

POLITICAL AND SOCIAL-ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF CHANGES IN AGE AND GENDER STRUCTURE OF POPULATION OF GEORGIA

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Abstract

The changes in age and gender structure of population of Georgia negatively reflected the demographic development, which has worsening tendency and constitutes one of actual problems of the country. The main aim of the study is to find out factors influencing population's age and gender structure, assessment of changes performed and definition of its further development tendencies. As a result of the study, there was found out, that changes in age and gender structures mainly were caused by political and social-economic factors, which had quite different course through time and space. There are defined a quantitative and qualitative properties, also intra-regional originalities of these changes and there are set the ways to improve demographic condition.

Keywords: *gender, age, demographics, population, migration, welfare*

JEL Codes: *J11, J16, J61, O15, R11*

1. Introduction

We have worsening tendency of demographic condition in independent Georgia. The population in our country was decreased by 31.8% (from 5.4 million to 3.7 million) during of 1991-2019 years. The decrease of population mainly was caused by political processes and worsened social-economic environment, which significantly changed population's age and gender structure. Accordingly, the changes in age and gender structure has essential influence on demographic development of the country, it has decreased the natural increase rate down to its minimum, thus decreasing the specific share of youth. Coming out of this, complex study of age and gender structure is one of the actual topic of country's demographic development.

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The main aim of the study is to find out the changes in age and gender structure performed as a result of political processes and social-economic condition and its regional originalities. In order to achieve the aim set, the following tasks are needed to be solved:

- Define the role and place of factors influencing the population dynamics in population's demographic development;
- Define the changes performed in population's age and gender structure (due to political processes) and its results;
- Find out the changes made in population's age and gender structure (as a result of social-economic factors) through time and space;
- Assess the quantitative and qualitative properties of age and gender structure of country's population towards the neighboring countries;
- Set the ways to improve age and gender structure of the country and improvement of its demographic condition.

The study object is the permanent population existing on the area under jurisdiction of Georgia (we don't imply the population existing on uncontrolled units of Georgia like Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia and Samachablo region).

2. Methodological basis of the article

2.1. Overview of the literature

The historical and modern development of demographic processes of Georgia is studied in details (Dhaohvili, 1996; Botev, 2012; Meladze, 2013; Davies and James, 2016; Putkaradze et al., 2019; Tsuladze et al., 2008), but there is no perfect study regarding the complex assessment of main properties of demographic processes – changes of its age and gender structure through impact of political and social-economic factors. Coming out of topic's urgency, its detailed research needs quantitative and qualitative analysis (Putkaradze et al., 2018; Farré, 2013; Patel, 2013; Rossi, 2018), which itself needs comparison of demographic processes of the region and the world (Gavrilov et al., 2010; Ward, et al., 2010; Carstensen, 2015; Kulu and González-Ferrer, 2014; England, 2017; Merchant, 2012; Kunisch, et al., 2011) and establishment of references in line of condition's improvement.

2.2. Study methods

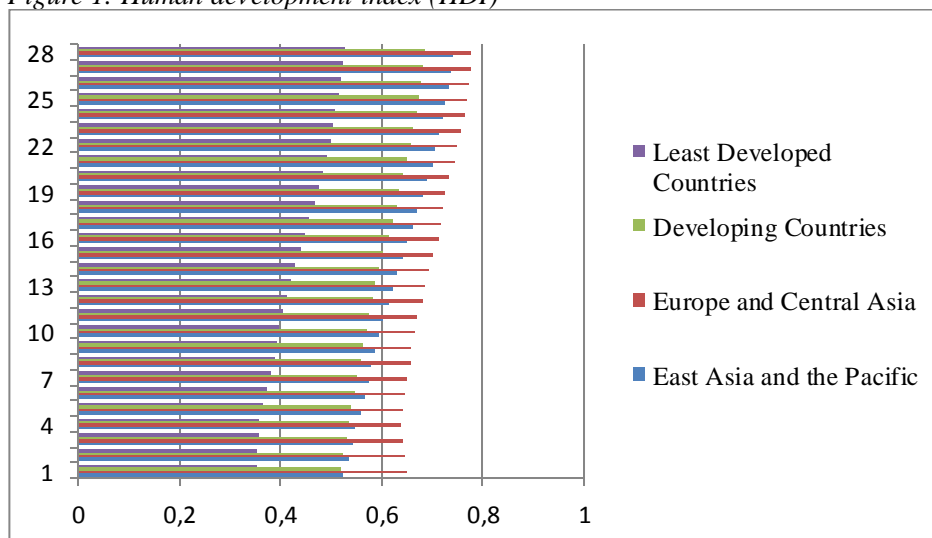
The age and gender structure of population is such a dynamic demographic indicator, that it is being influenced by all of aspects of social development. Thus, complex study of the topic needed different methodical approaches, by means of which there will be found out the qualitative and quantitative properties of changes made in age and gender structure of population in Georgia. During the research the statistical, historical, comparative analysis, spatial-time analysis and other methods were used. Besides, the achievement of aim set was greatly served by studies conducted throughout the world (Cesare, et al., 2018; Hinde, 1998;

Rowland, 2003; Siegel and Swanson, 2004; Uhlenberg, 2009), on the basis of which the conclusions were made.

3. Discussions

Since the end of XX century, some political processes took place in Georgia (the dissolution of Soviet Union, Civil War, “Rose Revolution”, 2008 Russo-Georgian War), which led to formation a radically different economic doctrines in the country. National economy was destructed, the unity of the nation was broken and demographic condition worsened. The decrease of population in independent Georgia mainly was caused by political processes and social condition, as a result of which quite big part of population went to emigration, some of them was left in uncontrolled areas (Abkhazia, Samachablo) for residential purposes. The civil war of Georgia brought heavy political, economic, social and other outcomes. Past 20 years of our country distinctly expresses the above mentioned. Indeed, it’s quite hard to live through such deeply transforming epoch even if political and economic reforms could have gone in right directions with desirable paces. Georgia’s move on new economic system with objective necessity needs the study of some theoretical issue of transitional period and social-economic system (functioning in highly developed countries of the world) as well, which will promote the settlement of most complex tasks risen in front of the country. Most of the studies, leaves the issue beyond the vision area, whether how is the influence of social-economic condition (HDI) on demographic condition. According the study outcomes, there is quite big difference among developing and developed countries under Human Development Index (Fig. 1).

Figure 1. Human development index (HDI)

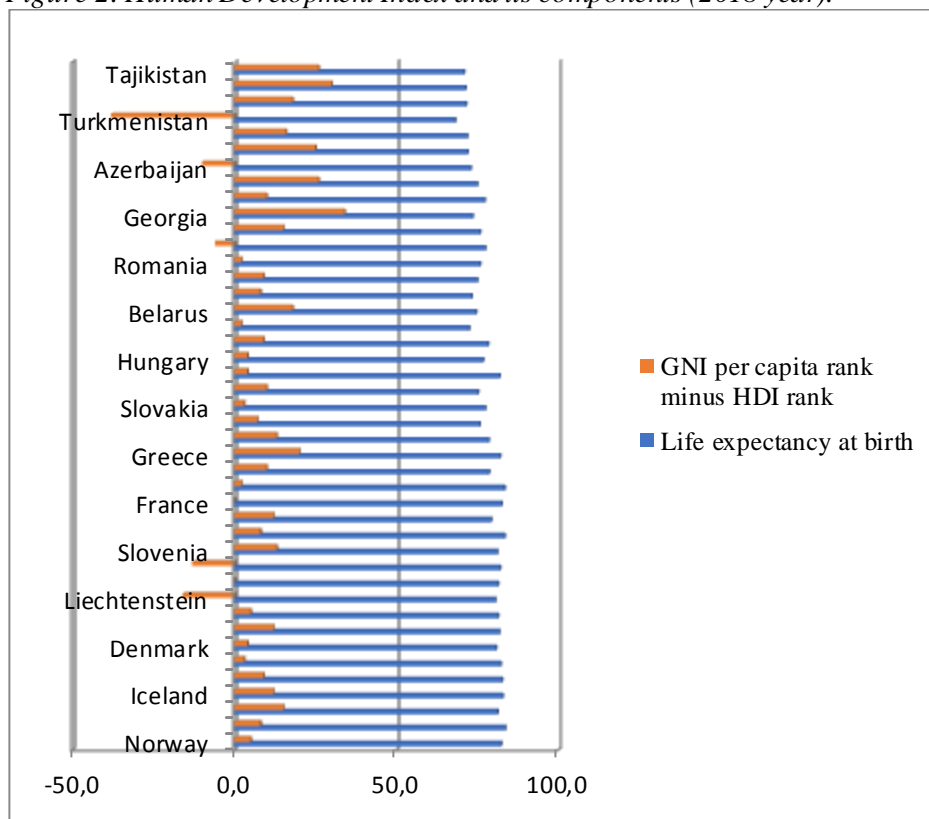


Source: author’s calculation is based on United Nation’s Development Program

The countries included in the given zones are brought in different diapasons according the income per capita (Abuselidze et al, 2019). For instance, GDP per capita under the priority of purchasing power in 2009 in Georgia, income amounted in 5440 USD, in 2010 – 5730 USD, 2011 – 6140 USD, 2012 – 6760 USD, 2013 – 7040 and in 2016 it amounted in 7400 USD. According HDI indicators, Georgia is 70-th in world rating and our country is significantly overtaken by states like: Belarus, Turkey, Bulgaria, Romania. As for priority of purchasing power of the population, the income in Georgia was 8040 USD while it was 8140 USD in Armenia, 18180 USD in Azerbaijan, 23200 USD in Russian Federation and 18760 USD in Turkey. This means, that population`s income and their purchasing power is quite big in our neighboring countries rather in Georgia (Fig. 2), accordingly the population`s welfare is big in Georgia`s adjacent countries (Abuselidze, 2018).

According the analysis of existing data, the natural increase rate of population falls and demographic condition is being significantly changed, especially in of age and gender structure in line with length of life (life expectancy).

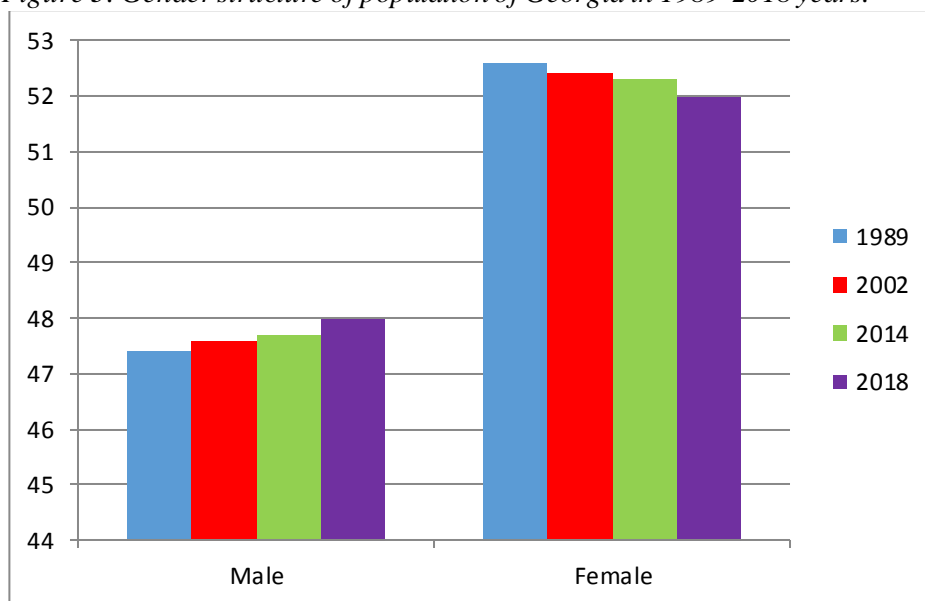
Figure 2. Human Development Index and its components (2018 year).



General regularity is, that crucial impact over population's age and gender structure is dealt by coefficients of its natural movement. In particular, in case of high natural increase rate, the specific share of men and young ones are quite high, but despite of decreased natural increase indicators (7.8 per mile in 1990 and 1.2 per mile in 2018), the gender structure didn't worsen, but it is characterized by improved tendency instead, that constitutes an interesting object for the study and definition of purposes is significant task for demographic development.

Age and gender structure of population in Georgia firstly, in 1989-2018 period is developing with worsening tendency, but during of recent period it is characterized with improving tendency (Fig. 3).

Figure 3. Gender structure of population of Georgia in 1989-2018 years.



During of 1989-2018, the specific share of men was increased from 47.4% to 48.0% of by 0.6%. The increase of specific share of men in the country was developing on the background of high emigration and decreased natural increase rate, which doesn't correspond to general regularity of demographic development. The existing condition is related to political and social-economic factors as well. Negative migration balance of 1992-2018 years period amounted in 911108 man. Generally, as a result of emigration processes, big part of emigrants comes on males, accordingly, specific share of males in Georgia due to high emigration rate could be decreased, but during of study period (1989-2018 years) it was increased instead (Fig. 3). The mentioned originality was caused by fact, that since the Soviet Union's dissolution, the whole families moved from Georgia to other former Soviet Countries. Thus, gender structure wasn't violated. From another

side, the Georgian citizenship was acquired by ethnic Georgians, residing in Turkey and Iran, the most part of which consisted of males also.

Among the social factors affecting the gender structure there should be mentioned the following: on the background of decreased average child-bearing coefficient, the supremacy is given to male gender. The specific weight of males was also slightly increased by circumstance, that women marry on citizens of other country.

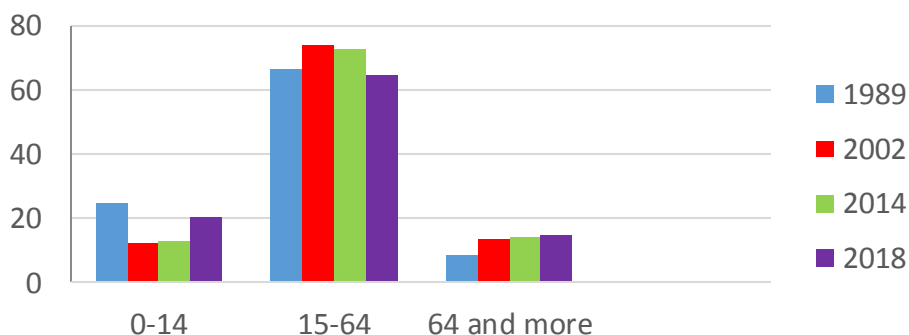
Economic factors influencing the gender structure are as follows: location of Georgia is one of the best in transport and geographical line and presents the foreign capital's interest field with its business environment. Accordingly, business activity is being performed by males possessing double citizenship and they somehow affect the increased specific share of males.

If we analyze the intra-regional originalities of gender structure throughout the country scale, we can distinctly see the influence of political and social-economic factors as well. In particular, the specific share of males is highest in Kvemo Kartli (Lower Kartli) region – 49.2%, which is caused by high natural increase rate (most part of the population is Azerbaijani, which are known to have high natural increase rate). In another hand, the biggest city of the region – Rustavi presents the largest industry center of the country, where are most of males employed. The impact of industry's nature on gender structure is also confirmed by fact, that town of Gori during of Soviet period constituted the largest center of light industry (nowadays, the light industry plants actually don't operate any more), where specific share of women was up to 61% in 1989 while it was dropped down till 54.1% by 2014.

If we discuss gender structure of neighboring countries, the highest specific part of males is in Turkey (50.2%) and Azerbaijan (49.6%) and the lowest in Russian Federation (46.3%) (The World Factbook, 2020). Comparing to Georgia, in Armenia is almost the same indicator – 48.6%. According an examples of mentioned countries, it is defined, that specific share of males is more in Turkey and Azerbaijan, where the natural increase rate is high as well. Besides, these countries weren't affected by political and migration processes. The same demographic properties of Georgian and Armenia are connected to identity of above mentioned factors.

Much more important changes of demographic development of Georgia is shaped in dynamics of population's age structure. The specific share of 0-14 age population in 1989-2018 period differed from 24.8% to 20.8%; 15-64 age group was decreased from 66.7% to 64.5% and 65+ age group was increased from 8.5% to 14.7% (Fig. 4).

Figure 4. Age structure of Georgian Population in 1989-2018 years



The decrease (from 24.8% to 20.8%) of specific share of 0-14 aged population during of 1989-2018 period mainly is caused by decrease of population's natural increase rate (7.8 per mile in 1989 while 1.2 per mile in 2018). The existing statement is grounded the circumstance, that amount of 0-14 aged population during of 1989-2018 period fell from 24.8% to 12.2%, because of hardest political and social-economic environment and depopulation up to -0.6 per mile. Since 2007, the natural increase rate was improved and it reached its maximum in 2014 – 3.1 per mile. Accordingly, the amount of 0-14 aged population was gradually increasing since 2007. Political and economic factors were slightly affecting the change of qualitative and specific share of 0-14 aged population, because the population of this category was less likely involved in migration processes.

The specific share of 15-64 aged population during of 1989-2018 period was slightly (from 66.7% to 65.2%) decreased. The mentioned age group was especially increased (from 66.7% to 74.3%) in 1989-2002 period, that was related to decrease of population's natural increase rate and further fall of natural increase rate is caused by increase of 0-14 and 64+ age groups. Besides, emigration of population in workforce age, somehow affected the decrease of population of mentioned age group.

As a result of political and social-economic processes, the specific share of 65+ aged population was increased (from 8.5% to 14.7%) during of 1989-2018 years, which indicates undesirable demographic development. Increase tendency of 65+ aged population was connected to following main factors: 1. Fall of population's natural increase rate; 2. The population of mentioned group was less likely involved in external migration processes; 3. An average life expectancy level was increased in the country.

Age structure of population in Georgia quite differs by intra-regional line. The specific share of youth is especially low in Ratcha-lechkhumi region, where amount of 0-14 aged population equals to 11.4% (depopulation is observed for a long time) and specific rate of 65+ aged population is highest – 29.1%. According to this point of view, much better situation we have in Kvemo Kartli (Lower Kartli) region, Javakheti region

and Mountainous Adjara as well. The mentioned originality mainly is caused by unequal indicators of population's natural movement and different migration processes.

Age structure of population of Georgia (0-14 age group - %; 15-64 aged group - %; 65+ aged group - %) seems quite unhealthy comparing to age structure of population of the world. Age structure of population of Georgia is close to demographic properties of highly developed countries, but under the regional scope of view, there is a big difference yet. In particular, almost equal demographic indicators are in Armenia and Russian Federation but Azerbaijan and Turkey has much higher specific share of youth (22.8% in Azerbaijan, 23.4% in Turkey) and low specific share of 65+ aged population (7.3% in Azerbaijan and 8.4% in Turkey) (The World Factbook, 2020). The mentioned originalities mainly are connected to above mentioned factors.

4. Results

On the basis of study of age and gender structure of population of Georgia, there was found out, that significant demographic transformations caused by political and social-economic factors. The following was defined on the basis of performed research:

1. During of 1989-2018 years, the specific share of males was gradually increasing, but during of recent years, we have obviously expressed decrease tendencies;

2. More or less influence on increase of specific share of males was dealt by political processes, especially for 2000-2004 period, the increase of population's natural increase rate and improved healthcare field;

3. During of 1989-2002 years, the specific share of 0-14 aged population was decreased twice and we have significant improvement since 2014, which is related to fluctuation of population's natural movement coefficients;

4. The specific share of 15-64 aged population is characterized by decreased tendency, especially during the recent years, which is related to emigrational processes of population in workforce age and increase of average life expectancy level;

5. We have obviously shaped increased tendencies of specific share of 65+ aged population, which is connected with decreased natural increase rate and increased average life expectancy level;

6. The age and gender structure of country's population is characterized with regional originalities, while in mountainous regions we have decreased share of males and young people. The mentioned originality is more likely related to social-economic factors;

7. Under the regional scope of view and comparing to neighboring countries, the age and gender structure of population of Georgia is close to demographic properties of Russian Federation and Armenia, but has much more violated indicators comparing to Azerbaijan and Turkey.

The results of the study makes clear, that demographic processes in Georgia is developing under worsening tendency. Coming out of the mentioned, improvement of country`s demographic condition should be done by increase of social-economic level. In particular, right demographic policy should improve the population`s natural increase rate and increase of life level should regulate the migration processes and there should be worked out an efficient social-economic projects to hold the population in mountain regions.

5. Conclusion

The changes in age and gender structure of population of Georgia, mainly are connected to political processes and fluctuation of social-economic development level, which is characterized by increased specific share of males, decreased youth and increased retirement age population. In general, demographic development of the country goes under worsening trend. In order to improve the current condition, proper demographic policy and social-economic projects should be implemented.

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