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ANALYTICAL REPORT

EQUAL WORK, EQUAL PAY:
GEORGIA'S PROGRESS TOWARDS GENDER EQUALITY IN PAY

UN WOMEN

FOR ALL WOMEN AND GIRLS

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EQUAL WORK, EQUAL PAY:

GEORGIA'S PROGRESS TOWARDS GENDER EQUALITY IN PAY

UN Women Georgia Country Office
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1

INTRODUCTION

In Georgia, the gender pay gap remains a significant barrier to women's economic empowerment, limiting women's earnings, economic security, and access to economic opportunities.

In Georgia, the monthly gender pay gap stood at **32 per cent** in 2024[1]. Women earn less than men across all sectors of the economy. The gap is particularly wide in the following sectors:

- Financial and insurance activities: **49.8 per cent**
- Manufacturing: **39.6 per cent**

The gender pay gap in Georgia is not merely a statistical indicator; it is a real problem that directly affects women's economic independence, the well-being of families and the development potential of the country.

Even when employees' education, experience and other job-related and demographic factors are taken into account, the gap in Georgia remains wide. Specifically, in 2024, the adjusted gender pay gap was **19.3 per cent** on a monthly basis and **11.4 per cent** on an hourly basis.[2]

Despite significant improvements in labour legislation and institutional mechanisms, further efforts are still required in Georgia to ensure equal economic opportunities and equal remuneration for women and men.[4]

Equal pay for work of equal value is a principle of social justice and a prerequisite for sustainable economic development. This right is recognized by the ILO Fundamental Convention No. 100 concerning Equal Remuneration for Men and Women Workers for Work of Equal Value,[3] by the EU legislation and by other international instruments.

In 2021, Georgia joined the **Equal Pay International Coalition (EPIC)** and committed to taking effective steps to close the gender pay gap. With EPIC membership, countries are required to meet at least 6 of the Coalition's 11 criteria. Countries are given a four-year period from the date of joining to meet these criteria.

This document assesses Georgia's progress in meeting the EPIC criteria[5] and presents recommendations aimed at reducing the gender pay gap in Georgia and ensuring equal pay for work of equal value.

1. National Statistics Office of Georgia, 2024. This represents the unadjusted monthly gender pay gap, which does not take into account an individual's specific demographic and job-related characteristics.

2. The adjusted gender pay gap takes into account an individual's specific demographic and job-related characteristics.

3. ILO Convention No. 100 on Equal Remuneration for Men and Women Workers for Work of Equal Value, 1951. https://normlex.ilo.org/dyn/nrmlx_en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_INSTRUMENT_ID:312245

4. UN Women. 2021. Country Gender Equality Profile of Georgia. https://georgia.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2021/11/country-gender-equality-profile-of-georgia_georgia

5. Note: The document does not assess Georgia's compliance with EPIC Criterion No. 11 – "Offer in-kind or financial support as contributions to key EPIC outputs." Additional analysis is needed for assessing this criterion, specifically the identification and assessment of financial and non-financial contributions made to support the achievement of EPIC's objectives

2

GEORGIA'S STATUS AGAINST THE EPIC CRITERIA

The Equal Pay International Coalition (EPIC) is a joint initiative of the International Labour Organization (ILO), UN Women and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). The Coalition aims to reduce the gender pay gap globally and ensure equal remuneration for women and men for equal work. EPIC supports its members in developing and implementing targeted and coordinated policies towards these goals.

At present, EPIC brings together 77 members, including the governments of 31 countries, as well as representatives of civil society, academia, the private sector and international organizations. Georgia became an EPIC member in 2021.

At the time Georgia joined the Coalition, it met **three of EPIC's criteria**. In addition, Georgia committed to meeting **four additional criteria**. Georgia's status against the EPIC criteria is presented below.

Table 1:

Georgia's status in meeting the EPIC criteria

EPIC Criteria	Status
Criterion #1: Ratification of ILO Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100) or verifiable steps being taken to ratify it.	***Georgia meets this criterion.***
Criterion #2: Legislation in line with ILO Convention No. 100.	***Georgia does not meet this criterion and has not committed to meeting it.***
Criterion #3: Ratification of the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, 1976 (Article 11d).	***Georgia meets this criterion.***
Criterion #4: Compliance monitoring on equal pay legislation through labour inspection or other effective measures is undertaken.	***Georgia partially meets this criterion and has committed to meeting it.***
Criterion #5: Sex-disaggregated data on wages are collected.	***Georgia meets this criterion.***
Criterion #6: Policies or practices that encourage pay transparency are in place.	***Georgia does not meet this criterion and has committed to meeting it.***
Criterion #7: In countries where minimum wages are set by sector or occupation, minimum wages cover also sectors and occupations where women workers predominate.	***Georgia partially meets this criterion and has not committed to meeting it.***
Criterion #8: National bodies that address equal pay are in place	***Georgia partially meets this criterion and has not committed to meeting it.***
Criterion #9: Laws, policies or measures to facilitate work-family reconciliation or increase the representation of women in companies' boards are in place.	***Georgia partially meets this criterion and has committed to meeting it.***
Criterion #10: Adherence to the Recommendation of the 2013 OECD Council on Gender Equality in Education, Employment and Entrepreneurship and the 2015 Recommendation of the OECD Council on Gender Equality in Public Life.	***Georgia partially meets this criterion and has committed to meeting it.***

EPIC CRITERION #1:

Ratification of ILO Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100) or verifiable steps being taken to ratify it.

Georgia meets this criterion.

Georgia has ratified the ILO Convention No. 100 on Equal Remuneration for Men and Women Workers for Work of Equal Value.[6] The Parliament of Georgia ratified the Convention in 1993 without reservations.

EPIC CRITERION #2:

Legislation in line with ILO Convention No. 100.

Georgia does not meet this criterion and has not committed to meeting it.

Georgia's national legislation is not fully aligned with the ILO Convention No. 100 on Equal Remuneration for Men and Women Workers for Work of Equal Value. In particular, the Convention requires the principle of equal pay for work of equal **value** to be ensured without any discrimination. At present, however, the effective labour legislation in Georgia does not recognize equal pay for work of equal value. Accordingly:

- Equal pay for work of equal value is not defined.
- There is no institutional framework for a methodology for measuring or evaluating the value of work, nor is there a national guideline.

However, certain steps have been taken in this direction in Georgia in recent years. Specifically:

- ✓ As a result of the public service reform carried out in 2015, under the Law of Georgia on Public Service,[7] the remuneration system for public officers should be based on the principles of transparency and fairness, which imply equal pay for equal work performed.
- ✓ As a result of the 2020 labour legislation reform, the concept of remuneration was defined in the Labour Code.[8] Employers were also required to ensure equal remuneration for male and female employees performing equal work. At the same time, the Labour Code prohibits discrimination and regards unequal pay as one form of discrimination.
- ✓ In 2020, the Labour Inspection Service was established. Its activities are regulated both by the Labour Code of Georgia and by the Law of Georgia on Labour Inspection Service.[9] Under the Labour Code, the Labour Inspection Service is responsible for monitoring occupational safety standards in the workplace, as well as for supervising compliance with safeguards relating to non-discrimination, including gender equality and equal opportunities for women and men, and the elimination of harassment. The Labour Inspection Service is empowered to impose administrative sanctions.
- ✓ In 2023, the Parliament of Georgia approved the State Concept on Economic Empowerment of Women, which also addresses the gender pay gap.[10] In particular, according to the document, one of the potential measures for closing

6. International Treaty and Agreement of Georgia, 1951, "Convention on Equal Remuneration for Men and Women Workers for Work of Equal Value". Accessed 24 October 2025. https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/1213019?publication=0

7. Law of Georgia on Public Service, 2015. Accessed 24 October 2025. https://matsne.gov.ge/document/view/3031098?publication=62

8. Organic Law of Georgia – Labour Code of Georgia, 2010. Accessed 24 October 2025. https://matsne.gov.ge/en/document/view/1155567?publication=28#!

9. Law of Georgia on the Labour Inspection Service, 2020. Accessed 24 October 2025. https://matsne.gov.ge/document/view/5003057?publication=5

10. Resolution No. 2662-XIMS-XMP of the Parliament of Georgia on Approval of the State Concept on Economic Empowerment of Women, 2023. Accessed 24 October 2025. https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/5755428?publication=0

the gender pay gap is to implement the equal pay principle and ensure monitoring of its implementation.

However, it should be noted that neither the State Concept on Economic Empowerment of Women nor the Labour Code provides for an effective mechanism for enforcing the equal pay principle, except for the general obligation imposed on employers, which specifies that anti-discrimination provisions must be reflected in internal labour regulations and other documents and that their enforcement must be ensured. At the same time, although the Law on Public Service provides for equal pay for equal work performed, there is no specific methodology for ensuring the implementation of this provision in practice.

Recommendations

Align domestic legislation with ILO Convention No. 100:

- Ensure that the legislation defines the principle of equal pay for work of equal value, in accordance with ILO Convention No. 100.
- Develop a national methodology for evaluating and measuring the value of work.

EPIC CRITERION #3:

Ratification of the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, 1976 (Article 11d).

Georgia meets this criterion.

Georgia signed and ratified the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in 1994, without reservations.[11] Article 11d of CEDAW specifically recognizes women's right to equal remuneration, including benefits, and equal treatment in respect of work of equal value.

EPIC CRITERION #4:

Compliance monitoring on equal pay legislation through labour inspection or other effective measures is undertaken.

Georgia partially meets this criterion and has committed to meeting it.

Under the Labour Code of Georgia, in addition to monitoring occupational safety standards in the workplace, the Labour Inspection Service also supervises compliance with non-discrimination requirements, including gender equality, and the elimination of harassment. The Inspection Service is also empowered to impose administrative sanctions. However, the entity does not have nationally approved guidelines that would enable it to identify the gender pay gap and, subsequently, identify or rule out a discriminatory ground.

In 2024, with the support of UN Women, a methodological instrument—the Equal Pay Review and Reporting (EPRR) tool—was developed for the Labour Inspection Service. The EPRR tool outlined the principle of equal pay in labour relations and provided detailed guidelines on the prevention, detection of and response to unequal pay in employment. Discussions on institutionalizing these guidelines are ongoing. Accordingly, Georgia's fulfilment of this commitment depends on the institutionalization of these guidelines by the Labour Inspection Service.

11. International Treaty and Agreement of Georgia, 1994, "Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women". https://www.matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/5691899?publication=0

Recommendations

Monitor the compliance with equal pay legislation:

- Until the principle of equal remuneration for work of equal value is incorporated into the legislation in accordance with ILO Convention No. 100, introduce and strengthen effective mechanisms for monitoring the currently applicable standard—equal pay for equal work—including through the development and application of methodological tools and practical guidelines by the Labour Inspection Service.
- Institutionalize the Labour Inspection Service guidelines on the prevention, detection of and response to unequal pay in employment.

EPIC CRITERION #5:

Sex-disaggregated data on wages are collected.

Georgia meets this criterion.

The National Statistics Office of Georgia (Geostat) regularly collects and publishes sex-disaggregated data on wages. In particular, since 2020, Geostat has published data on the adjusted gender pay gap by type of economic activity (i.e. services and industry) and by employee positions.[12]

In addition, in 2025, with the support of the UN Women regional programme "Making Every Woman and Girl Count", Geostat piloted the Structure of Earnings Survey (SES). Also in 2025, with the support of UN Women, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the Austrian Development Agency (ADA), Geostat launched a full-scale SES.

Based on an enterprise survey, the SES examines the relationship between wage levels and the individual characteristics of employees (such as sex, age, level of education, occupation, experience and so forth) and employers (such as economic activity, enterprise size, location, etc.). The SES is crucial for identifying and analysing the gender pay gap.

Recommendations

Collect sex-disaggregated data on wages:

- Ensure that the Structure of Earnings Survey (SES) is conducted regularly and is institutionalized within the national statistical system.

EPIC CRITERION #6

Policies or practices that encourage pay transparency are in place.

Georgia does not meet this criterion and has committed to meeting it.

Georgia has not introduced any policy or practice on pay transparency. On the contrary, a practice of 'salary confidentiality', which is based mainly on verbal agreements or by-laws, has become established in the country. This significantly hinders pay transparency in companies, organizations and institutions. This approach limits employees' ability to have full information about a company's pay policy that would enable them to identify possible inequalities in pay. The Labour Code of Georgia does not provide for additional regulations concerning the

12. National Statistics Office of Georgia, Wages. https://www.geostat.ge/en/modules/categories/39/wages.

procedure for determining remuneration, ensuring internal transparency within an organization, or similar matters.

However, it should be noted that there is a positive step forward: amendments have been made to the Labour Code prohibiting discrimination and treating unequal pay as one form of discrimination. In addition, under the Law on Public Service, the remuneration system for public officers is based on the principles of transparency and fairness, which imply equal pay for equal work performed. Nevertheless, there is no specific methodology for ensuring the implementation of this provision in practice.

To a certain extent, Georgia's fulfilment of its EPIC commitment in this regard will depend on the institutionalization of Labour Inspection Service's guidelines for preventing, detecting and responding to unequal pay. This will contribute to discussions concerning pay transparency.

Recommendations

Introduce pay transparency policies and practices:

- Develop and introduce pay transparency policies and corresponding legal mechanisms in Georgia's labour market.
- Develop an appropriate methodology or approach for the practical implementation of the principles of pay transparency and equal pay in public service.

EPIC CRITERION #7

In countries where minimum wages are set by sector or occupation, minimum wages also cover sectors and occupations where women workers predominate.

Georgia partially meets this criterion and has not committed to meeting it.

Georgia has not ratified the ILO Minimum Wage Fixing Convention, 1970 (No. 131). In Georgia, the minimum wage has remained unchanged since 1999[13] and amounts to only 20 Georgian lari (GEL) per month (approximately USD 7.30).[14] This is far below the monthly subsistence minimum, which stood at GEL 260 (approximately USD 95.70) as of December 2024. Accordingly, the existing minimum wage standard cannot be regarded as fair and adequate. It should also be noted that the Labour Code of Georgia neither defines nor provides for a minimum wage.

However, certain steps have been taken in this area in Georgia in recent years in the health and education sectors.[15] Specifically:

- ✓ In the education sector, the Minister of Education and Science of Georgia issued Order No. 126/n in 2015 "On Determining the Minimum Amount and Conditions of Remuneration for Public School Teachers",[16] which set the minimum remuneration for a full-time teacher at GEL 337.25 per month. From 2024, the minimum monthly remuneration for a full-time teacher was set at GEL 384.75. In addition, where a teacher has a workload of at least one hour per week, the teacher's gross monthly remuneration

13. Order of the President of Georgia "On the Amount of the Minimum Wage", 1999. Accessed 24 October 2025. https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/112786?publication=0

14. The GEL/USD exchange rate of 2.7206 is based on the 2024 exchange rate. Source: National Bank of Georgia. https://nbg.gov.ge/en/statistics/statistics-data

15. Women constitute the majority of employees in these sectors in Georgia. As of 2024, women accounted for 86 per cent of employees in the education sector and 85 per cent in the healthcare sector.

16. Order No. 126/n of the Minister of Education, Science and Youth of Georgia "On Determining the Minimum Amount and Conditions of Remuneration for Public School Teachers", 2015. Accessed 24 October 2025. https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/2995627?publication=0

amounts to GEL 96. This standard applies only to public schools and not to the education sector as a whole.[17]

✓ From January 2023, in all clinics participating in the State Universal Health Care Programme, the minimum remuneration for doctors was set at GEL 7 per hour (approximately USD 2.60), and for nurses at GEL 4.40 per hour (approximately USD 1.60). In addition, from January 2024, the reform was expanded to cover other personnel: junior doctors (GEL 5 per hour (USD 1.80)); assistant nurses (GEL 3.50 per hour (USD 1.30)); midwives (GEL 4.40 per hour (USD 1.60)); and hospital orderlies (GEL 3 per hour (USD 1.10)).[18] Since the minimum wage in the healthcare sector applies only to clinics participating in the State Universal Health Care Programme, this regulation does not cover all employees.

Recommendations

Introduce a fair and adequate minimum wage standard:

- Ratify the ILO Minimum Wage Fixing Convention, 1970 (No. 131).
- Establish a minimum wage at the national level, which is consistent with international standards.

EPIC CRITERION #8:

National bodies that address equal pay are in place.

Georgia partially meets this criterion and has not committed to meeting it.

Alongside the Labour Inspection Service, the Public Defender of Georgia also monitors the protection of gender equality and responds to violations, within the scope of its competence.

The Public Defender considers cases of discrimination, including the gender pay gap, on the basis of complaints submitted both by natural persons or legal entities and by groups of persons, as well as on its own initiative. Where discrimination is established, the Public Defender sends a recommendation to the relevant person with a view to restoring the rights of the victim. Within its current mandate, the Public Defender is also authorized to issue and submit to the relevant institution a general proposal concerning the prevention of and fight against discrimination.

In addition, it is important to mention the Tripartite Social Partnership Commission, which, under the Labour Code of Georgia, is an advisory body. The Tripartite Commission is accountable to the Chair of the Commission—the Prime Minister of Georgia.[19] Its functions include:

- Holding consultations with the Government of Georgia on matters of common interest relating to labour, economic and social policy, including reforms and legislative amendments concerning the State Budget of Georgia, the minimum wage and other matters that may affect the interests of employers and employees.

17. Order No. 108/n of the Minister of Education, Science and Youth of Georgia "On Determining the Minimum Amount and Conditions of Remuneration for Public School Teachers", 2024. Accessed 24 October 2025. https://www.matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/6199654?publication=2

18. Ordinance No. 36 of the Government of Georgia "On Certain Measures to be Implemented for the Transition to Universal Health Care". Accessed 24 October 2025. https://www.matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/1852448?publication=110

19. Ordinance No. 258 of the Government of Georgia "On Approval of the Statute of the Tripartite Social Partnership Commission", 2013. Accessed 24 October 2025. https://www.matsne.gov.ge/document/view/2037256?publication=0

- Developing proposals and recommendations on other labour and social policy issues that are important to members of the Tripartite Commission, and submitting them to the Government of Georgia.

Accordingly, the Tripartite Commission constitutes a mandatory forum in which issues relating to the pay gap should be discussed. However, the Commission is not an enforcement body: its function is limited to developing recommendations adopted on the basis of tripartite consensus, the implementation of which is not binding on the Government. It should be noted that on 19 March 2025, the Commission's 2025–2026 Action Plan was approved. The Plan provides for consideration of amendments to the labour legislation (i.e. to harmonize it with international standards), as well as the issue of ratification of ILO Conventions No. 156 (Workers with Family Responsibilities), No. 183 (Maternity Protection) and No. 190 (Violence and Harassment).

As noted above, the Labour Code does not recognize equal pay for work of equal value and, accordingly, there is not yet a methodology for measuring the value of work developed in the country. Thus, despite the formal regulation of the equal pay standard, the absence of enforcement tools means that this issue remains a significant challenge. None of the bodies responsible for monitoring compliance with the non-discrimination principle, including the Labour Inspection Service, have adopted national guidelines for identifying the gender pay gap. Nor do they have any instructions for identifying or eliminating the discriminatory grounds if such a gap is detected.

Recommendations

Strengthen public institutions responsible for enforcing equal pay, and improve coordination:

- Build the capacities of the Labour Inspection Service and the Public Defender of Georgia to effectively identify and examine cases of gender pay discrimination.
- Strengthen coordination between the Labour Inspection Service, the Public Defender and other relevant institutions on equal pay issues.

EPIC CRITERION #9:

Laws, policies or measures to facilitate work-family reconciliation or increase the representation of women in companies' boards are in place.

Georgia partially meets this criterion and has committed to meeting it.

Georgia has not ratified the ILO Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981 (No. 156). The domestic legislation does not define leave for a worker with family responsibilities, for a family member or for a caregiver. In addition, workers with family responsibilities in Georgia often face difficulties in accessing quality and affordable care and support services—be it childcare services, care for senior citizens or other types of support—that would enable them to balance their work and family responsibilities.

However, it should be noted that Georgian labour legislation contains certain provisions that, in effect, establish various statutory guarantees for workers with family responsibilities. Specifically:

- ✓ The Labour Code provides for additional leave for childcare, which any employee can enjoy (not only parents).
- ✓ The Labour Code provides for a paid break of at least one hour for mothers who are breastfeeding infants under the age of 12 months.
- ✓ The Labour Code also stipulates that a legal representative or supporter of a person with a disability may enjoy another paid rest day

once a month; alternatively, they may agree with an employer on working hours that differ from those provided for in the internal labour regulations.

- ✓ In Georgia, in 2023, compensation for the paid leave due to pregnancy and childbirth, childcare and the adoption of the newborn was doubled and set at a maximum total of GEL 2,000 instead of GEL 1,000. In the same year, public school teachers, like public officers and certain public servants, were given the opportunity to use 183 days of fully paid maternity leave.[20]
- ✓ The Labour Code of Georgia addresses the rights of part-time workers and prohibits discrimination against them solely because they work part-time, ensuring that they are not treated less favourably than full-time employees. In addition, the Labour Code prohibits termination of an employment contract if an employee refuses to transfer from full-time to part-time employment or vice versa.
- ✓ The anti-discrimination provisions in the labour legislation include grounds such as 'marital status' or 'family circumstances'. The Labour Code prohibits discrimination in pre-contractual relations as well as in employment and professional activities. Within labour relations, the Labour Code prohibits discrimination on the grounds of sex, marital status and other grounds with the purpose or effect of denying or breaching equal opportunities or treatment in employment and occupation..

Although the Georgian legislation contains a broad list of grounds of discrimination, 'family responsibilities' are not identified as a separate ground. However, the existing non-discrimination provisions in the labour legislation provide an important basis for equal opportunities for persons with family responsibilities. To provide stronger protection, it is necessary to include 'family responsibilities' among the prohibited grounds of discrimination in the Labour Code of Georgia. In addition, in accordance with ILO Convention No. 156, the labour rights of these persons should be set out in greater detail.

With regard to increasing women's representation on supervisory boards of companies, in 2018 the National Bank of Georgia introduced a gender-diversity requirement into the Corporate Governance Code for Commercial Banks (requiring representatives of a different sex to constitute at least 20 per cent of the supervisory board).[21] In addition, in 2022, with a view to improving gender equality on the supervisory boards and directorates of commercial banks, the National Bank of Georgia amended the Corporate Governance Code for Commercial Banks. According to the amendments, representatives of a different sex were required to constitute at least 33 per cent of banks' supervisory boards, and at least 40 per cent by no later than 1 June 2025. The Code also added a recommendation concerning the composition of banks' board of directors, according to which it is desirable for representatives of a different sex to constitute at least 33 per cent of the directorate.[22]

Recommendations

Facilitate the reconciliation of work and family responsibilities:

- Ratify the ILO Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981 (No. 156).

20. Order of the Minister amending Order No. 01-133/n of 29 December 2020 of the Minister of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Labour, Health and Social Affairs of Georgia "On Approval of the Procedure for Payment for Leave Due to Pregnancy and Childbirth and Childcare, as well as Leave Due to Adoption of a Newborn". Accessed 24 October 2025. https://www.matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/5703607?publication=0

21. Order No. 215/04 of the President of the National Bank of Georgia "On Approval of the Corporate Governance Code for Commercial Banks", 2018. Accessed 24 October 2025. https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/4333402?publication=0

22. Order No. 104/04 of the President of the National Bank of Georgia amending Order No. 215/04 of 26 September 2018 of the President of the National Bank of Georgia "On Approval of the Corporate Governance Code for Commercial Banks". Accessed

- Define the concepts of a 'worker with family responsibilities' and a 'family member' in domestic legislation. Identify 'family responsibilities' as a separate ground in the list of prohibited grounds of discrimination in the labour legislation, and envisage working conditions adapted to workers with family responsibilities..

Increase women's representation:

- Ensure women's active participation and representation at all levels of politics (including the Government, the Parliament, local government and the judiciary) through appropriate measures (such as the introduction of quotas, improving the transparency of promotion systems, etc.).
- Introduce incentives to increase women's representation at all levels of management and decision-making in the private sector..

EPIC CRITERION #10:

Adherence to the Recommendation of the 2013 OECD Council on Gender Equality in Education, Employment and Entrepreneurship and the 2015 Recommendation of the OECD Council on Gender Equality in Public Life.

Georgia partially meets this criterion and has committed to meeting it.

The OECD's recommendations from 2013 and 2015, which Georgia has committed to implementing, are multidimensional and cover areas such as entrepreneurship, employment, education and women's representation. In addition, they address interlinked issues, including sexual harassment, gender-responsive budgeting, gender impact assessment and so forth.[23] The most important measures undertaken by Georgia pursuant with these recommendations since joining EPIC, as well as the challenges, are briefly reviewed below.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The OECD recommendation provides for reducing barriers to women's entrepreneurship, promoting business growth and innovation through appropriate policies, and developing training, mentoring and awareness-raising programmes. Among other issues, it emphasizes the need to ensure equal access to finances.

At present, Georgia does not have a unified and consistent approach to women's economic empowerment. The main barriers to the development of women's entrepreneurship include prevailing gender norms, unequal gender-based distribution of landownership, unequal access to finance, challenges related to collateral, unequal access to knowledge and other factors. Against the background of these and other challenges, women face difficulties participating in State economic programmes, which creates an additional obstacle to their economic empowerment.[24]

However, certain steps have been taken in recent years to develop women's entrepreneurship in Georgia:

✓ In 2022, in cooperation between the Rural Development Agency and UN Women, **a pilot programme was established to support women in setting up their own greenhouses**, generously supported by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and the Austrian

23. These OECD recommendations also cover issues addressed under other EPIC criteria. Accordingly, this section covers only those areas that are not addressed under other EPIC criteria.

24. Parliament of Georgia. 2019. Thematic Inquiry on Women's Participation in State Economic Programmes. https://parliament.leavingstone.club/storage/files/shares/tematuri-mokvleva/genderuli/saxelmcifo-ekonom-programa/angarishi.pdf

Development Agency. The project was implemented in the municipalities of Marneuli and Lagodekhi and provided funding to 37 women. In 2024, the Rural Development Agency expanded the programme to the municipalities of Chkhorotsku, Vani and Chokhatauri and provided funding to 61 women. The new phase of the programme was fully financed from State resources.[25]

✓ In 2024, the State agency Enterprise Georgia launched a **Micro Entrepreneurship Support** Programme. Under this programme, when taking out a loan, a beneficiary may receive support from the agency's partner financial institutions in the form of an 80 per cent guarantee and co-financing of interest. The support period lasts for a maximum of five years, and the loan amount ranges from GEL 20,000 to GEL 50,000. Women are given priority under the programme. Specifically, if the beneficiary is a woman entrepreneur,[26] the loan interest is fully subsidized. As of 2024, the programme had provided loan support to 64 women, while 153 women had received lease support. It should also be noted that women applicants are given priority for Enterprise Georgia's Export Manager Certification Course and at the agency's consulting centres.

EMPLOYMENT

The OECD recommendation envisages policies and measures that facilitate the reconciliation of work and family responsibilities. The recommendations include, among other things:

- Developing appropriate tax relief and social assistance systems so that both parents have equal financial incentives to work.
- Ensuring the availability and quality of early childcare and education services, as well as long-term care services for dependent persons (such as children with disabilities and elderly relatives).
- Establishing paid maternity and paternity leave policies that ensure job security and promote the equal involvement of parents in family responsibilities, etc.

Women constitute the majority of the economically inactive population in Georgia. The share of women is disproportionately high in low-paid sectors and positions. Lack of access to care and social protection programmes, vertical and horizontal gender segregation in the labour market, and the lack of gender-sensitive employment programmes are among the barriers hindering women's participation in Georgia's labour market.[27] However, it should be noted that certain steps have been taken in this area in Georgia in recent years. Specifically:

✓ Ordinance No. 329 of the Government of Georgia "**On Approving the List of Sectors with Specific Working Regimes**", which remained in force until 1 April 2021,[28] identified the sectors in which certain enterprises[29] were permitted to set standard working time[30] for employees

25. The purpose of the pilot programme for establishing greenhouse farms is to empower economically inactive women, improve their socio-economic situation and encourage their participation in agricultural activities. The programme was designed exclusively for women and provides prospective participants with financial and technical assistance to establish greenhouses. Beneficiary co-financing is set at no less than 10 per cent of the cost of establishing greenhouses, which represents a significantly lower co-funding requirement than other programmes run by the Rural Development Agency.

26. In the case of a legal entity, for the purposes of the programme, only those business entities will be regarded to be a woman entrepreneur if there is a woman (or women) holding a 100 per cent ownership share for the previous six months before taking part in the programme.

27. UN Women. 2022. "Employment and Gender in Georgia." Issue Brief.
https://georgia.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2022/09/employment-and-gender-in-georgia

28. Ordinance No. 329 of the Government of Georgia "On Approval of the List of Sectors with Specific Working Regimes", 2013. Accessed 24 October 2025. https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/2118778?publication=0. An enterprise with a specific operating condition is an enterprise that requires more than eight hours of uninterrupted production/work process, and where disruption of the continuity of the production process may impede its proper functioning (for example, electricity or water-supply companies).

29. This rule applied only to enterprises where the work process required an uninterrupted working process lasting more than eight hours.

30. Under the Organic Law of Georgia – Labour Code of Georgia: standard working time shall be any period during which an employee is working at the employer's disposal and is carrying out his/her activities or duties. Working time shall not include breaks and rest periods.

at up to 48 hours per week instead of 40 hours, due to the need to ensure continuity of the production process.[31] On 26 December 2022, the Government of Georgia adopted a new ordinance that redefined the concept of an enterprise with a specific working regime and revised the relevant list. In particular, the new list no longer includes sectors such as agriculture, forestry and fisheries (except marine fishing, which is covered by the new ordinance); mining; manufacture of textiles and textile products; manufacture of leather, leather products and footwear; the paper industry; wholesale and retail trade; hotels and restaurants; construction, etc.

✓ In 2023, the compensation **during paid leave due to pregnancy and childbirth, childcare and the adoption of the newborn** was doubled and set at a maximum total of GEL 2,000 instead of GEL 1,000. Public school teachers, like public officers and certain public servants, may use 183 days of fully paid leave.[32]

EDUCATION

The OECD recommendations emphasize the importance of ensuring equal access to education as a prerequisite for women's economic empowerment. Recommended measures include:

- Adapting school and preschool curricula so that they are focused on the elimination of gender discrimination and stereotypes.
- Increasing girls' access to STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics), as well as to finance and entrepreneurship.
- Conducting awareness-raising campaigns on gender stereotypes targeting women and men, parents, teachers and employers, etc.

Gender inequality in Georgia is particularly evident in terms of the participation of women and men in higher education. Horizontal and vertical segregation in the labour market is largely the result of choices made at the stage of education and skills development. Women remain highly concentrated in 'feminized' disciplines such as education, the arts and the humanities. By contrast, they are less likely to choose fields such as engineering, science and agriculture. This imbalance has a significant impact on women's career opportunities and future employment.

Certain steps have been taken in Georgia's education sector in recent years. Specifically:

✓ In October 2024, the Minister of Education, Science and Youth of Georgia issued an order to approve the Code of Ethics for Vocational Education Teachers.[33] According to the Code, in carrying out their professional activities, vocational education teachers are required to:

- Promote a culture of trust and respect within the institution and promote universal values (pluralism, tolerance and democracy) as well as multicultural, multi-ethnic and gender equality values.
- Ensure the creation of a violence-free and discrimination-free environment irrespective of race, colour, language, sex, age, citizenship, origin, place of birth, place of residence, property or social status, religion or belief, national, ethnic or social affiliation, profession, marital status, health status, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, political or other opinion, or any other characteristic.

31. However, this rule did not apply to an employee of an enterprise with a specific operating condition, whose work performance did not require an uninterrupted operating process for more than eight hours and whose work was not related to the continuity of the work/production process.

32. Ordinance No. 33 of the Government of Georgia "On Determining the Amount of Compensation during Paid Leave Due to Pregnancy and Childbirth and Paid Childcare Leave, as well as Paid Leave Due to Adoption of the newborn, and on Certain Measures to be Implemented", 2023. Accessed 24 October 2025. https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/5699771?publication=0

33. Order No. 161/n of the Minister of Education, Science and Youth of Georgia "On Approval of the Code of Ethics for Vocational Education Teachers". Accessed 24 October 2025. https://www.matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/6289727?publication=0

- Ensure equal and fair treatment of vocational education students irrespective of race, colour, language, sex, age, citizenship, origin, place of birth, place of residence, property or social status, religion or belief, national, ethnic or social affiliation, profession, marital status, health status, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, political or other opinion, or any other characteristic.

✓ In addition, as noted above, in 2024, under the Order of the Minister of Education, Science and Youth of Georgia "On Determining the Minimum Amount and Conditions of Remuneration for Public School Teachers",[34] the minimum monthly remuneration for a full-time teacher was increased and set at GEL 384.75. Where a teacher has a workload of at least one hour per week, the teacher's gross monthly remuneration amounts to GEL 96 (approximately USD 35.30).

WOMEN'S REPRESENTATION

The OECD recommendations stress the need to promote women's active participation and representation at all levels of policymaking, governance and decision-making, in both the public and private sectors. The recommendations include measures aimed at eliminating barriers to women's promotion to leadership positions. These include improving the transparency of promotion systems, ensuring equal opportunities for career development, and overcoming gender stereotypes in organizational culture.

Certain steps have been taken in Georgia in recent years to promote women's representation. Specifically:

✓ With the support of UN Women and the National Association of Local Authorities of Georgia (NALAG), as of January 2026, 32 municipalities (out of 64) had joined the **European Charter for Equality of Women and Men in Local Life.**

✓ Significant changes were also made in the financial sector. Specifically, in 2022, the National Bank of Georgia amended the **Corporate Governance Code for Commercial Banks**, as mentioned above. Under the amendments, representatives of a different sex were required to constitute at least 33 per cent of banks' supervisory boards, increasing to at least 40 per cent by no later than 1 June 2025. The Code also added a recommendation according to which it is desirable for representatives of a different sex to constitute at least 33 per cent of the members of banks' directorates.

There was a significant setback in terms of women's political representation, when a legislative amendment was adopted in 2024 **abolishing mandatory gender quotas in Parliament and local self-government bodies.**

Previously, as a result of amendments to electoral legislation adopted in July 2020, the quota for proportional party lists was 25 per cent in parliamentary elections and 50 per cent for municipal councils (Sakrebulos). In February 2023, the Parliament extended the validity of gender quotas until 2032. However, amendments made to the Election Code of Georgia in 2024 abolished mandatory gender quotas for both Parliament and local self-government bodies, posing a threat to women's equal participation in the country's political processes.[35]

34. Order No. 108/n of the Minister of Education, Science and Youth of Georgia "On Determining the Minimum Amount and Conditions of Remuneration for Public School Teachers". Accessed 24 October 2025. https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/6199654?publication=0

35. European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission). 2024. Georgia – Opinion on the Amendments to the Election Code which Abolish Gender Quotas. https://www.coe.int/en/web/venice-commission/-/opinion-1189.

INTERLINKED ISSUES

- In 2022, the **Gender Impact Assessment (GIA)** methodology became an institutionally recognized process in Georgia. Specifically, amendments were made to the Organic Law of Georgia on Normative Acts[36] that laid the foundation for the establishment of an institutional framework and mechanism for GIA. As a result of these amendments, authors and initiators of draft laws and normative acts were required to present their views and positions on the impact that the initiative might have on gender equality.[37]
- The Public Financial Management Reform Strategy for 2023–2026,[38] developed by the Government of Georgia, incorporates the key principles of **gender-responsive budgeting (GRB)**. This represents an important step towards the institutionalization of GRB in Georgia.

  In addition, Article 13 of the Law of Georgia on Gender Equality (renamed the Law on Equality of Women and Men as of 2 April 2025)[39] stipulates: "The municipal budget, priorities of socio-economic development, municipal programmes and plans shall be developed in such a manner as to exclude any form of discrimination."

  In 2024, with the support of UN Women, the Ministry of Finance of Georgia developed and adopted a methodology for identifying the links between budgetary programmes/subprogrammes and gender equality and for reflecting those links in the electronic system. As a result, when State institutions submitted their 2025 budget proposals, 23 programmes and 18 subprogrammes were analysed, identified and tagged as gender-relevant.
- In 2017, the Government of Georgia amended the Code of Conduct for Public Officers and added provisions on the responsibility of public officers for preventing and responding to **sexual harassment** in the workplace. In addition, in 2019, the Parliament of Georgia adopted legislation introducing regulations on the prevention of and response to sexual harassment in public spaces and the workplace.[40] Specifically, in 2019, sexual harassment was added as a form of discrimination to the Law of Georgia on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination.[41] Sexual harassment in public places was also defined as an administrative offence under the Code of Administrative Offences, and a fine was introduced.[42] As of January 2026, with the support of UN Women, a total of 26 public institutions in Georgia, including six ministries, had introduced internal mechanisms for reporting sexual harassment.[43]

  Although Georgia has made some progress in combating sexual harassment, significant challenges remain. Public awareness of sexual harassment and response mechanisms remains low. Reporting rates for sexual harassment are also very low. Legislative changes have not yet translated into practical outcomes for victims. The vast majority of employers have not

36. Organic Law of Georgia on Normative Acts, 2009. Accessed 24 October 2025. https://matsne.gov.ge/document/view/90052?publication=38 and https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/5640766?publication=0.

37. In 2025, the wording "assessment of the expected impact of a draft law on the state of gender equality" in this Law was replaced with "assessment of the expected impact of a draft law on the state of equality between women and men".

38. Ministry of Finance of Georgia. 2023. Public Finance Management Reform Strategy 2023–2026. https://www.mof.ge/en/fl/20232026_tslebis_strategia_da_samokmedo_gegmebi?page=1

39. Law of Georgia on Equality between Women and Men, 2010. Accessed 24 October 2025. https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/91624?publication=11

40. UN Women. 2021. Workplace Sexual Harassment in the Civil Service in Georgia. https://georgia.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2021/09/workplace-sexual-harassment-in-the-civil-service-in-georgia

41. Law of Georgia on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination, 2014. Accessed 24 October 2025. https://www.matsne.gov.ge/document/view/2339687?publication=5

42. Code of Administrative Offences of Georgia, 1984 (Article 166□). Accessed 24 October 2025. https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/28216%23part_387?publication=578#

43. Code of Administrative Offences of Georgia, 1984 (Article 166□). Accessed 24 October 2025. https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/28216%23part_387?publication=578#

introduced internal mechanisms for reporting sexual harassment or mandatory training on sexual harassment.

- It is expected that **legislative amendments made in Georgia in 2025** will have a negative impact on the prevention of and effective response to the gender pay gap, including on the creation of effective mechanisms to address it and on the use of existing protection guarantees.

  The Parliament of Georgia adopted a package of legislative amendments on 2 April 2025, through which the **terms 'gender' and 'gender equality' were removed** from the Georgian legislation and replaced with the terms 'woman and man' and 'equality between women and men'. These changes affected 16 laws in force, replacing 'gender' in each of these laws with concepts referring to 'women and men' and 'sex'. The affected laws include, among others, the Law of Georgia on Gender Equality; the Law of Georgia on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination; the Law of Georgia on the Elimination of Violence against Women and/or Domestic Violence, and the Protection and Support of Victims of Violence; the Law of Georgia on Labour Inspection; the Criminal Code of Georgia; and the Local Self-Government Code. In addition, the package of amendments removed the provisions from the Rules of Procedure of the Parliament of Georgia that provided for the establishment and operation of the permanent Gender Equality Council of the Parliament.[44] At the local level, similar councils operating in the municipalities (Sakrebulos) were renamed Municipal Councils on Women's and Children's Issues.

  Also in 2025, the Government of Georgia **abolished the Civil Service Bureau,** which had been the lead agency for promoting gender mainstreaming in public administration, including through the 2023–2026 Public Administration Reform Strategy and the related action plans. Prior to this, on 13 December 2024, amendments were made to the **Law on Public Service**, according to which middle-management officials no longer have the status of a public officer and, instead of open-ended employment relations, they are employed under short-term administrative contracts. Consequently, the officials who were unlawfully dismissed as a result of reorganization are no longer reinstated through the courts. Public officers are now subject to performance reviews every six months rather than once a year. An agency head may unilaterally alter a review; the public officer's remuneration is reduced by 20 per cent following the first negative review, while a second negative review results in dismissal, and so forth.[45]

44. Article 75(2)(a) and Article 76 were removed. Accessed 24 October 2025.

45. Under the amendments:
    1. Heads and deputy heads of primary structural units of public institution (i.e. persons employed in middle-management positions) are no longer considered public officers but are instead persons employed under administrative contracts. At the same time, it is no longer mandatory for them to speak the State language, be above the age of 18 and possess a public officer certificate, unlike for the public officers working under their supervision.
    2. Contracts with heads and deputy heads of primary structural units may be terminated at any time subject to one month's prior notice, and they receive compensation equivalent to only one month's remuneration. Appointments to middle-management positions are made directly by decision of the head of the institution, without a competition.
    3. Heads and deputy heads of primary structural units are no longer subject to performance reviews. Public officers working at all hierarchical levels are, however, evaluated twice a year (once every six months, instead of once a year) and are dismissed if they receive an unsatisfactory evaluation on both occasions. In addition, the head of a public institution is empowered to change a review prepared by a public officer's immediate supervisor within one month of that evaluation. The review determines, among other things, the officer's grade and a grade-based salary supplement. Where an officer receives an unsatisfactory evaluation, 20 per cent of their official salary is withheld until the beginning of the next review period.
    4. Under these amendments, the mobility rules do not apply in cases of reorganization. Appealing a decision on dismissal does not suspend the effect of the adopted acts. A court decision upholding the claim of a person dismissed on the grounds of reorganization does not result in the reinstatement of the unlawfully dismissed person. If the dismissed public officer wins the case, they receive compensation equivalent to only three months' official salary. In addition, during the transitional period, provisions relating to reorganization and regulations concerning heads and deputy heads of primary structural units also apply to LEPLs (legal entities of public law).

Recommendations

Promote women's entrepreneurship:

- Develop and implement respective policies to reduce barriers facing women entrepreneurs (including barriers to access to finance) and to support internationalization and innovation.
- Conduct awareness-raising campaigns on women's entrepreneurship, develop targeted training programmes, introduce mentoring and coaching systems, and create and develop strong support networks.
- Promote women's participation in State economic programmes, take women's specific needs into account when planning and implementing such programmes, and develop mechanisms to ensure women's active participation.

Promote women's employment:

- Increase access to care and social protection programmes and services.
- Improve existing maternity leave standards, and introduce paternity leave.
- Increase access to gender-responsive counselling services for jobseekers..

Ensure equal access to education:

- Adapt school and preschool curricula, review textbooks, and introduce appropriate changes in order to eliminate gender norms, discrimination and stereotypes.
- Conduct appropriate awareness-raising campaigns among all target groups (including men and women, parents, teachers, employers and others) to tackle gender stereotypes and social norms in education.
- Promote women's participation in STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) as well as in finance and entrepreneurship.
- Develop gender equality plans within educational institutions to ensure equal opportunities for women and men in employment and academic career development.

3

CONCLUSION

Equal pay is an important prerequisite for women's economic empowerment, their equal participation in the labour market and the reduction of gender inequality. The right to equal pay is recognized by ILO Convention No. 100, European Union law and other international instruments.

Equal pay remains a challenge in Georgia: according to 2024 data, the monthly gender pay gap stood at 32 per cent.

EPIC's approach demonstrates that ensuring equal pay entails more than prohibiting discrimination at the legislative level. Achieving results requires a set of interconnected mechanisms: reliable data, pay transparency, a fair and adequate minimum wage standard, objective assessment of the value of work, effective monitoring of and response to violations, and policies that create equal labour-market opportunities for women and men.

Georgia has already taken certain steps in this direction. Of the 10 EPIC criteria analysed, the country fully meets three, partially meets five and does not yet meet two. Achievements include the incorporation into the labour legislation of the principle of equal remuneration for women and men performing equal work and the recognition of unequal remuneration as a form of discrimination, as well as the establishment of the Labour Inspection Service and the expansion of its mandate to cover discrimination and equality issues. Significant progress has also been achieved in improving the collection and production of sex-disaggregated data on wages by the National Statistics Office of Georgia (Geostat).

However, there are some steps required for further progress: the incorporation into legislation of the principle of equal pay for work of equal value, the development of a national methodology for job evaluation, the introduction of pay transparency policies, the strengthening of monitoring mechanisms and the effective enforcement of existing legal safeguards. In this process, it is also particularly important to develop and apply the Labour Inspection Service's methodological tools and practical guidelines.

The experience of EPIC member countries demonstrates that concrete and applicable mechanisms contribute to ensuring equal pay. A number of countries have already introduced mechanisms aimed at identifying, monitoring and reducing the gender pay gap.

Particularly noteworthy practices in this regard include those highlighted here.[46] **In Switzerland**, employers with 100 or more employees are required to conduct an equal pay analysis, have it independently audited and communicate the results to employees. Where inequalities are identified, they must take appropriate measures and repeat the analysis within four years. Switzerland also provides a free online tool, Logib, which helps organizations analyse pay data and identify differences in the remuneration of women and men. **In Iceland**, companies and institutions with 25 or more employees are required to obtain equal pay certification demonstrating that their remuneration system is based on objective criteria and ensures equal remuneration for women and men for equal work or work of equal value.

In Germany, the Pay Transparency Act enables employees to obtain information about the criteria used to determine their remuneration and also about the remuneration for comparable work. Employers also have access to free practical tools, including EG-Check (Entgeltgleichheit-Check), which supports the gender-neutral assessment of pay systems and the value of work and helps identify potential inequalities. **In the United Kingdom,** there is a mandatory gender pay gap reporting system for large employers. Employers publish 14 indicators annually, including mean and median gender pay gaps, bonus gaps and the proportions of women and men at different pay levels. Organizations publish the data on a publicly accessible online platform, increasing pay transparency and employer accountability.

46. Equal Pay International Coalition (EPIC). https://www.equalpayinternationalcoalition.org/en/members?title=&sort_by=newest&members=6

Ensuring equal pay in Georgia requires both strengthening the legislative and institutional framework and introducing practical mechanisms. Although the long-term objective is full implementation of the principle of equal pay for work of equal value, important initial steps can already be taken within the existing legal standard—equal pay for equal work.

One important practical step in this direction could be the implementation of the already developed EPRR tool for the prevention, detection of and response to unequal remuneration in employment in Georgia. The tool would enable employers to analyse pay data and remuneration practices, identify potential inequalities and determine appropriate response measures. Introducing such practical mechanisms would facilitate the effective implementation of existing legal safeguards in Georgia and lay the foundation for establishing a more comprehensive equal pay system.

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