

## Foreign Minister of Georgia Ilia Darchiashvili meets with Foreign Minister of Poland Zbigniew Rau

By Liza Mchedlidze

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Georgia, Ilia Darchiashvili, held a meeting with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Poland, Zbigniew Rau. Following the meeting, they issued a joint statement to the media.

During their meeting Georgian MFA Minister and his Polish counterpart Rau discussed the crucial matter of Georgia being granted candidate status for EU membership. Darchiashvili emphasized the significance of this status for his country.

According to Darchiashvili's statement at the joint briefing, he informed his Rau about Georgia's progress in meeting the 12 priorities necessary for EU membership.

"This is one of our main concerns, and during our cooperation discussions, we emphasized the need to further support and mobilize our friends towards this goal. I also had the opportunity to share with Minister Rau the progress Georgia has made in meeting the 12 priorities and the reforms that have been implemented.

We have already implemented most of the recommendations and are continuing to actively work towards meeting these priorities. Our ultimate goal is for Georgia to obtain the candidate status, which is of great significance to us, by the end of this year.

During my conversation with my colleague, I stressed that apart from meeting the specific conditions for joining the European Union, we are also committed to pursuing a comprehensive political, economic, and sectoral integration with the EU. This involves working towards institutional and legislative convergence, and we will continue to actively engage in this direction in the future.

We will be in active communication throughout the day, and I look forward to discussing with Minister Rau the critical issue of Europe's energy security. I will also highlight Georgia's specific contribution to this matter and share with



him the vital role our region, and Georgia in particular, plays in this direction today," said Darchiashvili.

Based on the minister's statement, he and his Polish counterpart also discussed the issue of the occupation of Georgian territories and the challenges that the country is currently facing. Additionally, they talked about the unwavering support of Poland towards Georgia in this regard.

Darchiashvili expressed his deep appreciation for Poland's consistent support for Georgia in matters related to territorial integrity and sovereignty, which he considers to be one of the most critical issues in the country's foreign policy. He

expressed gratitude for Poland's unwavering stance in supporting Georgia in this direction.

Rau stated that Poland has consistently and unequivocally supported the Georgian society's aspirations for independence, freedom, and peace, as well as their sovereign right to choose a development model, alliance, and integrative institution.

"Poland has always unequivocally supported the aspiration of Georgian society to have independence, freedom and peace, as well as the sovereign right to choose a development model, alliance and integrative institution,"

"Thank you very much. I would like to express my gratitude to Minister Ilia

Darchiashvili for inviting me on a working visit to Georgia and for the warm hospitality that the Georgian people are famous for. Georgia and its society have always had a special place in the hearts of Polish people, as we share a deep history of struggle for independence and resistance against Russian imperialism. Today, Ukraine is facing similar challenges, as Georgia did in 2008, and Poland stands in solidarity with both countries.

Poland has always unequivocally supported the aspiration of Georgian society to have independence, freedom, and peace, as well as the sovereign right to choose a development model, alliance, and integration institution," Rau stated.



## Overview of Geostat Data: Population and Migration Trends in Georgia as of January 1, 2023

By Liza Mchedlidze

As of January 1, 2023, the population of Georgia has increased by 1.3 percent compared to the previous year, according to Geostat. The latest data shows that the country's population is 3,736,400.

Tbilisi is home to one-third of Georgia's total population, with 60.4 percent of the country's population residing in urban areas.

The population of Georgia is categorized into different age groups. As of the latest data, the working-age population (aged between 15-64 years) constitutes 63.8 percent of the population, children below

14 years old make up 20.7 percent, while the population aged 65 and above comprises 15.6 percent.

The gender ratio in the country is 92 men for every 100 women, with a total of 1,793.8 thousand men and 1,942.5 thousand women. The number of men is higher than women among those under the age of 35, but this trend reverses among older age groups.

The published data by Geostat states that the life expectancy in 2022 increased by 2.3 units compared to the previous year and reached 73.7 years, with men having an average life expectancy of 69.4

CONTINUED FROM Page 2

Exchange Rates: US Dollar - 2.4991; Euro - 2.7605; GBP - 3.1146; 100 Russian Ruble - 3.0632; Swiss Franc - 2.8001

# Overview of Geostat Data: Population and Migration Trends in Georgia as of January 1, 2023

CONTINUED FROM Page 1

years and women having an average life expectancy of 78.1 years.

In 2022, there was a significant increase in the number of immigrants, with a rise of 142.9 percent, reaching 179,778 people. The number of emigrants also

increased by 25.3 percent, totaling 125,269 individuals. The majority of immigrants were citizens of Russia.

The data published by Geostat indicate that 84.3 percent of immigrants and 86.7 percent of emigrants belong to the working-age population, which is the age group of 15-64.

## The News in Brief

PREPARED BY MESSENGER STAFF

### President Salome Zourabichvili discusses EU accession progress with Polish Foreign Minister



Georgian President Salome Zourabichvili held a meeting with Polish Foreign Minister

Zbigniew Rau at the Orbeliani Palace, during which they discussed the current progress of Georgia's accession to the European Union and the significant role of Poland's unwavering support in this process, according to the President's administration.

The President of Georgia emphasized that the country's European integration is a top priority and a resolute decision

made by the Georgian people. She expressed her gratitude to Poland for its constant support towards Georgia's European integration, which also holds significant geopolitical significance for Europe.

The administration reported that the discussion between the two officials included topics such as the security challenges in the region, the significance of enhancing Black Sea security, and the current conflicts in Ukraine and the occupied territories of Georgia.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Poland is on an official visit to Georgia. His visit to the country will last until April 28.

### 20 Georgian Citizens Evacuated from Sudan Return to Tbilisi

20 Georgian citizens who were evacuated from Sudan returned to Tbilisi via Geosky Airline, describing the situa-

tion in Sudan as difficult and unbearable.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia reportedly assisted in the evacuation of the 20 Georgian citizens from Sudan, but the ministry hasn't officially confirmed that the intelligence department of the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine was



involved.

An airline employee recounted their harrowing experience of being surrounded by rebels for 10 days in a dangerous area, enduring continuous shooting and shelling, limited access to water, and having to travel

2,500 kilometers in the desert. "It was just hell," the employee stated, adding that women and children were among those running for safety.

"For 10 days we were surrounded by the rebels, I don't know what to call it. The conditions were really unbearable, shooting all around, shelling ev-

ery morning, every hour. It was just hell, people were running, children, women, there was very little water available. In total, we traveled 2,500 kilometers in the desert," said one of the employees of the airline.

# EUAM Ukraine launches pilot project to support policing, community safety and investigating war crimes in Izyum

The European Union Advisory Mission (EUAM) in Ukraine has developed an action plan on Liberated and Adjacent Territories to support its counterparts in overcoming challenges faced after the liberation of Ukrainian territories in the autumn of 2022.

The document foresees the implementation of a pilot project in several cities of Kharkiv and Mykolaiv regions to support Ukrainian law enforcement agencies which operate in hazardous environments, where basic infrastructure has been damaged or destroyed.

In this context, EUAM Ukraine is launching a pilot

project to support police and public safety in Izyum, a city in the

Kharkiv region that suffered greatly during the Russian oc-

cupation between April and September 2022.



"The project aims to support Ukrainian law enforcement agencies in fulfilling their tasks focused on re-establishing policing, rule of law, and community safety in their area of operation," says Lynn Sheehan, EUAM Ukraine's Head of Operations. "This support will be provided through the procurement of IT equipment, survival sets, delivery of training, and visibility items."

EUAM will also provide hands-on advice and training on key topics related to international crimes such as forensics, investigation planning, crime scene management, and criminal analysis.

According to Volodymyr Lyman, the first deputy head of the Kharkiv regional prosecutor's office, approximately 14,500 cases of war crimes are now being investigated in Izyum.

(euneighbourseast.eu)

## Weather

Friday, April 28

Day Partly Cloudy  
High: 25°C

Night T-storm  
Low: 13°C

Saturday, April 29

Day T-storm  
High: 23°C

Night T-storm  
Low: 12°C

published by

The Messenger

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