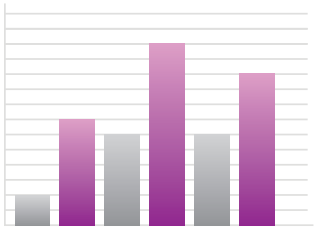
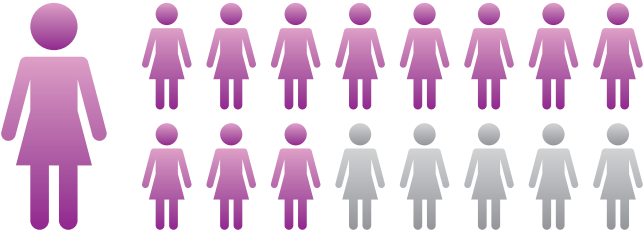


WOMEN'S STATE in Georgia





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INTRODUCTION

In Georgia, the rights of different sexes are equal. Georgian legislation recognizes the equality of all people before the law. In order to enforce the law or in response to international obligations, a number of institutions have been created in the country to eliminate gender inequality. However, statistical data, the real legal status of women and their own perception of their rights show that the established norms and mechanisms are fragile, since many women in Georgia feel discriminated because of their gender. The extreme form of gender-based violence – femicide – is also noticeable.

The purpose of this research is to assess the real legal status of women in Georgia based on different sources and using different methods, to identify shortcomings and to develop appropriate recommendations. In the research process, special attention is paid to (i) domestic violence, protection mechanisms and statistics, (ii) economic equality in terms of gender, (iii) facts of sexual harassment in the workplace and (iv) women's participation in the political decision-making process.

In the research process, local as well as international legislation related to gender equality was studied and evaluated. In addition, public information was requested from relevant agencies, and open, proactively published data were also evaluated. The decisions of the European Court of Human Rights against Georgia related to femicide were analyzed, the obligations undertaken by Georgia within international organizations and the state of their fulfillment were also analyzed, women were interviewed to assess their perception of their rights and freedoms, and recommendations were prepared based on all of the above.

MAIN FINDINGS

- In terms of gender equality, a number of steps have been taken in the legislation of Georgia, which, inter alia, created mechanisms ensuring gender equality. However, in practice, many issues still remain a challenge;
- In terms of legislation, important steps have been taken regarding sexual harassment in the workplace, although some agencies at the central level still have not adopted an internal mechanism for sexual harassment complaints in the workplace, which excludes the possibility of effective protection of one's rights;
- In recent years, the representation of women has improved both at the central and local government levels. In this regard, Georgia has advanced in its ranking of the World Economic Forum's index of gender participation and women's representation in parliament. In the last 4 years, Georgia has moved from 119th to 57th position out of 152 countries.¹ As for the data of the Inter-Parliamentary Union of October 1, 2022, compared to 2019, Georgia moved from 138th to 122nd place in the ranking of women in national parliaments with 27 female members.²
- Despite significant legislative changes at both central and local levels, the participation rate of women is still low, which highlights different expectations and stereotypical attitudes towards women;
- Violence against women, domestic violence and its extreme form - femicide remain an important challenge in the country. The data show that the rate of criminal prosecution is significantly higher than the rate of beneficiaries using services for the prevention of violence against women and domestic violence, which may indicate low awareness and trustworthiness of women victims of domestic violence in relation to existing state services;
- The limit for beneficiaries in shelters for victims of violence is not sufficient to properly respond to the number of cases of violence against women in the country, which is an obstacle to the effective use of state services by the victims;
- The number of restraining orders has been increasing over the years, which may lead to reduced cases of femicide (intentional murder and incitement to suicide on the grounds of gender);
- Despite the existing institutional and legal framework, the rate of women's participation in state economic programs is low. The disparity between women's and men's salaries is also a challenge;
- Women's participation in high-tech projects is significantly lower compared to traditional sectors of small and medium entrepreneurship programs. On the one hand, this indicates the priority of increasing women's involvement in individual state projects, and, on the other hand, the lack of digital skills and technical knowledge of women.

1 The World Economic Gender Gap Ranking is available at: https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2022.pdf

2 The ranking published by the Inter-Parliamentary Union is available at: <https://data.ipu.org/women-ranking?month=10&year=2022>

I. LEGISLATION, STATE INSTITUTIONS AND STATE POLICY

I.1. International Obligations

- In 1994, Georgia joined the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and undertook to submit a periodic report on the situation of women to the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). In 2020, in accordance with Article 17 of the Convention, Georgia submitted the 6th periodic report on the measures taken to implement the Convention.³
- In 2015, Georgia joined the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development of the UN and undertook to fulfill its 17 goals, including the 5th goal to achieve gender equality;
- In 2017, Georgia ratified the Council of Europe Convention on the Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence (hereinafter referred to as the “Istanbul Convention”), and in order to fulfill the obligation assumed by the Convention and bring it into line with national legislation, a number of legislative changes were implemented in the country. In particular, new crimes such as forced marriage, female genital mutilation, stalking and sterilization without consent were defined by the Criminal Code of Georgia. The first national report on the fulfillment of obligations under the Convention was submitted in 2020;⁴
- Georgia promotes the implementation of women’s rights within the framework of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women of the United Nations (1995). In 2019, the country submitted a national report on the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and its Platform for Action “Beijing+25”, in which the progress achieved by the country over the past 25 years and the current challenges in terms of establishing institutional mechanisms in the field of gender equality were discussed.⁵
- In 2000, UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security was adopted. In order to implement the resolution, Georgia approved national action plans (for the following years: 2012-2015, 2016-2017, 2018-2020); The reports on the implementation of the National Action Plan (2018, 2019, 2020) include 4 main areas: (i) increased participation of women in the decision-making process; (ii) prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls and risks related to human security; (iii) protection measures (physical, psychological) and (iv) the issues of effective implementation of the national plan.⁶
- In the context of ensuring equal pay in labor relations, Georgia is committed to the Convention 100 concerning equal remuneration for men and women workers for work of equal value of the International Labor Organization, which the country ratified in 1993.

3 The National Report of the Government of Georgia is available at: https://myrights.gov.ge/uploads/files/docs/4944CEDAW_Report_Georgia_ENG.pdf. Along with the national reports, an alternative report was presented to the committee by the group of non-governmental organizations “Coalition for Equality” and on behalf of other organizations. The shadow report is available at: https://wisg.org/Data/docs/publications/report/CE_-_CEDAW_Report_-_June_16__2021.pdf

4 The National Report of the Government of Georgia is available at: <https://myrights.gov.ge/uploads/files/docs/1661REPORT-OF-THE-GOVERNMENT-OF-GEORGIA.pdf>

5 The National Report of the Government of Georgia is available at: <https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/Headquarters/Attachments/Sections/CSW/64/National-reviews/Georgia.pdf>

6 The National Action Plan Implementation Report 2020, available at: <https://myrights.gov.ge>

- In 2014, the Association Agreement with the European Union was signed, within the framework of which the parties, among other directions, agreed to cooperate in order to achieve gender equality in social, economic and political life. It should be noted that within the framework of the agreement, Georgia undertook to incorporate into the national legislation and implement the following directives. In particular, Council Directive 2000/78/EC establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation, Council Directive 79/7/EEC on the progressive implementation of the principle of equal treatment for men and women in matters of social security, Directive 2006/54/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the implementation of the principle of equal opportunities and equal treatment of men and women in matters of employment and occupation.⁷

I.2. National Legislation, State Institutions and State Policy

- The Constitution of Georgia prohibits discrimination on the grounds of sex and takes special measures to ensure the substantive equality of men and women;⁸
- In 2006, the Parliament of Georgia approved the state concept of gender equality, which determined the measures to be implemented by the executive authorities in the context of establishing the principles of gender equality and developing the gender equality policy;⁹
- In 2006, Georgia adopted the law on Violence against Women and/or Elimination of Domestic Violence, Protection and Support of Victims of Violence, which defines the set of actions that characterize violence against women and/or domestic violence in public or private life, legal and organizational grounds for detecting and eliminating domestic violence, as well as guarantees for social and legal protection and support for victims of violence¹⁰, and ensures creation of legislative guarantees for protecting the rights and freedoms of all family members, their physical and mental inviolability and family values by recognizing their equal rights.¹¹
- In 2012, Article 126¹ on domestic violence was added to the Criminal Code of Georgia, which imposes responsibility for action. This was a step forward in the sense that punishment was established for crimes in the family.¹²
- As a result of the changes implemented in 2017, the restraining order comes into force immediately and does not require confirmation from court.¹³ In case of violation of the conditions defined by the

7 The Association Agreement entered into force on July 1, 2016. The time for the implementation was determined to be 3 years from the date of entry into force of the Agreement in the case of the directives 2000/78/EC and 79/7/EEC, and 4 years in the case of 2006/54/EC. The directives are already incorporated in the national legislation, however, labor discrimination and sexual harassment in the workplace have not been eliminated, and the methodology for assessing gender equality in work has not been introduced.

8 Article 11 of the Constitution of Georgia “All persons are equal before the law. Any discrimination on the grounds of race, color, sex, origin, ethnicity, language, religion, political or other views, social affiliation, property or titular status, place of residence, or on any other grounds shall be prohibited. The State shall provide equal rights and opportunities for men and women. The State shall take special measures to ensure the substantive equality of men and women and to eliminate inequality.” Refer to: <https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/30346?publication=36>

9 Resolution of the Parliament of Georgia on the approval of the “Georgian Gender Equality State Concept”. Available at: <https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/44014?publication=0>

10 Violence against Women and/or Elimination of Domestic Violence, Protection and Support of Victims of Violence, Article 1. Available at: <https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/26422?publication=21>

11 Violence against Women and/or Elimination of Domestic Violence, Protection and Support of Victims of Violence, Article 2. Available at: <https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/26422?publication=21>

12 The Criminal Code of Georgia, Article 126¹, available at: <https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/16426?publication=243>

13 Law of Georgia On Violence Against Women and/or Elimination of Domestic Violence, Protection and Support of Victims of Violence, Article 10, available at: <https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/26422?publication=21>

restraining order, liability is provided under Article 175¹ of the Administrative Offenses Code and Article 381¹ of the Criminal Code.

- Since 2010, the Law on Gender Equality¹⁴ has been in force in the country. The purpose of the law is to prevent and eliminate gender discrimination in any aspect of public life, as well as ensure equal rights for women and men.
- Since 2014, the Law on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination has been in force. The purpose of the law is to “eliminate every form of discrimination and to ensure equal rights of every natural and legal persons under the legislation of Georgia, irrespective of race, skin color, language, sex, age, citizenship, origin, place of birth or residence, property or social status, religion or belief, national, ethnic or social origin, profession, marital status, health, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, political or other opinions, or other characteristics”¹⁵
- In 2019, an amendment was made to the Labor Code¹⁶, according to which the concept of sexual harassment was defined and discrimination, including sexual harassment is considered to be unwanted sexual behavior towards a person. Within the framework of the same initiative, a legislative change was made in the Code of Administrative Offenses of Georgia¹⁷, on the basis of which Article 166¹ was added and sanctions for sexual harassment in public space were written.
- Legislative changes were made in terms of tightening sanctions against the perpetrators of sexual harassment, including deprivation of rights (perpetrators were deprived of the right to employment in educational institutions) and creation of a database of perpetrators of sexual crimes.¹⁸
- In 2020, amendments were made to the Labor Code of Georgia regarding the provision of equal pay for men and women performing equal work.¹⁹
- In 2020, amendments were made to the Election Code, according to which every fourth of the candidates presented in the lists submitted to the Central Election Commission must be of the opposite sex.²⁰
- In 2014, the Government of Georgia approved the first human rights protection strategy (2014-2020), one of the directions of which was to ensure gender equality, protect women’s rights and fight against domestic violence. The same priority is reflected in the 2nd human rights strategy of Georgia (2022-2030), published in September 2022 by the Government and forwarded to the parliament for approval²¹.

14 Law of Georgia on Gender Equality, Article 2, available at: <https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/91624?publication=9>

15 Law of Georgia on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination, Article 1, available at: <https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/2339687?publication=3>

16 Available at: <https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/5003141?publication=0#DOCUMENT:1>

17 Code of Administrative Offenses of Georgia, Article 166¹, available at: <https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/28216?publication=504>

18 Law of Georgia on Combating Crimes against Sexual Freedom and Inviolability, articles 3-8, available at: <https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/4792146?publication=2>

19 Labor Code of Georgia, Article 2, available at: <https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/1155567?publication=21>

20 Election Code of Georgia, Article 203, available at: <https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/1557168?publication=74>

21 The Strategy for the Protection of Human Rights in Georgia is available at: <https://info.parliament.ge/file/1/BillReviewContent/304603>, For information: as requested by the Human Rights Committee, and per the Parliamentary Bureau’s decision, the Strategy review date was extended until May 23. To find decision of the Bureau, please follow the link: <https://parliament.ge/legislation/24597> (as of 21.02.2023).

- Pursuant to the Law on Gender Equality, the Permanent Parliamentary Council for Gender Equality (2010)²², which is currently chaired by a woman, is responsible for achieving gender equality. The council consists of 23 members, 10 of which are men and 13 are women. The Council supports the Parliament of Georgia in defining the main directions of the policy in the field of gender equality, creating and providing a legal framework, reviewing and approving the gender equality strategy, raising awareness about gender equality and implementing measures supporting women’s empowerment. In order to achieve the mentioned goal, an Interagency Commission on Gender Equality, Violence against Women and Domestic Violence Issues has been established in the Government of Georgia²³. The Commission’s statute defines the Commission’s functions, which include gender policy coordination, planning measures on gender equality and violence against women, including the implementation of actions defined by the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 On Women, Peace and Security.²⁴

22 The information on Permanent Parliamentary Council of Gender Equality is available at: <https://parliament.ge/parliament/councils/51090/deputies>

23 The information about the Commission on Gender Equality, Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, is available at: <https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/3698004?publication=0>

24 Article 2 of the Statute of the Interagency Commission on Gender Equality, Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, available at: <https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/3698004?publication=0>

II. MAIN DIRECTIONS OF RESEARCH

II.1 Violence against Women

Georgia has taken important steps to establish a legal framework for the prevention of and response to violence against women, as well as to create social development mechanisms. Currently, there are administrative-legal mechanisms in the country to respond to violence against women and domestic violence in the form of issuing restraining/protective orders, as well as establishing electronic surveillance of the abuser.

In addition, in 2018, a domestic violence risk assessment tool was approved, which is an important mechanism for protecting safety of victims and preventing repeated violence²⁵.

Furthermore, it should be noted that on September 1, 2020, legislative changes came into force, which provide for the establishment of electronic surveillance of the abuser, along with the issuance of a restraining order. When establishing electronic surveillance, the risk of repeated violence is assessed and the consent of the victim/or his/her legal representative is necessary for its establishment. In the case of electronic surveillance, an electronic bracelet is attached to the offender's body. As a result, the approach of the perpetrator to the victim and to predetermined areas is controlled in real time²⁶.

According to the information of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia²⁷, the number of persons violating the restraining order has decreased through the aforementioned risk assessment mechanism.²⁸



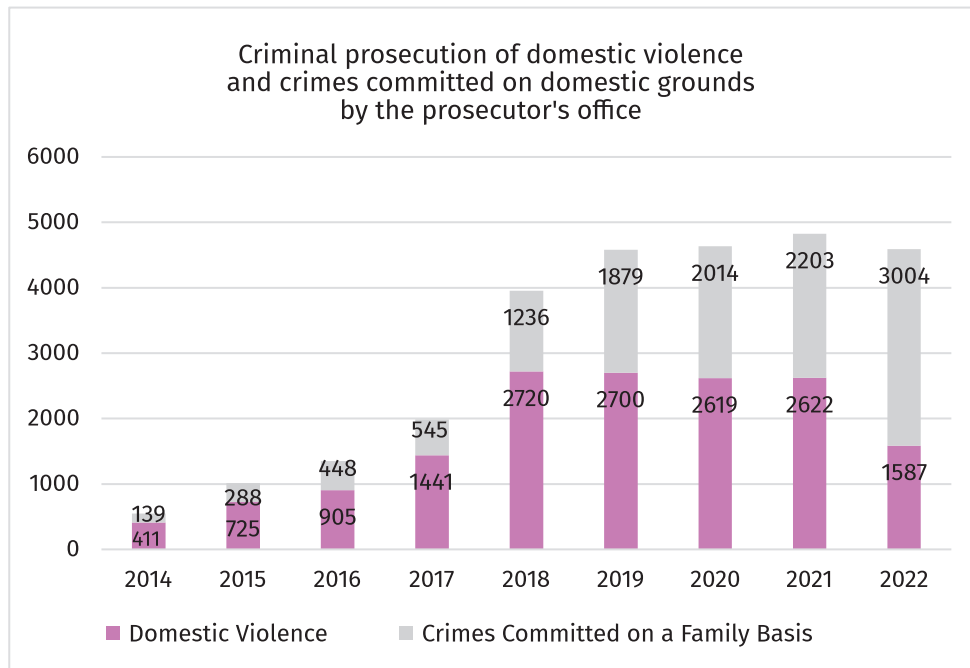
Since 2018, specialized prosecutors have been exercising authority over domestic crime cases (currently, there are 209 specialized prosecutors in the prosecutor's office). As a result, in recent years, the rate of initiation of prosecutions against persons guilty of domestic crimes and domestic violence has increased dramatically.

25 Information on risks mechanism is available at: <https://police.ge/en/qalta-mimart-da-odjakhshi-dzaladobis-riskebis-shefase-bis-instrumenti-da-shemakavebeli-orderis-monitoringis-meqanizmi-amoqmedda/11956>

26 Available at: <https://www.radiotavisupleba.ge/a/32155896.html>

27 Letter by Ministry of Internal Affairs: MIA 4 22 03128597, 07/11/2022

28 Letter by Ministry of Internal Affairs: MIA 4 22 03128597, 07/11/2022

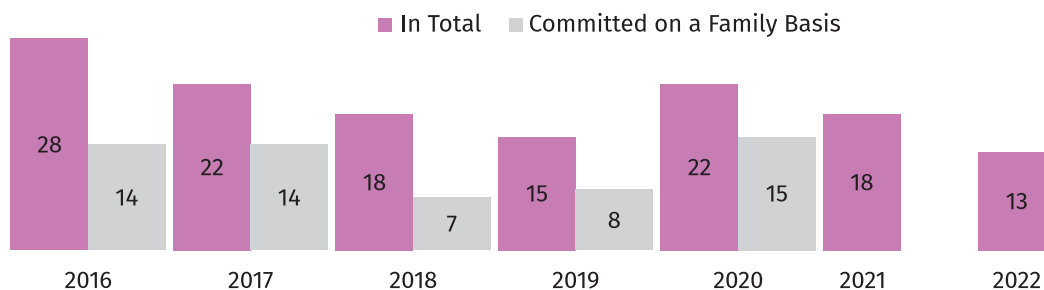


Note: In the material presented by the Ministry, crimes committed on domestic grounds refer to the total number of crimes provided for under articles 108, 109, 117, 118 of the Criminal Code.

II.1.1 Femicide

The Legislation of Georgia does not define femicide as a separate crime. The Criminal Code determines intentional killing on the grounds of gender identity²⁹ and incitement to suicide on the grounds of gender identity (Article 115, Criminal Code), which represent frequent qualifiers of femicide.

The introduced legislative changes and fulfillment of Georgian Public Defender's recommendations resulted in creation of the case-law on committed or attempted gender-based murder, defining the latter as an aggravating circumstance³⁰.



29 Article 109 of the Criminal Code of Georgia, available at: <https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/16426?publication=243>

30 Femicide Monitoring Report for 2020 by Public Defender: <http://ombudsman.ge/res/docs/2022070609293527273.pdf>

It shall be noted that the motive of most of committed femicide cases is jealousy and majority of homicide offenders are either partners or former partners to the murdered women³¹.

The cases of femicide indicate the requirement of enhancing the capabilities of the employees of the law-enforcement bodies for the prevention of “gender-based” homicide.

The European Court of Human Rights held discussions on the cases of femicide in Georgia (*Tkheldidze v. Georgia*³² and *A and B v. Georgia*³³). In all the cases brought to trial, victims (women) had been reporting the facts of violence against them to the relevant authorities. Yet, proper evaluation of risks and taking measures for the prevention of femicide were not possible.³⁴

For both of the cases referenced above, the European Court of Human Rights found that the State had violated articles 2 (Right to Life) and 14 (Prohibition of Discrimination) of the European Convention on Human Rights, and determined the monetary compensation to be paid to the applicant in respect of nonpecuniary damage.³⁵

II.1.2 Mechanisms to prevent violence against women and/or domestic violence

The hotline for the victims of domestic violence was launched and the shelter for the victims of violence was opened in Georgia in 2010. In 2016, the State Fund for Protection and Assistance of (statutory) Victims of Human Trafficking was established, providing services to victims of domestic violence, while as a result of the legislative changes implemented in 2020, the Agency for Assisting the Victims of Human Trafficking was established. To date, the agency includes the following shelters³⁶:

- Tbilisi Institution (Shelter) for the Service of Victims of Trafficking and Domestic Violence, number of beneficiaries: 23;
- Gori Service Institution (Shelter) for Domestic Violence, number of beneficiaries: 22;
- Kutaisi Service Institution (Shelter) for Domestic Violence, number of beneficiaries: 18;
- Signaghi Service Institution (Shelter) for Domestic Violence, number of beneficiaries: 10;
- Batumi Institution (Shelter) for the Service of Victims of Human Trafficking, number of beneficiaries: 10.

Victims and affected persons can stay at a shelter for 3 months, although the mentioned period can be extended if necessary, at the choice of the victim/affected person and based on the decree of the Director of the Fund. The Agency has a hotline (116006) too, providing assistance to affected persons in 8 different languages (Georgian, English, Russian, Turkish, Azerbaijani, Armenian, Arabic, and Persian). Psychosocial rehabilitation, medical services, legal assistance and interpreter’s services are offered to the beneficiaries of the shelters if needed.

31 Femicide Monitoring Report for 2020 by Public Defender is available:
<https://www.ombudsman.ge/res/docs/2022070609293527273.pdf>

32 To find the first decision of the European Court of Human Rights on the femicide case “Tkheldidze v. Georgia”, follow the link:
<https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/5273734?publication=0>

33 To find the decision of the European Court of Human Rights on the case of A and B v. GEORGIA, follow the link:
<https://www.matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/5443641?publication=0>

34 The plaintiffs were arguing that inactivity of the law-enforcement bodies could partly be caused because of gender discrimination by the side of the state representatives.

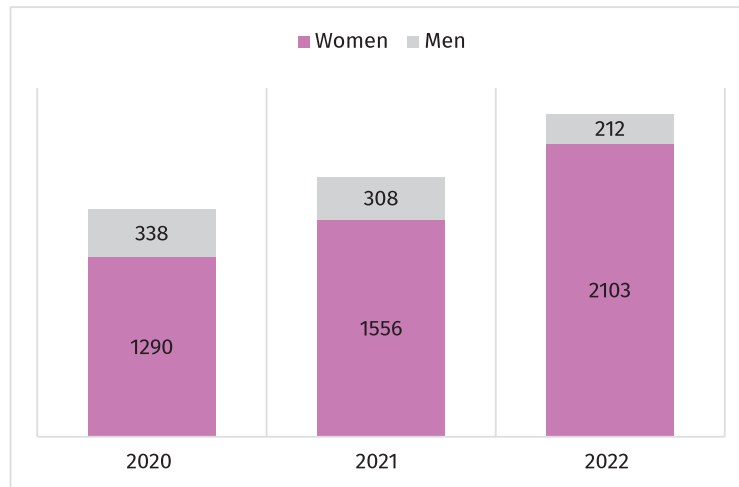
35 To find the first decision of the European Court of Human Rights on the femicide case “Tkheldidze v. Georgia”, follow the link:
<https://www.matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/5443641?publication=0>

36 The letter N1000318 7 22 00452272, 24/10/2022 issued by Agency for State Care and assistance for the Victims of Human Trafficking

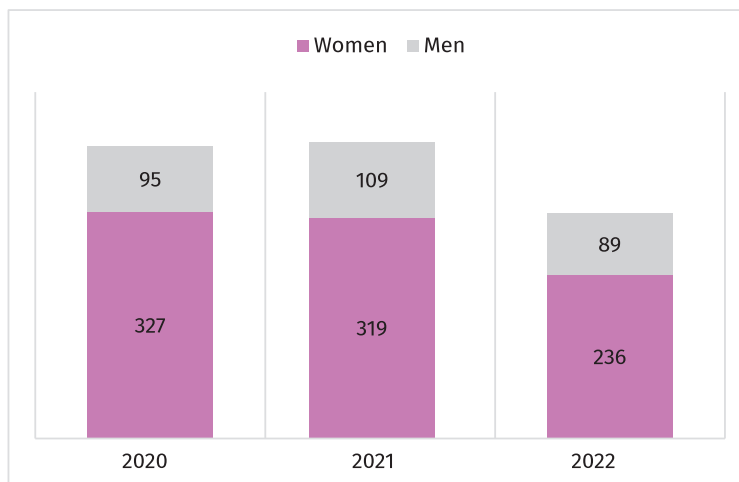
It should be noted that within the commitments undertaken under the Istanbul Convention³⁷, on November 9, 2022, the Government of Georgia approved the procedure for issuing monetary compensation to Victims of violence.³⁸ Based on the mentioned procedure, a victim of violence is entitled to compensation from the State if the perpetrator has not covered the cost of damage caused by harming the affected person's health as a result of the committed crime. The amount of compensation will be defined based on the decision of the court on compensation for damage.

In the course of the last three years, the number of those who contacted the hotline of the Agency for State Care and Assistance for the Victims of Human Trafficking and had free consultations, has increased.

Hotline Beneficiaries



Beneficiaries of Services provided by Shelters and the Agency



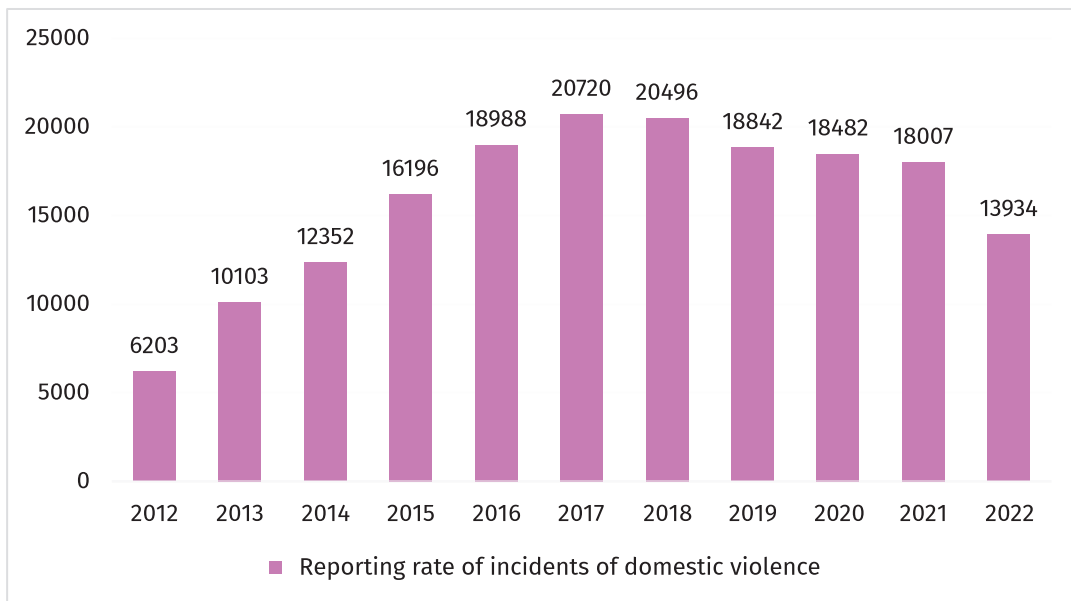
37 Article 30, Istanbul Convention: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/istanbul-convention/text-of-the-convention>

38 To find the Decree №523 of the Government of Georgia on the Procedure for Defining the amount of and Issuing Compensation to Victims of Violence against Women and/or Domestic Violence, please follow: <https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/5611339?publication=0>

The information about legal mechanisms on violence against women and domestic violence is also available at the hotline (24/7) of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) and MIA responds to each case in an immediate manner. In addition, mobile application of 112 has been developed, enabling activation of an SOS signal. Since 2018, LEPL Legal Aid Service has been providing free legal consultations for the victims of domestic violence, irrespective of the social status of victims³⁹.

II.1.3 Reporting rate of incidents of violence against women/domestic violence during COVID-19

Increase in the rate of reporting cases of domestic violence during COVID-19 is similar to previous years, which may signify that victims were not able to inform relevant authorities about facts of violence whilst having to be in the same space with perpetrators.



39 ATIPFUND letter 1000318 7 22 00452272 24/10/2022

II.2 Sexual harassment in the workplace

Sexual harassment in the workplace is a widespread hidden issue in Georgia, with women comprising the majority of victims. That is a significant obstacle from the point of ensuring equal opportunities in the workplace. The Labor Code of Georgia stipulates that harassment in the workplace (including sexual harassment) is a form of discrimination with the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of the person concerned, and creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for him/her.⁴⁰

In 2019, the Parliament of Georgia adopted legislative changes to regulate the sexual harassment in the workplace and in public places. According to the changes, the Labor Code of Georgia stipulates that an Employer shall be obliged to take measures to ensure equal treatment of all the employees and shall include anti-discrimination provisions in its internal labor regulations and other documents.⁴¹ In addition, the law has defined sexual harassment as an administrative offence and made it punishable with a sanction.⁴²

As of today, the victims of sexual harassment in the workplace are able to address either internal grievance mechanisms that are available within the workplace (if any), the Public Defender and/or the Court. If the recommendation on the fact of sexual harassment in the workplace, issued by the Public Defender to the Employer is not fulfilled, the Public Defender shall be authorized to bring the matter before the court and require that the recommendation be fulfilled by the legal entity, another organizational formation or the relevant employer, which, in the opinion of the Public Defender, has not complied with the recommendation issued⁴³.

It should be noted that in the event of sexual harassment in the workplace in case of the private sector, there is a practice where the victim has contacted the Office of Public Defender. As a result, the Public Defender has identified the committed fact of sexual harassment and recommended the respondent not to commit sexual harassment in the future and not to create an abusive, humiliating and inappropriate work environment for the employees⁴⁴.

An internal grievance mechanism established within an organization is considered to be one of the acceptable ways for civil servants to report the facts of sexual harassment⁴⁵. Pursuant to the available studies, 91% of those committing sexual harassment in the civil service of Georgia are men and every two in five among the female respondents employed in the civil service have experienced workplace sexual harassment.⁴⁶

40 Articles 2-4 of the Labor Code of Georgia are available at: <https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/1155567?publication=21>

41 To find Article 5, Labor Code of Georgia, Organic Law of Georgia, visit: <https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/1155567?publication=21>

42 Article 166¹ of the Code of Administrative Offences of Georgia reviews the sexual harassment in public places as the violation of law. The fine to be imposed for the referenced action amounts to GEL 300. Section 2 of the same Article defines either the fine at the amount of GEL 500 or corrective activities for the period of up to one month if the mentioned action is repeated in the course of one year after imposing the administrative fine. Pursuant to the third section of the same article, commission of the same action by an offender knowingly against a minor, a pregnant woman, a helpless person, a person with disability or in the presence of a minor shall carry a fine in the amount from GEL 500 to GEL 800. While repeated commission of sexual harassment against the above persons within one year after the administrative penalty is imposed shall carry a fine in the amount from GEL 800 to GEL 1 000, or corrective labor for a term of up to one month or administrative arrest for up to ten days. Please follow the link: <https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/28216?publication=508>

43 To find article 6(g) of the Georgian Law on Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination, visit: <https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/2339687?publication=3>, Article 6(g)

44 Successful cases, Public Defender, Case N6021/21, In addition, please find the recommendation of the Public Defender of Georgia dated April 13, 2020 against D.A. and “Sheraton Metekhi Palace” Hotel at: <http://www.ombudsman.ge/geo/191127024229seksualuri-shevitsroeba/sakhalkho-damtsvelma-shromit-urtiertobashi-seksualuri-shevitsroeba-daadgina>

45 UN WOMEN Workplace Sexual Harassment in the Civil Service of Georgia 2021, p. 37, available at: <https://georgia.unwomen.org/ka/digital-library/publications/2021/09/workplace-sexual-harassment-in-the-civil-service-in-georgia>

46 UN WOMEN Workplace Sexual Harassment in the Civil Service of Georgia 2021, p. 37, available at: <https://georgia.unwomen.org/ka/digital-library/publications/2021/09/workplace-sexual-harassment-in-the-civil-service-in-georgia>

In the process of working on this research, women from target groups were surveyed using a social network⁴⁷. As a result, it has been identified that 57.1% of the women surveyed have experienced various forms of sexual harassment in the workplace, while 59% have witnessed the facts of sexual harassment. Thirty-two percent of the women declared that they were aware of the prevention/response mechanisms available at their workplace, whereas 21% had information about such mechanisms, although they were unaware of how to apply to them if necessary; 22% noted that there was no grievance mechanism for sexual harassment at their workplace, and 25% did not know whether there was a grievance mechanism for sexual harassment at their workplace or not. The majority of those surveyed did not apply to relevant authorities and 38% of them shared the information about the event (sexual harassment) with their college/friend only.

In the course of the research, state institutions were also surveyed on internal grievance mechanisms for sexual harassment in the civil service and on facts of sexual harassment there.⁴⁸

The findings of the survey indicate that the internal grievance mechanism for sexual harassment has only been established at 5 out of the existing 12 Ministries: the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture (2021)⁴⁹, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2021)⁵⁰, the Ministry of Defense (2021)⁵¹, the Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure (2021)⁵², and the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development (2021)⁵³. The mechanisms are currently being implemented at the Ministry of Internal Affairs⁵⁴ and the Ministry of Education and Science⁵⁵, while the Ministry of Finance⁵⁶, the Office of the State Minister for Reconciliation and Civic Equality⁵⁷, the Ministry of Justice⁵⁸ and the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Labor, Health and Social Affairs⁵⁹ have no grievance mechanisms established.

It is to be noted that the victims of sexual harassment have used the grievance mechanism at the entity (the Ministry of Defense of Georgia), where mandatory training on the prevention of and response to sexual harassment is conducted on a regular basis. Moreover, only the Ministry of Defense offers several forms of reporting on sexual harassment, including the confidential one.

47 The inquiry was conducted in closed groups of the social network in November 2022. The questionnaire was anonymous, although the majority of the members of closed groups refrained from participating in the research.

48 Out of all the existing 12 Ministries, the written response on above-mentioned mechanisms, as well as on the facts of sexual harassment in the civil service was submitted by all ministries, except for the Ministry of Culture, Sport and Youth.

49 Letter N 9193/01, 28/09/2022 of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture

50 Letter № 01/29631 28/09/2022 of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia

51 Letter MOD 322 01154851 5/10/2022 of the Ministry of Defense

52 Letter N 01/2938 21/10/2022 of the Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure

53 Letter № 08/8176, 21/10/2022 of the Ministry of Economy

54 Letter MIA 4 22 03128597, 7/11/2022 of the Ministry of Internal Affairs

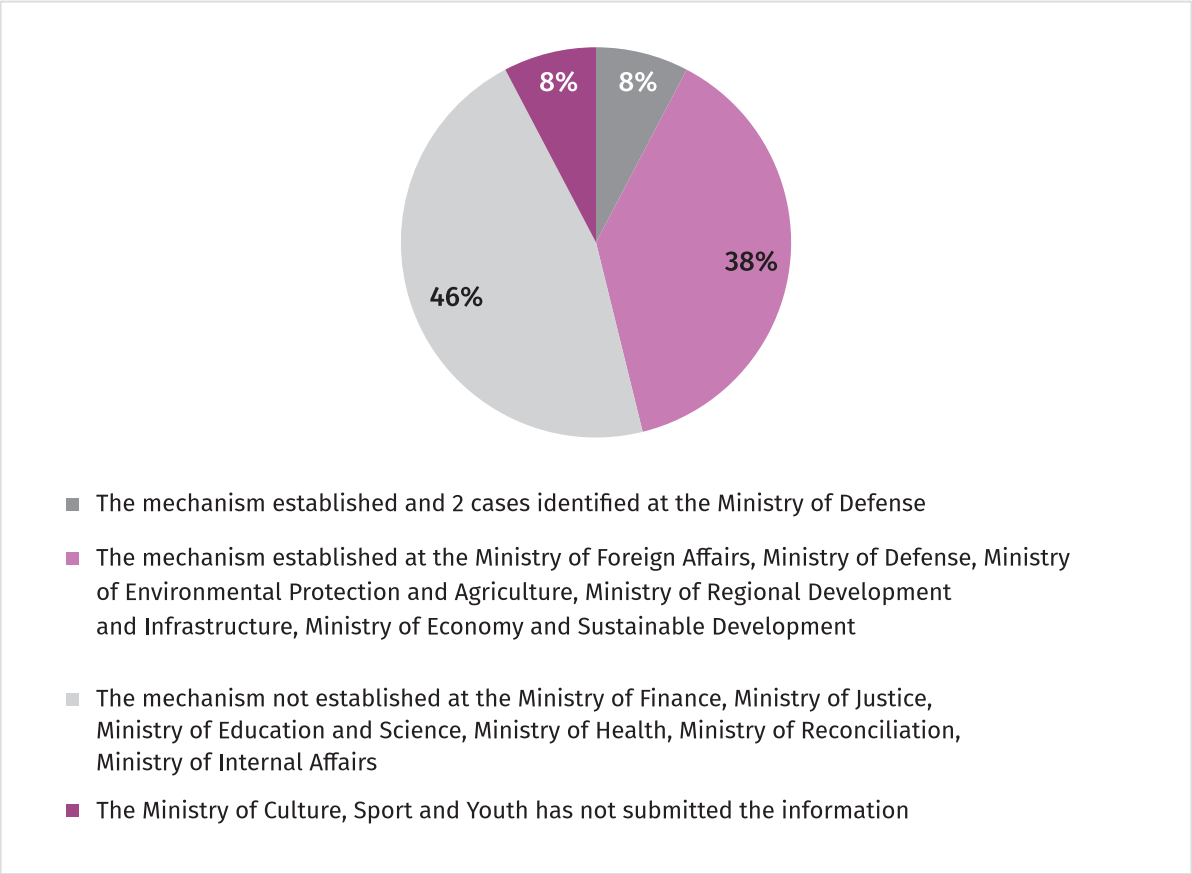
55 Letter MES 7 22 0001181511, 29/09/2022 of the Ministry of Education and Science

56 Letter N 08-02/91175, 30/09/2022 of the Ministry of Finance

57 Letter N1728, 25/10/2022 of the Office of the State Minister for Reconciliation and Civic Equality

58 The mechanism has not been established at the Ministry of Justice, although its statute regulates the issues related to sexual harassment. The letter N 01/2938 5/10/2022 of Ministry of Justice.

59 The mechanism has not been established, although its statute regulates the issues related to sexual harassment. The letter MOH 3 22 00350984, 26/09/2022 of the Ministry of Health.



The study of sexual harassment in the workplace has identified that, in spite of the mechanisms established at some of the public entities, as well as availability of either the Public Defender or other means of complaining, women often do not use those mechanisms. The reason is the negative attitude of society, anticipated adverse impact the declared fact might have on professional advancement, distrust and, frequently, the managerial position of the harasser.

II.3. Women's Participation in Decision-Making Process

The present gender inequality in political participation is the considerable challenge that the democratic, long-term and comprehensive development of Georgia is facing now.

It is worth mentioning that in 2016 changes were introduced in the Law on Gender Equality⁶⁰, pursuant to which, a Municipal Assembly is obliged to create a gender equality council to ensure gender equality, the objective of which is to assist gender equality and to eliminate gender discrimination at a local level⁶¹. By 2019, gender equality councils had been established at 64 (municipal) assemblies and persons responsible for gender equality were designated in all municipalities.⁶²

Moreover, in 2011, the Central Election Commission established a Gender Equality Council, which is responsible for development and execution of gender equality policy of the election administration, as well as for supporting implementation of recommendations of the Government of Georgia and international organizations. The Central Election Commission developed the strategic plan for 2015-2019, one of the strategic objectives of which was supporting development of environment based on gender equality by implementing gender equality policy and encouraging participation of women in political and public life.

Pursuant to Georgian Legislation, women and men, as voters and candidates, do have equal rights, although women's participation rate in decision-making process is low⁶³. That rate is low even with consideration of the facts that 52% of Georgian population is represented by women⁶⁴ and the rate of university-educated women among the university graduates is also high (based on the data of 2021, 52% of women are university graduates)⁶⁵. The low rate of women's participation in decision-making process might be caused by a number of factors, including economic-social ones and low political awareness.

The elections of 2012 resulted in the increase of the number of women in Parliament of Georgia from 6 to 12% (before that there had only been 18 women among 150 members of Parliament), whereas the Parliamentary Elections of 2016 increased that number to 24, amounting to 16%. The Parliament of Georgia consists of 143 men and 27 women members of Parliament⁶⁶ to date.

According to the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap, Georgia moved from 119th to 57th position⁶⁷ among 152 countries due to the indicator of women's participation in politics and their representation in the parliament for the period of the last 4 years; based on the data of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, as of October 1, 2022, compared to 2019, with its 27 women members of parliament, Georgia advanced from 138th

60 On introducing a change to the Georgian Law On Gender Equality, Article 13, available at: <https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/3276687?publication=0#DOCUMENT:1>;

61 On introducing a change to the Georgian Law On Gender Equality, Article 13, available at: <https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/3276687?publication=0#DOCUMENT:1>

62 National Report for 2020 on Fulfillment of Beijing Declaration, available at: <https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/Headquarters/Attachments/Sections/CSW/64/National-reviews/Georgia.pdf>

63 Universal Periodic Review - Georgia, 2021, UN Compilation, p. 7, Para 82 is available at: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/hr-bodies/upr/ge-index>

64 Data by National Statistics Office of Georgia, available at: <https://www.geostat.ge/en/modules/categories/41/population>

65 Data by National Statistics Office of Georgia, available at: https://www.geostat.ge/media/41855/WOMEN-AND-MEN-IN-GEORGIAN_-2021.pdf

66 Composition of members of Parliament is available at: www.parliament.gov.ge

67 The World Economic Forum's Global gender Gap 2022, available at: https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2022.pdf

to 122nd position⁶⁸ in the rating of women, represented in national parliaments. Legislative changes adopted by Parliament facilitated the progress, in particular, establishment of the mechanism for mandatory assignment of quotas as well as the mechanism for financial incentives.

In 2011, the Government of Georgia attempted to improve the low representation of women by introducing a financial incentive and, via amendments introduced to the Georgian Organic Law On Political Associations of Citizens, increased the state budget funding for the parties by 10%. Those parties were to have both sexes per each set of 10 candidates within their party list⁶⁹. In 2020, the next amendment was introduced, according to which, 30% increase in budget funding was defined for those parties that would introduce one different sex per each set of three people of the party list, submitted for participating in elections, and that the increase would be applied for the activities of the structural unit of the party – a women's organization.⁷⁰

In addition, in 2020, the Parliament of Georgia determined the mechanism for mandatory assignment of quotas⁷¹ in the course of staffing of the Parliament and municipal assemblies of local self-government bodies (sakrebulo) - according to the General Recommendation N23,⁷² approved by the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. As per the mechanism for assignment of quotas in case of Parliament, each set of four people of the party list, submitted to the Central Election Committee, shall include at least one person of different sex⁷³. Based on the mentioned mechanism, if an MP of Georgia who withdraws was elected under the party list, his/her seat shall be occupied by the next candidate of the same sex from the party list⁷⁴. In case of the municipal assemblies of self-government bodies, each set of three people of the party list shall include at least one person of different sex. The gender-based assignment of quotas is mandatory, since otherwise, submission of the party list to the Central Election Commission will not be possible.

Establishment of the gender-based assignment of quotas resulted in significant increase of women's representation at the level of local authorities too. In 2017, 277 women and 1781 men were elected to the local self-government bodies under proportional and majoritarian systems, whereas the data of 2021 show that 491 women and 1577 men were elected⁷⁵ to the local authority. In mayoral elections of 2017, 1 woman and 63

68 Rating of Inter-Parliamentary Union per the participation of women in national Parliaments is available at: <https://data.ipu.org/women-ranking?month=10&year=2022>

69 Georgian Organic Law On Political Associations of Citizens On introducing a change to the Organic Law of Georgia, Article 27, available at <https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/1542609?publication=0>

70 Georgian Organic Law on introducing the change to the Electoral Code of Georgia, Article 203, Para 1, available at: <https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/28324?publication=37>

71 Georgian Organic Law On introducing a change to the Organic Law of Georgia, Article 39, available at: <https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/4915093?publication=0>

72 General Recommendation 23 by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), available at <https://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/recommendations/recomm.htm>

73 Georgian Organic Law On introducing a change to the Electoral Code of Georgia, Article 203, Para 2-3, available at: <https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/4915093?publication=0>

74 Georgian Organic Law On introducing a change to the Electoral Code of Georgia, Article 203, Para 7, available at: <https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/4915093?publication=0> It shall be noted that the constitutional court found unconstitutional the content of the electoral regulation, requiring including one man in each set of four people of the list: Decision N23/3/1526 dated September 25, 2020 by the Constitutional Court of Georgia on the case: "Non-Commercial (Non-Entrepreneurial) Political Union of Citizens „New Political Center”, Herman Sabo, Zurab Girchi Japaridze and Ana Chikovani v. Parliament of Georgia", II-38

75 National Statistics Office, available at: <http://gender.geostat.ge/gender/index.php?action=Influence%20and%20Power>

men were elected, whereas the mayoral elections of 2021 resulted in the election of 3 women and 61 men. In spite of the changes introduced, women are still not sufficiently involved in the political decision-making process at the local level.

The low representation of women in the executive government is also evident. The Head of State – the President of Georgia is a woman⁷⁶, whilst Prime Minister, the Head of Government, is a man. All deputies to the Prime Minister are men and 10 ministers out of 12 are men. As for the deputy ministers, there are only twelve women among 46 deputy ministers.

According to the statistics of the Civil Service Bureau, in 2019, 20908 men and 4608 women were employed as public officers at the ministries and the office of the state minister, whereas the total number of those employed at the public sector included 30.5% of women.⁷⁷ Gender-based distribution of heads and deputy heads of public offices should be noted as well: 85.2% of the heads of public offices are men and 14.8% are women, while 18.4% of deputy heads are women and 81.6% – men. The causes of such gender gap might be gender-based stereotypes that prevent women from occupying high-ranking positions. The research “Manager Women in Public Offices of Georgia”, conducted by the Civil Service Bureau in 2021, identified that sex, to a certain extent, establishes different ways of career advancement and because of some stereotypes in the society, more women encounter invisible barriers of so-called “glass ceiling”⁷⁸ in their career path than men⁷⁹.

II.4 Women’s Socio-Economic Rights and the Labor Market from a Gender Perspective

The labor rights in Georgia are protected under article 26⁸⁰ of the Constitution, ensuring freedom of labor, as well as the right to free choice of employment, stipulating that the other labor rights are protected by the Organic Law - Labor Code of Georgia. The Labor Code of Georgia regulates the issues related to employment relations and prohibits discrimination on any grounds of gender, age, ethnicity, social affiliation, sexual orientation, disability, and religion⁸¹.

Labor rights are also protected by the Equal Remuneration Convention №100⁸² and Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention №111⁸³ of the International Labor Organization. Thus, for the implementation of the recommendations issued by the Committee of Experts of the International Labor Organization,

76 The parliamentary elections of 2012 resulted in change of the political power, and the new political authority significantly transformed the authorization of the President, in particular, the rights of the President diminished amid institutional strengthening of the Prime Minister.

77 Employment statistics in public office 2020, Civil Service Bureau, available at: <http://www.csb.gov.ge/>

78 “Glass ceiling” - barrier which prevents women from being as successful at work as their male colleagues. These invisible obstacles are conditioned by traditions and stereotypes, and asymmetrical distribution of household responsibilities between women and men, lack of support from management, homosocial nature of existing employment relations, etc. - dictionary-reference in social sciences - <http://dictionary.css.ge/content/glass-ceiling>

79 Manager Women in Public Offices of Georgia, Study Report 2021; authors: Mariam Bozhadze, Ana Koberidze, p. 16, available at: <http://www.csb.gov.ge/media/3210/87978.pdf>

80 Article 26 of the Constitution of Georgia, available at: <https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/30346?publication=36>

81 Article 2 of the Labor Code of Georgia, available at: <https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/1155567?publication=21>

82 Equal Remuneration Convention №100 of the International Labor Organization is available at: https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_Ilo_Code:C100

83 111th Convention of the International Labor Organization is available at: https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_Ilo_Code:C111

and commitments within the Association Agreement with the EU⁸⁴, the amendments introduced to the Labor Code of Georgia⁸⁵ since 2020, have determined the obligation of the employer to ensure equal remuneration of female and male employees for equal work performed. It shall be noted that the law on Remuneration in Public Institutions has been enacted in Georgia since 2017, ensuring equal pay in the civil service, with consideration of the post/position responsibilities.⁸⁶

Equal employment opportunities, equal remuneration and prevention of sexual harassment in the workplace are also envisaged within the National Strategy for the Protection of Human Rights (2022-2030)⁸⁷.

Despite available institutional and legislative frameworks, the studies⁸⁸ show that the economic participation rate of women is quite low and existing inequality between the salaries of women and men is a significant issue throughout the country.

According to the National Statistics Office of Georgia, labor force participation rate for the last 10 years was on average 64.23% for men, and 43.86% for women, indicating presence of significant gender inequality on the labor market.⁸⁹ By 2019, only 36.2% of women were employed, whereas the same indicator for men was 50.1%. As for the period of the pandemic, in 2020, only 33.9% of women, and 49.5% of men were employed.⁹⁰

Per gender-based employment rate, that gap has become particularly evident in the course of the last three years – during the pandemic. In this context, the decline in employment was quite obvious in case of women (by 2.3 %), while the same rate for men fell by 0.6% only. The employment rate of men compared to women is high in all age groups, especially in the age group of 25-34, in which the employment rate for women amounts to 42.3%, and 62% for men (resulting in 19.7% gap). Such results might be caused by reproductive function of women and non-reimbursable labor/commitments⁹¹.

There is also a huge gap between married, secondary school-educated women and men. The employment rate for the married women or those having a partner amounts to 38.7%, while the same rate for men is 56.5%. The rate is defined at 24.1% for the secondary school-educated women and at 47.2% for men⁹².

84 EU Directive 2000/78/EC on equal treatment in employment and occupation; EU Directives 2006/54/EC and 79/7/EEC on equal treatment of men and women in matters of employment and occupation, available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2000/78/oj>

85 Georgian Organic Law on introducing a change to the Labor Code of Georgia, Article 4, Para 4. available at: <https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/5003141?publication=0#DOCUMENT:1> ;

86 Georgian Law On Remuneration in Public Institutions, Article 3, available at: <https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/3971683?publication=20>

87 The National Strategy of Georgia for Protection of Human Rights for 2022-2030 p. 26, available at: <https://info.parliament.ge/file/1/BillReviewContent/304603>

88 Gender-based Wage Gap in Georgia - 2022 (ILO), author: Gilf Arnbjörson , available at: https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---europe/---ro-geneva/---sro-moscow/documents/publication/wcms_842469.pdf

89 Women and a Men in Georgia, Statistic Publication 2020, National Statistics Office of Georgia, available at: <https://www.geostat.ge/media/38262/%E1%83%A5%E1%83%90%E1%83%9A%E1%83%98-%E1%83%93%E1%83%90-%E1%83%99%E1%83%90%E1%83%90%E1%83%AA%E1%83%98,-2020.pdf>

90 Women and a Men in Georgia, Statistic Publication 2021, National Statistics Office of Georgia, available at: <https://www.geostat.ge/media/41854/%E1%83%A5%E1%83%90%E1%83%9A%E1%83%98-%E1%83%93%E1%83%90-%E1%83%99%E1%83%90%E1%83%AA%E1%83%98-%E1%83%A1%E1%83%90%E1%83%A5%E1%83%90%E1%83%A0%E1%83%97%E1%83%95%E1%83%94%E1%83%9A%E1%83%9D%E1%83%A8%E1%83%98,-2021.pdf>

91 Gender Equality Profile throughout the country for 2021, UN Women, available at: <https://georgia.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2022-04/Country%20Gender%20Equality%20Profile%20GEO.pdf>

92 Ibid

As for the pay gap, general data show that correlation of average monthly salary, designated in the country for women (952.2) and for men (1407.7), amounts to 67.6%, and a woman's salary is by 32.3% lower than that of a man⁹³, which is significant, considering approximately 20%-gap between the salaries throughout the world.⁹⁴

It should be noted that due to the gender-based pay gap, in 2018, the Committee on the Application of Standards of the International Labor Organization reviewed Georgia and developed recommendations for elimination of existing inequality.⁹⁵ In particular, the Committee called upon the Government to ensure that national legislation commits to the principle of "equal remuneration for men and women for work of equal value" in consultation with the social partners; take steps to raise awareness among workers, employers of the rights envisaged by effective legislation; implement effective mechanisms to ensure that the principles of equal remuneration are complied with and continue to provide gender-disaggregated data on labor market participation and remuneration⁹⁶.

II.4.1 Women's Economic Empowerment

The rate of businesswomen in Georgia amounted to 29.06% in 2018⁹⁷, with 29.1 % in 2019 and 29.7% in 2020; The same data for men are as follows: 51.6% in 2018, 55.5% in 2019 and 59.1% in 2020. The main sector of employment is agriculture for both women and men, although gender-based segregation is high beyond that field. In particular, women basically work in sectors of wholesale and retail trade, education and healthcare, whereas men work in industry, transport and communication, as well as in public administration. Besides, women mainly work as household helpers rather than as employers or employees.⁹⁸

II.4.2 Women's Participation in State Programs

The Government of Georgia acknowledges the rights, knowledge and potential of women in small and medium enterprises, as well as unequal accessibility of women and men to business opportunities, including finances⁹⁹ and determines the economic empowerment of women by assisting development of their entrepreneurial potential, as one of the priorities of the **strategy of small and medium enterprises (SME)**. For the achievement of the established objective, the strategy mainly determines popularization of women's empowerment principles (WEPs), encouragement of their participation in the state programs, enhancement of digital skills of women and improvement of gender-based statistics¹⁰⁰.

93 Women and Men in Georgia, Statistical Publication 2021, National Statistics Office of Georgia, p. 78, available at: https://www.geostat.ge/media/41854/%E1%83%A5%E1%83%90%E1%83%9A%E1%83%98-%E1%83%93%E1%83%90-%E1%83%99%E1%83%90%E1%83%AA%E1%83%98-%E1%83%A1%E1%83%90%E1%83%A5%E1%83%90%E1%83%A0%E1%83%97%E1%83%95%E1%83%94%E1%83%9A%E1%83%9D%E1%83%A8%E1%83%98_2021.pdf

94 Gender-based wage gap in Georgia 2022 (ILO), Author: Gilf Arnbiorsen, available at: https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---europe/---ro-geneva/---sro-moscow/documents/publication/wcms_842469.pdf

95 The conclusions developed by the Standards Committee for Georgia within International Labor Conference in 2018, available at: https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:13100:0::NO::P13100_COMMENT_ID:3957950

96 The conclusions developed by the Standards Committee for Georgia within International Labor Conference in 2018, available at: https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:13100:0::NO::P13100_COMMENT_ID:3957950

97 Gender-based data for 2021 by National Statistics Office of Georgia, available at: http://pc-axis.geostat.ge/PXweb/pXweb/ka/Database/Database__Gender%20Statistics__Business%20Statistics/03.px?rxid=e12558d3-1382-410a-b1ee-75e79574c401

98 Gender Equality Profile of the Country 2021, UN Women, available at: <https://georgia.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2022-04/Country%20Gender%20Equality%20Profile%20GEO.pdf>

99 SME Development Strategy of Georgia (2021-2025). Priority 6, available at: <http://www.economy.ge/?page=ecopolitic&s=45>

100 SME Development Strategy of Georgia (2021-2025). Task 6.1-6.4, available at: <http://www.economy.ge/?page=ecopolitic&s=45>

Since 2014, **LEPL Enterprise Georgia** has been offering grants to either new or existing beneficiaries within the most important direction “Micro and Small Business Support Program” ensuring equal opportunities to receive grants in terms of gender. Participation share of a new beneficiary in the program should be at least 20% of co-funding, whereas the participation share for the existing beneficiary of the program shall be at least 50% of co-funding¹⁰¹. Concerning the gender aspect, public information provided by Enterprise Georgia indicates that between 2015 and 2022, 11411 beneficiaries, 42% of whom are women, have been funded within “Micro and Small Business Support Program”, which is probably due to the quota effective within the program ensuring directing of at least 40% of the funded projects to women entrepreneurs¹⁰².

As for the projects supporting agriculture, in 2013, the law on agricultural cooperatives was adopted, aiming at strengthening small resource farmers, and the first cooperative was registered in 2014. To date, 752 cooperatives of agricultural status are registered in total, consisting of 7776 shareholders, 24% of whom are women. Out of the mentioned number, only 6% of women are Heads of Cooperatives¹⁰³ and 15% of the total number of cooperatives are led by women. There are 59 cooperatives, consisting of women only. Thus, activity of women in the component of cooperatives is low and managerial positions are occupied by a very small number of women.

From 2015 to date, 21% of 909 founders of the projects, funded by LEPL Georgia’s Innovation and Technology Agency, have been women. Those projects included the co-funding grants amounting to GEL 100 000, innovative co-funding grants in the amount of GEL 650 000, “Integrated Development Program for Pilot Regions”, and the small grants program¹⁰⁴.

Based on the above-mentioned, it is clear that participation of women in high-tech projects is low, compared with the participation in traditional sectors of SME programs, indicating a priority of increasing women’s involvement in some state projects, on the one hand, and the lack of digital skills and technical knowledge among women, on the other hand.

Moreover, according to the Thematic Research Report of the Gender Equality Council of the Parliament of Georgia¹⁰⁵ beginner women entrepreneurs (startupper) have neither access to financial resources nor inherited real estate for ensuring loans to commence entrepreneurial activities. They spend most of their time on uncompensated household activities, and, despite availability of information on state programs, they have neither desire nor opportunities to be engaged in entrepreneurial activities. In this context, statistical data throughout the country on gender-based testamentary and legal succession would be interesting, although the Notary Chamber does not process gender-based data on the number of testamentary and legal heirs, in spite of the significance of such data¹⁰⁶.

101 Parliamentary Research on women’s participation in state programs, 2019, Parliament of Georgia. Author: Ana Diakonidze, available at: <https://info.parliament.ge/file/1/BillReviewContent/223862>

102 Source: Letter № EG-3.1/830 27/09/2022 by “Enterprise Georgia”

103 Source: Letter N 9193/01 9193 28/09/2022 by Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture

104 Source: Letter № 02/409 6/10/2022 by Innovation and Technology Agency

105 Parliamentary Research on women’s participation in state programs, 2019, Parliament of Georgia. Author: Ana Diakonidze, available at <https://info.parliament.ge/file/1/BillReviewContent/223862>

106 For evaluating the issue, we addressed to the Notary Chamber, although the latter notified us that gender-based statistical data on the issued certificates of inheritance are not collected.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

To reduce and prevent the level of violence against women, it is important to:

- Strengthen information campaigns for raising awareness of women of the available services for the prevention of violence against women and domestic violence, including referring potential victims to shelters designated for victims of violence by employees of law-enforcement agencies.
- Extend the period of staying at shelters for victims of violence and increase the limit for beneficiaries.
- Continue awareness-raising activities on violence against women for employees of law-enforcement agencies in order to prevent femicide and discriminative inactivity by law-enforcement agencies with regard to reports of domestic violence.

To prevent sexual harassment in the workplace, it is important to:

- Introduce internal mechanisms for the prevention of and response to sexual harassment at public institutions, and ensure regular and mandatory training on sexual harassment in the workplace, as well as on existing response mechanisms.
- Ensure confidential form of reporting at all public institutions.
- Conduct awareness-raising campaigns on a regular basis to encourage reporting by the victims.

To improve participation of women in decision-making, it is important to:

- Carry out measures required for empowering women. In this context, the role of educational institutions and civil society organizations is important. It is also important to continue activities focused on gender equality and empowerment of women at the local as well as the national level.
- In the context of increasing representation of women in political positions, it is desirable to establish the mechanism of assignment of quotas as a temporary norm to encourage participation.

To enhance economic opportunities of women, it is important to:

- Organize more information campaigns aimed at raising awareness of the existing state economic programs and motivating potential women applicants;
- Focus on the directions that involve more women within the existing state economic programs;
- Establish special pilot grant programs exclusively focused on supporting women entrepreneurs and their economic empowerment;

- Continue fulfilment of commitments undertaken within the International Labor Organization, and implementation of recommendations of the Committee of Experts for elimination of wage inequality in the country.