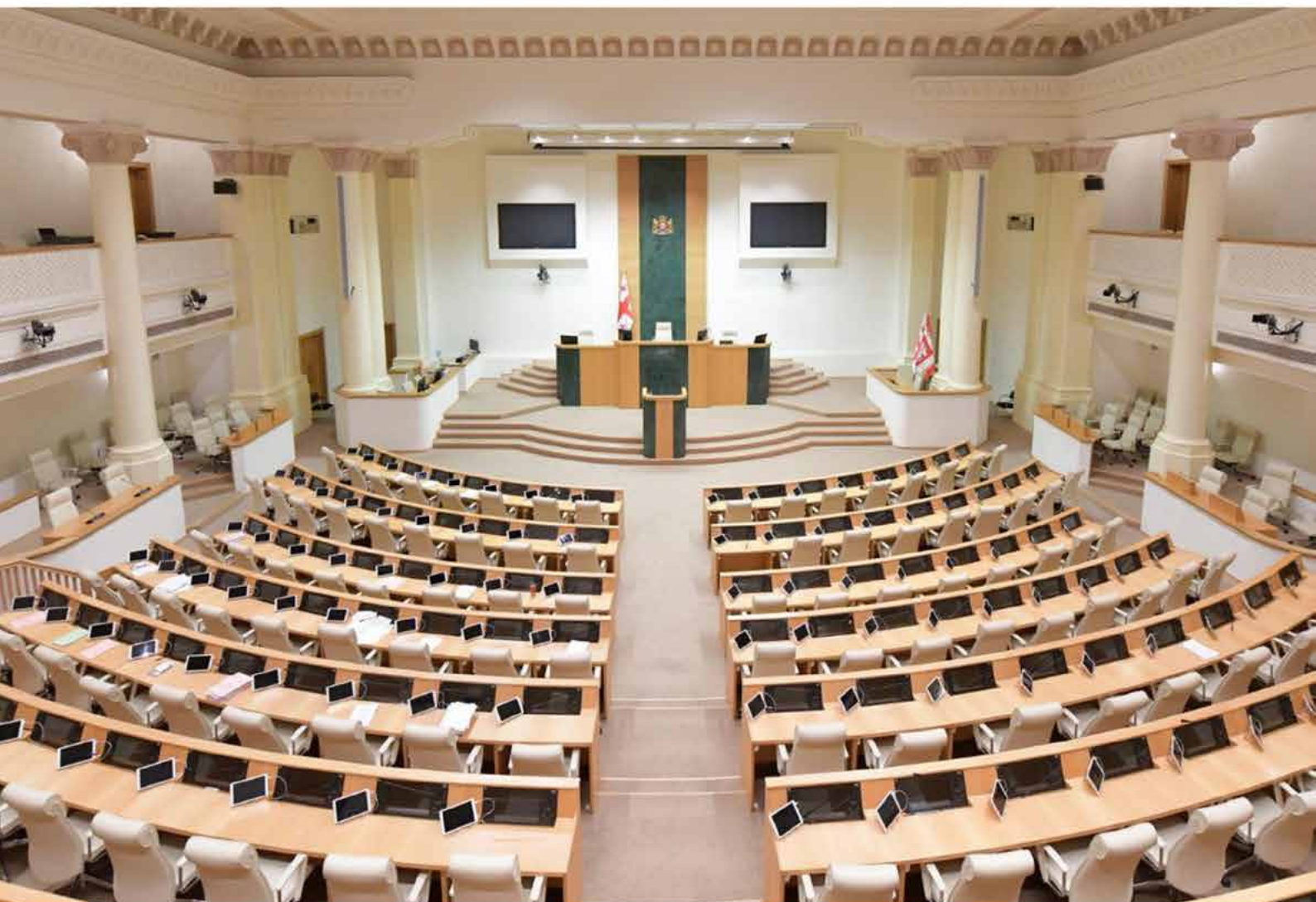




PERFORMANCE OF THE 10TH CONVOCATION OF THE PARLIAMENT ON GENDER EQUALITY

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Legislation on ensuring gender equality and empowering women has significantly deteriorated in the tenth Parliament compared to the previous convocation.

Gender quotas, an essential mechanism for women's involvement in politics, were abolished. The Chairperson of the Gender Equality Council also supported this initiative.

In the legislative body, male MPs repeatedly insulted female MPs and used hate speech against them, to which the Gender Equality Council did not respond appropriately.

INTRODUCTION

The study covers the activities regarding gender equality (carried out by the 10th convocation of the Parliament (reporting period: December 11, 2020 - July 31, 2024). In this framework, the activities carried out by the Parliament and the Permanent Gender Equality Council are analyzed.

The study is based on public information requested from the Parliament, information available on the Parliament's website, and observations of our organization.

CHAPTER 1. MAIN FINDINGS

The undemocratic processes taking place in the 10th Parliament, the ineffective performance of its functions, the deterioration of its transparency, and political polarization also affected the Parliament's activities regarding gender equality,

The activities of the Gender Equality Council were of a formal nature. The Council did not respond to significant challenges, which were related to both the existing problems in the country in terms of women's rights, as well as the use of hate speech against female MPs in the legislative body.

Main activities carried out regarding gender equality

- The Parliament adopted the “State Concept of Gender Equality” and the “State Concept of Women's Economic Empowerment”;
- One of the 12 recommendations issued by the European Union for granting Georgia the status of an EU candidate country concerned the strengthening of gender equality. To implement the recommendation, legislative amendments were made with the involvement of the Gender Equality Council;
- A legislative package was initiated, which envisaged the abolition of “victim status” as a prerequisite for using asylum services;
- A group established by the Council, with the involvement of experts, developed a concept and methodology for integrating Gender Impact Analysis (GIA) into the activities of the Parliament;
- The Council worked on the issue of changing the status of single parents and amendments to the Law “On Gender Equality”.

Challenges

- The gender quota rule, which was an essential mechanism for women's involvement in politics, was abolished;
- The Council has not supervised the executive branch of the government. The Government of Georgia has not submitted reports to the Council within the established deadline;
- The Council's action plan did not envisage ambitious commitments to be implemented effectively in a timely manner, including initiating significant legislative changes based on international obligations. The indicators and deadlines for implementation provided for in the Gender Equality Council's action plan were of a general nature;
- An advisory group consisting of representatives of local and international organizations was not established in the Council, which would ensure the intensive involvement of experts in the Council's activities;
- A gender analysis of the legislation and a gender analysis of the budget have not been carried out.

Recommendations for improving legislation:

- To strengthen gender equality, it is important that Georgian legislation is fully aligned with the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention). It is necessary to align sexual crimes, including the definition of rape, with the Istanbul Convention;
- Amendments to the law on sexual crimes against minors should be continued and supported;
- It is crucial to develop a draft law in a timely manner that will regulate femicide with a special provision in the Criminal Code;
- Gender Impact Analysis (GIA) of important legislation should be carried out with the involvement of committees;
- Gender analysis of draft budgets should be carried out annually.

Recommendations regarding the activities of the Gender Equality Council:

- The Gender Equality Council should fully exercise its powers, both in determining gender equality policy, as well as in engaging in the legislative process and performing its supervisory function;
- The Council, based on its functions, should fulfill its main goal and contribute to the achievement of gender equality in practice, improving legislation, and should effectively respond to critical events and citizens' statements;
- The Council should strengthen supervision of the activities of the executive branch related to gender issues, summon authorized persons to sittings, issue recommendations, and monitor their implementation;
- MPs should attend Council meetings and exercise the rights and duties assigned by law;
- Accountable persons should responsibly fulfill the obligations assigned by law and submit reports to the Council in a timely manner;
- The Council should effectively and periodically monitor the implementation of recommendations issued by thematic study groups;
- The Council's activities should be transparent. The Council's statements should be published on the Parliament's official website.

CHAPTER 2. ASSESSMENT OF LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT REGARDING GENDER EQUALITY

Supported initiatives

→ Abolishment of quotas

The issue of quotas has repeatedly been on the agenda of the 10th convocation of the Parliament. [Amendments](#) adopted in 2023 extended the validity of the “gender quotas” for a period of 4 years. Later, Aleksandre Rakviashvili and Iago Khvichia registered an [initiative](#) to amend the Election Code, which was supported by the MPs of the Parliamentary Majority, including the Chairperson of the Gender Equality Council, Nino Tsilosani.

Quotas were a political [bargaining chip](#). In particular, in exchange for the abolition of quotas, the Georgian Dream received a promise from Girchi that it would support the Georgian Dream’s candidate in the process of electing the CEC chairperson. According to the [opposition MPs](#), the abolition of gender quotas “serves to place wealthy majoritarians in a good position” for the 2024 parliamentary elections. About 80 non-governmental organizations responded to the issues and [stated](#) that the abolition of gender quotas contradicts the will of the people reflected in the Georgian Constitution, violates women’s rights, and hinders the European integration process.

The President of Georgia [vetoed](#) the presented initiative, which was overturned by the Parliament.

It should also be noted that a [draft law](#) was initiated in the parliament (initiators: Iago Khvichia, Herman Sabo, Vakhtang Megrelishvili, Aleksandre Rakviashvili), according to which the term “gender” was removed from the legislative framework, because, according to the initiators, “gender identity does not exist.”

→ Institutionalization of Gender Impact Assessment

The parliament supported the initiative, according to which the initiator of a legislative act must reflect the assessment of the impact of the normative act on the state of gender equality in the explanatory note attached to the draft law.

In our reports, we have repeatedly noted the need to substantiate the impact of a normative act on gender equality.

→ Adoption of Concepts

The parliament supported two concepts developed by the Gender Equality Council, which are the primary guiding documents for the implementation of gender policy.

On December 22, 2022, the parliament supported the [State Concept of Gender Equality](#). The concept is the state’s vision for eliminating all forms of gender-based discrimination and ensuring gender equality in civil, political, economic, social and cultural spheres, in public and private relations.

The approved concept was [criticized](#) by some non-governmental organizations because the concept speaks of equality between women and men, and nothing is said about the equality of other groups. According to their assessment, gender equality implies equality not only based on sex but also based on gender identity.

On March 23, 2023, the parliament supported the [State Concept for Women’s Economic Empowerment](#). The document aims to establish a framework for women’s economic empowerment.

It was in the Parliament, but the 10th Parliament did not adopt legislative amendments regarding sexual crimes.

CHAPTER 3. GENDER IMPACT ANALYSIS (GIA)

On December 14, 2022, the Parliament's Gender Equality Council, as a result of joint work with the Agrarian Issues Committee and the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, and with the support of the EU4Gender Equality Reform Helpdesk project, presented a Gender Impact Assessment Report (GIA) prepared based on the draft law "On the Reduction of Food Losses and Waste and Food Donation".

A Gender Impact Assessment of the "Law on Public Service" was carried out at the joint initiative of the Civil Service Bureau and UN Women. The document aimed to identify gaps in the law in terms of gender equality and to develop recommendations to improve the legislation to promote gender equality and women's empowerment in the public service. However, the document is not public.

CHAPTER 4. SUPERVISION

4.1 HEARING OF REPORTS

The Gender Equality Council does not issue recommendations after hearing the reports submitted to it. The Government of Georgia has not submitted the 2022-2023 reports on Gender Equality, Violence against Women, and Domestic Violence to the Council within the established deadline.

- The Council heard the 2020 report of the Interagency Commission on Gender Equality, Violence against Women and Domestic Violence at its meeting on May 24, 2021, presented by Maka Peradze, Head of the Human Rights Secretariat of the Government Administration.
- At an external working meeting, the Council heard the 2021 report of the Interagency Commission on Gender Equality, Violence against Women, and Domestic Violence, presented by Niko Tatulashvili, Advisor to the Prime Minister on Human Rights.

4.2 ACTIVITIES OF THEMATIC STUDY GROUPS AND MONITORING OF IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS

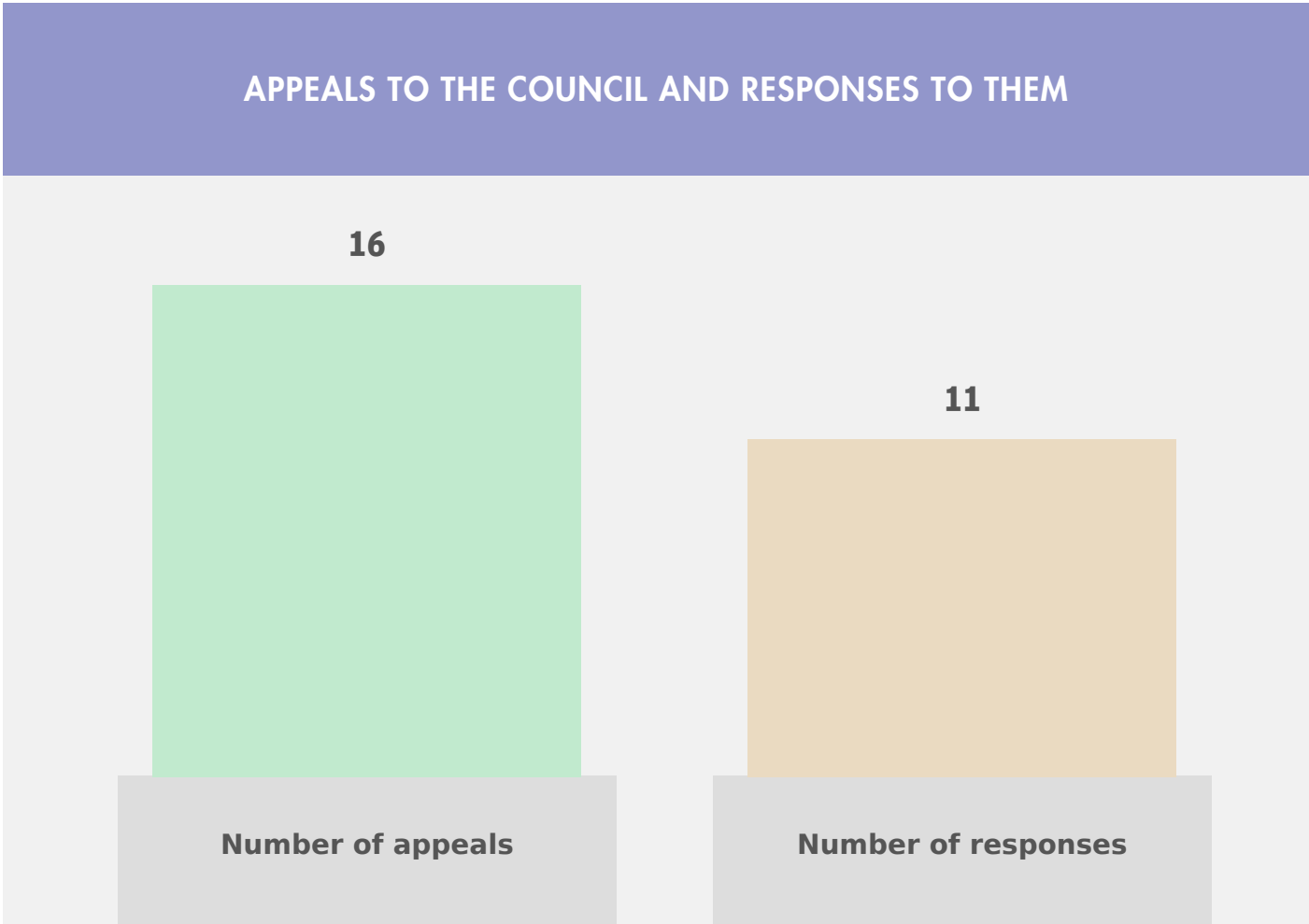
During the reporting period, 5 thematic study groups were established at the initiative of the Council, but the Council did not monitor the implementation of the recommendations issued by the thematic study groups it created in a timely and effective manner. Therefore, the Council's activities were limited to issuing recommendations.

Title	Creation date	
On access to infrastructure (roads, transport, internet, water) for women and girls	2022	Report
Women's access to financial resources	2022	Report
Mainstreaming gender equality issues into government policies	2022	Report
On the prevention and suppression of violence against women and domestic violence	2022	Report
Women's rights in the informal economy and the impact of Covid-19	2021	Report

CHAPTER 5. STATEMENTS CONSIDERED AND ADOPTED BY THE COUNCIL

During the reporting period, the Council published 31 statements. It should be noted that instead of publishing the statements on the official website of the Parliament, they were again published on social networks, as in previous years.

Interested parties addressed the Council 16 times, of which 11 cases were responded to.



The Council considered a written **appeal** from non-governmental organizations and opposition parties regarding the incident that occurred during the plenary session on July 18 between opposition MP Tina Bokuchava and majority member Shalva Papuashvili. The Council Chairperson noted that “the actions of July 18 did not have a gender sign because in that situation if the other party had been a man, the actions taken against him would have been exactly the same.” Nino Tsilosani also noted that “the actions taken are not punishable even by the current legislative standards.” The opposition representatives expressed their opinions, and finally, the Council expressed the following joint position on this issue.

The Council did not respond to significant challenges related to both the problems existing in the country regarding women’s rights, as well as the use of hate speech against female MPs in the legislative body, and did not issue a statement on this.