



Центр экономических исследований "БЕРОК"
BEROC Economic Research Center



Gender Gap in Life Expectancy

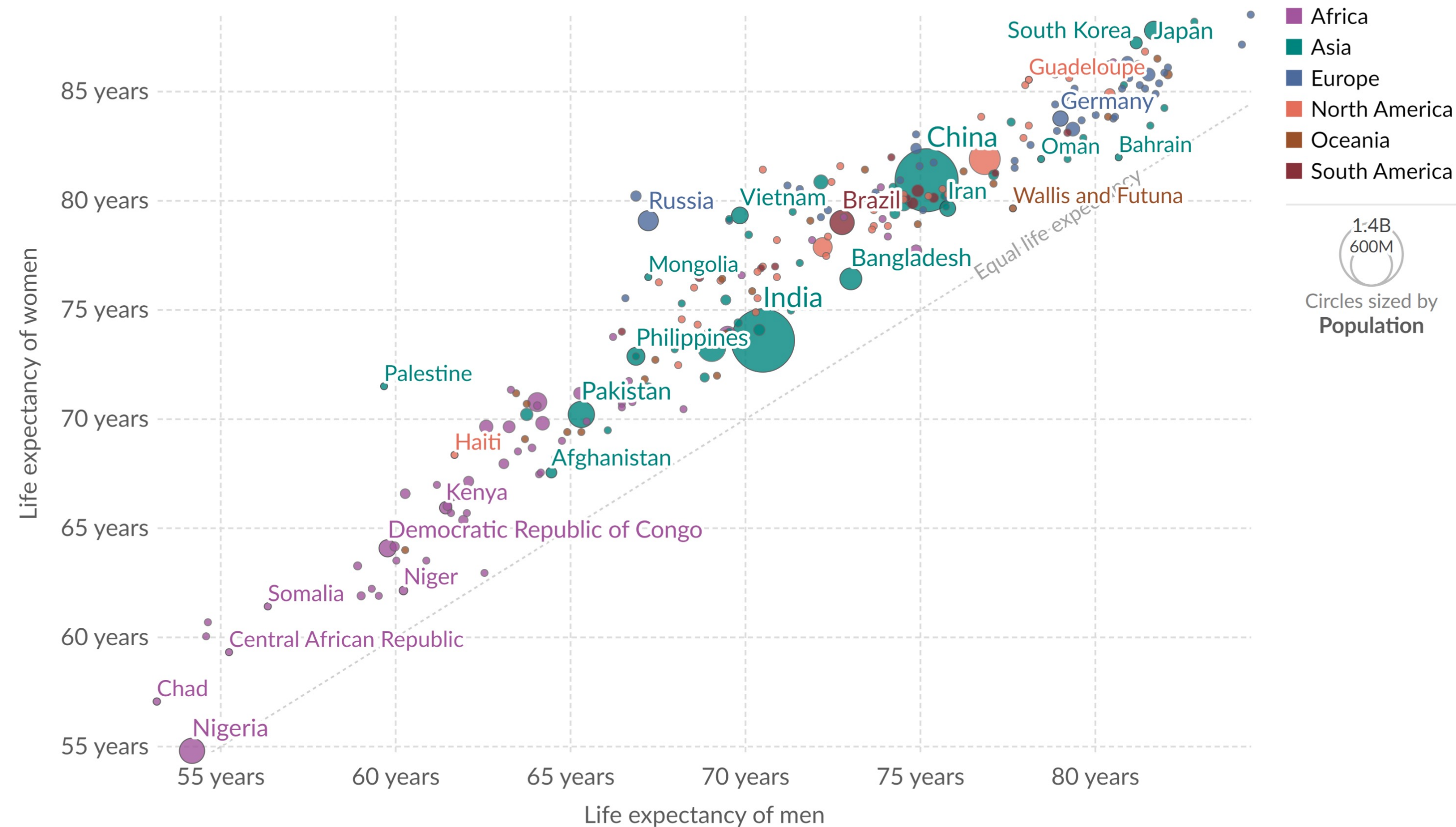
Lev Lvovskiy

Women outlive men in every state

- Life expectancy: females versus males, 2023

The period life expectancy¹ at birth, in a given year.

Our World in Data



Data source: UN, World Population Prospects (2024)

OurWorldinData.org/life-expectancy | CC BY

1. Period life expectancy: Period life expectancy is a metric that summarizes death rates across all age groups in one particular year. For a given year, it represents the average lifespan for a hypothetical group of people, if they experienced the same age-specific death rates throughout their whole lives as the age-specific death rates seen in that particular year. Learn more in our articles: “Life expectancy” – What does this actually mean? and Period versus cohort measures: what’s the difference?

Why do we care?

- Jealousy

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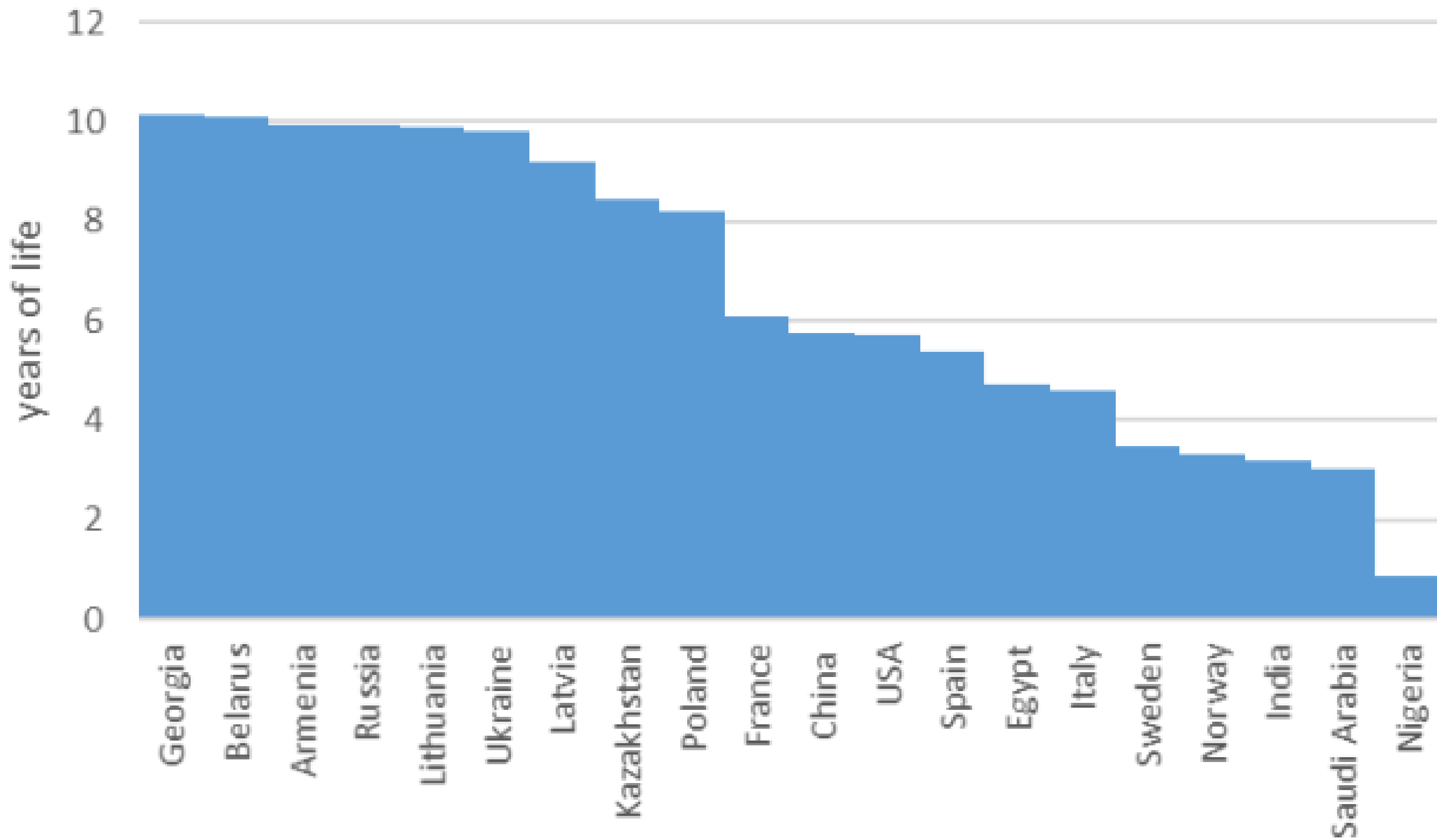
Why do we care?

- Utility losses for men
- Labor force losses
- Utility losses for women
- Family financial instability and widowhood
- Capital under accumulation
- Inefficient social policy design and uptake

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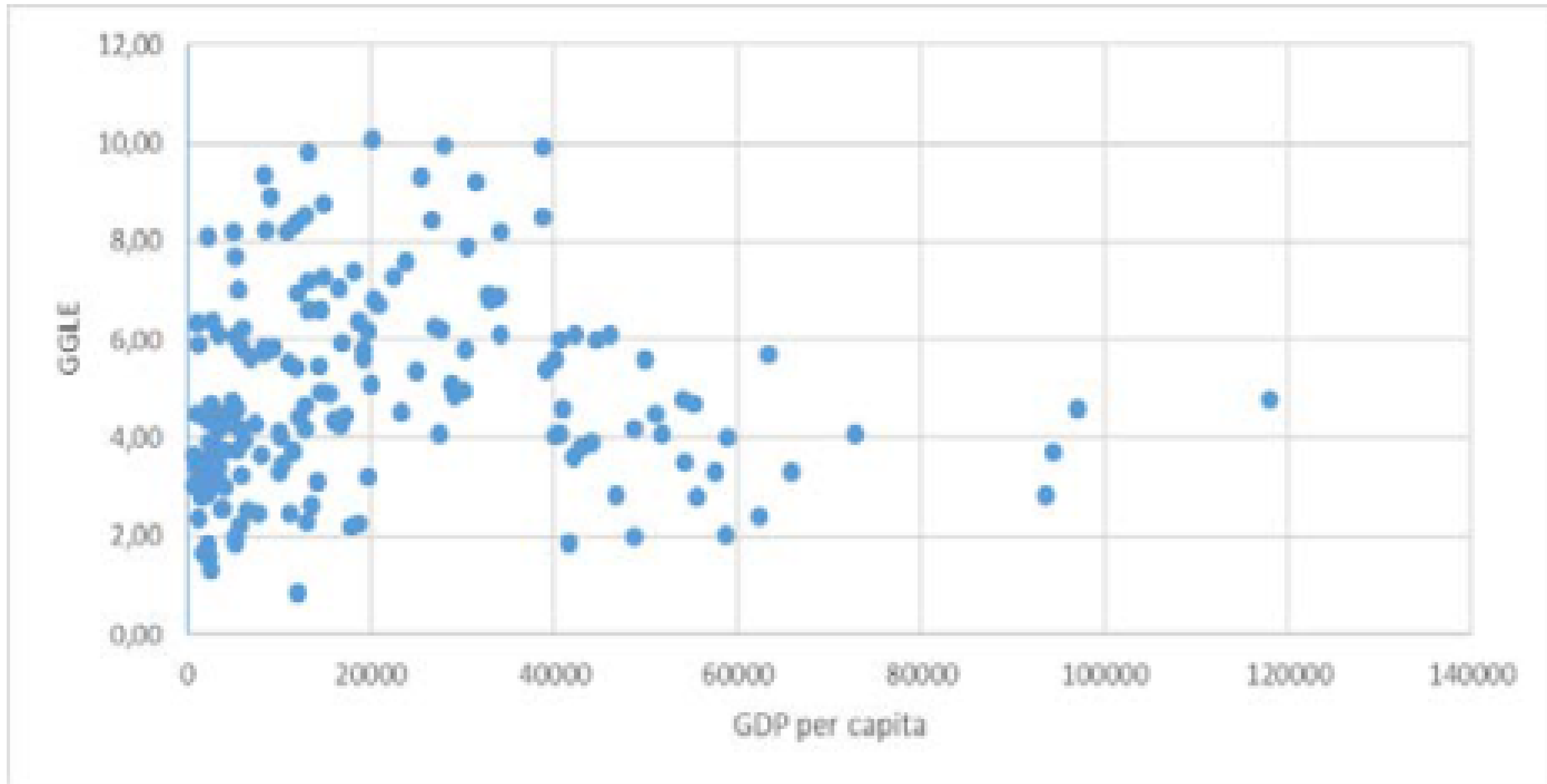


Effect

- EU average cost of premature mortality 1.2% GDP, 70% due to male premature mortality
- Counterfactual GGLE = 0
 - Belarus +2.5% GDP (+4% Labour Force)
 - Latvia, Lithuania +2.3% GDP
 - Poland +1.7% GDP
 - Sweden +0.3% GDP

Cause

-



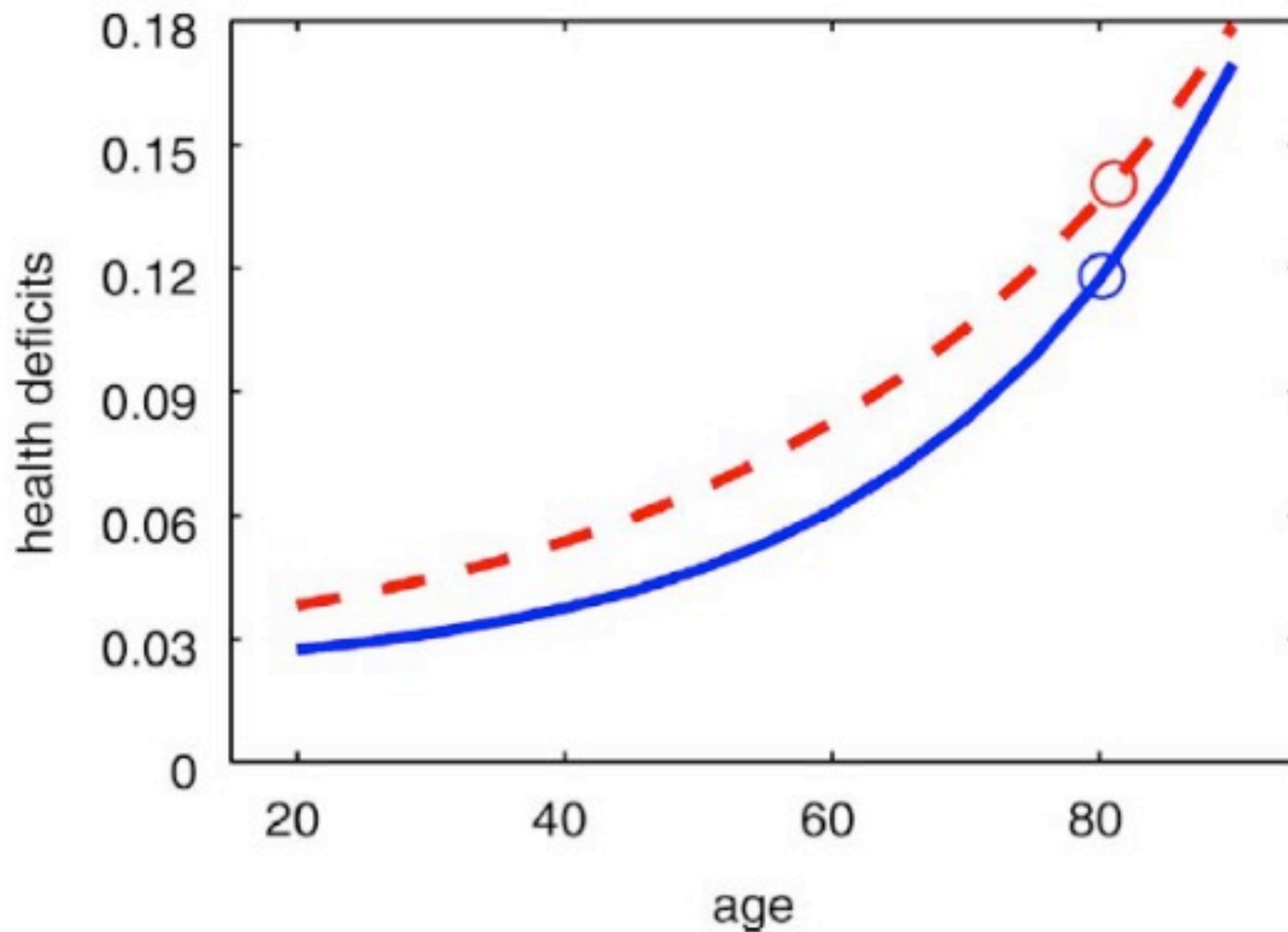
Causes

- Biological Factors
 - Genetics
 - morbidity-mortality paradox
- Behavioural Factors
 - Gender inequality in professions
 - Inequality in health services utilisation
 - Gender norms and habits

Biological Factors

- Evolutionary biology:
 - Female longevity → offspring survival rates
- Genetics
 - Spare copy of X chromosome
 - Stronger immune system (contributes to M-M paradox)
 - Estrogen → lower cardiovascular disease chances

Morbidity-mortality paradox



Behavioural Factors

- Search YouTube “Why Women Live Longer Than Men”
- Men die at road traffic 3X
- Men commit suicide 3.78X, M-M paradox in depression
- Behaviour explains 3.2 years of GGLE out of 4.6 years average for developed nations [Schünemann et al,2017]
- Smoking (20% - 30 %), obesity and alcohol (10% - 20%)
- High-risk jobs, military activities
- Lower healthcare utilization

Full report and country-specific parts

- <https://freepolicybriefs.org/>



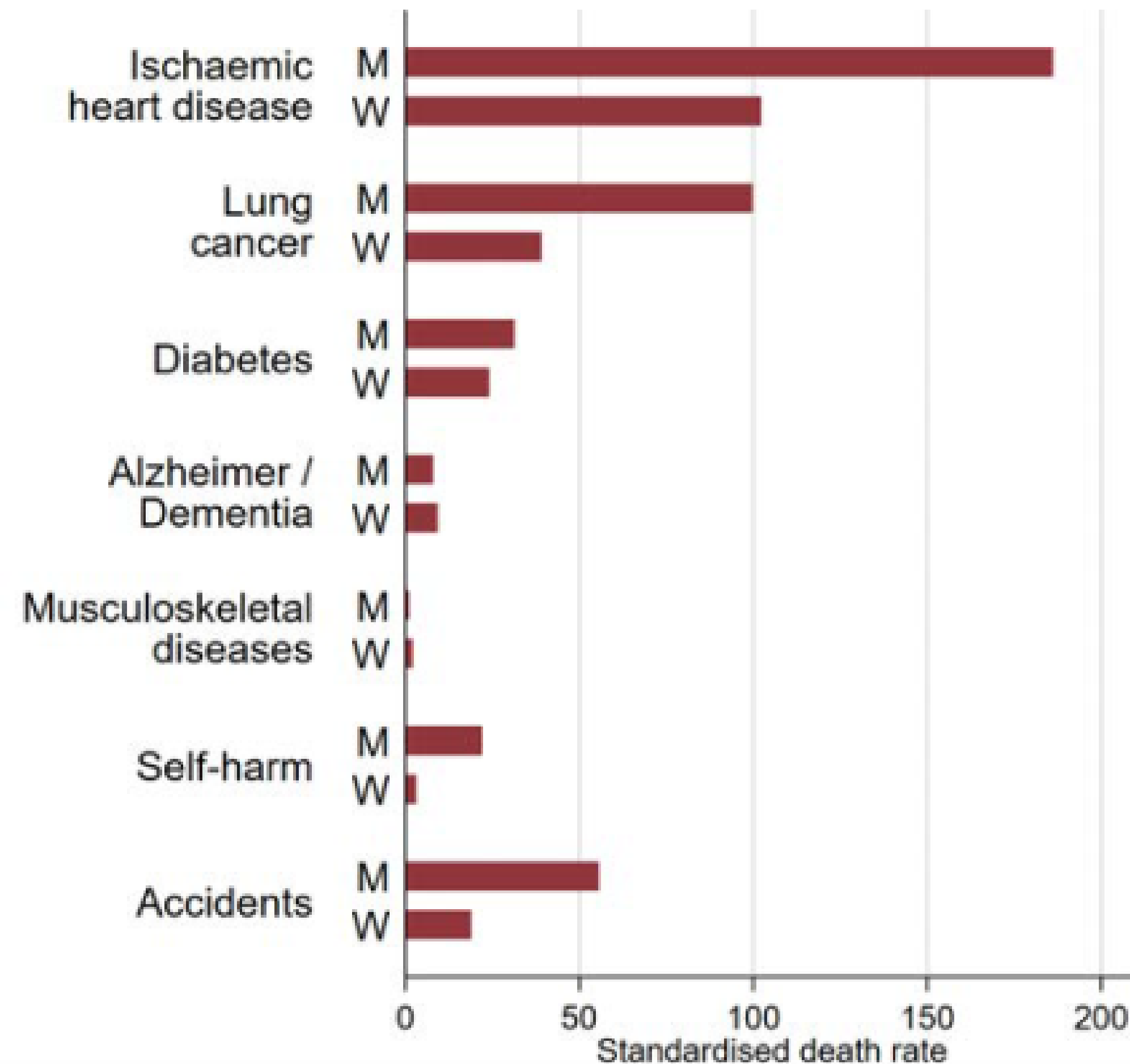
Gender Gap in Life Expectancy and Its Socio-Economic Implications

Belarus

- GGLE 10.4 years 2021 (World Bank)
- Heavy episodic [alcohol] drinking
 - 21% men, 10% women (WHO 2020)
- Suicides 37 per 100,000 men, 8 per 100,000 women
- Deaths caused by pollution 94 vs 40 per 100,000

Poland

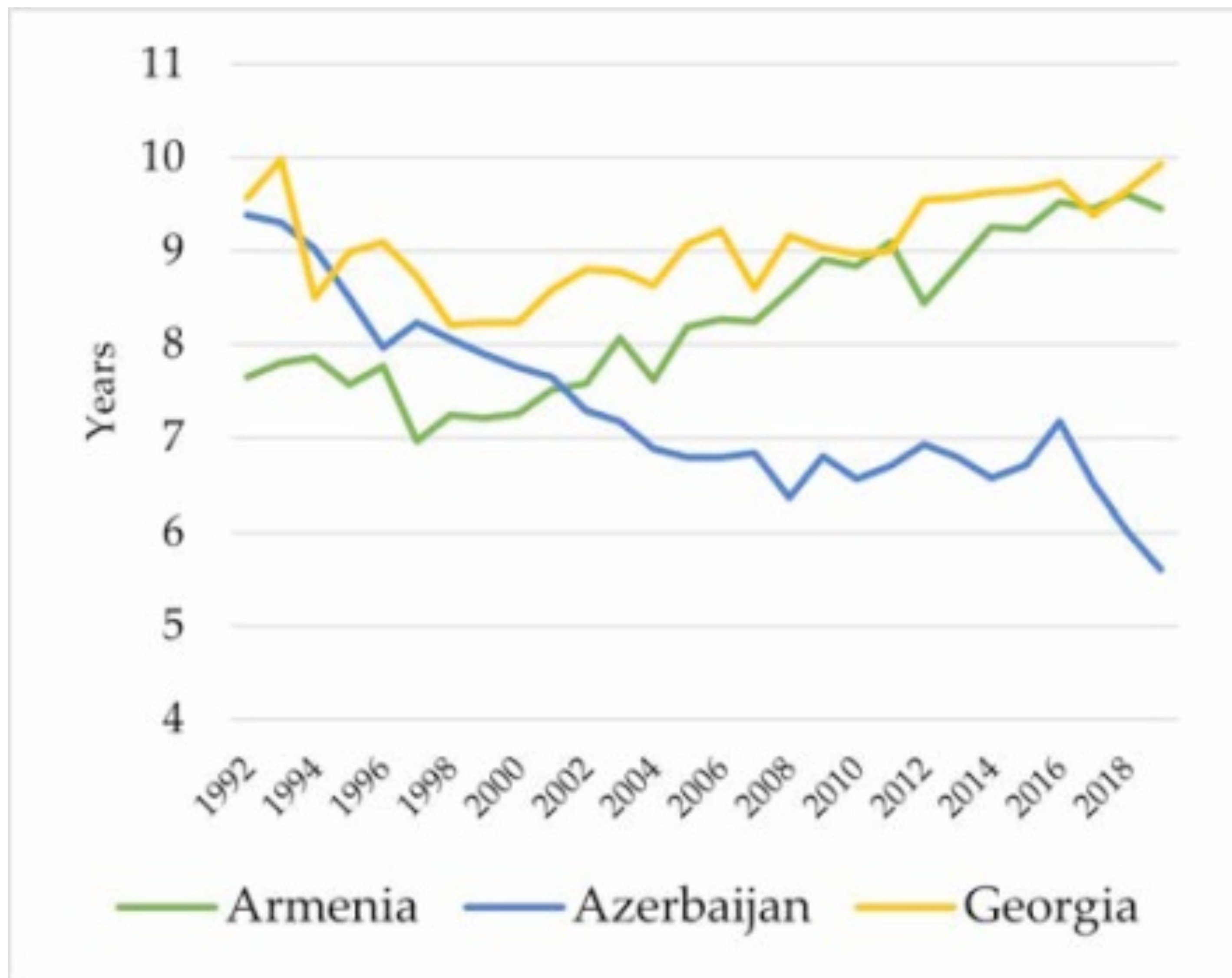
- GGLE 8 years 2021 (World Bank)



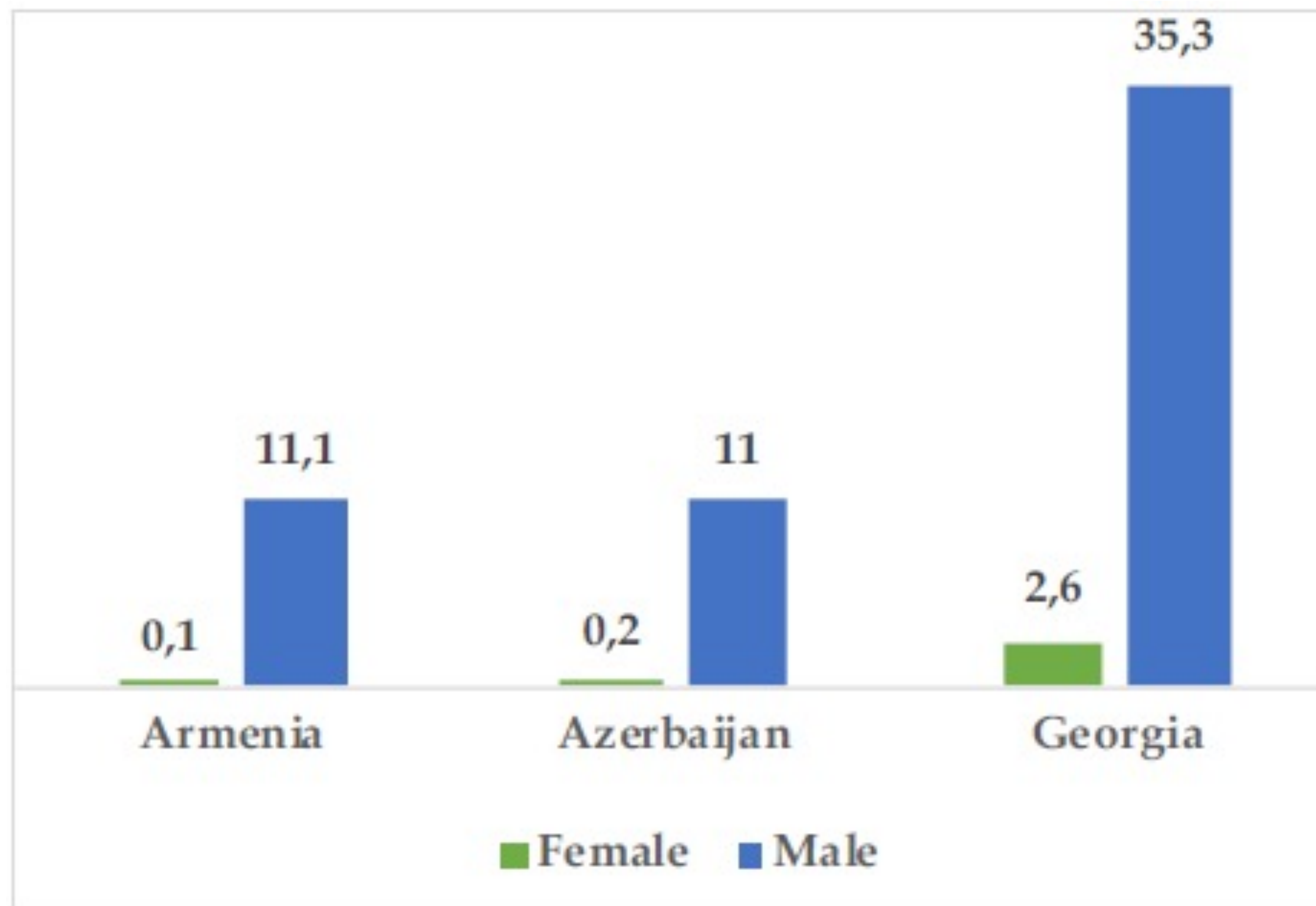
Poland

- GGLE 8 years 2021 (World Bank)
- Main contributors heart disease, lung cancer, accidents
- Heavy episodic [alcohol] drinking
 - 54% men, 18% women (WHO 2018)
- Smoking
 - 31% men, 18% women (GIS 2019)

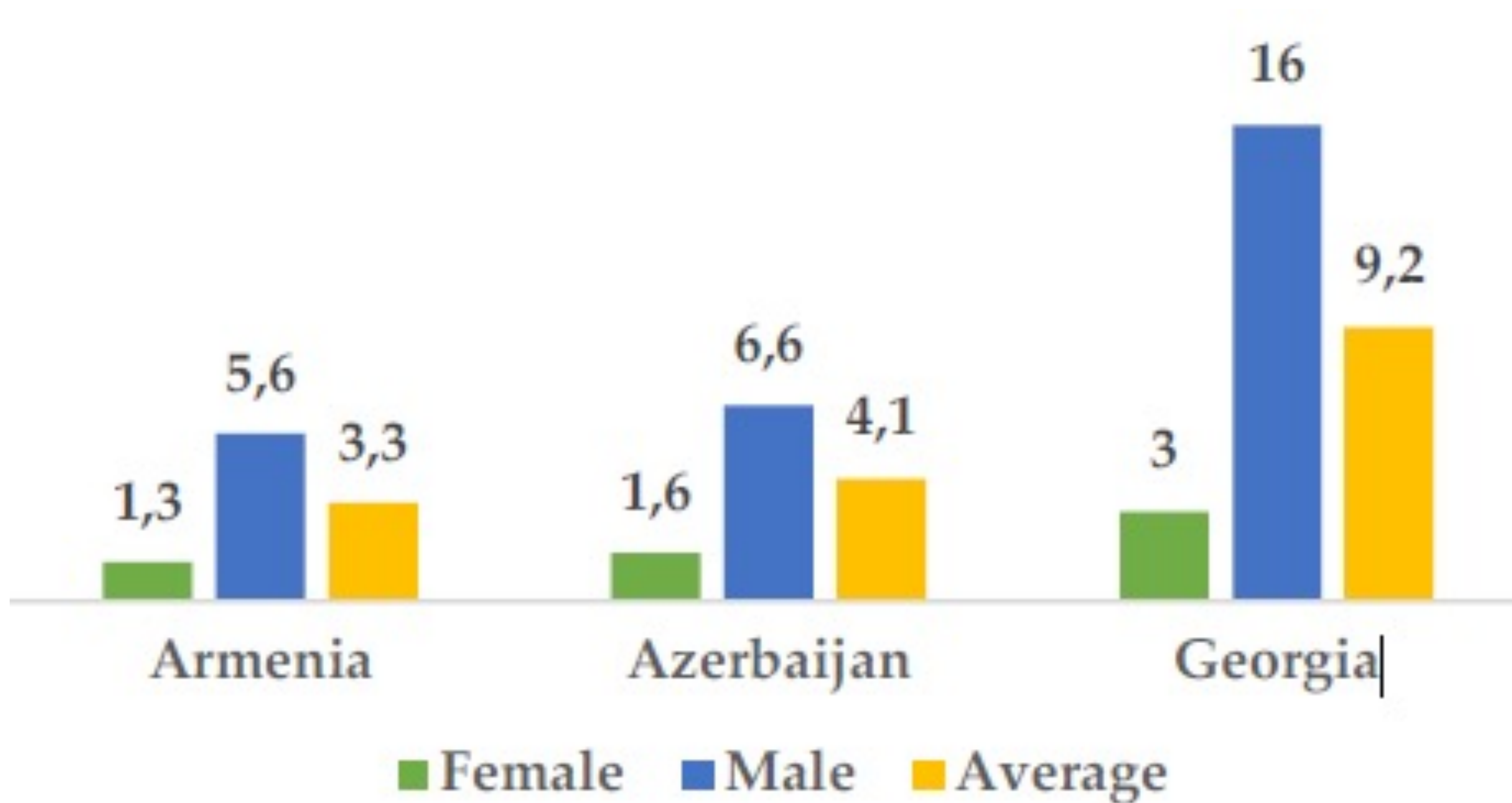
Caucasus: GGLE



Caucasus: Heavy episodic drinking



Caucasus: Suicide mortality rate



Caucasus: air pollution

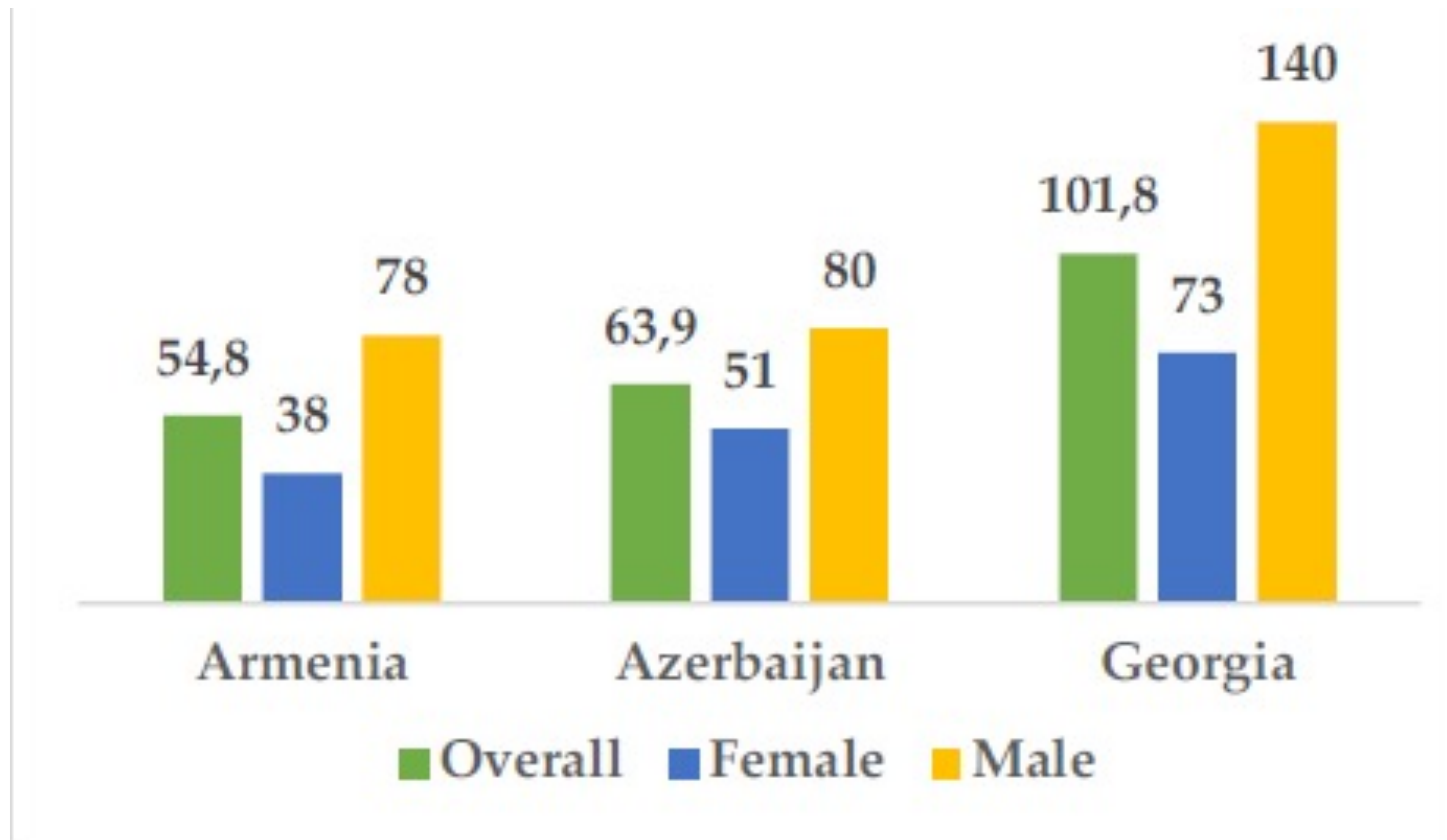
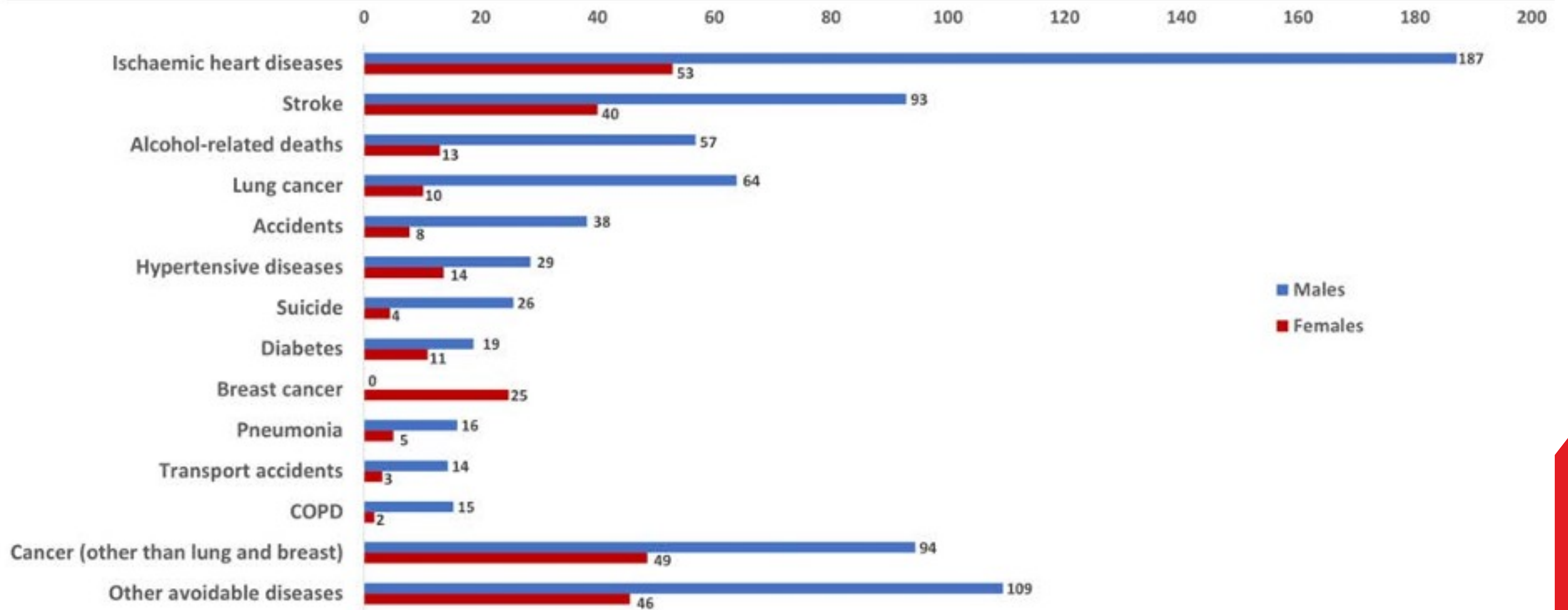


Figure 2. Avoidable mortality by cause and sex, Latvia, 2019, annual rate per 100,000 population



Source: Author, based on Eurostat Database, data code [HLTH_CD_APR_custom_5063819]. Note: Data are based on the OECD/Eurostat definitions and lists of avoidable (preventable + treatable) causes of mortality.