

INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN IN GEORGIA

Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women have been identified as one of twelve critical areas of concern by the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women in September 1995. They play a central role in supporting government-wide mainstreaming of a gender-equality perspective in all policy areas. Institutional mechanisms are required to be located at the highest possible level in government and to be invested with the authority and resources needed to fulfill their mandates.

Institutional mechanisms for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment are present in different branches of power and at different levels in Georgia:



- ① Parliamentary Gender Equality Council (legislative branch);
- ② Inter-Agency Commission on Gender Equality, Violence against Women and Domestic Violence Issues (executive branch);
- ③ The Public Defender's Office (National Human Rights Institution);
- ④ Local government gender equality councils and gender equality focal points (local self-government).

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GENDER EQUALITY COUNCIL OF PARLIAMENT

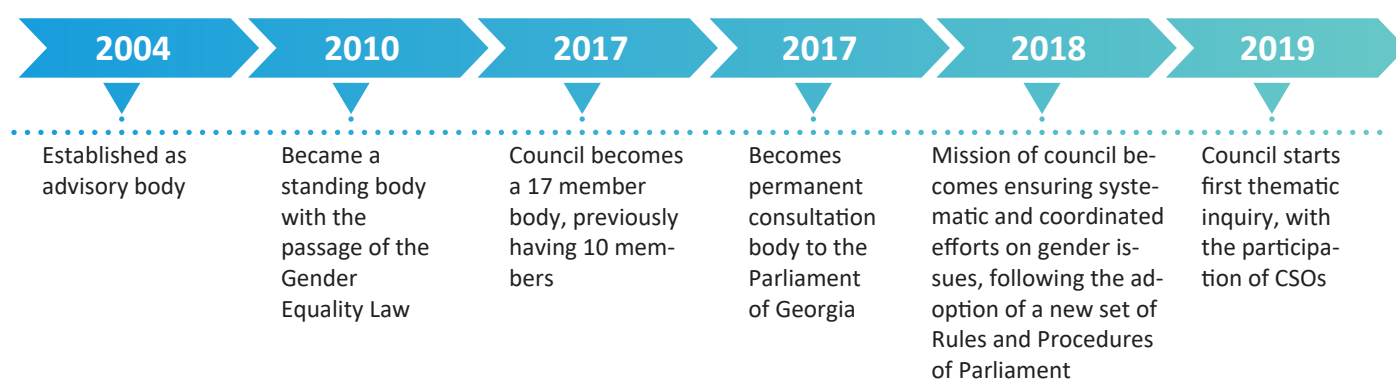
The Parliamentary Gender Equality Council, established in 2004 and later transformed into a standing body in 2010 through the Law on Gender Equality,¹ serves a range of purposes in the fight for gender equality in Georgia. It is uniquely positioned to support the monitoring and oversight of Government's progress towards gender equality given its institutional home in the Parliament of Georgia.

►► The main purpose and functions of the Council include:

- Supporting the Parliament of Georgia to define state policy on gender issues;
- Analyzing the legislation of Georgia and develop proposals for the elimination of gender inequalities;
- Providing gender equality assessments of draft legislation;
- Developing and planning measures to achieve gender equality and to realize the equal rights of men and women;
- Developing and establishing a monitoring and evaluation system for measures aimed at ensuring gender equality;
- Supervising the gender equality activities of the executive government.

►► The Council also has a number of powers, including:

- Summoning representatives of Ministries and State Agencies to Parliament to obtain information;
- Hearing the reports of the Inter-Agency Commission on Gender Equality, Violence against Women and Domestic Violence Issues;
- Requesting information and documents related to the investigation of gender equality issues;
- Considering applications, documentation, and other information related to the violation of gender equality and provide responses and recommendations;
- Overseeing the implementation of the National Action Plan on the Rights of Women and Gender Equality;
- Conducting thematic inquiries on the issues of gender equality and women's empowerment.



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INTER-AGENCY COMMISSION ON GENDER EQUALITY, VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ISSUES

The Inter-Agency Commission on Gender Equality, Violence against Women and Domestic Violence Issues, founded in 2017, is the central unit within executive government on gender equality and women's empowerment. It was established on the basis of Decree N 286 of the Government of Georgia.²

►► The main purposes and functions of the Commission include:

- Promoting gender mainstreaming within the executive government in all policies and programmes;
- Supporting the collection and analysis of gender disaggregated data;
- Coordinating implementation of national action plans on gender equality, violence against women and domestic violence and the UN Security Council Resolution on Women, Peace and Security (UNSCR1325).

►► The Commission has a number of powers including:

- Requesting information from state institutions;
- Creating thematic working groups to develop appropriate recommendations and reporting;
- Drafting proposals and recommendations to present to the Government of Georgia;
- Submitting an annual report on the implementation of UN Security Council Resolutions on gender equality, violence against women, and domestic violence.

The Commission is co-chaired by the Advisor to the Prime Minister on Human Rights and Gender Equality Issues and a Deputy Minister of Justice of Georgia. The Commission further consists of deputy ministers from line ministries/state agencies.

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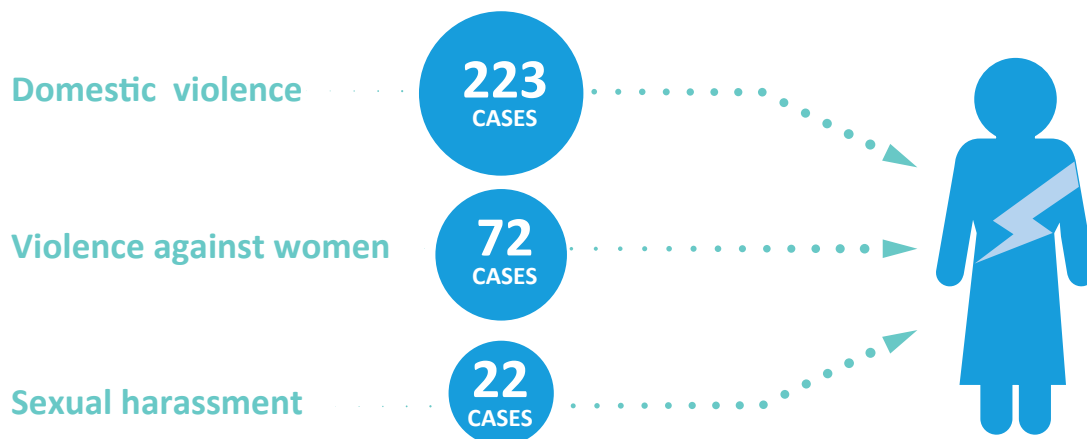
PUBLIC DEFENDER'S OFFICE

The Public Defender's Office (PDO) is the third key institution in Georgia's gender equality architecture legally mandated to monitor protection of gender equality and provide appropriate response to violations of gender equality.³ To implement this work, Gender Equality Department has been set up within the PDO.

►► The main functions and purpose of the PDO as relates gender equality are:

- Supervision of the protection of human rights and freedoms as relates gender equality;
- Supporting the integration of gender equality issues in human rights activities the Public Defender carries out;
- Raising awareness on gender equality in Georgia.

- ▶▶ The PDO has a number of powers as relates gender equality including:
 - ▶ Issuing recommendations and conclusions;
 - ▶ Monitoring the implementation of national and international legislation on gender equality;
 - ▶ Providing input on the use of good practices from national and international experience;
 - ▶ Conducting research on gender equality and women's empowerment;
 - ▶ Promoting awareness of gender equality issues in Georgia;
 - ▶ Issuing annual and special issue reports on women's rights;
 - ▶ Writing thematic amicus curiae briefs.
- ▶▶ In this work, the PDO has:
 - ▶ Reviewed 1449 applications between 2014 and 2019. In 2018, this included:



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INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN AT THE LOCAL LEVEL

The 2010 Law on Gender Equality mandated institutional mechanisms for gender equality at the local government level.⁴ Municipalities are legally required to have gender equality councils, and heads of municipalities must appoint public servants responsible for gender equality issues.

- ▶▶ Municipal gender equality councils are tasked with:
 - ▶ Ensuring systematic work on gender-related issues within their municipality;
 - ▶ Localization of relevant national gender equality policies;
 - ▶ Coordinating collaboration with the Parliamentary Gender Equality Council.
- ▶▶ Public servants responsible for gender equality activities serving under head of municipalities are expected to:
 - ▶ Study gender equality related issues;
 - ▶ Plan gender equality related activities to be performed;
 - ▶ Coordinate relevant events within the municipality.

Endnotes

- 1 Parliament of Georgia. Law on Gender Equality. 2010. Available at: <https://matsne.gov.ge/en/document/view/91624?publication=4>
- 2 Government of Georgia. Decree N286 On Establishment of Interagency Commission on Gender Equality, Violence against Women and Domestic Violence Issues and Approval of its Regulation. 2017. Available at: <https://gecommission.gov.ge/index.php/comission-charter/>
- 3 Parliament of Georgia. Law on Gender Equality. 2010. Available at: <https://matsne.gov.ge/en/document/view/91624?publication=4>
- 4 Ibid.

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