



The Georgia Relocation Readiness Guide

What to know before you move — every figure sourced, nothing assumed.

Visas · Residency · Tax · Cities · Costs · Healthcare · Banking

Before you read: how this guide works

Moving to a country you have not lived in is stressful, and most of what you will read online makes it worse by pretending it is simple. This guide does the opposite. Every number in it comes from an official source or a named provider; each section tells you where the information came from, and where something is uncertain or changing, we say so plainly. Georgia's rules have been shifting since 2025 — a guide that does not admit that it is not being honest with you.

We are Expat Connect Services. We connect relocating expats with vetted, licensed local professionals — lawyers, doctors, accountants, and property experts. We do not give legal, tax, or medical advice ourselves, and this guide is not that advice. It is the map, not the lawyer.

All figures were verified in July 2026. Rules change; check the cited sources or ask us for a current introduction before acting on any of them.

Getting in: the 365-day rule

Citizens of more than 95 countries — including the United States, United Kingdom, EU states, and Canada — can enter Georgia without a visa and stay for up to 365 days. This is one of the most generous entry policies in the world, and it means you can live in Georgia for a full year, legally, before committing to anything. Many expats simply cross a border briefly and re-enter to reset the clock, though building a life on visa runs is not a long-term plan — and Georgia's posture toward foreigners has been tightening (see the residency section).

Key facts

- Visa-free stay: up to 365 days for 95+ nationalities
- No residence permit needed during that year
- Most arrivals from Europe land at Kutaisi (Wizz Air's hub — 1.8M passengers in 2025); Tbilisi and Batumi airports serve the rest

Sources: expatden.com, Georgia digital nomad guide; georgiatoday.ge (Wizz Air Kutaisi, 2025 figures)

Staying: residency routes in 2026

This is where most online information is wrong. On March 1, 2026, Georgia raised the real-estate investment threshold for a temporary residence permit from \$100,000 to \$150,000. Many relocation sites still quote the old figure. The \$150,000 applies to your total registered property holdings, valued by accredited assessors, and grants a renewable one-year permit. Existing permit holders who bought at the \$100,000 level can renew without a new appraisal, provided they keep the property.

The main routes today:

Key facts

- Property route: \$150,000+ in registered real estate — renewable 1-year temporary permit (raised from \$100,000 on March 1, 2026)
- Investor route: \$300,000+ investment — 5-year residency for the applicant, spouse, and minor children; path to permanent residency after 5 years
- IT specialist permit (introduced Sept 2025): 3-year permit for tech professionals with 2+ years' experience and \$25,000+ annual income
- Work permits: mandatory for foreign workers since March 1, 2026 —

Georgia's previously informal approach is over

The honest caveat: Georgia's immigration system is in active reform. Since September 2025, documentation standards have tightened across every category, and enforcement has increased. None of this makes relocation impractical — but it makes current, professional guidance worth far more than a forum post from 2023.

Sources: eiglaw.com (threshold change, effective date); imidaily.com; legal.ge (work permits, IT permit)

Tax: the 1% headline, and what it leaves out

Georgia's famous offer: register as an Individual Entrepreneur with Small Business Status and pay 1% tax on turnover up to roughly \$180,000 per year, with no social security contributions. It is real, and thousands of remote workers use it. What the headline leaves out: eligibility depends on your type of income (employment income does not qualify), your home country's tax rules may still reach you, and since March 2026, registering as an IE can trigger the labor-permit requirement. Tax residency (183+ days) has its own consequences worth understanding before you arrive, not after.

This is exactly the topic where we tell you to talk to a professional. ECS connects you with English-speaking Georgian accountants and tax advisers who do this daily — that introduction is free.

Sources: armenian-lawyer.com (IE regime, thresholds); legal.ge (2026 regulatory changes)

Choosing your city: Tbilisi, Batumi — and the Kutaisi question

Tbilisi is the capital and the center of gravity: 1.33 million people (34% of the country), the deepest expat and nomad community, the most coworking, and the most English-speaking services. It is also where costs have risen fastest since 2022.

Batumi is the Black Sea alternative — the fastest-growing city in Georgia (population up 54% in a decade to about 236,000), roughly 10–15% cheaper than Tbilisi, with a large foreign community and a beach-town rhythm: lively in summer, quiet in winter. It suits people who want the sea and lower costs over capital-city energy.

Kutaisi is the question we get asked increasingly often, so here is the straight answer: Kutaisi is where Europe lands (Wizz Air carried 1.8 million passengers through it in 2025), and it is Georgia's cheapest sizable city — but the data does not show a large expat community living there. It is a gateway and a budget option, not yet a settlement hub. Georgia's full 2024 census breakdown, due in 2026, will give real city-level numbers; until then, anyone quoting precise percentages of 'where expats live' is guessing.

Sources: oc-media.org and civil.ge (census 2024, city populations, foreign-resident concentrations); georgiatoday.ge (Kutaisi airport)

What it actually costs to live

Ranges below are for mid-2026, in US dollars, from cost-of-living trackers and local agency data. Your number depends on neighborhood and season — Batumi rents can double in peak summer.

Item	Tbilisi	Batumi
1-bed apartment, central	\$400–700/mo	\$300–500/mo (off-season)
1-bed apartment, outside the center	\$250–350/mo	\$250–400/mo
Comfortable single-person budget, rent included	~\$1,000–1,200/mo	~\$800–1,000/mo
GP visit, private clinic	\$15–30	\$15–30
Specialist consultation	\$30–80	\$30–80

Note the seasonality: peak-summer Batumi rents run \$600–900 for the same apartment that costs \$300–500 in winter. Plan around it.

Sources: georgiaexpats.com; expatden.com; numbeo.com; cappuccino-estate.com; expatlife.ai (all accessed July 2026 — spot-check before signing anything)

Healthcare: better than you expect, cheaper than you're used to

Georgia's public system is basic; its private system is the story. Modern private hospitals in Tbilisi — MediClub, American Hospital Tbilisi, the Evex network, Aversi — work in English for international patients, and prices are a fraction of US levels: GP visits \$15–30, specialist consultations \$30–80, an MRI \$80–150. Local private insurance from Georgian insurers runs roughly \$50–100 per month for comprehensive coverage; many expats pair it with an international policy (\$50–150/month) for evacuation and treatment abroad.

Dental deserves its own line: a single implant in Tbilisi runs \$500–900 against \$3,000–5,000 in the US or UK — quality clinics, European-trained dentists, savings of 70% and more. It is one of Georgia's most underrated advantages, and worth planning a trip around even if you never move.

Sources: expatlife.ai; veridia.ge; expatden.com (insurance and consultation prices); placidway.com (dental costs, Tbilisi)

Banking: the part that got harder

Honest warning: opening a Georgian bank account in 2026 is no longer the passport-and-a-smile process older blog posts describe. Georgia has aligned its anti-money-laundering rules with international standards, and Bank of Georgia and TBC — the two banks that matter, holding ~75% of banking assets — now run full source-of-funds checks on foreigners. Arriving with only a passport is a reliable path to rejection.

Key facts

- Bring: passport, 6–12 months of home-bank statements in English, and clear documentation of income sources
- Business accounts additionally need company documents — and since March 2026, IE registrants may need a labor permit
- English-speaking branches: Bank of Georgia Pushkin St., TBC Marjanishvili (Tbilisi), plus major mall branches
- Expect questions about why you chose Georgia; a genuine, documented answer usually clears them.

Sources: easyglobalbanking.com; deloryen.com; consensuslegal.ge; tbcbank.ge (all 2026 requirements)

The readiness checklist

You are ready to book the flight when you can check every box:

- I know which residency route applies to me (or that the 365 days is enough for now)
- I have spoken to a professional about my tax position — home country and Georgia both
- I know my target city, and I've priced real rentals there for the season I'm arriving
- My proof-of-funds paper trail is assembled (6–12 months of statements, in English)
- I have health cover that works in Georgia from day one
- I've budgeted first-90-day costs: deposit + rent, insurance, setup, buffer
- I know that work permits are now mandatory if I'll be employed or registering as an IE
- I've seen the country in person or booked the trip to do so

What we cannot tell you yet

Where exactly foreigners settle, in percentages: Georgia's full 2024 census breakdown publishes in 2026, and until then, city-level expat numbers are estimates. How the immigration reform settles: the work-permit regime is new, and the enforcement practice is still forming. What your specific tax outcome is: that depends on your income type and home country. Anyone who claims certainty on these is selling you something. We will update this guide as each answer becomes official.

Your next step

If Georgia is on your shortlist, don't navigate it from forums. Talk to someone who knows — connect with ECS today at **expatconnectservices.com**. We'll introduce you to the vetted English-speaking professionals your situation needs: immigration lawyers, accountants, doctors, and property experts. Free for expats — no fees to search, ever.

Full source list

Entry & visas: expatden.com/georgia · Residency thresholds: eiglaw.com, imidaily.com · Work permits & IT permit: legal.ge · Tax (IE regime): armenian-lawyer.com · Census & city data: geostat.ge via civil.ge and oc-media.org · Kutaisi airport: georgiatoday.ge · Costs: georgiaexpats.com, numbeo.com, expatden.com, cappuccino-estate.com, expatlife.ai · Healthcare: veridia.ge, expatlife.ai, placidway.com · Banking: easyglobalbanking.com, deloryen.com, consensuslegal.ge, tbcbank.ge. All accessed July 2026.