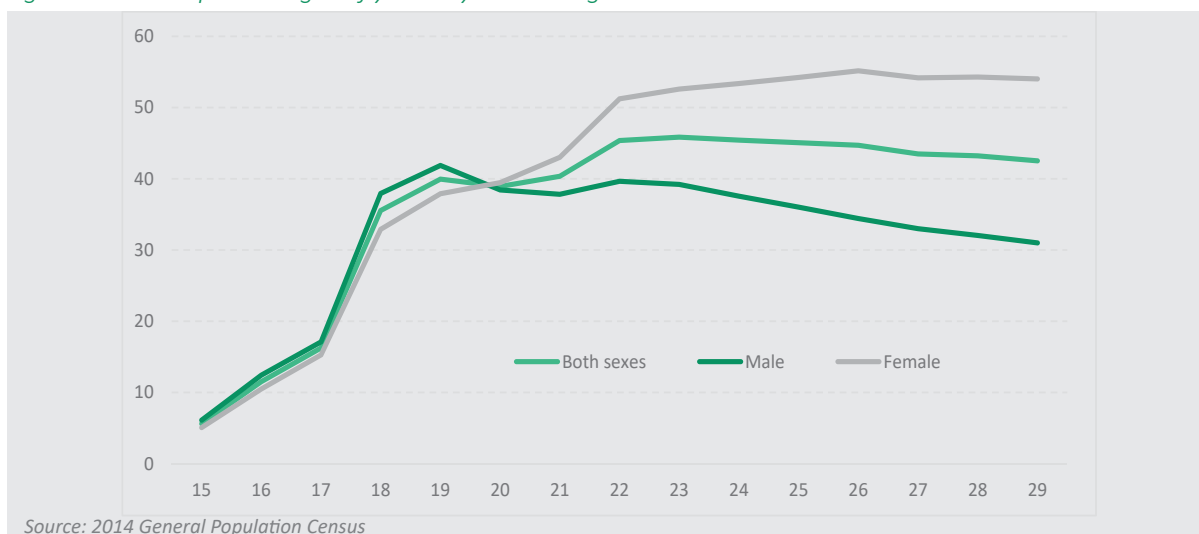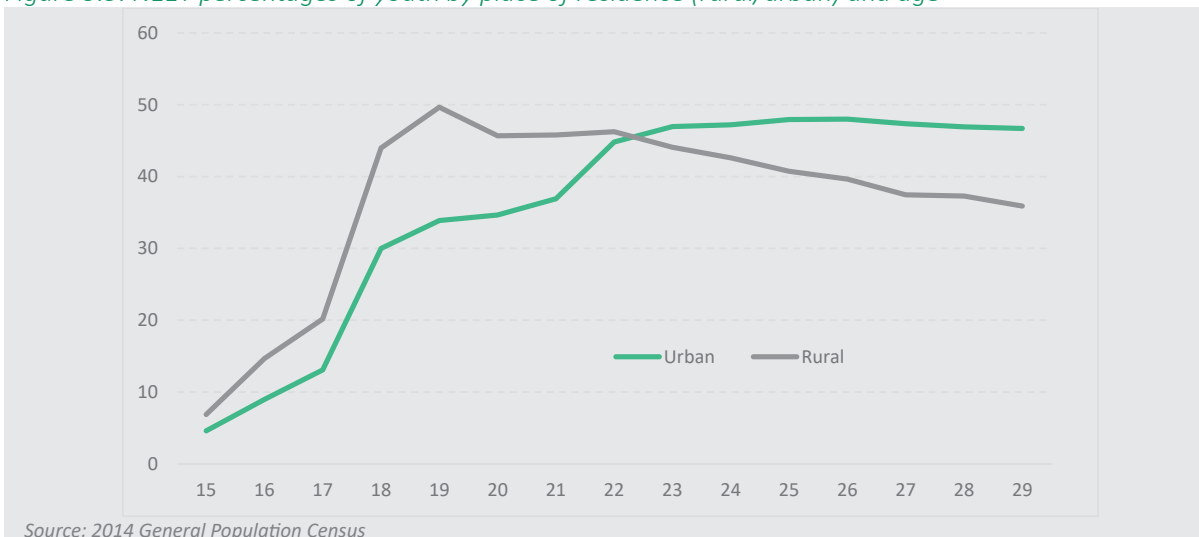*Figure 5.4: NEET percentages of youth by sex and age*



*Source: 2014 General Population Census*

*Figure 5.5: NEET percentages of youth by place of residence (rural/urban) and age*



*Source: 2014 General Population Census*

# 6. Conclusion

The transition young people go through when they are no longer a child but not yet an adult, is a critical phase in their life as it sets the stage for the future. In Georgia, the youth population aged 15 - 29 years peaked in 1989 at 1.3 million and has been on a steady decline since. A shrinking youth population combined with the ageing phenomenon taking place, means that in coming years more will be expected from young people to sustain the economy and further drive progress in the future.

For all the hope and aspiration that young people embody, they also face significant challenges in their transition into adulthood. The 2014 General Population Census elucidated that youth unemployment is one such challenge, whereby nearly 30 percent of young people aged 15- 29 are unemployed. Among 15- 24 year olds, this number stood at 37 percent. Unemployment among females is more common than males: 34 percent versus 26 percent. If such rates persist across young people's work lives, then this will create difficulties in funding the increasingly growing number of pensioners, as well as other sectors such as healthcare (Buckley, 2015). Internal migration of rural youth to urban centers is not a solution, as youth unemployment in urban centers is very high. If young people's current high unemployment rate follows them across their work lives, funding retiree pensions and health care may be even more challenging than otherwise, as those with lessened prospects for income will be asked to support an ever-growing number of retirees (Deloitte, n.d.). Furthermore, unemployment also increases the likelihood of "long-term scarring", whereby at an older age the individual is more likely to have lower

pay, higher unemployment, greater mental health problems and lower life chances (McQuaid, 2017). Youth unemployment is therefore a significant challenge for the present, but also for the future as the effects of youth unemployment will be felt for decades. Therefore, effective evidence-based policies will need to be in place to create jobs for the younger generations.

The 2014 General Population Census also revealed that several groups of young people (among others) are vulnerable, either by having to live with a disability, are internally displaced or are not in education, employment or training. In most cases, females are more numerous and affected than males. It is therefore crucial to ensure meaningful involvement of these young people in addressing the issues that affect them, particularly by assuming a gender-sensitive and youth-friendly approach. Ensuring adequate education, training and subsequent employment is available for these young people and that stigmatization and negative attitudes towards these groups are eliminated, will be key to ensuring they play an active and productive role in society.

This report produced an initial picture of young people in Georgia based on the 2014 General Population Census. Whilst it did produce a number of interesting results, many changes are taking place on the national and international stage, and it will therefore be crucial to further investigate the challenges identified in this report in order to create evidence-based and effective policies that can create a prosperous presence and future for the country.

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