



# PERFORMANCE EVALUATION OF THE GENDER EQUALITY COUNCIL

(1 JUNE 2022 – 30 JUNE 2023)



TRANSPARENCY  
INTERNATIONAL  
GEORGIA

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# INTRODUCTION

The report developed by Transparency International Georgia within the framework of the parliamentary monitoring project evaluates the performance of the Gender Equality Council (hereafter – the Council) in the Parliament of 10<sup>th</sup> Convocation in a period between 1 June 2022 and 30 June 2023 (hereafter – the reporting period).

The report examines and evaluates the activities of the Council in the following directions:

- Gender analysis of legislation;
- Work on new legislative initiatives;
- Oversight and monitoring of the gender-related activities of accountable bodies;
- The Council’s response to high-profile cases;
- Received and reviewed statements by the Council.

The report is based on the FOIAs requested from the Parliament, as well as information available on the website of the Parliament and monitoring conducted by our organization.

## CHAPTER 1. KEY FINDINGS

One of the [12 recommendations](#) proposed by the European Union for granting Georgia a candidate status is related to enhancing gender equality. According to recommendation 9, Georgia shall notably consolidate efforts to enhance gender equality and fight violence against women. To fulfill the recommendation, the legislative amendments were implemented with the involvement of the Gender Equality Council. For advancing gender equality, it is crucial that the Georgian legislation is harmonized with the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (the Istanbul Convention). The Council should fully exercise its authority in shaping gender equality policies, participating in the legislative process and carrying out its oversight powers.

**The following positive trends were identified in the performance of the Parliament during the reporting period:**

The Parliament [institutionalized the Gender Impact Analysis \(GIA\)](#). The gender impact assessment has to be embodied in an explanatory note of the bill.

- **The mandatory gender quota rule was extended** – The gender quota rule will be valid until October 2032 as a result of the amendments to the Election Code. According to the quota rule, at least 1 out of every 3 candidates on the party list must be a woman. If a term of office of a female MP is terminated, she will be replaced by the next female member of the party list;
- The Parliament adopted **“the State Concept of Gender Equality”** and **“the State Concept on the Economic Empowerment of Women”**.

## Challenges regarding gender equality

- The Gender Equality Council's oversight of executive authorities is weak. The Government fails to submit reports to the Council within the specified timeframe. After hearing reports, the Council does not issue recommendations.

The consideration of the legislative [package](#) coordinated and initiated by the Council is suspended in the Parliament;

- The members often do not attend sessions of the Council;
- The Council's Action Plan lacks timely and effective implementation of ambitious commitments, including the initiation of substantial legislative changes aligned with international obligations.
- The timelines and indicators defined in the Action Plan for the Council's activities are very broad.
- The Council does not monitor the implementation of the recommendations issued by the thematic inquiry group in a timely and efficient manner;
- The Council has not established a consulting group composed of representatives of local and international organizations, which would ensure intensive engagement of experts in the activities of the Council;
- The Council still lacks human resources to adequately perform its duties.

## CHAPTER 2. MANDATE AND COMPOSITION OF THE GENDER EQUALITY COUNCIL AND PARTICIPATION OF MEMBERS IN THE COUNCIL'S SESSIONS

The Gender Equality Council is the permanent body in the parliament that aims to develop principal directions of state policy on gender equality. The Council has **26** members.<sup>1</sup>

### Functions of the Council



Facilitation to outline the primary directions of state policy on gender-related issues by the Parliament



Conduct gender analysis of the Georgian legislation and draft proposals for the elimination of gender inequality in the legal framework



Assessment of legislative initiatives through the prism of gender equality



Development and implementation of the system of monitoring and assessment of measures, undertaken to ensure gender equality, development of relevant recommendations



Monitoring the government's work on the issues related to gender equality



Invitation of the representatives of the ministries and agencies to the Parliament and collection of information from them



Hearing the report of the Interagency Commission on Gender Equality, Violence against Women and Domestic Violence



Oversight of implementation of national action plans on women's rights and gender equality

<sup>1</sup> The number and composition of the members of the Council is approved by the Chairperson of the Parliament. The composition of the Council is determined by the Chairman of the Parliament based on preliminary consultations with the parliamentary factions.

Members of the Gender Equality Council:



**NINO TSILOSANI**  
Chairperson of the Council  
(Majority)



**AKUBARDIA TEONA**  
(Opposition)



**BITADZE MAIA**  
(Majority)



**BERADZE RAMINA**  
(Majority)



**BUCHUKURI ANA**  
(Opposition)



**BOCHORISHVILI MAKHA**  
(Majority)



**ZAVRADASHVILI IRMA**  
(Majority)



**DEKANOIDZE KHATIA**  
(Opposition)



**INJIA PRIDON**  
(Opposition)



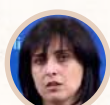
**TURAZASHVILI KETEVAN**  
(Opposition)



**KVITSIANI BAIA**  
(Majority)



**IONATAMISHVILI RATI**  
(Majority)



**KORDZAIA TAMAR**  
(Opposition)



**KIRKITADZE DAVIT**  
(Opposition)



**MEGRELISHVILI VAKHTANG**  
(Opposition)



**LASHKHI MARIAM**  
(Majority)



**SAMNIDZE KHATUNA**  
(Opposition)



**NATSVLISHVILI ANA**  
(Opposition)



**KARUMIDZE LEVAN**  
(Majority)



**SARJVELADZE MIKHEIL**  
(Majority)



**TSAGAREISHVILI GIORGI**  
(Majority)



**KURASBEDIANI SALOME**  
(Majority)



**TSILOSANI KHATIA**  
(Majority)



**TSITLIDZE ANA**  
(Opposition)



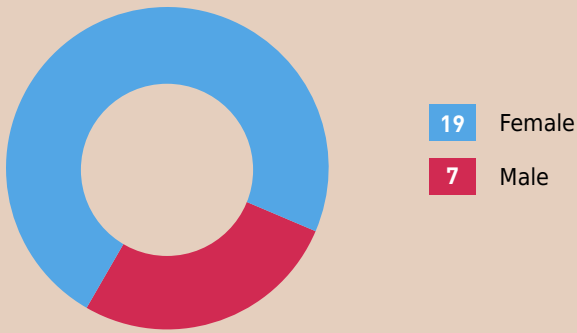
**TSITSAVA GENRIETA**  
(Majority)



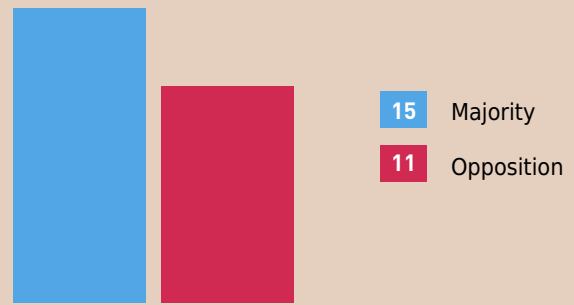
**JINJOLAVA SALOME**  
(Majority)



### Distribution of Council's members by gender



### Political Composition of the Council



### Distribution of the Council's Members by Political Affiliation



The opposition MPs often do not attend the sessions of the Gender Equality Council and therefore, they are not actively engaged in the Council's activities.

The session of June 20, 2022, was attended by:

- Georgian Dream - 12 MPs
- Strategy Aghmashenebeli - 1 MP

The session of July 27, 2022, was attended by:

- Georgian Dream - 7 MPs
- Strategy Aghmashenebeli - 1 MP
- Reform Group - 1 MP
- Lelo - Partnership for Georgia - 1 MP
- Girchi - 1 MP



The session of November 14, 2022, was attended by:

- Georgian Dream - 7 MPs
- Strategy Aghmashenebeli - 1 MP
- Lelo - Partnership for Georgia - 1 MP
- Girchi - 1 MP
- For Georgia - 1 MP
- United National Movement - United Opposition "Strength in Unity" faction - 1 MP

The session of May 10, 2023, was attended by:

- Georgian Dream - 10 MPs
- Girchi - 1 MP
- European Socialists - 1 MP

## Council's activities

On November 16, 2022, presented a report to the Parliament on the situation regarding gender equality in Georgia

The 2022-2024 Action Plan of the Gender Equality Council defines **5 objectives and 45 activities**, of which:

- 20 fulfilled
- 11 partially implemented (ongoing)
- 14 are to be fulfilled

4 sessions were held

235 working meetings in Tbilisi and regions

The Council participated in 107 meetings/conferences/forums

8 citizens submitted applications to the Council

STATISTICAL DATA ON THE COUNCIL'S ACTIVITIES

The Council issued 12 statements

1 thematic inquiry group was established

The thematic inquiry groups issued 81 recommendations

# CHAPTER 4. GENDER ANALYSIS OF LEGISLATION, DRAFTING INITIATIVES AND ADVOCACY

## 4.1 DEVELOPMENT AND MONITORING OF PRINCIPAL DIRECTIONS OF STATE POLICY ON GENDER EQUALITY

The Parliament endorsed the two concepts developed by the Gender Equality Council that are the principal guiding documents for the implementation of the gender policy.

On December 22, 2022, the Parliament approved [the State Concept on Gender Equality](#). The concept constitutes the state's vision for the elimination of all forms of gender-based discrimination and promoting gender equality in civil, political, economic, social and cultural spheres, public and private relations.

For implementation of the concept, the legislative and executive branches of the government should ensure the following within their competencies:

- Implementation of the principle of substantive equality in all state strategies, sector strategies, state budgeting and law-making processes;
- Monitoring, reporting and evaluation of gender equality policies developed and adopted by the government;
- Ensuring the effective functioning of the state institutional mechanisms of gender equality by both the legislative and executive branches of government at the central and local levels;
- Effective monitoring of action plans adopted by the government or other entities.

[Some non-governmental organizations](#) criticized the approved concept for its exclusive focus on equality between women and men, without addressing the equality of other groups. According to their assessment, gender equality implies equality not only based on gender but also on the basis of gender identity.

The State Concept on Women's Economic Empowerment was initiated on 14 December 2022 and was adopted by the Parliament on 23 March 2023. The document, developed with the support of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), seeks to establish a framework for women's economic empowerment. The action plan of the Concept will be integrated into the National Strategy of Human Rights. According to the information provided by the Council, the Administration of the Government has already started working on the strategy.

On April 21, 2023, the Gender Equality Council met with the Deputy Ministers of all ministries to develop an action plan for the internal use of the State Concept of Women's Economic Empowerment. On April 21, 2023, the Gender Equality Council met with the Deputy Ministers of all ministries to develop an action plan for the internal use of the State Concept of Women's Economic Empowerment. The ministries should prioritize the issues of women's economic empowerment based on the action plan.

The State Concept on Women's Economic Empowerment defines the following directions:

- Equal access to economic resources;
- Strengthening gender-sensitive legal framework;

- Improving procurement and employment practices in the public sector;
- Improving employment practices in the private sector;
- Recognizing, reducing and redistributing unpaid and care work;
- Encouraging the formalization of economic activities of women employed in the shadow economy;
- Fight against contradictory social norms.

## 4.2 GENDER ANALYSIS OF LEGISLATION

On December 15, 2022, The Parliament adopted the legislative [initiative](#) on the implementation of Gender Impact Analysis (GIA). The Gender Equality Council worked together with the Human Rights and Civil Integration Committee on the legislative initiative. According to the amendments, it is mandatory to incorporate the gender impact analysis in the explanatory note of a new legislative act as well as in case of a change in the legislative act. Conducting a gender impact analysis on legislative initiatives and involving committees in this process has been a [recommendation](#) of Transparency International Georgia for many years.

## 4.3 COUNCIL'S WORK ON LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVES

To fulfill the 12 recommendations of the European Union, the Council and the Human Rights and Civil Integration Committee jointly led the work process, within the framework of which several initiatives were submitted to the Parliament:

The Parliament approved the [institutionalization](#) of the gender impact analysis.

The [amendments](#) to the Criminal Code on sexual crimes. Adoption of the draft law “On the Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Women and Domestic Violence” was implemented in order to harmonize the norms of the Criminal Code of Georgia with the requirements of the Convention of the Council of Europe and was aimed at an effective fight against violence against women, domestic violence and sexual exploitation of children. This initiative is under consideration.

The Parliament passed [amendments](#) to the Law on Gender Equality which define at the legislative level that the state, in addition to strengthening formal equality, ensures the establishment of substantive equality between women and men and the elimination of inequality.

During the reporting period, the already prepared draft law was not reviewed at the Council sessions. However, the Council worked on the following legislative initiatives:

- With the initiative of the Gender Equality Council and with the support of UN Women, the **issue of revising the status of a single parent** was examined and analyzed. As an outcome of the initiative, the practice and legislation should be improved and a better legal and social environment should be created for single parents. The Council held 3 working meetings in February and May 2023. A package of legislative amendments is planned to be initiated in the fall session of 2023.
- At the session of July 27, 2022, the Council discussed the issue of **maximal approximation of the legislation to the Istanbul Convention** which requires a package of legislative amendments. Emphasis was placed on the **issue of modifying sexual offenses**.

On September 8, 2022, at the initiative of the Gender Equality Council and the Human Rights and Civil Integration Committee, a femicide elimination working group was established for the purpose of systematic examination of the issue. The group held 2 meetings and continues to work. The group will examine issues related to the detection, prevention, and elimination of femicide, including current challenges and opportunities for improving the femicide prevention system. The working group should develop recommendations for revising and improving state policies aimed at reducing femicide. Regulating femicide with a special norm has been a [recommendation](#) of Transparency International Georgia for many years.

## CHAPTER 5. OVERSIGHT

### 5.1 REPORT HEARINGS

The 2022 report of the Inter-agency Commission on Gender Equality, Violence against Women and Domestic Violence was not submitted to the Council during the reporting period.

At the session of November 14, 2022, the Council heard the report of the organization “Equality Movement” on the social and economic needs of the representatives of the LGBTQ+ community.

At an offsite meeting in February 2023, the Council invited organizations representing the LGBTQI+ community, heard their reports and worked with them in planning the future priorities of the Council.

### 5.2 PERFORMANCE OF THEMATIC INQUIRY GROUPS AND MONITORING OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS

During the reporting period, two thematic inquiry groups worked:

1. The thematic inquiry group on [Access to Financial Resources for Women and Girls](#) was established on 31 May 2022. The group issued **35** recommendations to relevant agencies with strict timelines. On 1 May 2023, the group presented an opinion. The lead speaker of the thematic inquiry group was Ana Natsvlishvili. **It was the first precedent that the thematic inquiry group was led by the opposition representative.**
2. On 20 June 2022, the thematic inquiry group on Access to Infrastructure (Road, Transport, Internet, Water) for Women and Girls was established at a session of the Permanent Parliamentary Gender Equality Council. Baia Kvitsiani was designated as a lead speaker of the thematic inquiry group and Nino Tsilosani, Mariam Lashkhi, Khatia Tsilosani, Giorgi Tsagareishvili, Ramina Beradze and Ana Buchukuri as members. The group issued **46** recommendations to relevant agencies with concrete timelines.

**During the reporting period, the Council issued a total of 81 recommendations to the relevant agencies. The monitoring of their implementation is planned to begin in 2024.**

**It is recommended that the monitoring methodology be more adaptable and refined and that the Council conduct periodic assessments to verify the implementation of the provided recommendations.**



## CHAPTER 6. RECEIVED AND REVIEWED STATEMENTS BY THE COUNCIL

During the reporting period, **8 individuals submitted applications** to the Council and in 4 cases, the Council responded accordingly, in particular:

- One appeal was related to the construction of a kindergarten in the municipality and was beyond the competence of the Council and the Council informed the applicant about it;
- The work is underway on 3 issues, one of which is the issue of extending the status of single parents and providing relevant services.

The Council did not provide information on why it did not respond to the remaining 4 applications.

The Council's statements are not published on the official website of the Parliament. During the reporting period, the following 12 statements of the Gender Equality Council were posted on its Facebook page:

06.06.22 - [Solidarity with Khatuna Samnidze](#);

04.06.22 – [On Tbilisi Pride Week](#);

20.07.22 – [About the circulated video that promoted the use of the helpless state of women for sexual purposes](#);

12.08.22 – [About the femicide that happened in Ozurgeti](#);

08.09.22 – [About the establishment of a working group fighting femicide](#);

20.09.22 – [On the role of the media in covering femicide](#);

13.10.22 – [About the tragedy that happened in Vake Park](#)

10.01.23 – [About the case of Khanum Jeiranova](#);

17.03.23 – [About the case of the dead 12-year-old girl found on Petritsi Street](#);

24.04.23 – [About the harmful practice of genital mutilation and the role of the media in the fight against it](#);

08.05.23 – [About possible harassment case in school bus in Vani](#);

30.06.23 – [Regarding the sexual offense committed against a 13-year-old juvenile in Zugdidi](#)

Khatuna Samnidze, an opposition MP and member of the Council, disagreed with the Council's [statement](#) about the sexual offense committed against a 13-year-old juvenile. According to [her](#), the opposition was not involved in the drafting of the statement. The Gender Equality Council of the Parliament noted in a statement that the sexual offense committed against a 13-year-old juvenile in Zugdidi, for which a man under the age of 50 was arrested, is appalling. However, the Council further added that it is *“even more aggravating that the child is pregnant, and the parent did not report it to the law enforcement but took her to Kutaisi for an abortion.”*

# RECOMMENDATIONS

TI Georgia developed recommendations for the Parliament to take into consideration in order to enhance gender equality, strengthen women's rights, and improve the performance of the Gender Equality Council.

Legislative Process:

The [draft laws](#) initiated within the framework of the 12-point plan of the European Union should be continued to be discussed and approved including amendments on sexual crimes against minors;

It is necessary to approximate the definition of sexual crimes, including rape in line with the Istanbul Convention;<sup>2</sup>

Timely development of draft law is crucial to establish a specific provision in the Criminal Code that addresses femicide.

Gender Impact Assessment shall be carried out on prominent initiatives with the engagement of the committees;

- Gender analysis of the budget project should be carried out annually.

Recommendations regarding the performance of **the Council**:

- The Council should strengthen oversight of the government activities related to gender issues, summon responsible persons to sessions, issue relevant recommendations and monitor their implementation;
- MPs must attend the sessions of the Council and exercise the rights and duties assigned by law;
- The responsible persons should follow the liability envisaged by the legislation, and timely submit reports to the Council.
- The Council should effectively and periodically monitor the implementation of the recommendations issued by the thematic inquiry groups;
- The Gender Equality Council's statute shall define the establishment of a consultative group composed of representatives of local and international organizations. The consultative group shall participate in the Council meetings, submit proposals/recommendations, and assist in the effective implementation of its powers;
- Statements of the Council shall be published on the official website of the Parliament;
- In order to operate at full capacity and to conduct a gender analysis of the draft laws along with the committees, it is recommended to strengthen the Council's office with human resources;

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2 See "Administration of Justice on Sexual Violence Crimes against Women in Georgia", Dekanosidze, Chikhladze, Kharatishvili, Council of Europe, 2020, <https://www.coe.int/en/web/tbilisi/-/administration-of-justice-on-sexual-violence-crimes-against-women-in-georgia>