Aging and Ageism in Comparison

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As nations develop, birthrates decline, and life expectancies increase, the aging of populations has become one of the most serious socioeconomic issues our time. Although by many indicators Georgia is less developed than northern and western European countries, its age structure is very similar. Mid-year projections for 2017\(^1\) put the country at 21% aged 60 and above, while the U.N. estimates Europe as a whole to be at approximately 24%\(^2\). Moreover, both in the 2008 EVS survey and among the 16 countries included in the 2017 pre-release, the Georgian population was most concerned about living conditions of older people. However, this concern does not mean that ageism is not an issue in the country; older couples are rarely seen displaying physical affection, there few organized social activities for the elderly, and older people in general are quite marginalized. I examine the contradictory nature of this reality, and compare the factors involved to those in other European countries.

\(^1\) https://www.geostat.ge/en/modules/categories/41/population  