



PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT REPORT OF THE GENDER EQUALITY COUNCIL

(JULY 29, 2018 - JULY 31, 2019)

Research Supervisor

Lika Sajaia

Research Author

Tamar Tatanashvili



This report was prepared with the financial assistance of the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA).

CONTENTS

PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT REPORT OF THE GENDER EQUALITY COUNCIL	1
INTRODUCTION	4
KEY FINDINGS	4
CHAPTER 1. FUNCTIONS AND COMPOSITION OF GENDER EQUALITY COUNCIL	5
CHAPTER 2. ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN BY THE COUNCIL	8
2.1 DEVELOPMENT OF PRINCIPAL DIRECTION OF STATE POLICY WITH REGARD TO GENDER EQUALITY (DEVELOPMENT OF THE CONCEPT, ACTION PLANS AND STRATEGY)	8
2.2 GENDER ANALYSIS OF LEGISLATION, WORKING ON AND ADVOCACY OF INITIATIVES	9
2.2.1 COUNCIL'S WORK ON LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVE	9
2.2.2 GENDER ANALYSIS OF LEGISLATION	12
2.2.3 GENDER ANALYSIS OF STATE BUDGET	14
2.3 EXERCISE OF OVERSIGHT	15
2.3.1 HEARING OF REPORTS	15
2.3.2 WORK OF THE THEMATIC INQUIRY GROUPS	15
CHAPTER 3. AWARENESS-RAISING ACTIVITIES	19
CHAPTER 4. TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY OF THE COUNCIL	20
CHAPTER 5. ASSESSMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS	21

INTRODUCTION

The report conducted by Transparency International - Georgia within the framework of parliamentary monitoring project covers the activities of Gender Equality Council (hereinafter the “Council”) carried out during the reporting period (July 29, 2018 – July 31, 2019).

Gender Equality Council is the standing body of the Parliament, whose activities are of crucial importance for the promotion and enhancement of the process of gender equality in the country.

This report focuses on the assessment of the performance of Gender Equality Council in several directions:

- Supporting the definition of the main direction of state policy
- Gender impact analysis of legislation
- Working on new legislative initiatives
- Overseeing and monitoring the activities of accountable bodies on gender-related issues
- Transparency and providing information to the public on the performance of the Council

The report is based on public information, retrieved from the Parliament, also data published on the official web page of the Parliament and observations of our organization. The report was conducted using normative research method, according to which method the recent amendments to legal framework were studied. Moreover, the report presents the assessments on the performance of the Council of the NGOs that work on gender equality issues and the representative of the Public Defender.¹

KEY FINDINGS

The following **positive trends** were identified in functioning of Gender Equality Council during the reporting period:

- With the active engagement of the Council and the initiative of its members, sexual harassment was defined as an administrative offense.
- The Council strengthened its oversight function. Two thematic research groups were set up, which carried out a problem analysis and drafted recommendations.

The following challenges were identified during the research:

- Analysis of the budget from a gender perspective is still an issue
- Out of 15 committees, only five delivered a gender impact analysis on the legislation²
- The new state concept on gender equality has not been adopted
- The Council’s Action Plan for 2018-2020 has to be improved, for example it doesn’t have a hard deadline for the fulfillment for the defined indicator³

1 Interviews were held with the Partnership for Human Rights and the Public Defender’s Office. Questionnaires were also sent electronically to other organizations working on gender equality issues.

2 In the time period January 2017 - July 2018, the commitment of the Council Action Plan has not been fully fulfilled - instead of five, only two draft laws were analyzed for their gender impact.

3 For example, the second commitment envisages activity 2.3.4 (Activity Number 2.3.3 is repeated twice in the plan) - “Parliament Approves Changes to the Law on Gender Equality”, which does not specify the implementation period. See p.8 of the Gender Equality Action Plan 2018-2020, <https://bit.ly/2WESFZE> .

CHAPTER 1. FUNCTIONS AND COMPOSITION OF GENDER EQUALITY COUNCIL

The Gender Equality Council was set up to ensure the systemic and coordinated work on gender related issues. According to its statute, the primary functions of the Council are as follows:

- Facilitation to definition of the main directions of state policy in gender field by the Parliament of Georgia;
- Conduct of gender analysis of Georgian legislation and drafting of proposals for the elimination of gender inequality in legal framework;
- Provision of expertise of legislative acts submitted within the framework of legislative initiatives, in the light of assessment of gender equality;
- Development and implementation of the system of monitoring and assessment of measures, undertaken with a view to ensuring gender equality, development of relevant recommendations;
- Hearing the report of the Interagency Commission on Gender Equality, Violence against Women and Domestic Violence. ⁴

International and local organizations have provided significant support to the Council in its work related to the drafting of laws and awareness-raising activities.⁵

4 Statute of the Gender Equality Council of the Parliament of Georgia: <https://goo.gl/BjMZyA> .

5 Including NDI, UNDP GGI/USAID, PROLoG/USAID, UN Women, Women's Information Center (WIC)

Chart 1. COUNCIL COMPOSITION ACCORDING TO MEMBERSHIP

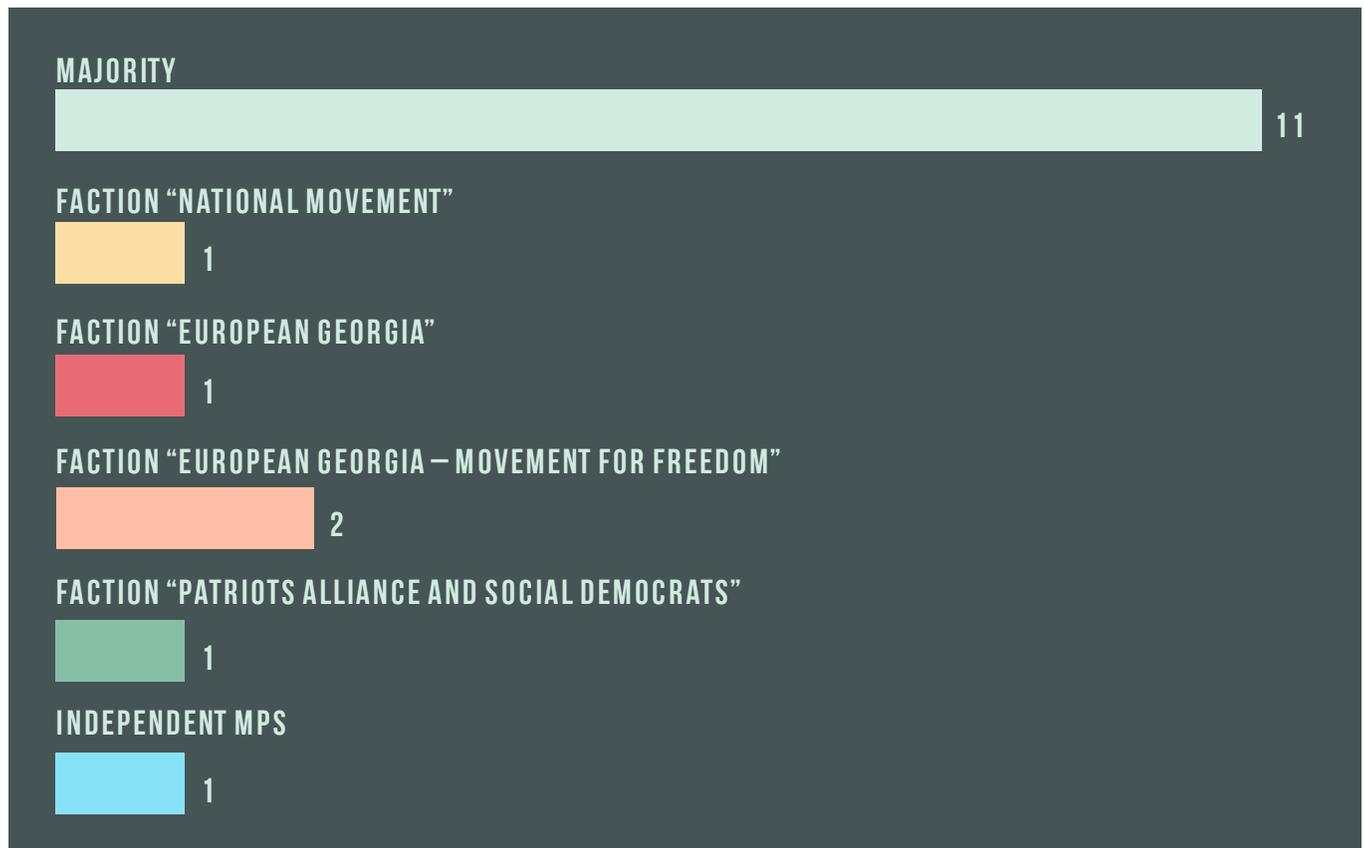


Chart 2. Members of the Council ⁶

⁶ The members and positions in the Council are provided according to the reporting period. Tamar Chugoshvili addressed the Parliamentary Bureau on November 18, 2019 with a [statement](#) of resignation as the Chairperson of the Council and staying as a regular member.

WHO ARE MEMBERS OF GENDER COUNCIL?



TAMAR CHUGOSHVILI – CHAIRPERSON OF THE COUNCIL
Faction “Georgian Dream”



EKA BEVELIA
Independent MP



TINATIN BOKUCHAVA
Faction “National Movement”



KHATUNA GOGORISHVILI
Faction “European Georgia – Movement for Freedom”



NINO GOGVADZE
Faction “Georgian Dream – Conservatives”



RATI IONATAMISHVILI
Faction “Georgian Dream”



SOPIO KILADZE
Faction “Georgian Dream”



ADA MARSHANIA
Faction “Patriots Alliance and Social-Democrats”



GUGULI MAGHRADZE
Faction “Georgian Dream”



ENDZELA MACHVARIANI
Faction “Patriots Alliance and Social-Democrats”



GIORGI TUGUSHI
Faction “European Georgia – Movement for Freedom”



IRINA PRUIDZE
Faction “Georgian Dream”



DIMITRI TSKITISHVILI
Faction “Georgian Dream”



NINO TSILOSANI
Faction “Georgian Dream”



ELENE KHOSHTARIA
Faction “European Georgia”



TAMAR KHULORDAVA
Faction “Georgian Dream”



MARIAM JASHI
Faction “Georgian Dream”

CHAPTER 2. ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN BY THE COUNCIL

The Council assembled 3 times during the reporting period.⁷ The Council worked on new legislative initiatives, including amendments to the Labor Code and the Law on Gender Equality.

In 2019, in accordance with the new Rules of Procedure, a organizational support unit was set up to support the work of the Parliamentary Councils, which united the staff of the Standing Parliamentary Councils, including the Council on Gender Equality. This department employs one staff member for the organizational and technical support of the Gender Equality Council. The respective amendment was also made to the statute of the Council.⁸

The following thematic working groups were set up with the members of the Advisory Board of the Gender Equality Council:

- A consultative group working on a package of amendments to the Labor Code;
- Working Group on the reduction of the pay gap and drafting of a methodology;
- Working Group on the regulation of sexual harassment;

Within the framework of parliamentary oversight, thematic groups have also been set up in parallel to thematic inquiries: “Women’s participation in state economic programs,” “Access to vocational education for women’s economic empowerment”⁹.

2.1 DEVELOPMENT OF PRINCIPAL DIRECTION OF STATE POLICY WITH REGARD TO GENDER EQUALITY (DEVELOPMENT OF THE CONCEPT, ACTION PLANS AND STRATEGY)

Developing and initiating the State Concept on Gender Equality was a commitment under the 2017 and 2018-2020 Action Plans, but this draft has not yet been initiated.

With the technical support of the International Organizations (UN Women), the Council drafted a new State Concept on Gender Equality, which is currently under internal review and has not been adopted.¹⁰

In April 2018, the Council approved the [2018-2020 Action Plan](#). 2018-2020 Action Plan envisages 6 objectives. The novelties are the activities related to the improvement of gender equality state mechanisms¹¹ and institutional strengthening of Gender Equality Council. Similar to previous Plan, the current Action Plan concerns the promotion of adoption of Gender Equality State Concept, also the legislative amendments regarding encouragement of political participation of women, the issues related to sexual harassments, femicide.

7 Parliament of Georgia, Minutes of the Gender Equality Council Meeting, <https://goo.gl/TAs29u>.

8 Statute of the Gender Equality Council of the Parliament of Georgia (18.06.2019, №1/223/19), <https://bit.ly/33hfWDI>

9 For more information on their activities, see the Chapter on Oversight

10 The first concept was developed in 2006; see: The Resolution of the Parliament approving the “State Concept of Gender Equality in Georgia”: <https://bit.ly/34Ujqr4>

11 The 2018-2020 Action Plan envisages gender equality councils with the Supreme Councils of Abkhazia and Adjara Autonomous Republic, municipalities with gender equality councils and civil servants responsible for gender equality, as well as co-operation with female member of the City Councils in municipalities; Establishing a coordination mechanism with the Interagency Commission on Gender Equality, Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, as well as establishing a co-operation mechanism with the Special Department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. See Activity 3.1, 3.2, 3.3: <https://bit.ly/2rAUYBL>

The novelty of the Action Plan is the issue of the pay gap, in particular the Council working on the development of a methodology for the calculation of the pay gap. According to information provided by the expert that was jointly hired by UN Women, the Gender Equality Council, the National Statistical Office, and other interested parties, a report was drafted on the gender pay gap and the and gender inequality on the labor market in Georgia. The report is nearly finalized, and the final document should be available by the end of the year.

2.2 GENDER ANALYSIS OF LEGISLATION, WORKING ON AND ADVOCACY OF INITIATIVES

2.2.1 COUNCIL'S WORK ON LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVE

The Council worked on different legislative amendments during the reporting period, in particular:

- Amendments to the Law on Gender Equality
- Sexual harassment,
- Maternity leave, amendments to the Labor Code
- Amendments to gender quotas

In February 2019, the members¹² of the Gender Equality Council [initiated](#) a package of bills related to the prohibition of sexual harassment. According to the law:

- Definition of sexual harassment as an unwelcome sexual behaviour against an individual, which aims or/and results in his/her degrading and creates intimidating, hostile, humiliating or offensive environment.
- The Public Defender is authorised to apply to the court of law in the capacity of a claimant if a legal person or other entity of private law has not responded to his/her recommendation or has not agreed to this recommendation and there are sufficient evidences proving discrimination.
- Natural and legal persons, also the other entities of private law are obliged to provide all certificates, documents and other materials for inspection to the Public Defender
- Public Defender addresses natural and legal persons, also other entities of private law, with proposals and recommendations, which are required to review them and inform the Public Defender in writing about the outcomes of the review within a period of 20 days.
- The deadline for applying to the court has been increased, in particular a lawsuit can be filed within a year instead of three months after a person has heard or should have heard of circumstances that he/she considers to have elements of discrimination.
- The concept of sexual harassment in the public sphere was defined in the Administrative Code and administrative penalties were established for its violation.

¹² Members of the Parliament: Tamar Chugoshvili, Tamar Khulordava, Dimitri Tskitishvili, Rati Ionatamashvili, Guguli Maghradze, Endzela Machavariani, Giorgi Tugushi.

Sexual harassment is regulated by international agreements.¹³ The issue of sexual harassment has repeatedly been debated in the 9th convocation of the Parliament. The implementation of these amendments was one of the activities carried out by the Gender Equality Council.

The adopted law was discussed by the Council at its session on May 23, 2019.

More specifically, during the reporting period, the Council worked on the following legislative initiatives:

- **Amendments to the Law on Gender Equality**

According to the information received, internal consultations are underway on legislative amendments to the **Law on Gender Equality**, which was prepared by an expert commissioned by the UN Women Council.

- **Amendments to Maternity Leave and Labor Code**

A package of legislative amendments on **maternity leave** has been prepared. A new model of maternity leave has been developed, where the “parental” and “paternal” leaves are stipulated. Amendments to the Labor Code have also been prepared to enhance the economic empowerment of women. The Council deliberated on these issues at its session on October 2, 2018.

- **Amendments to Gender Quotas**

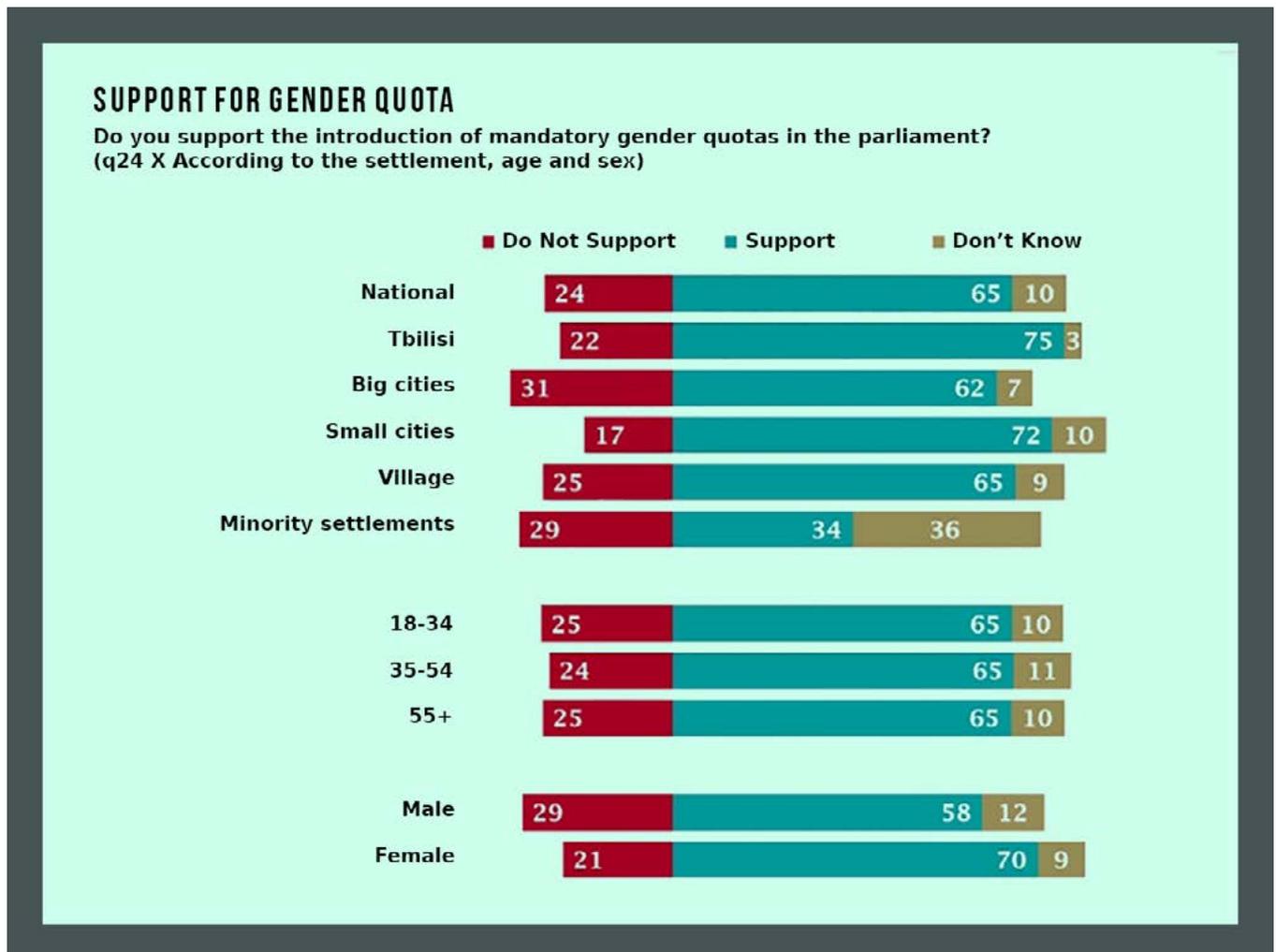
During the reporting period, a package of legislative amendments related to **gender quotas** was prepared. The Council discussed this at its session on January 17-18, 2019. The issue of gender quotas is a widely discussed subject of debate.

It is noteworthy that, according to a July 2019 opinion poll¹⁴, the majority of respondents support the introduction of gender quotas.

13 The EU directive defines the notion of sexual harassment as an unwanted, sexual, verbal or non-verbal act aimed at or causing derogation, or creating a particularly hostile, humiliating, abusive, or violent environment. See: Directive 2006/54/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council <https://goo.gl/8qz2Hq>.

14 The NDI poll was carried out on July 13-29, 2019, based on a representative selection of 2,131 face-to-face interviews across Georgia between the Georgian, Armenian and Azerbaijani adult population of the country (excluding occupied territories). The average margin of error for the survey was +/- 1.7 percent. <https://bit.ly/329te3y>

Chart 3. Public Opinion Poll Results on Gender Quotas



All three of the initiatives are in the drafting process and have not yet been presented to the Parliament.

• **Activities Related to Femicide**

The Council’s 2018-2020 Action Plan envisages a number of activities related to the creation and improvement of the legislative framework with regard to femicide. Consultations are planned in in this regard until 2020¹⁵. According to the information provided, Dimitri Tskitishvili, a member of the Council, participated in an international conference on “Monitoring Femicide Cases for Prevention,” which was attended by the Public Defender and the Chair of the Inter-Agency Commission on Gender Equality, Violence against Women and Domestic Violence. The member of the Council spoke about the complexity of the topic of femicide, emphasizing the importance of national preventive mechanisms. During the reporting period, no other activity was undertaken in this regard.

The 2020 Plan also envisages the support for awareness-raising of persons working on femicide cases (investigations, trials, prosecutions, legal aid). The creation of courses and guidelines are planned in the framework of the awareness-raising activities.¹⁶

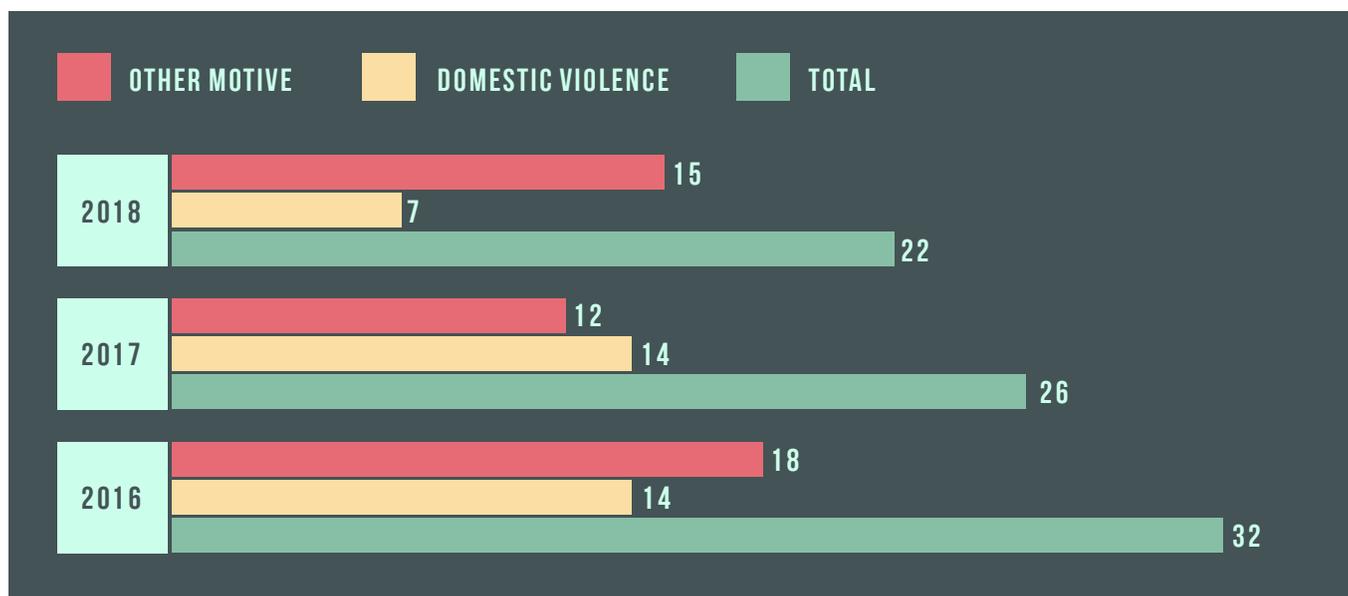
The recent rise in the number of murders of women has once again highlighted the need

15 Gender Equality Council Action Plan 2018-2020, Activity 2.1, Task 2.1.2: <https://bit.ly/32efsfZ> .

16 Gender Equality Council Action Plan 2018-2020, Activity 5.5: <https://bit.ly/32efsfZ> .

for appropriate measures in the field of **femicide**¹⁷, violence against women and domestic violence. According to a report released by the Public Defender on March 19, 2019, despite the steps taken to prevent violence against women and domestic violence, the high number of gender-based killings of women, femicide, remains a problem to date.¹⁸

Chart 4. Statistics on Female Homicide ¹⁹



2.2.2 GENDER ANALYSIS OF LEGISLATION

One of the objectives of the 2018-2020 Action Plan is to institutionalize the Gender Impact Analysis (GIA) methodology in the Parliament. The following activities are envisaged in this regard:

¹⁷ Femicide is the murder on the basis of the female gender, or the killing of a woman whose motive or context is related to gender-based violence, discrimination, or the subordinate role of a woman, expressed by a desire for a woman’s rights, a superior status, a woman’s proprietary attitude, her behavior control , or another gender-related issue. Also leading a woman to suicide due to the aforementioned circumstances. See more details: Public Defender of Georgia, Feminist Monitoring Report: Gender Assassinations for Women in 2017 Criminal Justice Analysis, 2019, p. 6: <https://bit.ly/2qggNPA> .

¹⁸ Public Defender of Georgia, Feminist Monitoring Report, 2017 Criminal Justice Analysis: <https://bit.ly/34uGyKM> , Page 4.

¹⁹ Report of the Public Defender of Georgia on the State of Human Rights and Freedoms in Georgia - 2018, p. 177: <https://bit.ly/36xGLW4> .

Activity	Timeframe	Status	Note
Each Parliamentary committee implemented gender impact analysis for at least one draft law (GIA on 15 draft laws was conducted annually);	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2018 • 2019 • 2020 	Partially fulfilled	
GIA is introduced into a new draft of the explanatory note.	2018	Not fulfilled	
Training course on gender impact analysis is designed at the Training Center of the Parliament;	2018	Not fulfilled	
New GIA trainers are trained on the basis of the pilot program (at least 1 employee from each committee office)	2018-2019	In process	According to the information received, staff members of the committees participated in the GIA training ²⁰ .

The Gender Impact Assessment (GIA) Guidelines were developed in the Parliament on September 25-26, 2018. With the support of international organizations²¹, the Gender Impact Assessment training was held by the initiative of the Gender Equality Council. The purpose of the training was to review the methodology of the GIA and then start the implementation of gender analysis of draft laws.

During the reporting period, five committees worked on the following draft laws:

- Committee on Sector Economy and Economic Policy - Assessing the Gender Impact of Some Aspects of Small Business Taxation and Income Tax
- Human Rights and Civil Integration Committee - Assessing the Gender Impact of Legislative Changes related to Women and Domestic Violence
- Legal Issues Committee - Gender Impact Analysis on the Legislative Package Against Domestic Violence and Gender-Based Crime
- Committee on Healthcare and Social Affairs - Gender Impact Analysis of the draft law on Labor Safety
- Committee on Sport and Youth Issues - Gender Impact Analysis of the Georgian Law on Physical Education and Sport.²²

²⁰ It is not clear from the response whether all committee staff members participated in the training session.

²¹ NDI, UNDP GGI/USAID

²² According to the information provided by the Council, the presentation of the reports is planned for the second half of 2019. According to information received from the committees, the Sectoral Economics and Economic Policy, Human Rights and Civil Integration, Legal Affairs and Sport and Youth Affairs committees are in the process of completion and analysis. See: [Report](#) on the Gender Impact Assessment of Organic Labor Law Organized by the Committee on Health and Social Affairs in collaboration with the Council and supported by the National Democratic Institute (NDI).

2.2.3 GENDER ANALYSIS OF STATE BUDGET

In the light of legislative analysis of crucial importance is the gender analysis of the State Budget. One of the objectives of the 2018-2020 Action Plan is to institutionalize a methodology for gender analysis of the state budget. The following activities are envisaged in this regard:

Activity	Timeframe	Status	Note
Parliamentary Budget Office developed pilot methodology for gender analysis of the budget	2018	Fulfilled ²³	In April 2018, the Budget Office of the Parliament of Georgia presented a report on “State Budget from a Gender Perspective”, in the framework of which the Budget Office developed the Gender Index, on the basis of which budget programs were evaluated.
Budget Office carried out pilot gender analysis of the program annexes of the state budget	2018	Fulfilled	According to the information provided by the Budget Office of the Parliament of Georgia, this commitment has been fulfilled in the framework of the “State Budget from a Gender Perspective” Report.
Gender analysis (pilot) of the Parliament’s budget is performed	2018	Fulfilled	According to the information provided by the Budget Office of the Parliament of Georgia, the legislative work of the Parliament (Program code 01 01) has been discussed in the framework of the “State Budget from a Gender Perspective” Report. This commitment is thus fulfilled.
Gender analysis of the state budget was conducted	2018-2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fulfilled in 2018 • In the process of being fulfilled in 2019 	

23 For details, see: Budget Office, State Budget in Gender. <https://bit.ly/2Xg1KIQ>

2.3 EXERCISE OF OVERSIGHT

The Council has the statutory right to exercise oversight over the activities of reportable bodies and persons.

A welcome development in terms of oversight are the Council's duties as outlined in the new Rules of Procedure, which provides for the establishment of a thematic inquiry group and the conduct of a thematic inquiry on a particular issue.²⁴

2.3.1 HEARING OF REPORTS

According to its statute, some of the primary functions of the Council are as following:

- Oversight of the gender equality related activity of the Government of Georgia;
- If necessary, summon of the representatives of the Ministries and State Agencies to the Parliament and obtainment of the information.²⁵

According to the information received, within the framework of the oversight function, on January 17-18, 2019, the Council heard the 2018 Interagency Commission Activity Report that was presented by Sopo Japaridze, the Chair of the Inter-agency Commission on Gender Equality, Violence against Women and Domestic Violence. The Board had no recommendations in this regard.

Moreover, according to the information provided by the Government in the field of parliamentary oversight of parliamentary and international commitments in the field of gender equality, the Secretariat of the Council has participated in reviewing the report to the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

The Council has plans until the end of 2019 to begin work on monitoring the Government's implementation of the international and local commitments in the field of gender equality.²⁶

2.3.2 WORK OF THE THEMATIC INQUIRY GROUPS

During the reporting period, the Gender Equality Council initiated the creation of two thematic inquiry groups following the introduction of the new rules of procedures. The two themes were as following: **women's participation in state economic programs and access to vocational education for women's economic empowerment.**

24 Draft Rules of Procedure, Article 154: <https://goo.gl/gja84a>

25 Statute of the Standing Parliamentary Council on Gender Equality (18.06.2019 №1/223/19) <https://bit.ly/2CB327M>

26 Activity 6.3 of the 2018-2020 Action Plan, Deadline: 2018-2019. <https://bit.ly/2PLmu9E>

THE COUNCIL HAS THE RIGHT TO ESTABLISH A THEMATIC INQUIRY GROUP TO STUDY AND ISSUE RELEVANT RECOMMENDATIONS ON AN IMPORTANT SUBJECT.



THE THEMATIC INQUIRY GROUP WORKING ON THE SUBJECT DEFINES THE REVIEW PLAN, THE TIMEFRAME AND SPECIALISTS TO BE INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE INQUIRY, AS WELL AS REVIEWS THE INFORMATION PRESENTED BY THE INTERESTED PERSONS TO PREPARE THE PROJECT AND ISSUE THE RELEVANT RECOMMENDATIONS. THE GROUP HAS THE RIGHT TO REQUEST NECESSARY INFORMATION AND EXPLANATIONS FROM ADMINISTRATIVE BODIES.

THE INFORMATION RECEIVED DURING THE INQUIRY IS PUBLISHED ON THE WEBSITE OF



MOREOVER, THE FINDINGS OF THE COUNCIL, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE RULES OF PROCEDURE, SHOULD BE PRESENTED TO THE PARLIAMENTARY BUREAU, WHICH HAS THE POWER TO INTRODUCE IT TO THE AGENDA OF THE PLENARY SESSION.



BASED ON THE FINDINGS, THE PARLIAMENT OR A RESPECTIVE COMMITTEE HAS THE POWER TO ISSUE RECOMMENDATIONS OR CARRY OUT OTHER DUTIES AS ENVISAGED BY THE RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE PARLIAMENT.

THE RECOMMENDATIONS/TASKS ISSUED BY THE COMMITTEE OR THE PARLIAMENT ARE SENT TO THE RESPECTIVE ADMINISTRATIVE BODIES AND ARE UPLOADED ON THE WEBSITE OF THE PARLIAMENT.



► Women’s participation in state economic programs

Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of State Programs on Economic Empowerment from a Gender Perspective • Analysis of the barriers that lead to low engagement of women in these programs • Developing recommendations²⁷.
Timeframe	March 11, 2019 - June 11, 2019
Group composition	Nino Tsilosani (Head and Speaker of the thematic inquiry group), Dimitri Tskitishvili, Irine Pruidze, Nino Gogvadze, Giorgi Tugushi.
General information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The group was presented with 12 applications, of which 8 were summoned for an oral hearing. • Oral hearings were held from April 22 to May 15. • The group held 3 public meetings with female beneficiaries of the programs. The meetings took place in Chokhatauri, Marneuli and Zemo Nikozi

According to the report, there are complex reasons that explain the low participation of women in state economic programs, in particular socio-economic factors that prevent women from accessing programs, as well as problems directly related to program design and implementation methods²⁸.

In this regard, the Council prepared recommendations that can be divided into two main parts:

1. General recommendations for bringing a change in the socio-economic contexts and which is aimed at different stakeholders
2. Specific recommendations that are addressed to institutions that were involved in the thematic inquiry process

The aforementioned findings (report) was [presented](#) to the Parliamentary Bureau on June 12, 2019²⁹.

27 Thematic Research Report of the Gender Equality Council of the Parliament of Georgia, “Women’s Participation in State Economic Programs”, 2019, for details see: <https://bit.ly/2NggzHG> .

28 Thematic Research Report of the Gender Equality Council of the Parliament of Georgia, “Women’s Participation in State Economic Programs”, 2019, for details see: <https://bit.ly/2NggzHG> .

29 Report of the thematic inquiry group “Women’s Participation in State Economic Programs” presented by Tamar Chugoshvili, the Chairperson of the Gender Equality Council of the Parliament of Georgia and the Vice-Speaker of the Parliament, in the framework of the Gender Equality Council. <https://bit.ly/2qhVDAQ>

► Access to vocational education for women’s economic empowerment

Timeframe	March 2019 - May 2019
Group composition	Guguli Maghradze (Head and Speaker of the thematic inquiry group), Mariam Jashi, Sopho Kiladze, Rati Ionatamishvili, Irine Pruidze, Eka Beselia, Dimitri Tskitishvili, Endzela Machavariani, Ada Marshania
General Information	The Group was presented with 74 filled-in surveys, including 37 from municipalities, 18 from vocational colleges, while the rest were from non-governmental and international organizations ³⁰ .

According to the report, there was no need for major legislative changes that would increase access to vocational education for women. According to the report by the thematic inquiry group, the major obstacle for women to access vocational education and training is the lack of vocational education. The following issues were defined as problematic:

- Traveling to the nearest vocational education institution, as well as changing the place of residence for a few months, is an obstacle for many girls and women, as it is uncomfortable for families to live in dormitories, as well as in locations with infrastructure problems;
- Stereotypes in society and low prestige for women in vocational education
- Gender based segregation of jobs, i.e., the existence of “feminine” and “masculine” professions. In this setting, women are assigned to relatively low-paid occupations.³¹

Recommendations from the findings of the thematic inquiry are intended for the relevant agencies of the executive, local government and state legislature. The following recommendations were issued to the agencies within the framework of the thematic inquiry:

- Gender mainstreaming in state policy planning; The agencies are working on post-2020 strategies, at which time the requirement for gender mainstreaming will be significant and timely. Parliament, within its oversight function, has the capacity to carry out a gender impact analysis (GIA) of legislation, government policies and strategies;
- Implementing gender budgeting principles when drafting vocational education budgets.³²

The [report](#) of the thematic inquiry group was presented to the Parliamentary Bureau on September 2, 2019³³.

30 UNDP, MCA Georgia, Women’s Information Center, Young Economists Association and others. Thematic Inquiry Report of the Gender Equality Council of the Parliament of Georgia on “Access to Vocational Education for the Empowerment of Women”, 2019, see: <https://bit.ly/32aTQ4k>

31 Thematic Inquiry Report of the Gender Equality Council of the Parliament of on Georgia on “Access to Vocational Education for Women’s Economic Empowerment”, 2019, See: <https://bit.ly/32aTQ4k>

32 Thematic Inquiry Report of the Gender Equality Council of the Parliament of on Georgia on “Access to Vocational Education for Women’s Economic Empowerment”, 2019, See: <https://bit.ly/32aTQ4k>

33 Thematic Inquiry Report of the Gender Equality Council of the Parliament of Georgia presented by the First Deputy Speaker of Parliament, Tamar Chugoshvili, on “Access to Vocational Education for Women’s Economic Empowerment”. <https://bit.ly/2C9m8Bt>

CHAPTER 3. AWARENESS-RAISING ACTIVITIES

One of the main activities of the Council activities is awareness raising, which are outlined in the action plan. Specifically, the [Action Plan for 2018-2020](#) includes activities on awareness raising of gender equality and women's empowerment:

- Support awareness raising activities in support of introducing mandatory gender quotas;
- Organizing thematic public meetings in the regions of Georgia;
- Support and participate in events dedicated to awareness raising on domestic violence and violence against women;
- Strengthening cooperation and coordination with international networks and organizations working on gender equality and women's rights;
- Support awareness raising of actors working on domestic violence and violence against women and femicide cases (investigation, court, prosecutor's office, legal aid);
- Raising awareness about sexual harassment;
- Actively engage in awareness raising campaigns carried out by partner international organizations, civil society etc.

The following events were heard through the initiative of the Council during the reporting period:

- **Gender Impact Assessment (GIA) Training** - On September 25-26, 2018, the Gender Impact Assessment (GIA) training was organized by the staff of the Parliamentary Committees on the initiative of the Gender Equality Council and technical support of international organizations (NDI, UNDP GGI / USAID). The purpose of the training was to study the methodology of the GIA and then start the implementation of gender analysis of the draft laws.
- **Workshop: "How to Measure and Reduce Gender Pay Gap"** - On October 2, 2018, the Gender Equality Council and UN Women held a workshop on "How to Measure and Reduce Gender Pay Gap," with the aim of sharing best practices in pay gap and planning future activities to decrease it.
- **Workshop on Gender Equality** - On October 15, 2018, the member of the Gender Equality Council, Nino Tsilosani, held an informational meeting with students and academic staff at the Samtskhe-Javakheti State Teaching University, as well as with the local population at the Akhaltsikhe office of the Network of Civic Engagement Centers related to the issues of gender inequality, domestic violence and discrimination.
- **Workshop on Regulation of Sexual Harassment** - On 20 October 2018, with the initiative of the Gender Equality Council and with the technical support of international organizations (PROLoG / USAID, UN Women), a workshop on the regulation of sexual harassment was held, with the aim of discussing the preparatory stages of this issue, discussing the package of legislative changes and sharing of best practice in this regard.
- **Conference: "Women, Labor, Rights"** - On December 11, 2018, the Gender Equality Council and PROLoG / USAID organized a conference on "Women, Labor, Rights," which focused on the main messages of the package of legislative changes related to women's labor rights.

- **Public Presentation of the Draft Law on the Regulation of Sexual Harassment** - On December 19, 2018, the Gender Equality Council initiated a public presentation of the Draft Law on the Regulation of Sexual Harassment, attended by representatives of both government and international and non-governmental organizations.
- **“Parliamentary Control for Women’s Economic Empowerment”** - On March 8, 2019, the Gender Equality Council initiated an event with the technical support of NDI on “Parliamentary Control for Women’s Economic Empowerment”, in the framework of which the Chairperson of the Council discussed the creation of thematic research groups and the launch of the process.
- **“Accessible and inclusive health services for disabled women”** - On April 23, 2019, the Gender Equality Council initiated an event with the technical support of NDI on “Accessible and inclusive health services for disabled women”, where the status, challenges and future plans related to gender equality were discussed.

Members of the Gender Equality Council regularly participate in awareness-raising and women’s empowerment events (meetings, conferences, panel discussions, roundtables, regional meetings). Thematic meetings were held both in Tbilisi and in the regions; On May 15, 2018, an introductory conference was held with all municipal councils. The first national conference was attended by all 64 municipalities.

According to the information provided, the Council regularly participates in conferences held for the gender equality councils of the municipalities. During the reporting period, an annual conference was held for female members of the City Council.

CHAPTER 4. TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY OF THE COUNCIL

It is important for the information about Council activities to be publicly available for interested persons. The minutes of the Council session, together with the reports and information about various activities, are published on the website. Furthermore, according to the information received, 3 quarterly bulletins were published during the reporting period. A social network page will be set up after the Secretariat has been established (early September 2019).

During the reporting period, the Gender Equality Council was presented with 17 applications. According to the information received, a response was given to each application.

The Council published two public statements:

- [On the dissemination of private life recordings](#)³⁴
- [On the alleged sexual harassment of a student by a professor](#)³⁵

It is noteworthy that the Council released a public statement on the private life recordings

34 Statement of the Gender Equality Council of the Parliament of Georgia on the Release of Private Life Recordings, 31 January 2019, <https://bit.ly/32bVr9N>

35 Statement of the Gender Equality Council of the Parliament of Georgia on the Lecturer’s Alleged Sexual Assault on a Student, 28 May 2019. <https://bit.ly/2WEk9Pd>

only after public protest and pressure. In 2019, as it was [the case in previous years](#), there have been numerous cases of attempted blackmail and intimidation of socially active women, on the matter of which the Council has not made any statements.

According to the Parliament's Rules of Procedure, the Permanent Parliamentary Council on Gender Equality submits a report to the Parliament once a year on the state of gender equality in Georgia. The Council presents [annual reports](#)³⁶, which takes place in the beginning of the year within the framework of the Council session. The Council submitted its 2018 performance report on February 1, 2019.³⁷

CHAPTER 5. ASSESSMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

During the reporting period, the Gender Equality Council worked on legislative amendments and its analysis. Moreover, two thematic inquiry groups were set up as part of its oversight function, which should be assessed as a positive step forward. A number of different activities were held for awareness-raising on gender-related issues.

The participants of the research positively assess the quality of the transparency and openness of the Council, its draft concept and the work of the Council in the framework of the thematic inquiry groups.

Based on the obtained information about the existing regulations and operation of the Council it should be said, that certain directions require further improvement. Specifically:

- It is important for a gender analysis of the draft budget to be held on an annual basis;
- Committees should carry out a gender impact analysis of legislation, as envisaged by the Action Plan;
- The Council should strengthen the oversight of the executive government in matters related to gender issues. The Council should actively summon representatives of Ministries and agencies to receive information about their work and the state of fulfillment of the issued recommendations;
- The explanatory note of the draft law should include information on the gender impact of legislation. The Gender Equality Council should actively carry out gender impact analysis of legislative amendments;
- Information about the gender impact analysis of draft law carried out by committees should be periodically published on the official website of the Parliament;
- The recent rise of instances of femicide has once again shown the need for new measures in this area. In regard to femicide, it is important for the Council to become more active in addressing the challenges in this area and to take effective steps within its oversight framework, including the drafting of a draft law that would criminalize femicide with a special provision in the Criminal Code.

36 Activity Reports of the Gender Equality Council: <https://bit.ly/2NcEJ60>

37 Parliament of Georgia, "Presentation of the Gender Equality Council's 2018 Activity Report at the Session of the Inter-Agency Commission on Gender Equality, Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence", 01 February 2019: <https://bit.ly/2Qm1LJV>

- Each indicator in the Action Plan of the Council should have a hard deadline for fulfillment.
- The Council should regularly receive and analyze information on the challenges and issues that municipalities face in regards to legislative amendments. The Council should be more active in releasing public statements, as well as publishing special reports. In particular, the Council should make more statements in regards to the instances of sexist assaults and online blackmailing of female politicians.
- The 2018-2020 Action Plan of the Council should cover the problems of vulnerable groups and other minorities; therefore, it is important for there to be respective awareness-raising activities in this regard.