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Gender and Society: Georgia

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The findings and recommendations expressed in this Report are solely those of the author, and do not necessarily represent the views of the UNDP project “Gender and Politics in South Caucasus”.



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List of Abbreviations

AIDS	Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome
BTC	Baku-Tbilisi-Ceychan pipeline
CBOs	Community based organizations
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CSOs	Civil society organizations
EDPRP	Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
ENP	European Neighbourhood Policy
FGPV	Focus group discussions with Internally Displaced Persons in Zugdidi
FGSA	Focus group discussions with Students of Akhaltsikhe University
FGST	Focus group discussions with Students of Tbilisi State University
FGT	Focus group discussions with Self-employed women in Taniant Kari
FGWF	Focus group discussions with the members of Women’s Forum of Local Self-governance
FGYA	Focus group discussions with Youth of Akhalkalaki
FGYM	Focus group discussions with Youth of Marneuli
GES	Gender Equality Strategy of Georgia
GTUA	Georgian Trade Union Amalgamation
HIV	Human immunodeficiency virus
ICFTU	International Confederation of Free Trade Unions
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
ILO	International Labour Office
INT	In-depth interviews
IOM	International Organization for Migration
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MP	Member of Parliament
NAP	National Action Plan
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OSCE/ODHIR	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe / Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
PPP	International dollar
PV	Photo voice
SCP	South Caucasus Pipelines
SIDA	Swedish International Development Agency
SUR	Survey of population on gender issues
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Fund for Population Activities
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
WHO	World Health Organization
WID	Women in Development

Preface

Globally among both young and elderly people, gender is used as a classification between men and women. Gender, as a universal category, serves like a central organizing principal of social life virtually in all cultures (Wharton, 2004). The perception about gender as a category is socially construed i.e., a category that culture creates and perpetuates, and forming expectations associated with it. Gender rests on the biologically determined category of sex. As a visible category, sex speeds up categorization and stereotyping processes. Categorizing people into groups minimizes within group variability and maximizes between group differences (Fiske & Taylor, 1991). Gender operates in a multiple fields-culturally available symbols, normative concepts, social institutions and organizations, and subjective identities (Scott, 1986).

Gender differentiation is universal and characterizes every society, so is gender inequality (Kimmel, 2000). It is based on biology, and its definition varies:

- from one society to another;
- within a culture over a period of time;
- with the maturity of a person;
- between different groups within a culture;
- between individuals.

The existence of gender differentiation is undisputable, although the evaluation and criterion of fairness in the distribution of power and resources based on gender, among men and women is debatable. Critiques of the proponents of women's empowerment often say that women are satisfied with themselves and do not want any changes. It is true that many women do not strive for participation in public life, to acquire more power in family or the society at large, but critiques ignore the fact that in many cases, this is a result of not acknowledging the existence of opportunities due to the upbringing in a traditional and patriarchal manner, or the lack of actual information on existing possibilities. In reality women are often devoid of opportunities to make real and informed choices, and hence escape from their underprivileged condition. As Amaryta Sen (2001) remarks, that women themselves may not be immune from the hold of traditional "masculinist" values, and "what is needed is not just a freedom of action but also freedom of thought" (p.15).

Women account for more than half of the world's population, yet they are extremely underrepresented in elected bodies, in decision making organs of government and in private businesses. Women constitute a majority among poor population, and in a world dominated by men, the masculine nature of almost all societies distinctly visible.

Since the second half of twentieth century, gender equality has been associated with development. The welfare of any society is impossible if half of its members are unhappy. In many parts of the world, the work of women is essential in obtaining food, water, and energy sources, so the development planning should begin from the standpoint of poor women (Sen & Grown, 1987). Men are in more favourable conditions than women in most aspects of life. Hence, development efforts were first of all directed on the empowerment of women, in the programmes launched by UNDP in the seventies, and integrated under the concept of “Women in Development” (WID). The aim of these policies was to develop practical solutions to empower women and to improve their economic and social status (Barker, 2000).

Gender equality is a fundamental human right, which is an essential feature for the development, and welfare of men and women. A summary of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) Programme of Action published by UNFPA in 1994 states that “empowerment of women and improvement of their status are important ends in themselves and are essential for the achievement of sustainable development”.

The decisive steps towards the elimination of discrimination against women were taken after the adoption of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1979, and subsequently 179 countries signed the document by 2004.

The nineties of last century was marked with the shift of the policy of International organizations, and UNDP’s among them, from strategies that mostly focused on the elimination of discrimination against women, to strategies which attended to the different needs of men and women, which integrated under the name Gender Mainstreaming. It is not only fair to satisfy the needs of both men and women, but also due to the numerous and complex linkages, it is impossible to attend to the problems of only one gender in isolation. One example of such linkage is provided by Amaryta Sen, when he discusses the evidence associated with the high incidence of cardiovascular diseases in South Asia, mostly experienced by men due to maternal undernourishment, which leads to foetal growth retardation and underweight babies, resulting in a greater incidence of cardiovascular afflictions much later in adult life (Sen, 2001).

“Mainstreaming a gender perspective is the process of assessing the implications for women and men, of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in any area and at all levels. It is a strategy for making the concerns and experiences of women as well as of men an integral part of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal

spheres, so that women and men benefit equally, and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal of gender mainstreaming is to achieve equality”. - United Nations Economic and Social Council, 1997

Therefore, similar to WID approach, gender mainstreaming aims at the achievement of gender equality, but does this through broadening the scope by encompassing men, and by “the application of gender perspectives to all legal and social norms and standards, to all policy development, research, planning, advocacy, development, implementation and monitoring”(Gender Gap, 2005). As such, apart from being more just, it has the ability to recruit more advocates and become more effective in achieving the well-being for a bigger portion of world’s population. Since women are disadvantaged in many spheres of the life, gender mainstreaming is complemented with women empowerment policies.

Gender equality, which is the underlying theme of the present study, is a value-laden concept and as such its content is debatable. The objectivity in issues related to evaluation and judgement demands open and unrestricted critique, public reasoning and discussion (Sen, 2004). The author of the report does not have an ambition to represent only the truth, but hopes that the study will contribute in introducing gender issues into public discourse and sensitize the reader to gender related problems.

Chapter 1

Study design and purpose

In traditional societies, to which Georgia belongs considerably, public life is considered as men's and private as women's domain. Equality issues, gender related obligations and rights exist differently in these two realms. The report discusses gender issues in public and private lives separately, and addresses gender differences in human and social capital as well. As gender is considered to be culturally constructed, the gender issues among ethnic minorities, Armenian and Azeri communities are reviewed. The long-term impact on the lives of displaced women and men due to Abkhazian conflict is also examined.

Field work was carried out in September-November, 2007.

The report attempts to draw a general picture of the situation in Georgia, from a gender perspective. For achieving this purpose various methodologies have been used:

1. Desk-review.

Various reports and analytical publications on gender in general and particularly on Georgia were analysed. Statistical data whenever possible was collected. The biggest hurdles encountered by the researchers were associated with the collection of statistics. Apart from the booklet published with the support of UNDP (Women and Men in Georgia, 2006), sex disaggregated data is either unavailable or inaccurate.

2. In-depth interviews (INT).

Interviews were conducted with gender experts, state authorities and professionals: Overall, forty seven comprehensive interviews were carried out, mostly in Tbilisi (refer list of participants in Annex IV).

Table 1
Interviewed persons by spheres of occupation

No	Sphere	Male	Female	Total
1	Gender experts	-	12	12
2	Member of the Parliament*	3	4	7
3	Other professionals	1	5	6
4	Government executives	2	3	5
5	Professionals in education	3	2	5
6	Representatives of political parties	1	3	4

7	Trade Union leaders	1	1	2
8	Internally Displaced Persons	1	1	2
9	Business executives, entrepreneurs	-	2	2
10	Journalist	1	-	1
11	Clergyman	1		1
	Total	14	33	47

* A number of consulted members of Parliament were also leaders of political parties

Six different types of interview guides were designed to cover issues, such as participation, gender equality, economic activity, health, education and criminality.

3. Focus-group discussions (FG).

The nine focus group meetings saw an overall participation of 100 individuals, which were held with:

1. Self-employed women in Taniant Kari (FGT);
2. Members of Women’s Forum of Local Self-Governance (FGWF);
3. Internally displaced persons in Zugdidi (FGPV), held twice.
4. Youth of Marneuli (FGYM);
5. Students of Akhaltsikhe University (FGSA);
6. Youth of Akhalkalaki (FGYA);
7. Two groups of students from Tbilisi State University (FGST);

Four types of focus groups guides were used, the first one for women-politicians, the second for the youth and student groups, the third for the self-employed women, and the fourth for internally displaced persons.

Discussions centred on gender equality, role of women in public and private realms, possibilities and hindrances in career achievement, self-employment, and difficulties of daily life.

4. Survey of population on gender issues (SUR).

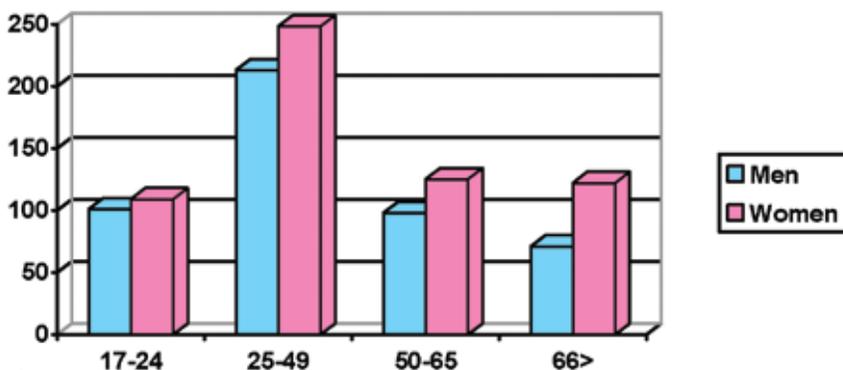
The representative survey of Georgia’s population on gender issues was carried out in all 9 regions of Georgia, including the autonomous Republic of Ajara and the capital

Tbilisi. The hierarchical probability sampling was used ensuring the correspondence of the respondents' demographic features with the distribution of population across gender, age groups living in both rural and urban areas.

The representative sample consisted of 1087 people (44.1 percent male and 55.9 percent female). To be able to conduct separate analyses on the population living in regions inhabited by ethnic minorities, an additional 52 individuals were surveyed in Akhalkalaki and Ninotsminda regions.

Table 2
Distribution of respondents by regions

		Males					Females					Grand total
		17-24	25-49	50-65	66>	Total	17-24	25-49	50-65	66>	Total	
1	Tbilisi	23	49	22	16	110	30	64	30	32	156	266
2	Ajara	9	16	11	6	42	10	20	14	11	55	97
3	Guria	4	9	3	3	19	4	9	4	4	21	40
4	Imereti	18	36	16	9	79	18	41	18	20	97	176
5	Kakheti	10	19	11	7	47	10	22	10	11	53	100
6	Mtskheta-Mtianeti	3	6	3	2	14	3	8	4	3	18	32
7	Racha-Lechkhumi	1	4	1	1	7	1	4		1	6	13
8	Samegrelo	10	23	9	8	50	7	23	15	12	57	107
9	Kvemo Kartli	10	24	10	10	54	13	28	15	15	71	125
10	Shida Kartli	7	16	7	6	36	7	18	9	9	43	79
11	Samtskhe-Javakheti	6	11	5	3	25	6	11	6	4	27	52
	Total	101	213	98	71	483	109	248	125	122	604	1087
	Additional for Akhalkalaki and Ninotsminda	6	11	5	3	25	6	11	6	4	27	52
	Grand Total	107	224	103	74	508	115	259	131	126	631	1139



Graph 1
Distribution of respondents by gender and age groups

Among the surveyed population, married persons constituted the majority at 55.7 percent, 3.2 percent were cohabitating couples, 25.0 percent were single and 4.0 percent were either divorced or separated.

Georgians constituted the overwhelming majority at 90.3 percent of the surveyed followed by Armenians at 4.0 percent, Azeris at 2.0 percent and remaining ethnicities at 3.7 percent.

According to the survey, 91.1 percent belonged to the Georgian Orthodox Church, 3.9 percent were Muslim, 2.9 percent were Gregorian, and 2.2 percent belonged to other denominations.

Interestingly, the survey revealed that women and men did not differ in their educational status. Among the surveyed, 46.7 percent men and 47.5 percent women, either had University (complete or incomplete) or higher (post-graduate, PHD.) education.

The majority of the surveyed were conversant with Georgian language (94.8 percent), with men and women not differing much in this respect. Though, more men (72.0 percent) were able to converse in Russian than women (66.9 percent).

The “Questionnaire” consisted of 151 questions and was specially designed for the purpose of the study, with questions mostly referring to:

- values and attitudes of the population on gender equality;
- family roles and family power structure;
- attitudes towards the education of boys and girls, their possible career paths and capacities;
- accepted behavioural patterns of men and women, their obligations, and perceptions on features attractive in women and men;
- attitudes towards women in politics and top level management.

The respondents were reached at their homes, and face to face interviews were con-

ducted by experienced interviewers. The interviews lasted from 20 to 40 minutes.

5. Photo voice (PV).

Photo voice is an innovative participatory action research method developed by Wang and Burris (Wang, Burris & Ping, 1996). It is based on the assumption that people are experts of their own lives. Taking pictures and narrating the stories behind them aims at informing interested parties about issues of concern at the grassroots level (Wang, Cash & Powers, 2000). Fifteen Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Zugdidi, consisting of 6 men and 9 women were given a camera and asked to take pictures of a day reflecting their daily lives. The group was assembled twice, the first occasion for explaining the assignment and instructing how to use the camera, and the second occasion for narrating the stories behind the pictures taken. The specific advantage of the method lies in looking at the events from insider's view, or from the so called "emic" perspective (Strack, Magill & McDonough, 2004).

More than 300 pictures were taken. On an average, 10 photographs per respondent were selected for storytelling. In a group setting, with the help of a moderator, the IDPs told the stories behind the pictures and discussed the difficulties they encounter in their daily lives.

Chapter 2

Equality

Equality is a cross-cutting and recurring theme in the discourse on gender. It is defined as “that stage of human social development at which the rights, responsibilities and opportunities of individuals will not be determined by the fact of being male or female” (Lopez-Claros, and Zahidi, 2005. p.1). Equality is linked with power, the power to make decisions and to control resources; it is manifested in all spheres of life, regardless of being public or private, and is reflected in human and social capital.

Notwithstanding the changes, gender still serves as a status characteristic, being a male is largely considered more valued than being a female (Wharton, 2004).

Gender equality and women’s empowerment is declared by Millennium Declaration as an “effective pathway for combating poverty, hunger and disease, and for stimulating truly sustainable development”.

The urgency of attending to gender related problems in Georgia is evident. The population growth rate in the country has been steadily declining during past two decades due to a combination of expatriation, fall in life-expectancy, economic pressures causing to limit family size and rising number of couples experiencing infertility (review and analysis of reproductive health legislation and policy in Georgia, 2005). The demographic problems facing Georgia require urgent and radical solutions, which is impossible without paying attention to gender related problems. Inequality manifests itself through low representation of women in elected and executive bodies, abundance of women in informal and low paid sector of employment, in the alarming rise of substance dependence, criminality and casualties in traffic accidents among men.

The change in political system from authoritarian to democracy, by itself does not warrant gender equality. In many cases transitional period brings much more inequalities and worsens the conditions of both, men and women (Hawkesworth, 2002). Since declaring independence in 1991, Georgia underwent through much turmoil in form of ethnic wars in Ossetia and Abkhazia, forceful acquisition of power, civil war and revolution in a decade and a half adversely reflected on the well-being of population. Policies related to structural changes had a negative impact, resulting in further impoverishment of the population. On the background of economic disparity, over 250,000 displaced people were left homeless and living in dismal conditions for a decade. The problem of gender equality is perceived by both, the authorities and population as imposed by international aid agencies, at best it is considered as something alien, not necessary for Georgia, and at worse it is considered as being aimed at destroying the traditional way of living.

Legal framework warrants gender equality. Men and women in Georgia have equal rights spelled out in the constitution and the laws.

In keeping with the country's endeavour towards European integration and sharing of universal values, since 1994, Georgia has been a signatory of major international conventions and treaties based on human-rights approach to gender equality. It has adhered to several requirements outlined in these documents, but the manner in which it was carried out, involving sneer, cynicism and confrontation at the adoption of the Law on Domestic Violence, apart from postponing funds allocation for the enactment of different articles of the laws concerning gender issues, and low participation of women in elected and executive bodies at all levels of governance, gives rise to the assumption that compliance to international documents is simply formal and merely aimed at publicity, and not on achieving progress.

Calendar of state machineries

State actions pertaining to gender issues commenced in 1994 in Georgia, when the country became party of "The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women" (CEDAW).

1994

September 22, Georgia signed "The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women" (CEDAW).

1995

September, 15. Georgia participated in the fourth UN World Conference on Women's Issues "Action for Equality, Development and Peace", which included the presentation of the country report by non-government organizations of Georgia. As a result of the conference, the Governments of 189 states, Georgia among them, agreed and adopted a five year action plan for the advancement and empowerment of women, which is also known as Beijing Platform of Action, for granting women more opportunities and creating conditions for its accomplishment.

1997

"Women in the Development" (1997-2000), a joint project of UNDP and the Government of Georgia was launched. The project aimed at raising awareness on gender equality and the cooperation with the government for outlining gender equality policy.

November, 27. Presidential Decree No. 593, to prepare a report on the Beijing Platform of Action in 2000

National Action Plan aimed at the implementation of Beijing Action Platform was prepared.

1998

February, 20. By the Presidential Decree, No48, a “State Commission on Elaboration of the State Policy for Women’s Advancement” was established. The commission was conceived as the principal monitoring organ for the implementation of the State Gender Policy. The Commission was headed by Rusudan Beridze, then Deputy Secretary of the National Security Council of Georgia on Human Rights Issues, which consisted of 24 members (eighteen women and six men), representatives of the Parliament, government and non-government organizations.

April, 24. The conference “Women and Society” adopted the “National Action Plan for Improving Women’s Conditions in Georgia for 1998-2000”, drafted by the State Commission. The plan spelled out the following priorities:

- establishment of institutional mechanisms;
- increase of women’s role and participation in decision-making process;
- economic policy;
- women and poverty;
- women and armed conflicts;
- women and health improvement;
- women’s rights.

June, 18. The Action plan was approved by the Presidential Decree No 308. It dealt with seven out of twelve issues listed in the Beijing Platform of Action. The issues elaborated in national plan included:

- establishment of institutional mechanisms;
- increase of women’s participation in decision-making;
- economic policy;
- women and poverty;
- women and armed conflicts;
- women and health;
- women’s rights.

1999

August, 28. By Presidential Decree No 511 “On Measures for Strengthening the Protection of the Human Rights of Women”- the State Commission elaborated and allocated tasks to 13 governmental bodies, aimed at the advancement of women’s rights and improvement of women’s conditions in the country.

First periodic report on the implementation of “The Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination of All Forms against Women” (CEDAW) was heard.

The report was prepared by a group of experts under the instructions from the Deputy Secretary for Human Rights Protection of the National Security Council of Georgia, pursuant to Presidential Decree No. 593 of November, 27 1997.

“Shadow report” on the implementation of CEDAW, prepared by NGOs was submitted.

August, 28. By Presidential Decree No 64, the Action Plan for 2000-2002 to combat the violence against women was adopted. The Action Plan was prepared by the State Commission based on the comments of CEDAW committee members.

2000

February, 25. Presidential Decree No 64, approving the Three Year Plan (2000-2002) on Combating Violence against Women.

August, 28. Presidential Decree was passed, on the extension of the implementation period for the Plan of Action for improving Women’s conditions till 2004.

September, 8. At the Millennium Summit in New York, 189 countries of the world, including Georgia committed itself on attaining the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) by the year 2015. Gender is a cross-cutting issue of all MDG, but specifically two goals, No 3 and No5 refer directly to gender issues.

The eight identified MDG were adjusted to the Georgian context, with relevant targets being elaborated for each goal, in addition, country specific indicators for each target were introduced.

According to the adjusted MDG 3: Promote gender equality and empower women, two target areas were identified:

Target 8: Ensure gender equality in employment

Target 9: Ensure equal access to activity in the political arena and at all levels of management

MDG 5: Improve maternal health

Target 11: Reduce the maternal mortality ratio by three-quarters, between 2000 and 2015

2003

Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (EDPRP) of Georgia

was adopted in March. Although the document contains description of gender related factors, it does not elaborate them.

In August, the non-government organizations working on gender issues came up with an initiative to the Parliament on the introduction of quota system in political parties. The proposal was ignored by the deputies with only 67 out of 235 MPs participating in the voting procedure.

2004

With the support of UNDP, the first national report “Millennium Development Goals in Georgia”, mentioning gender issues was published

August, 15. Joint UNDP and Parliament of Georgia project: “Gender and Politics in South Caucasus” was launched.

August, 30. By Decree No109 of the State Minister of Georgia on European and Euro-Atlantic Integration, an ad hoc working group was established, for developing recommendations on the creation of an efficient institutional mechanism for gender equality.

October, 27. By Decree No105/3 of the Parliament Speaker, and the support of UNDP project “Gender and Politics in South Caucasus”, the Gender Equality Advisory Council under the Parliament Speaker was established. The Advisory Council is headed by the speaker and consists of seventeen members, which include seven members of the Parliament (Chairperson of the Parliament, MPs from National Movement and New Rights party), three representatives of government structures (from Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Affairs, Office of the State Minister of Georgia for European Integration, National Security Council and Georgian Public Defenders office), and six persons representing non-state sector. The Council’s mandate is to formulate and monitor implementation of State Gender Policy, review legislation from gender perspective, and ensure conformity of the laws to international norms and standards related to gender equality.

2005

June, 28. By Decree No109 of the Government of Georgia, and the initiative of non-government organizations, “The Temporary Government Commission for Gender Equality” was established. Similar to the Advisory Council, it consisted of the members of the Parliament, representatives of government structures and non-state sector, with an overall representation of 15 members, of which 4 were NGO representatives. The Commission was tasked to elaborate a national concept and plan for achieving gender equality within a period of one year.

2006

In February, with the support of various UN agencies (UNDP, UNIFEM and UNFPA), the Commission and Advisory Council established a working group consisting of several members of the Commission and Advisory Council, as well as, government representatives, members of women's NGOs, and a member of the Human Rights Ombudsman's Office. The working group prepared the Gender Equality Strategy of Georgia (GES). The GES contains the state concept on gender equality; Three year Action Plan; and recommendations for the creation of permanent gender equality mechanisms for monitoring and coordination.

July, 24. The Parliament adopted the State Concept on Gender Equality.

April, 28. The Parliament adopted the Law on Combating Human Trade (trafficking).

May, 25. The Parliament adopted a Law on the Elimination of Domestic Violence, Protection and Support to its Victims.

The Labour Code was adopted in May. Although, it would be worth mentioning that several articles of the code contradicted with international standards, such as restrictions on the rights of employees, and maternity leave being shorter in duration than what was determined in the earlier code.

In the same period of time, the government adopted the Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking.

In September, the draft of the three-year National Action Plan (NAP) on the implementation of the State Concept on Gender Equality was presented to the Cabinet of Ministers.

November, 14. The Action Plan of European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) came into force. The plan does not elaborate gender equality issues.

The Temporary Government Commission was dissolved.

2007

In May, the responsibility for coordinating gender equality issues in the executive branch of the government was transferred to the Office of State Minister for Reforms Coordination.

July, 30. The Activity Plan for 2007-2008 to Combat and Prevent Domestic Violence was adopted.

August, 20. Under the order No 97/3 Gender Advisory Council under the chair of the Parliament has been renewed. Among its members, six are MPs.

September, 26. The final draft of three-year National Action Plan (2007-2009) was prepared and adopted by the Government Decree No539, which covered the following issues:

- creation of interdisciplinary commission on gender equality;
- formulation of legal basis for gender equality;
- increasing public awareness on gender issues through popularization and dissemination of information on gender issues;
- changing gender related stereotypes at all levels of education system with a new vision oriented at gender equality.

September, 26. By Decree No 211, the Interdisciplinary Commission on Gender Equality was established. The ten member commission comprising representatives of government agencies was headed by Kakha Bendukidze, then the State Minister for Reforms Coordination. The aims of the commission were defined as the following:

- developing State Gender Equality Policy;
- monitoring State Gender Equality Policy;
- monitoring the implementation of National Gender Equality Action Plan;
- discussion of issues related to gender equality;
- appointing gender focal points in ministries.

But commission never has been assembled.

Gender inequality

Gender inequality reveals itself in the attitudes held towards equality, to men and women, in actual participation of women and men in public life, in the power they possess plus the resources they control and freedoms they enjoy, as well as in human capital – health and education.

Recent assessment of the gender equality situation in the country, *The Reality – Women’s Equal Rights and Equal Opportunities in Georgia* (Sanikidze, et al., 2006), indicates that despite equality on legal ground, gender equality is far from being achieved in Georgia.

Nevertheless, gender inequality is not considered as a major issue in Georgia, with many men and a number of successful women sharing the view that equality is not a problem.

A majority (45.4 percent) of the surveyed (SUR) believe that men and women are equal in Georgia, while 42.1 percent believes that women are oppressed, while 5.5 percent holds the opinion that men fall into that category, and 6.9 percent has no definite answer. There is a significant gender difference in the assessment of equality, in comparison more men (50.9 percent) than women (41.1 percent) believe in the existence of equality (Chi square 27.6; df 3, p<001).

Society in general views gender equality as something imposed, rather than being real or a necessity. According to the female expert Tamar Sabedashvili, the reason for such attitude can be traced back to Soviet legacy. In the Soviet era, liberation of women was considered exaggerated and problems related to equality were associated with capitalism, something alien to the population.

The other reason being, the conception that gender equality issues are financed by foreign donor organizations, and consequently they are not perceived as an integral part of the local society, but as something imported. Around one third of interviewed persons (INT) noted that equality does not exist, although this was not always negatively assessed:

“Equality is not good. God made world by hierarchical order. The artificial equality of women and men makes women unfortunate” (Male notary)

The meaning of gender equality was analysed by Irakli Pachulia, a male person heading a vocational school as:

“What we call equality has different meanings, if it means that women and men have to perform the same kind of physical work, then this is not right. Even in the context of family, men and women compliment with each other, and the question of equality is quite ambiguous. Men and women have their own obligations which they have to fulfil. If inequality means that women are oppressed, then in my opinion they are not”.

Tamar Abramishvili, a female gender expert critically assessed the gender equality situation, as:

“Gender equality is the main feature of democracy, but we are moving very slowly towards it. Inequality is everywhere in the society.”

Concerns on gender equality among Azeri minority (FGYM) inhabiting Kvemo Kartli region of Georgia, were raised in focus group discussions where all the participants admitted that there was no gender equality, but the difference was in the evaluation. Most young men considered the subversion of women as normal. Like a young man said:

“According to Caucasian mentality woman is always in the background. This is rooted deep in family”.

However, some young women in the group protested and asserted their desire for more independence and employment to defend their rights. One of the female participants went far as expressing her readiness to sacrifice the family for a career:

“I want equality in the family and not that only men have all the rights. I cannot be happy in such a scenario. I prefer to make the choice myself and defending my own rights”.

The students of Akhaltsikhe University (FGSA) were not unanimous in their opinion on gender equality, although some acknowledged its existence; there were many that indicated it only existed as a law, and far from being accomplished in reality. Nonetheless, it was unanimously agreed that inequality was more prevalent in rural than in urban areas. Prejudice against women was candidly expressed as one of the young men noted:

“A man is one step ahead of woman in all spheres”.

While female student underlined the significance of gender difference:

“Women should be equally involved in public life as women and men think differently”.

Students of Tbilisi State University (FGST), similar to their counterparts in Akhaltsikhe, were convinced about the nonexistence of equality in Georgia, and in comparison to women, men enjoy much more freedom and rights. They also pointed out that men in their ambition to be a leader always try to dominate women. As a male participant noted;

“In Georgia men are always dominant, they always occupy higher positions than women”.

“It is from ancient times that man has been the boss. Men and not woman went to war, cultivated land and worked, while woman stayed at home and looked after children”.

“Women and men do not have equal opportunities. Be it career or other spheres. Equality is illusory and far from real. We should define exactly what equality means, because the possibility may exist for both sexes to be equal, but the arena and conditions for this to happen do not exist” - Male MP, Nika Rurua.

Although, men and women are equal on legal grounds in Georgia, many people that were consulted pointed out to the discrepancy between legal and factual equality.

“Legally women and men are equal, and laws protect women from discrimination, moreover, traditionally women have always been respected, but in reality as everywhere in the world, life is masculine and oriented on men, so that woman is in no way equal to man” - Member of Women’s Advisory Council Baia Romelashvili.

However, five of the people consulted believed in the existence of factual equality:

“When I look at my private life and at people around me, I see equality in all spheres. I think gender problem does not exist in Georgia, and men and women are equal”- Female government executive Eka Zguladze.

Gender stereotypes

Gender identity is more important for women than men. It is assumed that women are characterised more with warmth, expressiveness and concern for others, while men are characterised more with instrumentality, dominance and assertiveness (Deaux and Major, 2000).

Women are seen as more dependent and men as more independent. The attitude was revealed in the evaluations of the respondents (SUR) on the reasons for failure in career achievement. While the biggest share of the surveyed attributed the lack of effort in men’s failure (34.9 percent compared to 27.4 percent in case of women), women’s failure was mostly attributed to the attitude of their superiors, and moreover they were presumed underestimated by the authority (31.3 percent for women and 17.0 percent attributed the same reason for men’s failure). Such attitude is shared by both men and women.

Another stereotype of men being strong and woman weak was underlined by a female participant of focus group in Akhaltsikhe:

“The stereotype exists of man being strong and women being weak and emotional. But this does not mean that it is so in reality”.

Gender preferences

Perception of men’s superiority over women in general, prevails among men (SUR). When compared to 69.0 percent of women, only 44.7 percent of men disagree with the statement that men as a rule do everything better than women (The gender difference is significant, Chi square 65.4; df 2, p<001).

Family is considered as the women’s realm. The importance of family to women is manifested firstly in the expression by the majority (56.1 percent) preferring a traditional role of women responsible for upbringing children, rather than being busy building a career (although this expression is preferred more by men at 65.6 percent than women at 48.5 percent .Chi square 33.9; df 2, p<001), and in the conviction shared by 63.7 percent that woman is valued more for her family, rather than for her career advancements. In this case as well, more men (68.1 percent) tend to agree than women (60.2 percent) (Chi square 8.6; df 2, p<05).

The majority (71.4 percent) concur with the statement that it is better for everyone, when a man takes up a job and woman tends to the house. The gender difference is significant (Chi square 40.0; df 2, $p < 001$), more men (79.8 percent) than women (64.7 percent) agree to this statement.

Preference to males is evident in many attitudes. It is expressed in the desire of having a son, rather than a daughter -70.7% of men and 48.3% of women express such attitude (Chi square 75.6; df 2, $p < 001$), in the preference to employ men over women- 55.1% of men and 37.2% of women express such preference.

Power and freedom

Culturally varying interpretations shape the expectations of activities appropriate for women and men to perform. “[They are] structuring divisions of labour and social space, constraining opportunities, choices and actions available, organizational and social roles, routines and policies, serve and promote men’s interests and normalize male power, often rendering women’s needs and interests invisible. Gender power operates through prohibitions, exclusions, denigrations, and devaluations that circumscribe women’s lives. Gender power is embedded in a system of values that privilege men by celebrating characteristics traditionally associated with maleness, and devaluing characteristics associated with women (Hawkesworth, 2006).

Gender inequality is manifested in norms regulating the power of decision making and resource allocation.

The answer to the question as to who should decide how many children the family should have (SUR) is equality oriented, to which an overwhelming majority of 88.5 percent considered that this should be a common decision of spouses.

The attitude towards father’s influence in the family is to some extent divided. The bigger share of respondents (48.2 percent) think that fathers should not have more authority over children than mothers, and although men and women do not differ in such opinion, yet a considerable amount of the surveyed (46.4 percent) accords more authority to men.

Power to control resources in both, public and private lives mostly rests with men (INT).

“Inequality is first of all expressed in the ownership and control of resources, and these resources are mainly controlled by men”- Female gender expert Charita Jashi.

“Inequality is widespread in the society. Large numbers of women are in the areas where there is not much money available”- Female gender expert Tamar Abramishvili.

Women and men are not unanimous when the decision concerns woman's freedom to spend her own income independently (SUR). Far more women (70.6 percent) than men (52.5 percent) think women can enjoy that privilege (Chi square 37.6; df23, p<001). While more men are granted the same freedom by both men (66.5 percent) and women (66.1 percent) alike.

Freedom to choose a spouse is granted equally to men and women. Both women and men consider that the boys (93.1 percent) and girls (92.8 percent) should marry by love and not arrangement.

The need of more freedom was raised during the focus group discussion in Akhalkalaki (FGYA), an area inhabited mostly by ethnic Armenians.

A young woman noted that girls do not have freedom, while another admitted that she herself does not know what freedom means, and that something intermediate needed to be established, which would not make one feel like being in prison and at the same time not going beyond mores.

Another female participant linked freedom with self-esteem, saying:

"Women are not self-confident and hence have difficulties in making decisions, which is precisely the reason why men have more freedom".

Several participants, mostly girls observed that traditions restricted freedom of woman, and only proper upbringing could change the situation as well as the mentality.

Inequality is especially evident in family. Female participants of the focus group discussion in Akhaltsikhe (FGSA) complained that being girls they are restricted to go out during late hours, boys are preferably provided the possibilities to attain education, and everything in the family belongs to boys, since it is assumed that a girl would marry and hence does not require anything.

The roots of inequality and the reasons for inequality.

Justification of gender inequality is embedded in both the teachings and practices of the world's religions (Deckard, 1975). In almost all major religions, during wedding ceremonies woman verbally or in a symbolic manner expresses her readiness to be obedient to her husband.

Lay priests are likely to be men, even though more women are constantly involved in the religious activities.

The importance of masculinity is manifested in everyday discourse when prominent women in public life are characterized by manly features or are praised as being like men.

"Even in the case of Tamar Mephe's name, patriarchy is evident. This still persists, and generations will needed to change such conception"- Female head of NGO Tamar Zhvania.

Traditions crystallized in stereotypes to a considerable extent are responsible for the women's subordination:

"According to stereotype woman is passive, not employed and her principal domain is family, while man is actively involved in professions"- Male MP Nika Rurua.

Subordination is perpetuated through culture and upbringing.

"We tell even a small boy that he should not cry as it is not appropriate for a boy, that he should be strong, etc"- Guguli Magradze, female MP.

"General developmental level and economic hardships in the country are perceived as the reasons behind inequality. Women do not have the conditions for harnessing their capacities"- Charita Jashi, female gender expert.

"People today do not think about gender inequality because they do not have time for it, as they are busy with getting something to eat for tomorrow" - Marina Tabukashvili, female gender expert.

In compared to men, the environment for women to develop their capacities is much less supportive. Consequently women need to put in more effort to achieve success.

"Women generally need to put in much more effort than men to realize her rights"- Guguli Magradze, female MP.

The reasons behind inequality are often attributed to women rather than to society.

Many see women as passive and consider passivity the main reason of inequality. However, at the same time active women are looked upon negatively.

"In Georgia, the role of men's and women's work is segregated. There exists a sceptical attitude towards active women" - Khatuna Sanikidze, female gender expert.

Women are often blamed for being apprehensive about independence:

"Women consider it inappropriate to go past her husband or contradict her brother, because they are apprehensive of being independent"- Tamar Zhvania, female head of NGO.

Attitude towards inequality and the extent of inequality varies by age. Young people as a rule hold more egalitarian attitudes than older generation.

"The younger generation has more possibilities for equality. Young women are more active today than our mothers were at their age" - Nika Rurua, male MP.

“The extent of inequality varies from one region to another, as well as among rural and urban population. Inequality is much higher in rural and areas inhabited by ethnic minorities” - Tamar Zhvania, female head of NGO.

Educational status and religion often determines the attitude towards equality. Major factor being gender itself because women perceive inequality more than men.

“Women see inequality, men do not” - Dalila Khorava, female government executive.

Changes in equality and their reasons.

Positive changes concerning gender equality have been observed, as indicated by interviewed persons (INT):

“Increasingly women’s opinions are taken into consideration. This has happened primarily due to the fact that during economic crises women managed to salvage families, men were mostly unable to do anything. Even today, in many families it is women that work and not men” - Marina Agishahsvili, female owner of a small scale business.

“Change in the attitude towards equality can be observed only recently, since it became a bit shameful to express stereotypical thoughts. Besides, more women are visible in public spheres. However, the problem is that in the process, women acquires many of the traditionally male roles, like providing for the family, building a career, although traditionally women’s roles, such as looking after the family and caring for ill as well as the elderly are not prestigious enough to be taken up by males, and consequently are done mostly by women” - Lela Khomeriki, female gender expert.

“Women’s struggle for more active life, involvement in public life and leadership is a result of the country’s striving for European values” - Mamuka Akhvlediani, male government executive.

Key issues

Gender inequality, especially in the area of public and family life is acknowledged as a reality, but not as a problem. Inequality is rather viewed as an element of cultural heritage. This attitude is shared by the population at large and by the authorities.

As a demonstration to the country’s striving for universal values and European integration, Georgia is a party to every significant global documents targeted at the achievement of gender equality. Legal framework is gender neutral, it does not allow discrimination based on gender, but the compliance to international documents or domestic laws is of a formal character, the main activities for combating discrimination are not supported by budget lines. Although Parliamentary Advisory Board with the support of

International organizations (SIDA and UNDP) has been functioning within its mandate implementation of NAP has not begun due to established executive body not being functioning. Key policy documents such as PRSP and ENP are not targeting on gender issues, and furthermore there is no permanent state body with a mandate to promote and monitor gender equality.

The progress towards attitude of equality is acknowledged by persons consulted. It is most evident among young and urban population.

The situation with gender should not be viewed in isolation, but as a part of a broader issue, the issue of values. The core reason seems to be the neglect of Human's Rights issues in the country, which is demonstrated in other fields as well apart from gender equality, and is reflected in a number of reports of international and local organizations (Ombudsman's report 2007). Until person's rights and welfare, and not economic efficiency become the central value and guiding principle of country's development policy, drastic changes on the road to gender equality and meeting the goals set up by MDG can not to be expected.

Gender in Public realm

Chapter 3

Participation in public life

One of the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) initiated in New York in September, 8, 2000 and to be achieved by 2015, to which Georgia is a signatory, directly refers to gender equality. Target 9 of the goal requires ensuring equal access of women and men in activities related to politics and in all levels of management.

Participation in public life and politics in particular, is one of the indicators of the overall equality and democracy in a country.

The population of Georgia has a keen interest in politics and public life in general. However, the problem which repeatedly brings the masses to street protest actions is the perception of helplessness and their inability to influence important decisions for the country.

According to the survey (SUR) the majority (82.4 percent) of men and women alike, are interested in politics, and 95.3 percent regularly follow the news on TV. The most popular TV news was on Imedi, followed by Rustavi 2 channel.

Table 3

List of TV news ranked by popularity among viewers

No	TV news	Percentage No 1034
1	Kronika (Imedi)	89.1
2	Kurieri (Rustavi 2)	66.2
3	Moambe (Public TV)	24.5
4	Russian TV stations	19.4
5	Mzera (Mze)	18.9
6	Local TV station	12.7
7	Akhali ambebi (Adjara TV)	10.7
8	Azeri TV stations	2.4
9	Armenian TV station	2.2
10	Turkish TV stations	0.2

Apart from hosting the most popular news on TV, Imedi channel was also the leader in airing TV programmes on politics and public issues.

Table 4
List of TV programmes ranked by popularity

No	TV news	Percentage No 1087
1	Droeba (Imedi)	84.4
2	Reakcia (Imedi)	72.1
3	Gia eteri (Imedi)	65.5
4	Post scriptum (Rustavi 2)	51.1
5	Talk-show (Rustavi 2)	25.4
6	Tabu (Mze)	15.4
7	Dgis comentari (Public TV)	8.2
8	Gamis saubrebi (Public tv)	6.4

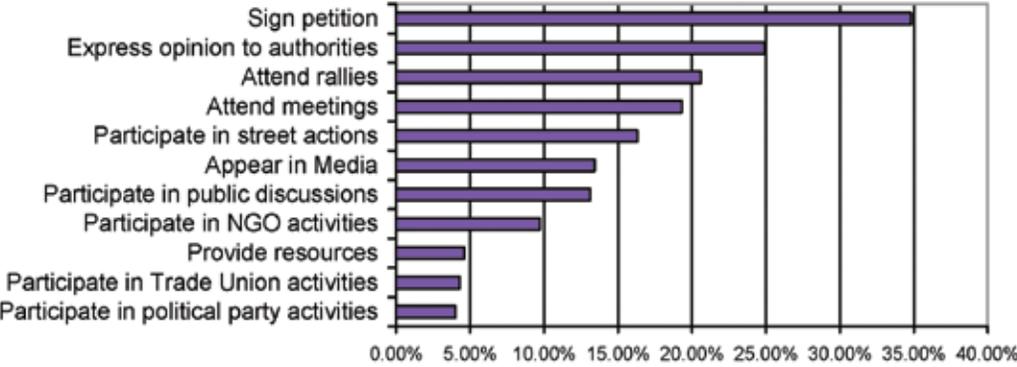
Number of people reading newspapers was far less in comparison to those following the news on TV; the readership among men was slightly higher than among women, with men preferring Rezonansi, 24 Saati and other local newspapers, and women favouring more for Alia and Kviris palitra.

Table 5
Newspaper readership

No	TV news	Percentage No 1087	Male percentage No 479	Female percentage No 608
1	Kviris palitra	22.1	21.0	23.0
2	Asaval-dasavali	8.6	8.8	8.4
3	Local newspaper	6.9	7.5	6.5
4	Alia	6.5	5.4	7.3
5	Rezonansi	6.2	8.2	4.6
6	24 saati	5.5	6.1	5.1
7	Kronika	4.2	4.4	4.1
8	Sitkva da saqme	2.3	2.3	2.3
9	Akhali taoba	1.7	1.7	1.6
10	Akhali versia	1.7	1.7	1.8
11	Georgian Times	1.1	0.8	1.3

Second only to the interest in public life, the country’s population expresses a strong desire in participation, but as mentioned earlier, this need combined with the feeling of helplessness to influence decision makers, to a great extent accounts for the population partaking in street actions, which is evident since autumn 2007. According to the answers to survey questions (SUR) 57.8 percent of the population, men and women share the opinion that the problems facing Georgia could be solved only with the participation of the people, however, among them less than a third (29.2 percent) feel that people like them can influence the decisions made by the government.

Despite having similar need for participation, men and women prefer different approaches for its realization. Upon checking the list of activities that a person could engage in case of violation of her or his rights, women selected less active means, such as attending meetings (20.6 percent of women and 17.7 percent of men) and signing petitions (36.3 percent of women and 32.8 percent of men), on the other hand men opted more intensive means, such as street actions (18.2 percent of men and 14.8 percent of women) and attending rallies (21.5 percent of men and 19.9 percent of women).



Graph 2
Activities undertaken in case of violation of rights

Actual participation of the population is much less than the readiness to do something. Only 7.8 percent of the surveyed reported taking part in any collective action from January till October, 2007. Men participate in more activities than women, with 10.7 percent of men and 5.5 percent of women taking part in collective action at least once in the given period (Chi square 9.5;df 2; p<.05).

Women in politics

Women all over the world were actively involved in the initial and most dangerous stages of democratization, organizing against oppressive regimes, mobilizing, standing publicly against the authoritarian rule (Jaquette and Wolchik, 1998). Women's participation was high in street demonstrations demanding independence of Georgia from the Soviet Union (Sabadashvili, 2007), in street actions preceding "Rose Revolution" and in the events of October -November 2007.

In Georgia, women's activity in public life can be traced back to its history. The most often cited example is King Tamar, a female monarch with whom the glorious period of the country is associated. Women were the initiators of the rebellion against the Ottoman Empire in South of Georgia. Muslim women defended the town of Akhaltsikhe from the united Georgian and Russian army.

Today many women can be seen in manifestations or busy in pre-electoral activities. The problem does not lie in the low participation of women, but in the discrepancy of power between the interest and the activities of women and as their representation in decision-making bodies.

Georgian legislation grants equal voting rights to men and women. Women and men voters are equally active, both in rural and urban areas (Millennium Development Goals in Georgia, 2004), however, equality is very far from desired in respect to who is elected at any level of governance. It can be definitely stated that women's participation in politics and decision-making in the country is very limited and lags far behind the UN set goal of 30 percent.

Gender in politics has two sides, and although separate, they are associated with each other. One is women's representation and the other is concern for women's issues. Representation increases the likelihood for considering women's issues as well as brings in gender perspective; however representation on its own cannot guarantee the desired outcome.

"Simply representation in due quantities in politics or Parliament is not enough, even when these could be representatives of women's movement. The movement should bear its leaders who will be motivated to make the voices of women audible, and should not think that to speak about women's needs in front of an audience or Parliament is a shame. Today these issues are marginalized and considered as shameful" - interview with a female gender expert Marina Tabukashvili.

The importance and positive impact of women's participation was unequivocally de-

clared by all experts and political leaders interviewed (Interviews), as well as by the participants of focus group discussions (FG) carried out in the framework of the project. Individuals and interviewed people mentioned several following reasons for the importance of female participation in politics:

Prerequisites of democracy:

Equality is the foundation of democracy.

“The society consists of men and women, so both should be represented in decision-making - interview with female MP, Manana Nachkebia along with one of the senior male executives of the National Movement Irakli Kavtaradze.

“Everything has two origins, male and female, all problems refer to both sexes therefore the opinions of both should be considered” - participant of a focus group in women’s forum on women members of Sakrebulo local governance.

Another interviewed noted:

“The perfect democracy presents possibility to every member of the society to express its opinion and participate in the decision-making. This means that if half of the society consists of women, and in the Parliament we have only 10 percent of them, we can conclude that we are not on a right path” - interview with a male executive of the National Movement, Irakli Kavtaradze.

Decision-making style of women

“Many consider women to be more pragmatic, constructive, and less unpredictable (Male MP Kakha Kukava, female MP Ketii Makharashvili and female politician Marina Muskhelishvili).

Although some consider emotions as an advantage, that plays a greater role in the decision making of women, compared to men” - Dalila Khorava, female government executive.

Issues attended by women

Focusing on issues traditionally considered as women’s.

“Women’s participation will ensure that issues important for women, such as preschool and school education will be attended” - Charita Jashi, female gender expert.

Cooperative attitude

Prevalence of co-operative attitude found among women.

“Women create more cooperative atmosphere, which leads to more balanced and peaceful solutions” - male participant of the Tbilisi University students’ focus group.

“Women should listen to each other, it will make them think about the problems together”- female participant of Marneuli youth, (FGYM).

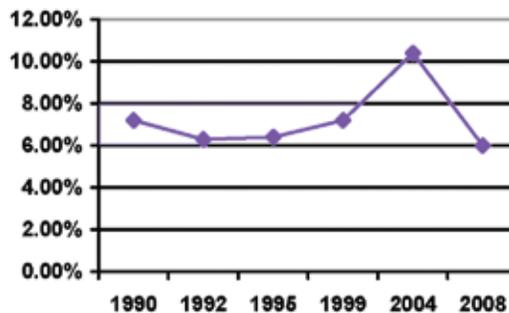
Opposing opinions in form of negative attitude towards active involvement of women were also voiced, although in a converted fashion. As a young man in focus group discussion in Akhalkalaki declared:

“Woman can enter politics, if she does not have ambitions”- (FGYA).

As far as public opinion is concerned, the results of the survey (SUA) indicate that gender difference in preference for greater involvement of women in politics is considerably more among women (54.7 percent) than men (39.1 percent) and believe that the country could only gain from women's participation (Chi Square 25.7; df 2; $p < .001$). However, representatives of both genders express preference for a male Presidential candidate, although men significantly outnumber women in such preference. In case of having similar characteristics only 9.2 percent of men and 21.5 percent of women are ready to vote for a female candidate (Chi Square 25.7; df 2; $p < .001$).

Women in Parliament

Women account for 59.0 percent of the electorate, but the level of women's participation in legislative organ since the independence of the country is relatively low. Georgian Parliament of 2004 consisted of 235 members elected by combined, majoritary one mandate (85) and proportional (150) vote. In the 2004 Parliament, there were only 23 women representatives, comprising merely 10.4 percent of the Parliament members. The share of women in 2008 Parliament dramatically decreased to 6 percent elected, indicating the lowest point in the history of Georgian Parliamentarism. The factual share of women is even less as two women MP from Opposition parties – Eka Beselia and Pikria Chikhradze, refused to take mandates.



Graph 3

Share of women in country's legislative organ (Supreme Council of 1990 and Parliament of 1992, 1995, 1999, 2004, 2008).

Georgian Parliament is elected by combined, proportional and majoritary system. For women politicians it is extremely difficult to be elected as majoritary deputies. Among the 71 MPs elected by majoritary mandate in 2004, only three, i.e. 4.2 percent were women (Nino Burjanadze, Sopio Lartsuliani and Nana Patarkatsishvili) and only one (Rusudan Kervalishvili) in 2008. Women's odds were slightly better in the proportional system, although in party lists women candidates usually occupy bottom positions. The probability to obtain seat is higher in case when there is small party fragmentation in the Parliament and one party gets many seats. Even though this was the case with the 2004 and 2008 Parliaments, yet among the elected deputies through proportional system women constituted only 13.3 percent in 2004 and 5.3 percent in 2008.

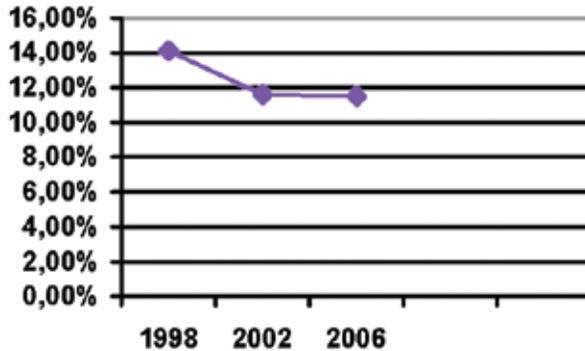
In contrast to the low representation of women, the positions they held in the office were impressive. Since 2001 Nino Burjanadze has been the Speaker of the Parliament. Out of 13 Parliamentary Committees 3 were chaired by women, Elene Tevdoradze chairs the Committee of Human Rights and Civil Integration, Khatuna Gogorishvili chairs the Procedural Issues and Rules Committee, and Nino Nakashidze chairs the Integration with Europe Committee. Among 25 deputy chairpersons 4 were women (Human Rights and Civil Integration, European Integration, Judicial Issues and Foreign Relations Committee). The majority faction of the Parliament, National Movement-Democrats was chaired by a woman Maia Nadiradze, and the remaining seven factions were chaired by men. The tradition continues and in 2008 Rusudan Kervalishvili is the Deputy Chair of the parliament, Khatuna Gogorishvili continues to chair the Procedural Issues and Rules Committee. Three more women, Magda Anikashvili, Eka Kherkheulidze and Khatuna Ochiauri are deputy chairs of the Committees of Health and Social Issues, of Human Rights and Civil Integration and of Education, Science and Culture.

The prospect of considerable increase of gender equality in the Parliament does not exist in the coming years, as the difference between the lowest and the highest representation during the last one and a half decade is only 2.2 percent, therefore attaining the UN set goal of 30 percent without special efforts seems improbable.

The presence of women's issues in the political agenda is comparatively worse than the issue of representation, and very seldom grabs the attention of the Parliamentarians. As correctly noted by the interviewed female gender expert, in this area activities of women deputies do not differ much from the activities of their male colleagues.

Women in local self-governance

Compared to Parliament, the situation with women's representation in the local self-governance is relatively better. In the local elections of 2006, 11.5 percent of the elected were women. The percentage of elected women has decreased since 1998, most probably due to the changes in Electoral Law.



Graph 4
Women in local governance

The number of village Sakrebulo or local councils, which is the lowest level and where a large number of women are represented decreased in 2002. By the same law, Sakrebulo in the regions were formed not by direct voting, but as an associate organ comprising of the heads of local government units of lower level, i.e. village, community, small town or town.

In 2006 the number of local governance units fell from 998 to 75, elections were held by mixed system, proportional and a single mandate majoritary system, which meant that for a candidate to win, he or she should get majority of the votes – a very difficult task to be achieved by women. Among the deputies elected by proportional system in 2006, women constituted 16.3 percent and in comparison nearly half among majoritarian deputies at 8.3 percent.

All three local self-governance elections, held after the independence of the country demonstrated a similar trend: The bigger and more important the administrative unit, the smaller the representation of women (e.g. in 1998 women representation was at 15 percent in village Sakrebulo, 13 percent in daba Sakrebulo, 9 percent in regional Sakrebulo and 7.4 percent in town Sakrebulo).

As a result, in the 2006 elections, none of the cities had woman as a mayor. Among the 37 members of Tbilisi Sakrebulo, 25 were elected by proportional and 12 by majoritary system, of which only 5 were women. Furthermore, none of the 66 Gamgebeli or local administration heads are women; women comprise merely 5.5 percent of the chair positions in local councils - Sakrebulo.

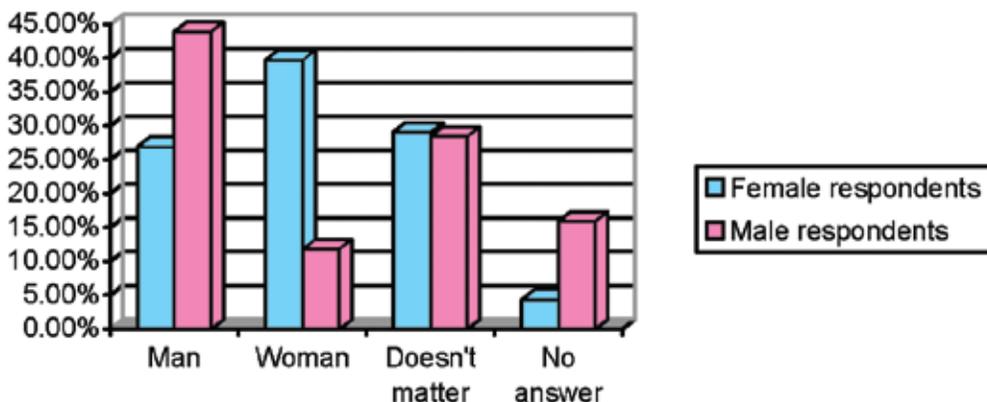
In 2006, the highest percentages of women were elected in conflict regions (64.3 percent in upper Abkhazeti and 21.4 percent in Liakhvi election districts); in contrast, the percentages of women were at the lowest in regions inhabited by ethnic minorities. In Marneuli, women comprised only 1.9 percent and in Bolnisi 4.7 percent.

Involvement of women in self-governance was even considered by many experts and politicians interviewed as being more important, than women's participation in the Parliament.

"It's very important to involve women in the local self-government since the population is more connected to the council members" - interview with a female member of women's council, Baia Romelashvili.

Prior to the local elections in October 5 2006, a survey was carried out in different regions of Georgia in the same year to study the community awareness with regards to elections, and its attitude towards the role of women in self-governance. Overall, 603 people were surveyed and the results unequivocally demonstrated low participation of the population in the process of solving local problems. Only 13.9 percent (8.9 percent of men and 5.0 percent of women) indicated as being involved. On questions pertaining to the presence of women in government bodies, more than half the respondents (58.7 percent, of which 50.6 percent men and 67.4 percent women) considered it necessary or desirable for women's further representation in government structures. Family commitments, traditions, and lack of desire and experience were most frequently mentioned as the main impediments for women's participation in politics. It is noteworthy that more women (38.4 percent) than men (33.5 percent) cited family commitments as obstacles to greater participation. Moreover, 53.7 percent of the surveyed pointed out to the existing differences in the working style of women and men politicians, with more women (60.3 percent) being convinced than men (51.5 percent) on the existence of such differences.

Women (39.7 percent) declared their preference to women candidates in elections, regardless of Parliamentary, Presidential or local, while men chose to vote for men (43.9 percent). Approximately equal percentage of both sexes (29.1 percent of women and 28.4 percent of men) confirmed that gender was not a decisive factor in their voting choice.



Graph 5
Preference to the gender of the candidates in elections

Results of the public opinion poll on women’s participation in local self-governance. 2006 Survey report

Women in executive bodies

Prior to 2004, there were only 2 female ministers in the government (Minister for Environment Protection and Minister of Culture). The new leadership that took the office in 2004 stressed the need of a broader representation of women in political life. In line with such statement, the Cabinet of Ministers formed in 2004 included four female ministers (Tamar Lebanidze, Minister for Environment Protection, Tamar Sulukhia, Minister of Infrastructure, Eter Astemirova, Minister of Displaced Persons and Accommodation, and Tamar Beruchashvili –State Minister for Integration with Europe). Subsequently one more women, Salome Zurabashvili was appointed as the Minister of Foreign Affairs. Therefore at that period of time females comprised 20 percent of the cabinet. However, by December 2007 there were only two female ministers remaining, Zinaida Bestaeva, State Minister of Civil Integration and Eka Tkeshelashvili, Minister of Justice. Out of 46 deputy ministers 9 or 19.6 percent were women. In Cabinet of Ministers, approved in November 2008 there the two female ministers, Eka Tkeshelashvili, minister of Foreign Affairs and Eka Sharashidze, Minister of Economics.

Among the employees of 10 Ministries and Diplomatic representations of Georgia abroad in 2007, women constituted 51.8 percent, which is more than half of the total strength, but in the decision-making organs of these ministries, the share of women was only 27.8 percent (Report of sociological study, 2007).

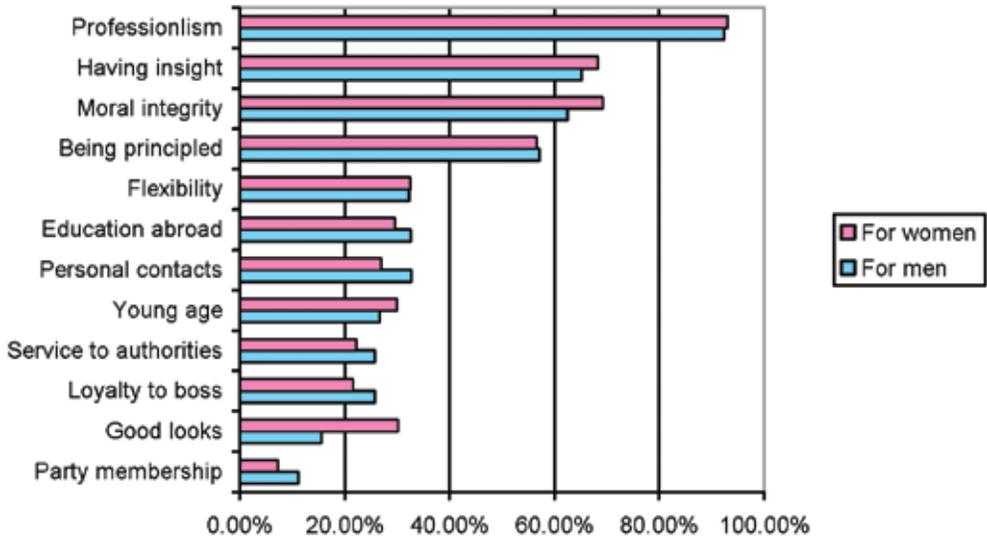
Public attitude towards a broader representation of women in the Cabinet of Ministers is comparatively less positive, than the attitude towards their representation in the elected

bodies. Majority of experts and politicians interviewed, express their preference to see women as deputy ministers, rather than ministers (female head of NGO, Tamar Jvania), since in their opinion women have a better capacity to do routine work, while men have better vision. Others consider that women are not active enough (interview with male MP, Zurab Tkemaladze). There are many, who think that the gender of a minister is not an important issue, and that the main requirement is professionalism (interview with female politician Marina Muskhelishvili). It is not the gender of the minister, but the ability to make decisions from gender perspective that is mentioned as the important characteristic for taking the office:

“The main thing is to pursue a balanced policy, to take into an account different views, to consider the problems from gender perspective, and in that case it does not matter whether the minister is a woman or a man. Therefore, the main objective is to have a strategy built on equality” - interview with gender expert, Khatuna Sanikidze.

Indeed, the survey data (SUR) indicated that the population predominantly evaluates the characteristics needed by men and women to occupy high level positions in state institutions, in the same manner.

Four out of the five qualities considered as most important: professionalism, insightful, moral integrity, and being principled are common for both men and women. The fifth essential quality for men is to possess good personal contacts, and for women it is flexibility. Although in features evaluated as less important for taking up high level position, the criteria for men and women are different. For example, physical attractiveness and moral integrity are considered to be more essential for women, whereas personal contacts, loyalty to supervisor and party membership are perceived to be more important for men.



Graph 6
Features desired for occupying high level positions in state institutions

Gender in political parties

Gender policy of political parties, as well as interest and attention to gender related issues in the society to a considerable extent determine women’s participation in political activities on national and local levels. There are 180 parties in the country (Political Landscape of Georgia, 2006). Among the visible parties, three are led by women, specifically “Forward Georgia” by Salome Zurabishvili, “Imedi” by Irina Sarishvili and the newly created “Women’s party” by Guguli Magradze. Which was established just before the 2008 Parliamentary elections and . The only women’s party was created just before the Parliamentary elections, but united in an election block with other two parties .

Precise information about the number of people affiliated to political parties is generally unattainable, especially the percentage of women among them. Majority of the interviewed party leaders admitted that they were not aware of the exact number of women members in their parties (interview with MP Kakha Kukava male leader of Conservative Party, Tina Khidasheli female leader of Republican Party, and male MP Zurab Tkemaladze of Industrialists party).

According to the Nationwide Survey (Sumbadze, 2007), only 4.7 percent of the population (5.2 percent of men and 3.6 percent of women) are the party members.

Women are associated with all parties in some way or another, they mostly carry out the everyday work of the party, but as a rule they mainly occupy low managerial level, and their representation in party's decision making bodies is on an average 9 percent (Political Landscape of Georgia, 2006).

“Women rarely take part in concept designing and decision-making in general. Only a handful of women are sometimes symbolically represented in high echelons of the party. They usually are characterized by male colleagues as having male qualities, and are complimented with words such as manly or brave”- interview with a female gender expert, Khatuna Sanikidze.

Even on the backdrop of common practice, there exist parties that differ by their interest in gender issues and representation of women in their top structures. Women account for half of the 4000 active members in the New Rights Party, they are also well represented in their Parliament faction, where they comprise a third of its total strength (interview with a female MP, M.Nachkebia). Republican Party has two women at its helm (interview with one of the female leaders of Republican Party, Tina Khidasheli). Among nine founding members of the newly established party “Free Georgia”, five are women (interview with one of the female party leaders, MP Ketik Makharashvili). In the leadership of Labour Party, two are women (interview with a female member of the party Nana Devadze). Among 10 Tbilisi district organization leaders of the Industrial Party, half are women (interview with the male head of the party, MP Zurab Tkemaladze). Compared to other parties, Forward Georgia has more women holding top positions, probably due to the fact that the leader of the party is a woman (Female member of the party, Marina Muskhelishvili).

Party lists for the 2008 Parliamentary Election does not point towards any improvement in the participation of women at the helm of party affairs. In the lists of 12 registered entities for elections, i.e. election blocks and independent parties, merely 9.2 percent women occupied the positions from 1 to 10 of party lists, 20.8 percent were on positions from 11 to 20, and 15.0 percent on positions from 21 to 30. Collectively, women comprised 25.5 percent of party lists, but as discussed earlier very few had the probability to get elected. Among the nominated majoritary candidates, women comprised 10.1 percent. The biggest number was nominated by the Labour Party (10 candidates), the unified block of Women's Party (10 candidates), and Republican Party (9 candidates).

It seems, as a rule a few specific and second-rate jobs are secured for women (interview with a female member of women's council Baia Romelashvili). Women are usually engaged in carrying out the entire electoral process, checking the lists of electorate, going from door to door conducting promotional campaigns for party candidates, and performing secretarial duties in election commissions (interview with male MPs, Kakha Kukava and Zurab Tkemaladze, and female gender experts Marina Tabukashvili and Khatuna Sanikidze). In contrast, the election administration of the New Rights Party is actually dominated by women, as they comprise 70 percent of the administration (Political Landscape of Georgia, 2006).

Besides participation, the parties' concern for gender is reflected in having women's division focusing on women electorate and lobbying for women's issues.

Several parties such as, The New Rights, Industrialists, Labour, Conservative, and Republican have women's division (Political Landscape of Georgia, 2006), (interviews with female MP, Manana Nachkepia, Tina Khidasheli one of the female leaders of Republican party, male MP, Zurab Tkemaladze, and female member of labour party Nana Devadze).

The Industrialists Party, apart from having a women's division since 1993, the wives of the party members have formed a women's club which is mainly engaged in humanitarian work (interview with male MP, Zurab Tkemaladze)

The New Rights Party also has women's club since its inception in 2002. It aims to increase party's electorate and intensively works on the preparation of women politicians for their engagement in local and national politics (interview with a female MP Manana Nachkepia). Labour Party on the other hand has a women's council (interview with a female member of the party Nana Devadze).

The Republican Party has a unit which develops strategies for increasing political activities of women and for the defence of their interests (<http://www.republicans.ge/>). The strategy conceptualizes support of women's participation through raising awareness of the population on gender issues, supporting women's participation in the decision-making structures of the party, providing solution for women's problems, and championing the need of bringing gender component into politics.

Irrespective this, none of the interviewed party leaders indicated to the presence of women's issues in their party manifesto. With the exception of New Rights and Labour Party, none of the parties focus on women as an electorate group, since they do not see the necessity to do so. As one of the male MP noted:

“In Georgia people vote according to family solidarity”

His statement is presumably based on the assumption that a male member of the family makes the decision.

The study on the activities of the leading political parties in Georgia revealed that party members are not too familiar with gender issues. The parties do not have in their agenda to draw women into politics (Political Landscape of Georgia, 2006).

Expectations towards women and men politicians

Interviewed experts and politicians expressed their expectations towards women and men politicians (Interviews). Many indicated that they did not differentiate by gender and expected women and men leaders alike to have the same qualities of being - honest, responsible, intelligent, able to communicate with the public, well educated, analytical, patriot, concerned with people’s problems, and having a good perspective on what needs to be done, as well as the resources to be utilized (interviews with Female MP Ketik Makharashvili, gender experts Lela Khomeriki, and Charita Jashi, and female government executive Dalila Khorava). However, there were still selected features which were expected more specifically from either women or men.

Expectations were high for women politicians on being principled, of service to people’s interest, impartial and stable, diplomatic and peaceful, calm and collective, warm and caring, flexible and compromising, a listener and having a vision (interviews with a male government executive Uruzmak Karkusov, a female Judge of Appeals Court Rusudan Chanturidze, a male executive of National Movement Irakli Kavtaradze, a female MP, Ketevan Makharashvili, a female member of Labour Party Nana Devadze, a female head of NGO Tamar Zvania, a male head of vocational school Irakli Pachulia, a female member of women’s council Baia Romelashvili, and a female entrepreneur Marina Agushashvili). Experts are convinced that for a woman to be successful, she should not look down on her gender, and suffer from a complex of being a woman (interview with a female government executive Eka Zguladze). Women should be a combination of being a good politician and a good housewife (male teacher of a vocational school). Women should possess feminine features and should never forget that she is a woman (Interviews with female government executive Dalila Khorava, and male MP, Zurab Tkemaladze). Woman politician should be self confident and believe in herself that she is a good politician (interview with a female head of NGO Tamar Jvania). In contrast to men-politicians, experts expect women politicians to bring social issues to the surface and support policies that increase social security (interview with a male member of women’s council). They are expected to defend women’s rights, to pay more attention to mothers with multiple children, and to assist women in career achievements (interview with a female patrol officer Lia Barkauli).

On the other hand, men politicians are expected to be charismatic, principled, daring and less dependent on their social environment, strict, able to make quick decisions in

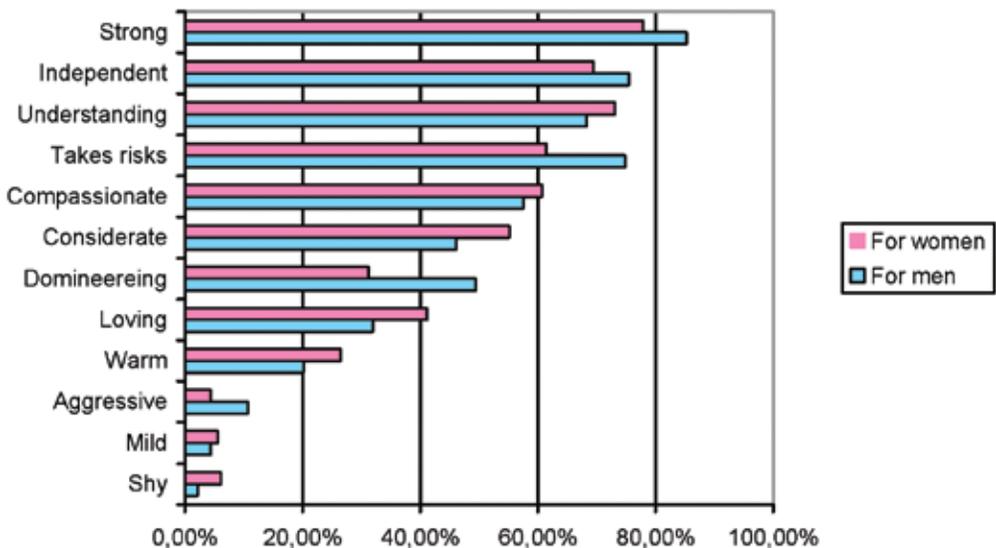
composure, able to carry out radical reforms and to have a good foresight (interviews with a male executive of National Movement Irakli Kavtaradze, a female school teacher Nana Kemularia, a female government executive Maka Mdivan, and the male head of a vocational school Zaza Tsiramua).

Comparing men and women politicians, an expert says:

“Men are closed-minded, they choose some ideas without considering the possibilities of its implementation, and do not pay attention to the environment, while women are better aware of the situation, they do not think in an unrealistic manner and are more pragmatic in politics”- Marina Muskhelishvili, female politician.

Features needed to be politician

Respondents of the survey (SUR) considered the same features mentioned above to be important for both, men and women politicians, although in a slightly different order. The most essential features for men are considered to be strong, independent, daring, persistent and understanding, and for women to be strong, independent, understanding, persistent and daring. The features perceived to be necessary for men, but much less required of women politicians are the ability to take risks, be domineering and make decisions at ease, at the same time women politicians are expected more to be considerate, warm and understanding.

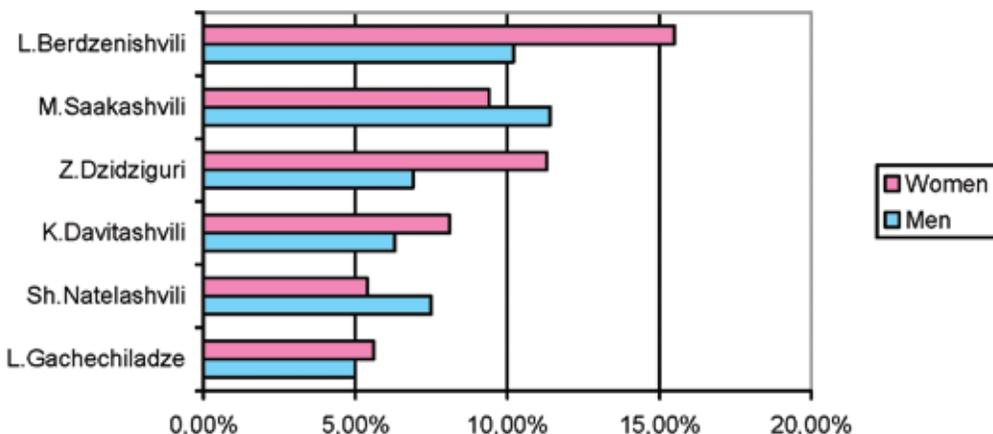


Graph 7
The desired features for male and female politicians

Trust towards politicians

Respondents of the survey (SUR) were requested to name up to five of each, men and women politicians who enjoyed their trust. More names of men (23) than women (20) politicians were mentioned. The most trusted men politicians are Levan Berdzenishvili, Mikhail Saakashvili, Zviad Dzidziguri, Koba Davitashvili and Shalva Natelashvili.

Women and men differ in their preferences, the most trusted politician for men being Mikhail Saakashvili and for women Levan Berdzenishvili.



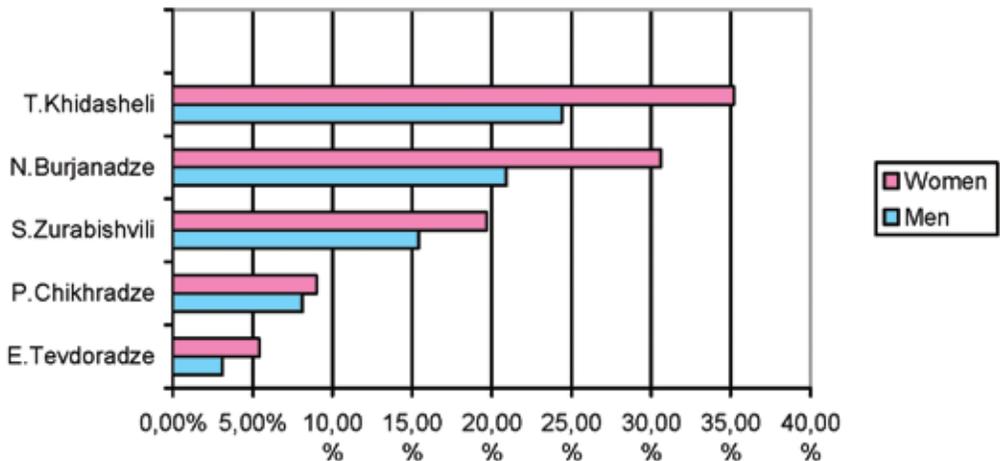
Graph 8
The most trusted male politicians

Table 6
List of men politicians ranked in the order of the trust they enjoy

Rank	Politician	Named by men % No 479	Named by women % No 608	Total % No 1087
1	Berdzenishvili, Levan	10.2	15.5	12.9
2	Saakashvili, Mikhail	11.1	9.4	10.1
3	Dzidziguri, Zviad	6.9	11.3	9.4
4	Davitashvili, Koba	6.3	8.1	7.3
5	Natelashvili, Shalva	7.5	5.4	6.3
6.5	Gachechiladze, Levan	5.0	5.6	5.3
6.5	Khaindrava, Goga	6.1	4.8	5.3

8	Okruashvili, Irakli	4.0	5.3	4.7
9	Berdzenishvili, Dato	3.7	4.8	4.3
10	Patarkatsishvili, Badri	2.7	2.0	2.3
11	Kukava, Kakha	2.3	3.3	2.8
12	Usupashvili, David	1.9	3.1	2.6
13	Gamsakhurdia, Konstantin	1.2	2.1	1.7
14	Ugulava, Gigi	0.8	1.6	1.3
15	Subari, Sozar	1.2	0.8	1.0
16	Maisashvili, Giorgi	1.0	0.6	0.8
17	Gurgenidze, Lado	0.6	1.0	0.8
18	Zurabishvili, David	0.2	1.1	0.7
19	Subeliani, Koba	0.6	0.8	0.7
20	Bagaturia, Jondi	0.6	0.8	0.7
21	Patiaashvili, Jumber	0.4	0.6	0.5
22	Khaindrava, Ivlian	0.6	0.8	0.5
23	Tsereteli, Gigi	0.4	0.6	0.5

The most trusted and mentioned among women-politicians were: Tina Khidasheli, Nino Burjanadze, Salome Zurabishvili, Pikria Chikhradze, Elene Tevdoradze, Eka Beselia, Maia Nadiradze, Manana Nachkepia, Nestan Kirtadze and Ana Dolidze. Women and men expressed their trust on the same top five women-politicians.



Graph 9
The most trusted female politicians

Table 7**List of women-politicians ranked in the order of being trustworthy**

Rank	Politician	Named by men percentage No 479	Named by women percentage No 608	Total percentage No 1087
1	Khidasheli, Tina	24.4	35.2	30.4
2	Burjanadze, Nino	20.9	30.6	26.3
3	Zurabishvili, Salome	15.4	19.7	17.8
4	Chikhradze, Pikria	8.1	9.0	8.6
5	Tevdoradze, Elen	3.1	5.4	4.4
6	Beselia, Eka	3.1	3.9	3.6
7	Nadiradze, Maia	2.3	2.6	2.5
8	Nachkepia, Manana	1.2	1.5	1.4
9	Kirtadze, Nestan	1.2	1.3	1.3
10	Dolidze, Ana	1.0	0.6	0.8
11	Magradze, Guguli	0.2	1.0	0.6
12	Kalandadze, Nino	0.2	0.8	0.5
14	Aronia, Nazi	0.6	0.3	0.4
14	Verulashvili, Eka	0.4	0.3	0.4
14	Samadashvili, Salome0.	0.2	0.3	0.3
18	Gogorishvili, Khatuna	0.2	0.2	0.09
18	Sarishvili, Irina	0.2	0.2	0.09
18	Tlashadze, Teo	0.2	0.2	0.09
18	Lazashvili, Natia	0.2	0.2	0.09
18	Archvadze,Manana	0.2	0.2	0.09

Reasons behind low involvement of women in the process of decision-making

Reasons behind under-representation of women in the process of decision-making can be attributed to different sources. These reasons can be found in women themselves, i.e. in their capabilities and desire to pursue political career, their family responsibilities, their financial and time constraints, as well as in the wider environment, such as, economic conditions of the country, state policy and cultural traditions.

Reasons attributed to women

Several consulted people indicated at the lack of desire to engage in political life, and low self-esteem as the primary reasons for low representation of women (interview with a female MP Elena Tevdoradze, one of the female leaders of the Republican Party, Tina Khidasheli, and gender expert Lika Nadaraia).

“The main factor is the lack of desire in woman to become a politician” - young man among the focus group discussion with the students of Tbilisi State University, FGST.

However, this notion was refuted by a young woman participant of the focus group discussion in Akhalkaki, stressing that women should not be blamed for this:

“A woman is brought up in such a way that she does not have the desire to enter politics. She has the mentality that the place of a woman is at home”- FGYA.

Some members of focus group discussions pointed out at the lack of human resources and low capacity of women, especially evident in regions as the reason behind women’s under involvement, while others spoke of features, such as being dependent, cautious and unwilling to take risks as factors deterring women from getting involved into politics or carrying out an independent policy.

“Women are brought into politics; they do not come on their own. You cannot find a woman politician in Georgia who came into politics on her ambitions or for a message she wants to convey. That is why they repeat the messages of those who brought them into politics”- female gender expert Lela Gaprindashvili.

Several experts and politicians, as well as focus group participants discussed yet another, but a very vital resource in their view that women generally lack, which is finances, as one of the main reasons hampering women’s involvement in politics (interviews with a female MP Ketii Makharashvili, a male MP Kakha Kukava, gender expert Lika Nadaraia, and a female Head of NGO Tamar Zvania).

Reasons attributed to family life

The majority of interviewed and focus group participants mentioned the lack of time associated with family burden, as the main determinant for low participation (interviews with a female MP Ketii Makharashvili, a male MP Kakha Kukava, gender expert Lika Nadaraia, female Head of NGO Tamar Zvania, and female gender expert Charita Jashi) - Political Landscape of Georgia, 2006.

As a young woman participant of focus group discussion in Akhalkalaki noted:

“Men have more time, so they can interact with people and be a part of the society. Women are less active in public”- FGYA.

It was stressed that unlike men, women lack the possibility to devote all their time and energy into political activities, and to travel extensively (interview with a male MP, Zurab Tkemaladze).

Reasons attributed to the surroundings

Several reasons behind low participation beyond the personal control of women were named:

First of all, the economic condition in the country which does not allow for hiring help at home was mentioned by many.

In addition, cultural traditions and stereotypes restricting women's activities in public domain were named as one of the main causes, preventing women's involvement in public life (interviews with a female MP, Ketik Makharashvili, a female gender expert Lika Nadaraia, a male MP Nika Rurua, and a female politician Marina Muskhelishvili).

The absence of women's movement and a potential leader (interview with a gender expert Tamar Abramishvili):

“Not having a serious political leader with finances, international contacts and strong character”- Lika Nadaraia, female gender expert.

Ways to increase participation

People consulted named several means for increasing the involvement of women in public life. Yet again, as in the case of reasons for low involvement, the solutions can be found in women themselves, within their family and their environment as a whole.

Women

Experts and focus group participants, to begin with pointed out to the need of measures to motivate women's involvement (interviews with a male executive of National Movement Irakli Kavtaradze, a female MP Ketik Makharashvili, and a female gender expert Nato Shavlakadze).

They also spoke of the necessity for women to become more active:

“Women should become more active, combat stereotypes, put forward the problems they are facing, and reveal injustice and inequality in the society”- Nika Rurua, male MP.

However, it was evident that the need for capacity building was perceived as the principle issue among the participants of the study.

“The work should begin at grassroots level and special measures should be taken to increase women's capacity. This inevitably will result in the emergence of women on higher levels”- a female participant at a focus group meeting of forum of women of Sakrebulo members, FGWF.

Formal education and training are seen as essential elements on the path to capacity building (interviews with female gender experts Nata Shavlakadze, Tamar Abramishvili and Khatuna Sanikidze).

“The education of women is the way to activate women, which in turn will lead to their greater involvement in political life” - Tamar Abramishvili, female gender expert.

Besides providing education, the necessity of creating conditions for increasing women’s competence was also underlined:

“Women do not lack activity, but of course they need to increase competence, for which special efforts should be made, meetings and discussions should be organized, as well as giving women the opportunity to speak in front of large audiences” - Charita Jashi, female gender expert.

Family

As mentioned above, Family burden was named by many respondents as one of the major factors hampering women’s participation in public life. Therefore reducing the burden through state policies, as well as changing existing stereotypes and sharing family responsibilities among the spouses were seen as effective ways for increasing participation.

“The remedy lies in reducing family burdens on women by increasing men’s involvement in family work and improvement of social conditions. There are no reasons why woman in productive age should sit at home. But she has to do so, because there is no other way out. When conditions become favourable, women’s participation will increase too. The example of such a change is in the non state and media sector, where there are ample opportunities for women to earn enough to have somebody to look after their children” - a female leader of Republican Party, Tina Khidasheli.

“By the age of 40 when the reproductive goals are already achieved, women become very active in public life. The state should create favourable conditions for enhancing their activity by providing possibilities for child care, or the husbands should share responsibilities on upbringing” - Baia Romelashvili, female member of women’s council.

The students at the focus group meeting in Tbilisi State University underlined the need for finances and male support:

“Woman needs finances and support of her husband or father to become a politician” - FGST.

Environment

State policy

Several members of focus group discussions, as well as experts mentioned the commitment of the state and the existence of coherent state policies targeted at the involvement of women, as being key to woman's participation:

“Only increasing the number of women in the Parliament will not bring in the results. Gender politics should be realized at all levels. To achieve gender equality we should begin by more representation of males as teachers in basic education” - Marina Tabukashvili, female gender expert.

Increasing awareness on gender issues to change stereotypes

According to experts an increase in women's involvement is only possible when the sensitivity of the society towards gender issues is increased, and stereotype of women depicting her as being predominantly active in private domain is changed:

“The stereotypes should be changed at school, through the projection women as role models in leadership”- Marina Muskhelishvili, female politician.

Improvement of the overall environment in the country by making it just, more free and liberal

Both, interviewed men and women consider societal transformations as the key issue for increasing participation. Improvement of the situation in the country, especially the economic condition of the population, will eventually contribute to the greater involvement of women. At the same time the society should become more tolerant to such changes as well.

“Women should be given more possibilities to be free and independent to express their own ideas and take appropriate steps. However, to achieve this, they should be stimulated to enter politics by forming public opinion through PR campaign. The more the involvement of women in politics, the better”- Charita Jashi, a female gender expert.

“Woman should be valued for her work, which should be the factor determining her political career, and not money or personal connections”- Lika Nadaraia, female gender expert.

Creation of associations, movements, and increasing the level of democracy in the parties

Establishing various kinds of women's associations, movements and clubs supporting the involvement of women in their public activities is seen as a necessary step towards increasing women's participation, by experts and focus group participants alike.

“As a result of strengthening women’s organizations and attracting funding, leaders will emerge from those successful in uniting women’s organizations on a common platform, to create women’s movement, to organize education for women and begin public debates on gender issues”- Lika Nadaraia, female gender expert.

Strengthening of professional unions is seen as another way:

“Strengthening professional unions over time will promote women as leaders, although this requires time and money” - participant of focus group of women Sakrebulo members.

The need of democratization of the political parties and the realization of gender equality policy in them was also underlined:

“Changes should take place in political parties. If they are not democratically governed, not allowing women’s participation, it is almost impossible for them to behave in a democratic fashion when they come to power”- female gender expert Tamar Abamishvili.

“Political parties should become instruments of political interests of the society, and not of a particular group. Such a change will open the doors both for men and women”- Lela Khomeriki, female gender expert.

Introducing quotas

Internationally, the introduction of quotas is the most widespread way for increasing participation. This is considered as the best temporary measure for countries where democracy is not yet fully developed.

Attitude of experts and politicians, among both men and women alike are almost overwhelmingly against taking such a measure in Georgia (interviews with a female MP Elene Tevdoradze, female politician Tina Khidasheli, male executive of National Movement Irakli Kavtaradze, and male MP Nika Rurua) - (Political Landscape of Georgia, 2006).

Various reasons were cited for the negative attitude towards quota system. However, the extent of unwillingness among both knowledgeable and people unaware of the quota system, against the introduction of quotas, to a large extent can be attributed to the Soviet legacy. The Supreme Council of the Soviet Union was formed according to quotas, warranting the participation of women, as well as people of different professions and age.

The other reason mentioned was inequality:

“Everything depends on political activity, bringing in artificial rules to increase participation is not justified, since equal opportunities exists for both genders and everything depends on one’s ability”- Irakli Kavtaradze, executive of National Movement Party.

Some, although against the system still see the necessity for support:

“I am against quota system, but I acknowledge that in developing countries this can be a necessary and a temporal measure”- Tamar Jvania, female Head of NGO.

Even the few (male MP, Kakha Kukava, female gender expert Nato Shavlakadze, female member of Labour Party Nana Devadze, and female MP Guguli Magradze) who favour quota system in the Parliament are cautious, and indicate to the threat of discrediting women in case of not being possible to find adequate women candidates (interview with a female gender expert Nato Shavlakadze, and female MP Guguli Magradze).

Supporters of the system speak of various models, from which the most suitable model can be selected, plus the need and intent of open discussions on the issue (interviews with female gender experts Tamar Abramishvili and Lika Nadaraia, along with a male MP Kakha Kukava)

“Introducing quota system as a temporal measure and it will be fruitful until representation paves its way. There are various models from which a choice could be made, e.g. introducing the system at the Election Law level, or motivating parties by increasing financial support to the party with gender balanced election list”- Tamar Abramishvili, female gender expert.

Women in civil society organizations

Civil society is defined as a sector of voluntary organizations and interested groups that provide support for organizing public actions (Hawkesworth, 2002).

Trade Unions, interest groups, non-government organizations, community based organizations, and the church alongside politics are considered as a part of the civil sector, and areas for public participation.

Trade Unions

The right to form and join trade unions is recognized in Georgian Law on Trade Unions adopted in 1997. It allows the right of collective bargaining and to stage a strike. The principal trade union in Georgia is the Georgian Trade Union Amalgamation (GTUA), which consists of 26 sector-based unions with an overall membership of 261,500 individuals, and represents around 45 percent of all hired employees. Women comprise 54 percent of union members. The union membership constitutes 1 percent of the salary

(www.Gtuc.ge) (interview with the President of GTUA Irakli Petriashvili). The union is a legacy of the Soviet era Trade Unions.

The actual influence of GTUA in public life is limited, although the new leadership elected in 2006, is demonstrating a more active approach towards the protection of worker's rights than the previous one. The Head of Trade Union is a male, and among his four deputies, only one, the head of the Ajara Union is a woman. The Committee of the Union consists of 26 members, who are the heads of the sectoral and regional organizations comprising GTUA, and among them only three are women. Women are better represented at the level of the deputy heads, comprising 65 percent. In addition, a woman's organization called "Komagi" operates within the Union.

The Union is a member of International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU). Equality and gender is listed among the five priorities of ICFTU (www.icftu.org). International Labour Organization (ILO), a tripartite UN agency of which Georgia is a member since 1993, criticizes a number of articles contained within the Georgian Labour Code, stressing that the liberties provided by the Law to the employers, and the restrictions of workers freedoms, deprive the workers of the possibility in protecting their rights (Rezonansi, April, 1. 2008). Furthermore, with short maternity leave and high job insecurity, the Labour Code is especially hostile towards women.

The other influential union being the Free Trade Union of Teachers and Scientists of Georgia, which brings together 107 000 members, with an overwhelming majority of women at 95 percent. Gender imbalance can be witnessed in the governing bodies, as well as in executive bodies of the union. The Union is headed by a woman, and the majority of members in the decision-making organs are women. Among the 17 members of the governing body, women comprise 70 percent, and out of the 27 employed workers of the union only 4 are men.

Non-Government Organizations

Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) are fairly developed in Georgia. Their development began in the nineties, which was initiated and strongly supported by international donors. Currently, there are more than 40, 000 non-government organizations registered in the country, although by expert estimations only about 10 percent of them are active. The sector is unevenly distributed geographically, with the majority concentrated in the capital. Apart from being the most favoured location, the capital also hosts majority of the most institutionally developed and successful NGOs. The bulk of NGOs are multifunctional, combining a number of different activities – e.g. providing services, lobbying for certain interests, conducting policy research or serving as watchdogs.

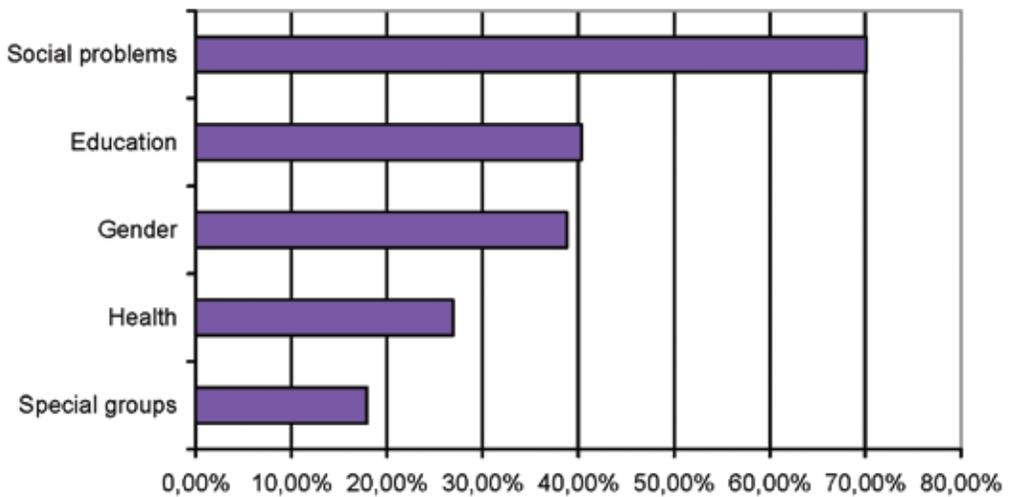
Institutional involvement of women in public sphere in Georgia dates back to the nineteenth century, when a number of institutions were established aimed at providing education to women, which were organized mostly by the sisters or wives of prominent

public figures. The first of such a type of institution “St. Nino’s Women’s Philanthropic Society” was established in 1846. Thereafter many followed the lead, with a declared goal of educating women, increasing women’s professional and economic opportunities, teaching Georgian language in schools, as well as developing Georgian literature for children, and introducing new approaches on upbringing (Khomeriki & Javakhishvili, 2005). Many newly formed organizations worked on social problems related to teachers and students. However, besides educational goals and institutions, societies with added political mandate were formed, such as “Women’s Circle in Khoni” (a small town in Western Georgia), established in 1903, and targeted at the involvement of women in public life. At the same time, several societies for the support of women’s employment were also formed. In 1889, Notio Lolua’s women’s vocational school was established in the Black Sea port of Poti. During the same period, professional trainings for teachers, secretaries, etc. were provided in women’s educational institutions. With the aim to support and endeavour in the employment of sex workers, a charitable society Saint Maria Magdalena’s shelter was formed in 1903. The society provided shelter and training for women under the age of 25 who expressed the desire to abandon the sex trade.

Women are actively involved in the work of non-state sector, and unlike in the state run organizations, here they more often occupy senior and decision making positions. The survey of the sector carried out in February, 2008 (Mincheva, 2008) revealed that women outnumbered men, both in the capital and in regions. Women comprise 58.1 percent of the total work force of NGOs based in Tbilisi, and 63.8 percent of regional NGOs. Furthermore, 65.8 percent of the employees having PHD are women, and the majority of NGOs (59.2 percent) are headed by women.

The policy of international organizations and donors to support gender equality stimulated the creation of a considerable number of women’s organizations. There are around 70 active women NGOs or NGOs working on women’s issues, but none working on men’s issues.

As a common practice in the civil sector, NGOs involved in women’s issues, work in more than one area and combine different activities, such as providing services, consultations, trainings, research, etc. The majority among them also work on social problems, education and gender.



Graph 10
Spheres of activities of women’s NGOs

The impact of women’s NGOs is not visible enough. As one of the respondent noted, there is a strong need for utilizing resources more efficiently:

“There is passivity, we often complain about mishaps reflecting some kind of dependence. I insist on being especially vigilant and critical, and utilize the resources of international and local organizations in the most efficient manner.” - Nino Tsikhistavi, female gender expert.

In 2004, with the support of UNIFEM, women formed a peace network called Unity of Women for Peace, bringing together over hundred organizations and individual members from all parts of the country with the aim of “achieving a positive and sustainable peace through women’s participation and gender equality.” The anti-violence network has been operating throughout the country for years. Coalition of Women’s NGOs was established in the year 2000 with the support of OSCE/ODHIR. Currently, the coalition represents 80 organizations

Notwithstanding numerous efforts, women’s organizations were not able to unite their efforts and form a strong and viable women’s movement. UNDP has a special interest on the involvement of women in public life. Many activities in this area are coordinated by the project “Gender and Politics in South Caucasus”.

The project is co-funded by Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) and the Georgian Government and is implemented jointly by UNDP and Georgian Parliament. It aims to contribute in defining gender policy and to provide support to the

participation of women in politics, or more precisely, to develop the capacity of women and increase their participation in decision-making.

Other civil society organizations

Community Based Organizations (CBOs) are far less in numbers than NGOs, and they operate mostly in rural areas. The developments of CBOs are linked with the implementation of Baku-Tbilisi-Ceychan (BTC) and South Caucasus Pipelines (SCP). Lately, CBOs are engaged in designing plans for local development, and as such serve as a good example of public participation in decision making. Women are actively involved in the work of CBOs and often lead these organizations. A good illustration of women's initiative is a CBO in Vardisubani, Telavi region. Female inhabitants of the village make woollen blankets and after 3 years of working, succeeded in securing regular contracts from the private sector.

Interest groups and consumer unions are few, and not very active. Women are seldom selected for the top positions in this particular sector. Professional associations are one more form of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs). Similar to trade unions these organizations have long tradition and during the Soviet era they had considerable influence, property and prestige. Majority of such unions are chaired by men, apart from one, the Writer's Union which is chaired by a woman.

Organizations created along ethnic identities are also a part of CSOs. Their main aim is the preservation of culture, and strengthening the ties with their ethnic homeland, as well as further integration in Georgia.

Additionally, a number of athletic or hobby-based organizations also exist. Among them many, like the Football Federation unite only men.

Religious Institutions

Generally, women are considered to be more religious than men. They constitute the bigger portion in congregations of the Georgian Orthodox Church. The majority of respondents (91.1 percent) of our survey (SUR) belonged to the Georgian Orthodox Church. Apart from which, among respondents 3.9 percent were Muslims, 2.9 percent Gregorian, 0.8 percent Catholics, and 1.4 percent belonged to other denominations. Significantly, more women (22.1 percent) than men (8.7 percent) professed following important religious rituals.

Several monasteries, both for monks and nuns exist in the country. As an example, in Mtskheta-Tbilisi eparchy there are 11 monasteries for men and 8 for women. The country also has a religious academy and religious seminary. However, only men can study in these educational institutions. Women on the other hand, can attend the religious institute which was established in 1988. It has three departments: psychology and religion, art history and religion, and icon restoration and applied arts. Among the students 80.0 percent are women.

According to the new registration regulations (in force since 2005) religious communities can be registered in the Justice Ministry. 14 such communities (e.g. the Seven Days Adventists, the Foundation of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints) are already registered. Their members are mostly women, but heads of such communities are men.

Key issues

The overall aim of women's participation in public life is the consideration of gender perspective in the making of important decisions for the country. This can be achieved through raising the awareness on gender issues, which in its turn can be the result of a fuller representation of women in public life. Although apart from this goal, the involvement of women in public life is to be considered as the goal for itself.

The analysis of the situation clearly indicates gender imbalance in the participation of Georgian citizens in public life. While men and women do not differ significantly in their interest towards public affairs and politics, the impact they have on decision making varies with gender, men having incomparably higher power than women.

The need of greater representation of women in the elected and governing structures is overwhelmingly recognized, at the same time deeply rooted discrimination against women's active involvement in public realm is also often revealed.

Cultural stereotypes, little gender awareness and sensitivity, lack of coherent state policy for attaining gender equality, time deficiency, and the lack of motivation and capacity of women are acknowledged as reasons for explaining the low involvement of women.

To improve the situation considerably, active measures are to be taken for tackling all the above mentioned reasons.

As equal participation is only one of the facets of gender equality, women's involvement is to be considered in the whole context of gender equality.

The main issue here is to make the public sensitive to gender issues and change the traditional notions on women's place in the society. The instruments for achieving this includes media campaigns and promotion of gender equality at all levels of public life, and through formal education beginning from pre-school till University levels. The text-books should be revised from a gender perspective, the teachers are to be trained on gender issues, and male teachers are to be attracted at schools and kindergartens.

A long term state policy for gender equality is to be formulated. The existing Action Plan approved by the government for gender equality should begin to be implemented. The Labour Code should be revised and correspond with international standards, allowing women to carry out their obligations in both realms, private and public.

At this point of time, it seems impossible to bridge the gap in the disparity of gender

involvement in public life without a strong state and legal support for women's participation. More direct and immediate measures for increasing participation includes introduction of quota system. To remove deeply rooted negative attitude towards quota system, largely determined by the Soviet legacy, public discussions on the system should be initiated, the various models should be discussed and cumulative international experience should be critically evaluated. One possible way of supporting women's participation without delay can be achieved by stimulating the parties with women's representation in top 10 and 20 positions of election party lists. The parties can be given TV time for promotion of their party, free training to party members, both men and women.

The capacity and motivation of women to participate should be increased through more involvement of women in formal education and special trainings. The possibilities for women to be active in public and through media should be provided.

It is important to create conditions for women to be able to set aside time for public activity. This can be achieved by improving the economic conditions of women, providing possibilities for hiring help and buying services, as well as through the further involvement of men in family life.

Participation of women in clubs and other voluntary organizations, and promoting women leaders will eventually increase women's participation. It will be beneficial to support the creation of women's organizations, especially in rural areas and in areas inhabited with minorities, where women are more restricted to work alongside men.

International experience have proved that autonomous women's movements which fight for political power are more likely to succeed, than groups which are integrated into existing institutions, this is probably due to the bigger critical mass and ability to develop independent strategies and political agenda (Gelb, 1989). Therefore creation of a strong women's movement can make a radical change, but as mentioned above, until now such attempts have been unsuccessful. At the inception, unity can be based on one or two specific goals to achieve.

Chapter 4

Employment

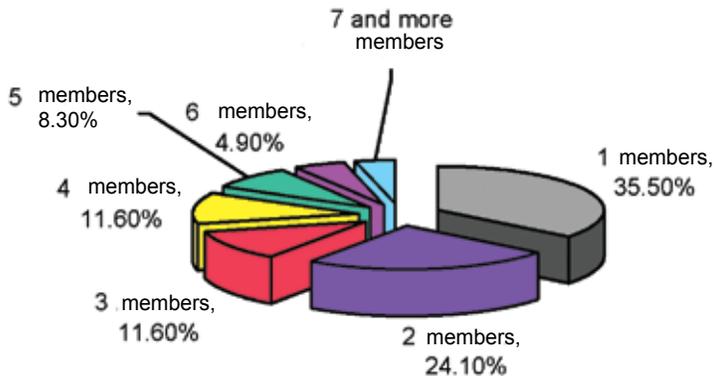
Poverty is acknowledged as one of the country's main problems. By the estimations of UN, in the World Food Program (May, 2008), Georgia is considered to belong just above the lowest category of socially poor countries. The estimation is based on the percentage of income that covers the food needs (Alia May, 27-28 2008). In 2005, 39.4 percent of country's population lived below the poverty level. Poverty level was higher among rural (41.7 percent) than urban (37.1 percent) population (Georgia: Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper Progress Report, 2006).

Demography is one aspect that influences the economics. In 13 years, between the two Censuses, Georgia's population decreased by 1, 088,000, from 5,443,400 in 1989 to 4,355,400 in 2002. According to the World Bank report: "From Red to Gray, The third Transition of aging populations in Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union" (2007), the country's economic prospects are aggravated by the prognosis of a further 17 percent decrease of Georgia's population in the period from 2000-2025. In 2025 people over 65 will constitute 18 percent of the population, compared to 13 percent in 2000. Aging population will exert new and possibly unaffordable pressures on public spending, especially due to pensions and the need of long term care for the elderly.

Poverty in the Georgia has a number of features which are different from poverty of traditionally poor countries. Prior to the onset of economic crises in 1990, the country was considered as having the highest quality of life among the Republics of the Soviet Union. It was a country with a very high percentage of people with University education. Therefore for many years low income did not change human capital such as education and health, although the impact of low income became increasingly apparent. Yet, parents with high educational attainment with low income continue to ascribe more value on capability building of their children, than parents with lower education, and in this way cushion the impact of poverty.

The government targets to fight poverty by its program: The United Georgia without Poverty 2008-2012, and through effective economic growth of the country and realization of anti-poverty social programmes.

One of such programmes is the state assistance to households which are the below the poverty line. By April, 2008, 467 749 households, with the total number of members equalling 1, 486 281 has applied for the assistance. This means that 39.8 percent of households consider themselves as poor and seek state assistance. Out of which 28.8 percent households received the assistance. Smaller households are in worse situation than larger ones, with 59.6 percent of the households that got assistance consisted of 1 or 2 members.



Graph 11
State assistance to poor households
 (April, 2008 data) Source www.ssa.gov.ge

Gender inequality manifests itself in economics. Women outnumber men, both among applicants (55.3 percent women and 44.7 percent men) and among those who received the State assistance (56.7 percent women and 43.3 percent men).

Among the rich of the country, only few women have accumulated the riches on their own. Women’s subordination to men in many cases rests on women’s economic dependence. Money earned at employment contributes to women’s independence.

As one of our respondent remarks:

“In recent years, the income of many families in towns depends on women and this contributes to equality, to have equal finances with men means to have equal freedom”- female Head of NGO, Tamar Zhvania.

The female students noticed at the focus group discussion (FGST):

“As woman becomes an earner, she determines the power structure in the family, i.e. social status creates a difference”.

The repercussions of poverty are manifold. It is increasingly understood as a deprivation of basic capabilities, rather than only the lowness of incomes. Notwithstanding multifaceted nature of poverty, income remains its main component, and in most cases income depends on employment.

Like poverty, unemployment has wider impact on a person’s life than just loss of income. Employment is considered as a sign of status, and there are few alternatives to

work that are considered as a respectable way for adults to spend their time. It affects a person's perception of self-worth, social esteem, satisfaction with life, and self-efficacy, i.e. perception of the ability to perform, social networks, family life and prestige (Sullivan, 2004; Lauer, 1998).

People are engaged in both formal and informal employment. Sex role differentiation refers not only to the requirement of the spheres of activity-public for men and private for women, but also to the segregation in the domains. Employment is marked with segregation of professions and positions, as well as irregularity in formal, informal and self employment across gender.

Finding or creating jobs is more difficult for women than men almost everywhere. To find a place in the work force, women have to fight harder and to overcome more overt or covert obstacles than men. However, financial hardships have motivated women in many economic activities. Under pressure of the situation, they took up the responsibility to provide their families with the essentials. Women realized before men that there was no returning to the secure employment provided by state and that they themselves had to think about their own future. They proved much more flexible than men to change occupation, such as, to take up jobs much below their qualification, to opt for employment as unskilled workers, to stand in the streets selling cigarettes and flowers, to make shuttle trips to Turkey, to make yoghurt and sell it in towns, to work as baby-sitters and cleaning ladies, and to run small businesses like Bed and Breakfast. Thus many women found their ways in new economic realities, often at the expense of giving up their former occupation and ambitions.

In informal employment women outnumber men. Even on the general background of low job security in the country, people employed in the informal economy are in an extremely bad situation. This concerns quite a large portion of the work force, such as petty traders, housekeepers and nannies, majority of which are women.

“Women are in big numbers in the informal work sector, which is neither regulated nor controlled. And here we see severe forms of discrimination, sexual harassment and unfriendly work environment”- Tamar Sabedashvili, female gender expert.

On the other hand, men are more represented in the formal sector. Of all employed in the formal sector, women constitute 47.5 percent and men 52.5 percent. More people are employed in private (77.0 percent) than in the public sector (23.0 percent). Women are more represented in public sector (25.8 percent of employed women) than men (20.5 percent of employed men) –(Women and Men, 2006).

Compared to public, the private sector gives more possibilities to earn, but in both sectors women earn less than men. According to the Department of Statistics in 2005, women hired in public sector earned on an average 89.3GEL, while men earned 184.1GEL. Average income in private sector for women was 134.7GEL and 210.6 GEL for men. Difference across gender is greater in public (94.8GEL) than in private sector (75.9 GEL), indicating probably to the more performance oriented approach of the private sector. 58.3 percent of the employed respondents of our survey (SUR) work in private sector, 33.4 percent are self-employed, 12.5 percent work in public sector, and 8.3 percent in NGOs.

Job security in the country is low. ILO (ITUC CSI IGB 2007 Annual Survey of Violations of Trade Union Rights) heavily criticized the Georgian Labour Code, which came into force in 2006. ILO considers it as a violation of international standards. The code introduces a hire and fire policy whereby a worker can be dismissed without a valid reason.

The new Labour Code is considered as a step backward from the previous one in regard to women's rights as well. According to previous Labour Code working mothers with child younger than 3 years old were allowed to begin work an hour later and finish an hour earlier. This provision is not present in a new Code. Under the current Code, a breastfeeding mother can only have an hour of extra break. There are limited monetary remunerations during maternity leave. Irrespective of the salary amount, woman cannot receive more than 150GEL a month, which makes 600 GEL for the entire maternity leave.

“This is a shot in the head to a demographic problem. Women, who have high salary and decide to have a child, do not take maternity leave and attend work until the very birth of the child. This obviously affects the health of both mother and baby”- Irakli Petriashvili, male Head of Trade Union.

Employment is a sign of status, it gives possibility to escape the routine of home chores, to get involved in social life, to build social networks, self-actualize, and hence it contributes to the development of human and social capital. It is an important part of both male and female identities; however it is more central for men.

Results of the survey (SUR) indicate to the link between employment and satisfaction with life, happiness, self-esteem and optimism, both in men and women. Proof of greater importance of employment for men is demonstrated by greater effect of employment on men, than women. Notwithstanding that working outside home creates a dual burden for women, employment still has a positive effect on them.

Employment is linked to satisfaction with life: 34.0 percent of employed men compared to 23.0 percent of unemployed, and 24.3 percent of employed women compared to 19.2 percent of unemployed are satisfied with their lives.

57.1 percent of employed men compared to 47.3 percent of unemployed, and 58.0 percent of employed women compared to 50.0 percent of unemployed feel themselves more happy than unhappy.

65.2 percent of employed men compared to 58.9 percent of unemployed and 51.1 percent of employed women compared to 46.8 percent of unemployed have high self-esteem.

52.2 percent of employed and 48.9 percent of the unemployed men are optimists, while 54.9 percent of employed and 50.4 percent of unemployed women subscribe to the optimistic attitude.

Increase of women's share in labour force is evident in almost all regions in the world (Pollert & Fodor, 2005), but yet it is considered more difficult for women to find a job. There appeared such concepts as Marriage bar and Pregnancy bar - refusing to hire women or mothers and by encouraging married women employees or mothers to quit.

Women who are employed could experience two kinds of segregation: horizontal and vertical.

Horizontal segregation

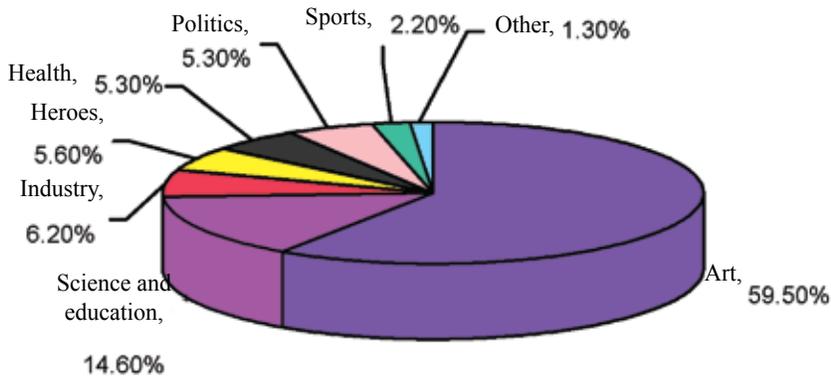
Traditionally there are female and male occupations. Occupational segregation by sex is apparent in almost all societies in the world. In the US, e.g. women are employed in occupations that are at least 70 percent female, and men are employed in occupations that are 70 percent male. In 2002, more than a third of employed women were concentrated in six occupational categories: teaching, secretarial, managerial and administrative, health care professions, retail sales, banking and insurance. (Convey, et al., 2005). Situation is somewhat similar globally: three-quarters of employed women worldwide work in 7 occupations – as nurses, secretaries/typists, housekeepers, bookkeepers and cashiers, building caretakers and cleaners, caregivers, sewers and tailors (Wharton, 2004).

Occupational segregation by sex depends on a number of factors, such as economic, social and cultural character. Women have more access to male occupations in case of scarcity of men. This was demonstrated in all countries during war times, and is apparent in the countries with low birth rate. Society's egalitarian beliefs also reduce segregation.

Lack of data does not allow drawing precise conclusions about occupational segregation in Georgia, but the observation allows us to say that the above mentioned spheres are dominated by females in this country as well.

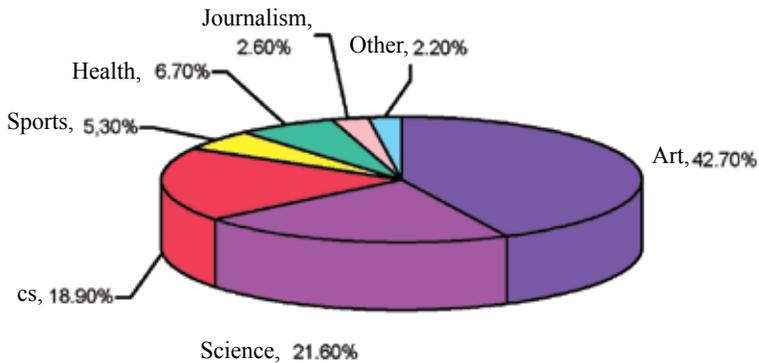
Career achievements of women are associated more with art and education. This is partially supported by the analyses of entries of Georgian Soviet Encyclopaedia published in 1975-1987, and “Who is Who” published in 2006.

In the Georgian Soviet Encyclopaedia, 321 Georgian women are listed. Among them more than a half (59.5 percent) represent art, 14.6 percent represent science and education, and 6.2 percent are women in industry.



Graph 12
Distribution of entries on women in the Soviet Georgian Encyclopaedia by activity spheres Source: Maisuradze, M. Unpublished report

“Who is Who” enlists 227 women. Here again the largest percentage of women (42.7 percent) works in arts and 21.6 percent represent science.



Graph 13
Women in “Who is Who”, 2006.

Women's average earnings are lower than men's. The main reason being, the occupations where women are concentrated pay lower wages. Men opt for occupations that are well-paid and have high prestige. For example, there are few men among notaries. As one of our respondents, male notary noted:

"The reason being, it was not considered as a profession with a high prestige, and it did not require high qualification".

"A man always chooses profession that is well-paid, since he has to provide for his family. Women in the period of economic hardships managed to find their place, they accepted low income jobs, while many men preferred to stay at home and be supported by their wives, rather than to go and work for a low wage as their wives did"- Baia Romelashvili, member of Women's Advisory Council.

Feminine occupation spheres, i.e. education, health, hotels and restaurants are among those where the average incomes are the lowest. For instance, average monthly salary in the education sector in the second quarter of 2007 was 147.3GEL, in health services 183.3Gel, and in hotel and restaurant services 344.4GEL. The highest salaries were attached to banking (943.8GEL), and in mining and quarrying industries (644.8GEL), which are traditionally male occupations. In the same period of time, women's average salary stood at 211.2GEL while the average for men was 320.9GEL (Department of Statistics). Although even in male-dominated occupations, women earn less than men. One reason for this is because women enter and leave labour market more frequently than men, due to domestic responsibilities.

Gender experts discussed the negative consequences of gender imbalance in professions:

"Gender balance means that men and women are equally represented. In education system there is shortage of men, which is very bad. Wherever gender balance is distorted we cannot speak about healthy atmosphere. This means that there is no freedom, and women or men can monopolize the sphere, and as a result neither men nor women are in an equal position"- Charita Jashi, female gender expert.

"We are dissatisfied with the gender awareness of our men, but at the same time we have to admit that they are brought up by women, because children out here are brought up by mothers and grandmothers, then in kindergarten all the teachers are women, the same situation is in the elementary school. It is necessary to include men at least at the elementary school level. This is very important"- Marina Tabukashvili, female gender expert.

There are cases when women make inroads in traditionally male occupations. As our respondent, a female taxi-driver said:

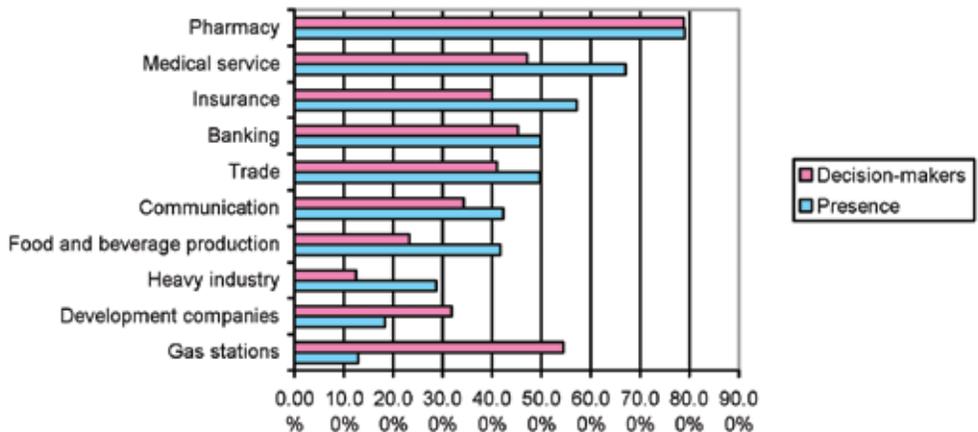
“I became a taxi driver due to unemployment. I could not find work, and my neighbours; taxi-drivers told me to become taxi driver as I am a strong woman. So because my character I decided to get into this profession”.

In occupations where qualifying certification exams are mandatory, there is a clear tendency of increase in female employees. Among 257 judges 126 are women, although all three Heads of Courts are men. Gender balance among Heads of Courts is better on district level, where out of 56 heads 26 are women. Communiqué with the press is wholly secured for women, and all Speaker Judges are female.

Vertical segregation

It is well acknowledged that women and men do not have equal possibilities for promotion. There are few women among decision-makers worldwide, and Georgia is not an exception.

A survey (Report of Sociological Study, 2007) which was carried out by UNDP to identify organizations with the best gender balance, revealed disparity between the share of female



Graph 14

Employees and the share of women in decision-making positions.

Source: Report on sociological study for identification of the organization with the best gender balance (2008).

Masculine culture prevails in employment surroundings. One outcome is that men behave masculine both in men's and women's professions, while women also usually behave masculine in men's professions (Wharton, 2004).

Career advancement is more difficult for women than men. The constraints encountered by highly skilled women in promotion to higher paid jobs were long ago labelled as a glass ceiling. On the contrary, in the case of men working in female occupations, the so called glass escalator pushes them upwards.

One respondent, a male journalist shares his experience of working in female profession:

"I have been a journalist for the last 13 years and I worked for journals, radio, newspapers and TV. Everywhere women were in majority. I remember I had a woman boss in radio, and when I began to work there she was so happy, that at last she had a male employee. Co-workers were happy too when I went there, and I was happy myself because there were many women. Men journalists had privileges, due to the fact of being a male"- Aleko Elisahvili, male journalists.

While discussing career advancement of women, the issue of necessity in building a career by women arose. Some of those we interviewed pointed towards the need for women to build their careers; others put forth conditions for it:

"Much work is to be done to show the right path, many believe that a woman should be at home, her business is upbringing the children, looking after family and husband. This phenomenon should die in Georgia. Woman should be employed, independent, and this will be very fruitful for the country, family, children and husband"- Tamar Zhvania, female head of NGO.

"Women's career depends on her own self and her husband, if she is married and if he is not against, I think husband should not hold her back, and also that a woman's employment should not interfere with the family's well-being, in which case why should she not have a career? However, if this leads to problems in the family, then she should think and decide, if it is worth pursuing a career"- Irakli Pachulia, male head of a vocational school.

Our survey (SUR) also reflected different attitudes towards women's career. The majority thinks that it is better for everyone, when husband works and wife looks after the

family, but here the gender difference is observed (Chi Square 39.9%; df 2; $p < .001$), more men (79.8 percent) than women (64.7 percent) think in this manner. Women and men also differ in their attitude towards privileging men in getting employed (Chi Square 42.7%; df 2; $p < .001$). Bigger share of men (54.4 percent), compared to women (37.7 percent) are in favour of privileging men. But men and women agree (87.6 percent) that husbands should have a more income than wives.

At the interviews and focus group discussions, participants noted that woman's point of view is often ignored in working environments. Generally more demands are posed at men than women. At the same time, the consequence of unemployment is much more severe for men.

Promotion of women according to respondents view depends on the occupation and job demands.

“In the sphere of culture or education, women can expect to be promoted, but in other fields, like politics, conflict resolution or some other serious sphere, men have higher probability”- Baia Romelashvili, member of Women's Council.

“Preference for hiring men or women is determined by the job requirements. There are jobs which ask for women's qualities, such as communicability and nontrivial thinking, here women are preferred, while when masculine features are demanded men are promoted”- Natia Turnava, female business executive.

Respondents expressed different preferences on having a male or a female superior, but as a whole, men were more preferred to work with.

Respondents (INT) named lack of time due to family obligations as the main obstacle in career advancement of women.

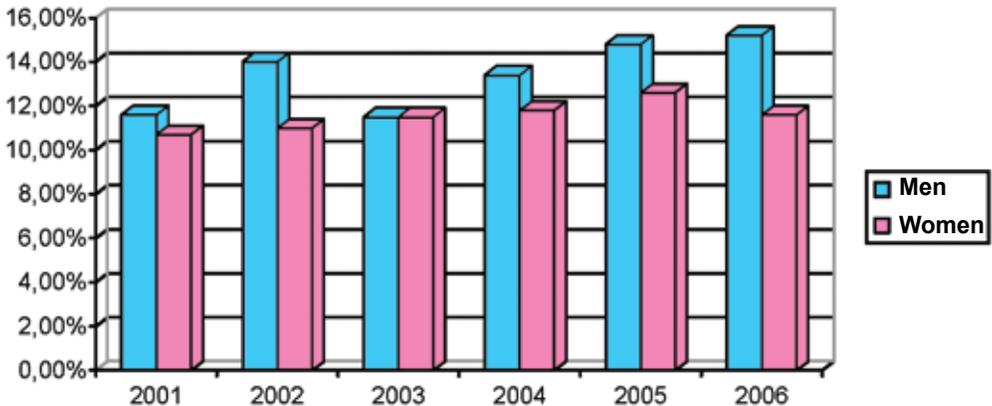
Unemployment

Scarcity of employment opportunities is the main reason of poverty in the country. Official statistics in the period from 2000 to 2006 indicates that unemployment among the economically active population, i.e. population older than 15 years ranges by ILO strict criteria from 10.3 percent to 13.8 percent (Georgia: Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper Progress Report, 2006). The 13.8 percent of unemployment in fact did not accurately reflect the situation with employment in the country, as according to official criteria anyone owning plot of land is considered as self-employed. By expert estimations un-

employment in 2007 was between 35-40 percent (IOM, 2007).

Unemployment in the country has a specific profile; it is the highest among people holding university diplomas. In 2005, 39.6 percent of unemployed women and 38.4 percent of unemployed men had higher education (Women and Men, 2006).

The share of women in workforce is less than that of men's (e.g. in 2001, overall workforce consisted of 1.093.600 men and 1.019.700 women, and in 2006 of 1.085.900 men and 935.900 women). In 2007 also more men (63.0%) than women, (48%) were employed.



Graph 15

Unemployment among economically active men and women

(Source: Department of Statistics).

Besides high level of unemployment, underemployment, i.e. working full time for poor wages, working part-time when one desires full-time job, or working at jobs that are temporary or below one's level of skills are very widespread in the country.

Unemployment was high among the respondents of our survey as well (SUR), with 61.6 percent of the respondents indicating that they did not do anything for income generation. Women outnumbered (68.1 percent) unemployed men (53.1 percent). Among unemployed respondents 38.1 percent sought, but could not find employment, 9.1 percent could not find a job, but did not actively try to find one, 8.3 percent did not have time for work, 23.6 percent were pensioners, 8.9 percent were students, 8.3 percent did not work due to health constraints and 3.7 percent owing to other reasons. Men showed more activity than women: 45.7 percent of men, compared to 33.6 percent of women actively sought work. Women experienced more time scarcity, as 11.4 percent of women, compared to 3.0 percent of men reported as not having the time for employment.

Repercussions of unemployment increase with its duration; it also has more severe consequences in case of delayed entry in the initial job. Negative tendencies were demonstrated in both these aspects. More than a third (37.5 percent) of unemployed had never worked, in addition the share of those who were unemployed for more than 10 years was high (30.4 percent). Women's human capital was more depleted than men's, as 72.9 percent of unemployed women either had never worked or were unemployed for more than 10 years, while 59.2 percent of surveyed were men in a similar situation. Men and women share similar concerns on unemployment and lack of money. 44.5 percent singled out self unemployment, 41.1 percent unemployment of family members, and 72.1 percent the lack of money as the main concerns of their lives presently (respondents could choose as many from the 13 concerns listed).

Unemployment is much more than just lack of income; it is associated with the perception of exclusion and isolation, leading to unhealthy and risky behaviours, as well as to morbidity. Therefore it is detrimental to both physical and emotional well-being. Depression, lowered self-esteem, anger and resentment, shame and embarrassment, serious mental illness or even suicides are the consequences of unemployment. Unemployment adversely affects interpersonal relationships. Unemployed tend to withdraw from social contacts and become hostile to family members.

Many unemployed and poor men respond to unemployment by drinking, many become depressed. Crime may become an alternative livelihood strategy for the unemployed. Evidence from some countries (e.g. Sweden) point to the association of unemployment among the youth with higher tobacco and drug use, and increased crime rates (Lauer, 1998).

These negative consequences of unemployment create additional challenge to women and children. Avison examined mental health consequences of unemployment among men and women and found interesting differences. Unemployed women were at higher risk of disorders, especially anxiety disorders, but unemployed men were more prone to substance abuse and depression (Sullivan, 2004)

Employment could be a result of activities based on expectations that a person holds. One can assume, that if one believes that it is impossible to lead a decent living by honest work or that the success of her or his career depends more on situation and other influential factors rather than one's own efforts, he or she may not actively seek employment and hence may not have one. But belief in possibilities of honest work for achieving adequate living standard did not prove to be associated with employment among our respondents (SUR). Being very low, ranging from 27.2 percent to 29.8 percent, trust in the effectiveness of honest work does not differ across gender and

employment status. On the other hand, trust in one's own abilities in achieving a career differentiates employed and unemployed men, but not women. More employed (53.8 percent), than unemployed (48.3 percent) men consider that personal achievements depend more on person's efforts, rather than on the situation or others.

Having computer skills can be considered as one more reason contributing to employment. 39.8 percent of employed, compared to 26.3 percent of unemployed men can work on computers; the difference across employment is even more pronounced in women: 45.0 percent of employed, compared to 22.1 percent of unemployed have computer skills.

Ways of overcoming unemployment

In case of low opportunities of employment that characterize Georgia for the last decade, creating employment opportunities for oneself or finding employment in other countries are the two options widely preferred for generating income.

Creation of employment

Indeed, results of our survey (SUR) demonstrated that a third of the employed (33.4 percent) had their own business, and 8.3 percent worked in Non-Government Organization which in many cases could have been organized by the respondents themselves.

The story of women from Taniant Kari, who organized their own business, serves as a good example of the value of initiative.

Initiative of Taniant Kari women

Taniant Kari is a small village of 50 households, situated 45 km from Tbilisi to the North over a small town of Dusheti. High altitude, no possibility of irrigation did not allow for commercial harvesting. There have been years when households could not produce enough beans, potatoes or corn for family consumption. During the Soviet period, men of the village were employed as construction workers, and many women worked in poultry farms in a nearby town. Social and political changes in the country affected the population of the village and evoked deep economic crises. People were left without work and without any means.

The women of Taniant Kari showed initiative in finding the ways out of the crisis. They began to sell milk and matsoni (type of yoghurt) in Tbilisi. With heavy bags filled with bottles and jars, they walked for 3 km to get to the bus heading for the town. So went 4 years, then the women decided to cooperate and hire a bus. Since then a bus takes 17 women to town twice a week. Women expanded their clientele and also diversified products to sell; they supplied

cheese, eggs, and seasonal fruits as well. With the increase in demand, the need to purchase milk arose. They began to buy milk from others in their own and nearby village. Having clientele stimulated villagers to do different things; two of them saw sheets and sell them to their clients. In fact this small group of women managed to economically stimulate the entire village, by purchasing from others their produce for reselling. They provide the family with food, medicines, cigarettes and clothes. Today the families are mostly sustained by women, although men assist them by herding cows and collecting hay. Initial reaction of husbands to their wives' initiative was different. Some did not allow their wives to go due to jealousy, but the pressing need for money did its work and husbands had to give up. Men adapted to the new role of their wives as principal earners and eventually the attitude of men towards them changed. Due to the dependence on wives they become less demanding, and consequently domestic violence decreased.

With a business of such scale it is not possible to lead a really decent life, but the income allows buying food, sending children to school, and buying cigarettes for husbands. But what is more important, it allows women to feel proud, as they managed through their initiative and hard work to overcome economic crises (FGT).

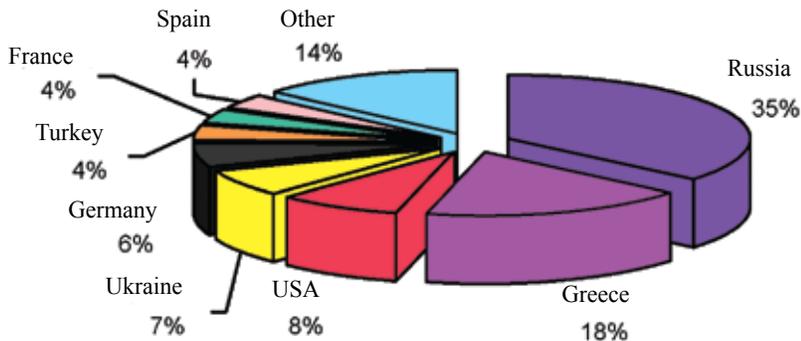
Migration

Besides self-employment, migration is the most often preferred way for escaping unemployment.

Labour migration is a phenomenon closely associated with globalization and evident in many countries. By experts estimations, during the last decade more than a million people left the country (Jashi, 2005). The exact amount of money Georgia receives from labour migrants is impossible to calculate, as next to money transfers informal ways of sending money back home are used, but there are no doubts that many families are able to secure their subsistence only through remittances.

The usual destinations of Georgian citizens are Russian Federation (39 percent), USA (14 percent), Greece (14 percent) and Germany (13 percent). Research showed that in majority of cases (66.0 percent), the departure of labour migrants came about with the assistance of relatives and friends (IOM, 2003).

17.2 percent of the surveyed (SUR) reported of having a migrant family member, which is mostly one member (86.9 percent), while there are families with up to 4 members living abroad. Our data on frequent destinations is similar to IOM data of 2003. The biggest share lives in Russia (36.1 percent), followed by Greece (17.8 percent) and then US (8.4 percent).



Graph 16
Countries where family members migrated

Seeking employment is the most often (65.9 percent) mentioned reason for migration of family member, 13.5 percent left to marry citizen of the host country, 9.8 percent went for further studies, 5.6 percent for medical purposes and 5.2 percent accompanied their family member.

Besides positive consequences, migration also has negative effects on migrants, their families and the country of origin.

The main advantage is the possibility to sustain one's own self and send money for the family. In many cases migration allows one to nurture his or her own skills, learn new language, new life style and become more flexible. At the same time the country gains from the money transferred.

But it is difficult to say if these advantages outweigh disadvantages. Separation from the families (according to IOM, 2003 survey, 27 percent of women labour migrants have left behind husbands and 37 percent have children left behind), stress, impact of permanent, as well as temporary labour migration on the demographic profile of Georgia, due to the direct decline of the country's population, the decline of Georgia's reproductive resource potential, and the high probability of temporary labour migration turning into permanent emigration (IOM, 2003) are evident.

Attitude of people differs towards potential migrants according to their gender (SUR). Women and men (65.8 percent) think alike that in the event of not finding a job at home, male member of the family should migrate, while in a similar situation only 23.8 percent considers it appropriate for women to migrate. Women and men have different views in this respect (Chi Square 9.3%; df 2; $p < .005$), more women (27.1 percent) than men (19.6 percent) think it is appropriate for women to migrate.

Feminization of migration is relatively a new phenomenon. Unlike initially, there is a tendency of women moving as independent individuals and not to join their male family

members (Pollert & Fodor, 2005). In Georgia 48.7 percent of the labour migrants are women, and 51.7 percent are men (Beridze, 2004), and according to IOM survey (2003) women constituted 40.0 percent of labour migrants.

Female migration differs from male migration in several ways:

Remittances from women labour migrants to their families in Georgia exceed on an average by 40 USD the amount sent by men (IOM, 2003).

The possibility of return for married women is much higher than that for men (IOM, 2003)

Occupation spheres where women can work are different from that of men, and the demand for female workers is on the rise. According to IOM (2003) survey, 33.1 percent of female labour migrants work as nurses, 9.2 percent as nannies, 9.2 percent as housekeepers, and 5.5 percent as shop-assistants and 4.3 percent as waitresses.

Key issues

Poverty is the fundamental problem of the country. Its main reason is the lack of employment opportunities. The way out is found by the population in self-employment and migration. High migration creates a serious threat to the demographic situation in the country, which is already bad and is expected to worsen. The decrease in population growth and consequently increase of aged population will have a negative impact on economic situation.

Majority of the employed work in private sector and many are engaged in informal occupation. Job security is low. New Labour Code is a step backwards from the previous Code, as it decreases the rights of the employees and discourages reproduction of population.

The overall attitude still supports the division of male and female domains, assigning men to public and women to private domains.

The importance of employment differs for men and women. It is more central for men's identity and therefore its repercussions are more severe for them. Employed women face both horizontal and vertical segregation. There are male and female professions, male professions are characterized by the possibilities of getting higher income. Achieving a carrier is more difficult for women than men. Women are more represented in informal employment, while in formal employment they are more concentrated in public than in private organizations.

Observed increase of migration and its feminization pose a serious threat to the demography and hence future of the country.

Gender in private realm

Chapter 5 Gender in family life

Private realm is considered as women's domain.

“There should be biological and psychological characteristics, at least in our culture determining that women should look after the family and men see to the country. Women in our culture are not asked to defend the country and fight enemies”- interview with male MP Kakha Kukava.

“Woman is a pillar of the house, she should defend the sanctity of the family, men do not have so many responsibilities in this regard”- a young male participant of a focus group discussion in Aklhaltsikhe.

Family is a universal institution in all societies, it is necessary for survival as it fulfils sexual, economic, reproductive and educational functions.

Due to differences in cultures and time, its definition encompassing all its forms poses a problem. Murdock (1949.p.2) defines family as the following: “The family is a social group characterized by common residence, economic cooperation, and reproduction. It includes adults of both sexes, at least two of whom maintain a socially approved sexual relationship, and one or more children, own or adopted, of the sexually cohabiting adults” There are different types of families throughout the world, and today the concept of family also includes single parent and homosexual families.

Transition in the family is often associated with social changes, as family reflects the changes in the society for adapting to new realities (e.g. Le Play, 1855, Durkheim, 1892).

Most often families are categorized according to generations, one, two, three, or four generation families. The most common form of two generation family is a nucleolus family, consisting of parents and one or more offspring. Nucleus family is a relatively recent phenomenon, associated with industrialization and migration of people from rural to urban areas. It emphasizes the polarized gender roles with an earning father and a housekeeping mother. Next to nucleus family exists much older form of family, extended family, usually consisting of three generations, consanguineal (blood-related) and affinal (related by marriage) kin in lineal and collateral relations, i.e. grandparents,

parents, siblings, in-laws, aunts and uncles, cousins, nieces, nephews and other relatives.

Rules of descent differ across cultures and are associated to relationships with paternal or maternal kin, with patrilineal being the most frequent rule across societies. Patrilocal pattern of marital residence, i.e. living with the husband's family after marriage is the most prevalent residence pattern throughout the world.

Georgian family was of a patriarchal character, where extended family with three or even four generations living together was the most wide-spread type of family. Women after marriage moved to husband's house. The eldest male was considered to be the head of the family and enjoyed undisputed authority. His wife had power over her daughter-in-law, who was supposed to do the chores outlined by her. Children had almost no say in family decisions and were supposed to obey elders. In some parts of Georgia there was a practice of electing men and women heads of the households. Women heads were responsible for the fulfilment of all responsibilities that were traditionally allocated to women. They assigned tasks to female members of the household, while men distributed tasks among men and made most important decisions for the family (Gogichaishvili, 1976)

Drastic changes in social, political and economic spheres experienced by the country during last one and a half decade were reflected in family life. Collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Socialist system resulted changes in almost all areas of life, and created a pressing need to adjust to the new realities. The end of the system was marked with the closure of the overwhelming majority of organizations and industries, resulting in mass unemployment. Unemployment hit almost every family and created a large army of impoverished population. After although not of affluence but still secure living, when confronted with new realities, families began to find ways for survival. Women were quicker to adapt. Hard-pressed by the situation and by male passivity they took up the responsibility to provide their families with essentials.

“For many years families have been sustained by women. Women saved the families from hunger, men could do nothing and women took up the burden. Even now, in many families it is women that work and not men” - interview with a female entrepreneur, Marina Agushashvili.

“We can see that women haven't stopped working, some are involved in petty trade, and some have become domestic workers. These women despite being educated, never refuse to do the work; women never complain about the remuneration being low, and due to which they would not work” - interview with a female expert, Tamar Abramishvili.

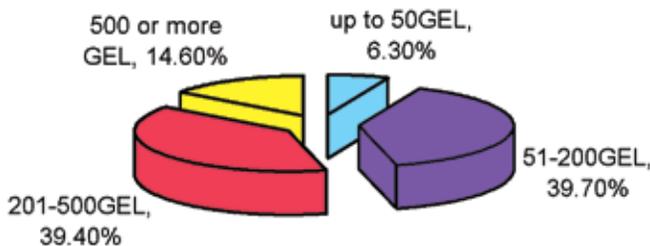
Poverty forced the able population out of the country in search of work. Migration has long term repercussions on families. The lengthy absence of fathers or mothers of the family required of the parent left behind in the family also to take the role of absent parent.

Economic situation of the surveyed families

Economic situation of the surveyed families

Poverty remains the most pressing problem of the country, with the survey (SUR) clearly revealing its prevalence. Lack of money (72.0 percent), own unemployment (44.5 percent) and that of a family member (40.5 percent), pose problems to the largest share of respondents in both men and women alike.

The reported income of households is relatively low, as the majority of households reported having monthly income from 51 to 500 GEL.



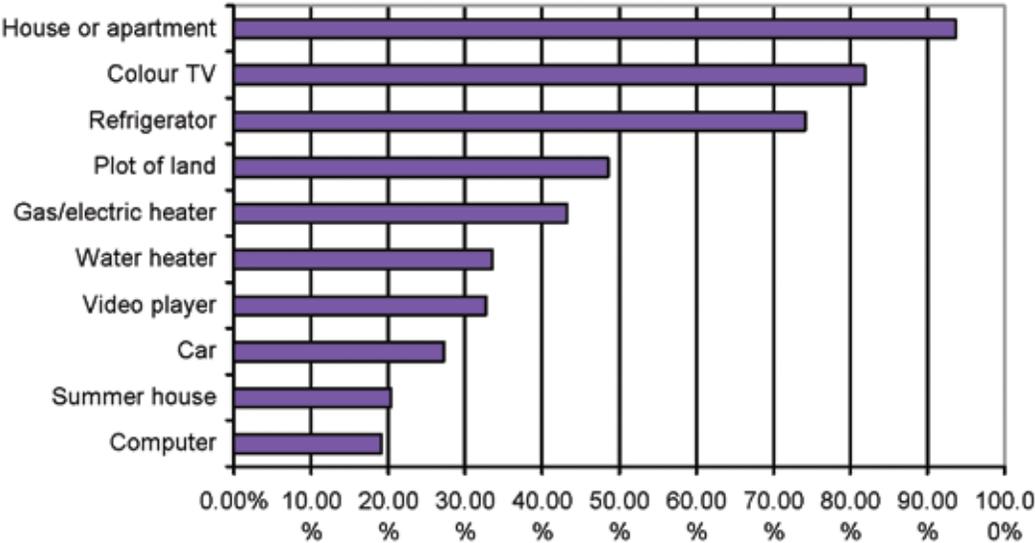
Graph 17
Monthly income of households

Not surprisingly a fifth of the respondents (20.5 percent) indicated that they had difficulties in getting money for food, 31.1 percent had money only for food, a third (33.6 percent) just had enough to buy food and clothes, 13.8 percent said that could buy things and go for vacations, and only 1.0 percent said of having enough to go abroad or purchase a car or flat. However, when asked to assess the economic well-being of the household, very few (23.9 percent), considering the reported income, evaluated their household as being poor. This fact can be accounted to two factors: the relative character of poverty. On the background of massive poverty, people do not assess their own situation as very bad; and the reluctance of accepting poverty, due to the shame and disgrace associated with it.

The repercussions of unemployment or underemployment seem to be cushioned for half of the respondents' households, due to self-provision of food from cultivated plots of land.

The fact that the population is predominantly impoverished lately shapes the character of poverty in Georgia. These nouveau poor are mostly educated people, who adhere to the values of education as well as health, and despite selling off assets; they still have flats or houses in their possession.

An overwhelming majority of the surveyed (93.6 percent) owned a flat or house where they permanently live. Majority of the households also had colour TV sets (81.9 percent) and refrigerators (74.1 percent). Furthermore, 15.5 percent reported having some kind of facility for business.



Graph 18
Ownership

At least 74.7 percent of households reported having some kind of income from work, more than half (51.6 percent) relied on state entitlements or pensions, 14.3 percent of households were supported by relatives, 10.5 percent on borrowed money from others or banks and 9.8 percent had income from selling agricultural or farm products.

In case of cash shortage, households are more likely to economize on making repairs at home (67.1 percent), buying durable goods (e.g.furniture) (60.9 percent) and clothes

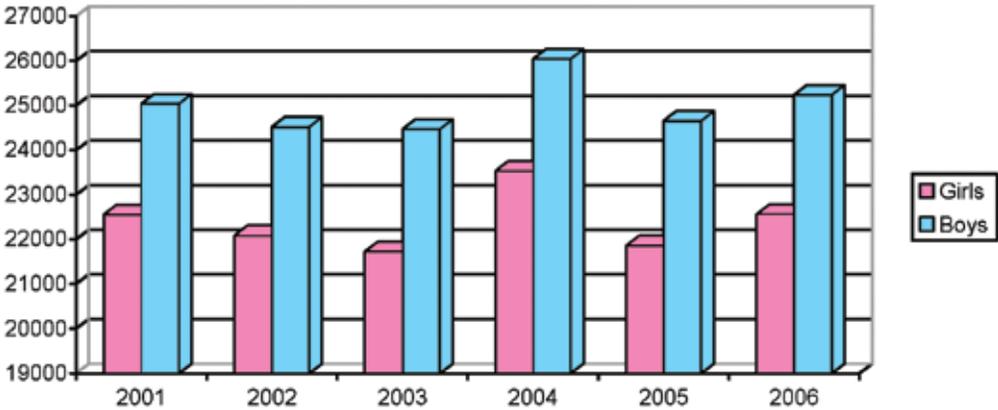
(36.5 percent); the last things they are ready to cut back on are food (92.5 percent), healthcare (84.0 percent) and education (36.5 percent).

Social changes had an impact not only on economic condition, but also on the composition and power structure of the families.

Family type and composition

In the recent years, there has been a distinct decline in the number of children. Economic conditions had multiple effects and were mostly responsible for the decline. This first of all was due to the lack of resources needed for upbringing children, secondly due to the migration of predominantly able population, and also due the increase in the age of marriage.

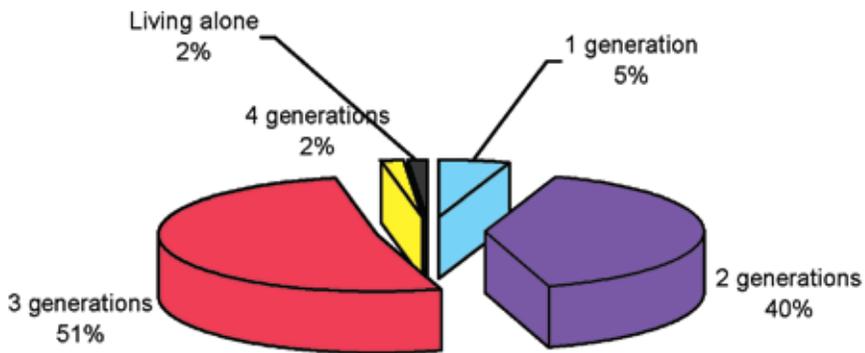
Average age at the time of the first marriage increased from 25.0 in 2001, to 25.6 in 2007 among women, and from 28.8 in 2001, to 29.4 in 2007 among men (data provided upon request by the Department of Statistics, 2007). Increase of women’s age at marriage has negative consequences on birth rate, as according to statistical data of 2006, more than half of births (51.3 percent) were from mothers under the age of 25. The number of live-births beginning from 2001 fluctuates, showing an increase in 2004, and decreasing subsequently.



Graph 19
Number of live-births by gender
Source: Statistical Department (2007)

Despite the changes, Georgian families still maintains many features and characteristic of the past.

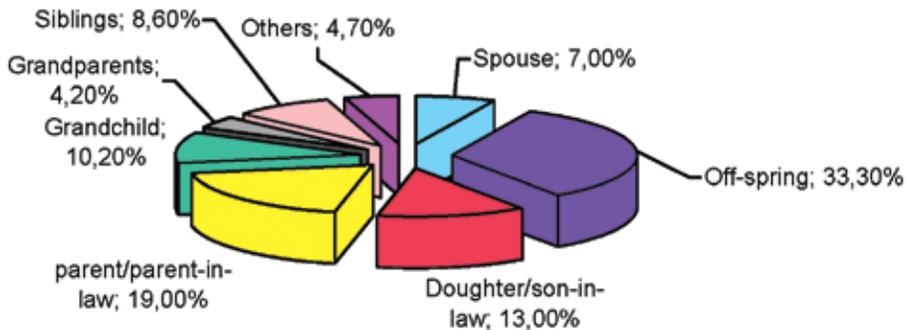
Our survey indicated that extended family remains the most prevalent type of family. More than half of the respondents (51.7 percent) live in three, and 1.5 percent in four generation families. This is much higher than the observed rate of 10.0 percent in the countries within European Union in 1999 (Eurostat, 2001). Two generation families comprise 39.4 percent. The trend of increase in nucleolus families is evident among the young employed urbanites. Due to the small amount of money needed for hiring a nanny, and the possibilities of getting bank loans, young couples increasingly choose to live independently and away from their parents.



Graph 20
Family composition by generations

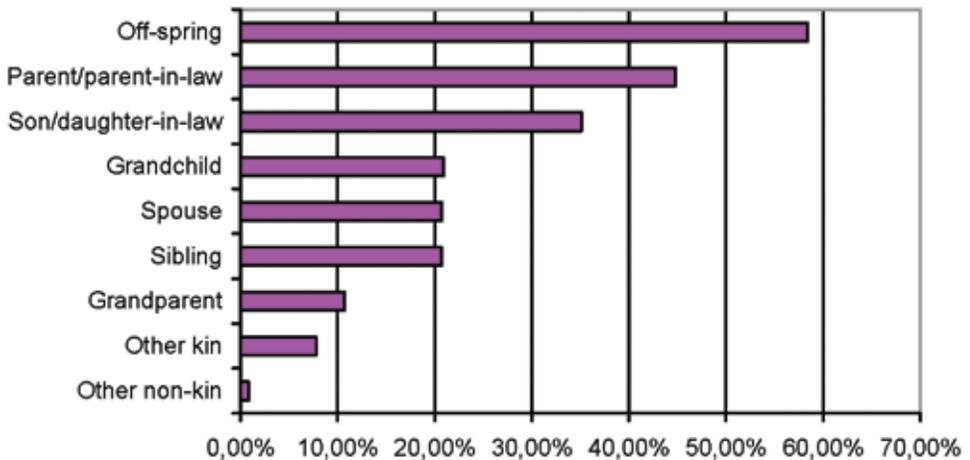
The surveyed families reported of having from 1 to 10 family members. Most commonly, families consisted of four persons (23.6 percent), while 1.5 percent of the respondents lived alone which were mostly elderly women. Two member families comprised 18.1 percent, three member families 19.7 percent, 19.2 percent had five, and 10.8 percent had six followed by 7.1 percent with seven or more members.

Overall, respondents named 3333 family members, among them females (52.6 percent) were more than males (47.3 percent). As for the relation of family members to respondents, the most abundant category was children (33.3 percent), followed by parents/parents-in-laws (19.0 percent).



Graph 21
Relation of family members to respondents

Children comprised not only the most abundant category, but also most of the surveyed respondents (58.4 percent) reported of living with at least one off-spring.



Graph 22
Households having at least one member of the listed category

Majority of households were headed by males, while households headed by females comprised a fifth of the surveyed families (21.8 percent).

55.7 percent of respondents were married, 25.0 percent of respondents had never been married, 4.0 percent were divorced or separated, 12.0 percent were widows, and 3.2 percent were cohabiting. Among the married, the most common age of marriage (ranging from 14 to 56) was 23. Women married at a younger age, mostly at 22 (age range

14 to 56), than men who generally married at the age of 25 (ranging from 16 to 50). Majority (67.9 percent) reported of having love marriage, while 26.5 percent reported of having arranged marriage and 5.6 percent did not give a definite answer.

5.0 percent of married people did not have children, others indicated of having from 1 to 8 children. Most commonly, respondents indicated having 2 children with 22.3 percent of parents having children below the age of six. Among them more than half indicated that their children attended either state (43.1 percent) or private (7.5 percent) run kindergarten. 16.7 percent wanted their children to attend the kindergarten, but were unable to make arrangements, while others (32.7 percent) did not want their children to attend kindergarten. The unwillingness can be attributed to the notion of superiority of maternal care, although there is no evidence indicating that maternal care is superior to professional care or the ones provided by other than the members of the family (Conway, Ahern and Steuernagal, 2005).

Lack of possibility of day care for children prevents women from engaging themselves in paid work, and also encourages young couples to live with their parents and grandparents to secure assistance in child care.

Power structure

Men enjoy more power in families than women. Men's power is often described as the "legitimate authority" of husbands/fathers to exercise control over their wives and children (Blood and Wolfe, 1960). Inequality is often rooted in economic dependence, and manifestes in decision-making powers, degree of freedom, in norms concerning inheritance, appropriate behaviour and chastity.

Men and women often agree that the family is to be headed by men and his authority should be respected by the entire family.

"Like a country, a family also needs a leader, and this should be a man"- young male participant of a focus group discussion in Akhaltsikhe.

"I have seen women, who were convinced that they should not supersede their husbands, should not dispute with their brothers and should not express opposing ideas to them"- interview with a female expert, Tamar Zhvania.

Power is reflected in decision-making.

"There is no equality in decisions made at home. Woman may decide the things that does not require much financing, e.g. buying clothes or selecting kindergarten for the child, etc, but in case of buying a flat or a car, the last word always belongs to the man"- interview with a female expert, Tamuna Sabedashvili.

The thought expressed by experts resonates in the survey data. According to the respondents of the survey, women have more say on how to spend money for daily needs and who their children should marry, while men predominantly makes the decisions on which social gatherings the family should attend and what the family should buy.

In the family women, be it young or old, enjoy a lot less freedom than men of corresponding age. As a young female participant of focus group meeting in Akhalkalaki declared:

“You marry and freedom ends”.

More than half (52.6 percent) of the surveyed female and 27.0 percent of male respondents indicated that they had to get permission from family members to go out of the house after dark. Females mostly informed spouses (47.0 percent) or parents (26.5 percent) or offspring (11.8 percent). While males mostly informed spouses (53.1 percent) or parents (33.8 percent).

Access to communication is also linked with freedom. More male (59.1 percent) than female (50.2 percent) respondents had mobile phones (SUR).

Different norms apply also to chastity. Females are much more closely watched over than males.

“Girls gather, walk and get amused as they walk along the street they live, but they should not disappear from the sight of their family”- young female participant of focus group discussion in Akhalkalaki.

Men are granted more sexual freedom. Survey data demonstrated that both, men and women (89.9 percent) agree that women should abstain from sexual activities until marriage. However, they differ in their attitude to kidnapping. More women (74.8 percent) than men (66.7 percent) consider that woman should not marry her kidnapper, even in case of an intercourse (Chi-Square 8.4, df.2, $p < .05$).

Husband's adultery is tolerated much more than wife's. 24.1 percent of women and 35.5 percent of men think that in case of men's adultery, wife should seek divorce (Chi square 35.0, df.2, $p < .001$), whereas in case of women's adultery 87.4 percent of men and 76.8 percent of women think that the divorce should be sought by the husband (Chi square 20.0, df.2, $p < .001$).

Divorced women have fewer possibilities than divorced men to remarry.

“To marry a woman, who was someone's wife somehow harms man's pride”- young female participant of focus group discussion in Akhaltsikhe.

Power mostly is rooted in economic independence.

“In Georgia women rarely possess anything that can contribute to her mental or physical autonomy. Consequently she has to consider someone else’s perspective before taking any step. Economic dependence is the root cause of all kinds of dependence”- interview with a female expert, Lela Gaprindashvili.

“In a family, the person who brings in money has the power. If a man does not work and a woman brings in money, or is supported by her family, the man has less right to say anything. He just does not allow himself to do so”- young male participant of a focus group discussion in Tbilisi.

According to the survey, more men (64.7 percent) than women (44.2 percent) had either regular or irregular self income (Chi Square 36.6; df 2; $p < .001$). Income of more men (31.0 percent) than of women (9.2 percent) was greater than of their spouses (Chi Square 117.9; df 4; $p < .001$).

Men and women differed in the freedom to spend own income. More women (45.9 percent) than men (33.2 percent) indicated that they could spend according to their wishes (Chi Square 9.3; df 1; $p < .005$). This can probably be an indication of the fewer amount or less significance of women’s income and stressed men’s role as a provider for the family.

Customary law assumes that the parental house is inherited by the son and not the daughter. Survey results demonstrated the such conviction still exists more among men than women. But a considerable portion of the surveyed respondents (71.5 percent of women and 62.6 percent of men) adhere to a more egalitarian attitude, and think that parental house should be equally divided between sons and unmarried daughters (Chi-Square 15.5, df.4, $p < .005$). As for land 71.9 percent of women and 65.1 percent of men consider that it should be divided equally (Chi-Square 11.6, df.4, $p < .05$). In respect to other possessions, such as jewellery, cash, car, etc. 80.4 percent of women and 72.4 percent of men are for equal division (Chi-Square 10.6, df.4, $p < .05$).

Roles and duties

As discussed earlier, male characteristics is more concentrated in the public realm and is closely associated with employment, while women’s importance is linked with her family and children. Such division of roles are consistent with the world-wide allocation of primary functions of breadwinner and decision maker to men, and family caretaker to women (Narayan, 2000), and corresponds to Parson’s (1949, 1965) distinction between instrumental parental roles related to survival assigned to fathers, and expressive roles related to maintenance of morale assigned to mothers.

It is often repeated that in Georgian culture women are deeply respected and valued. This mostly concerns mothers, as womanhood is often associated with motherhood. Woman first of all is a mother and her functions are reproduction and upbringing of children (Surmanidze, 2002).

Discoursing about family at the beginning of 20th century, a famous Georgian poet, Vaza-Pshavela, wrote: "In a family, woman is the master. She has great power over the young and the old. The upbringing of children, which is of utmost importance, is in her hands, she decides the fate of her children. The future of a child depends on how she has nurtured his/her young and sensitive soul and mind. That is why it is necessary for a mother to be educated, to sow kindness, to know how to bring up children, and what to serve them, thus she can ruin or revive the nation" (pp. 31-32, Oboladze, 1990)

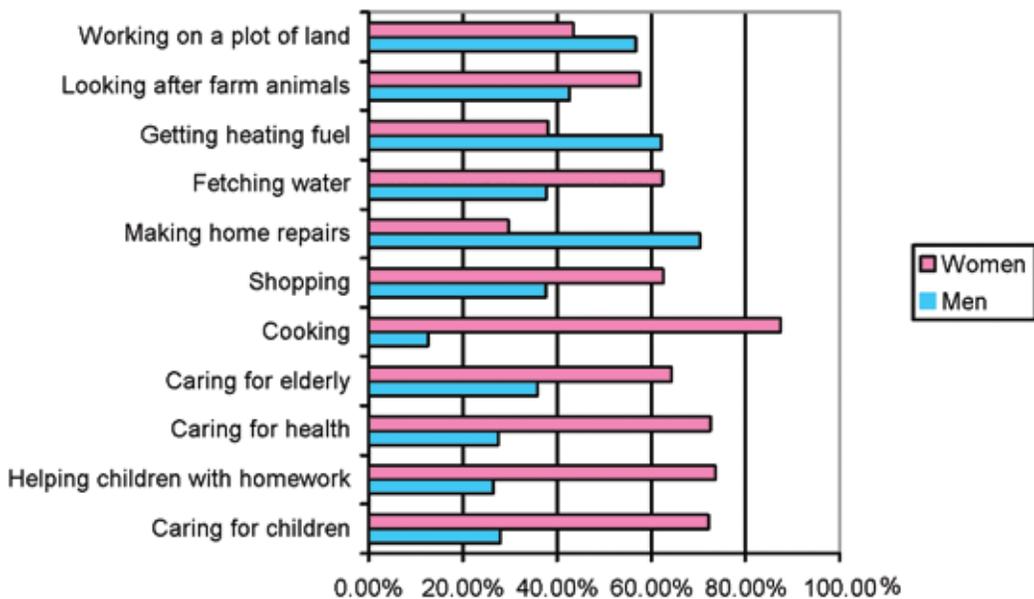
Despite global trends towards more gender equality in families, the roles of men and women in Georgian families remain much differentiated. Women are far busier with household chores than men, even in situations where women have paid jobs and men do not. Women's work in the house mostly remains unnoticed, and it is not valued as much as men's work outside the house. Moreover, many women have a dual burden of providing for the family and housekeeping, while men do not take the responsibilities traditionally allocated to women.

"There is a strong conviction in the society that the place of a woman is at home. Although family tasks require a great deal of time, women's efforts are not recognized"- young female participant of focus group discussion in Aklhalkalaki.

"Women are always in the shadows, men do not value women's work"- young male participant of focus group discussion in Aklhalkalaki.

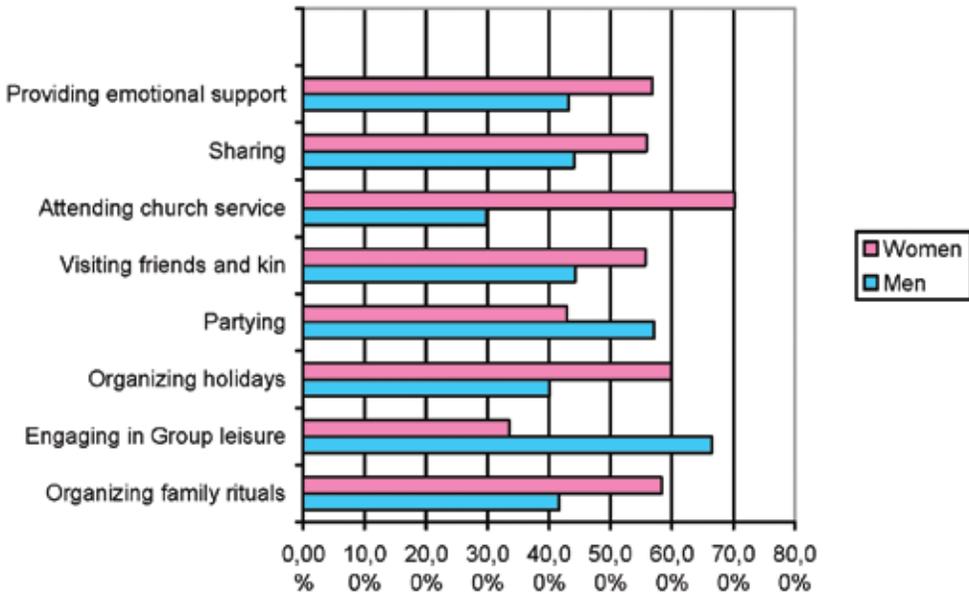
In many societies, more so in rural areas and places inhabited by ethnic minorities, performing traditionally women's tasks by a man is considered to be a shame. Even though it might not be a rare practice, men usually conceal performing such activities from the public eye.

Cooking, shopping and health care of family members are the activities in which majority of households are pursuing. Survey results proved that women are more occupied with household chores than men. Much more women than men are cooking, helping children with their homework, caring for the health of family members including children and elderly, fetching water and tending farm animals, while more men are bringing fuel for heating the house, making home repairs and cultivating a plot of land.



Graph 23
Home chores performed by men and women

More women than men were engaged in social activities and in offering emotional support, while more men participated in group leisure activities and in parties.



Graph 24
Social activities of men and women

Family contact with state institutions was not frequent, most often it took place with schools or other educational institutions. Contact with the authorities fell under the area of men’s activities.

As demonstrated by the above presented survey results, fathers are not a great deal engaged with the upbringing of their children, not many look after them or help them with their homework.

Cross-cultural study demonstrated commonality and specific characteristics of emotional closeness to family members among Georgian respondents. The youth evaluated emotional bond with mothers as the closest, followed by the ties with siblings. Fathers were the most distanced family members (Georgas, Berry, & Kagitsibasi, 2006).

Young participants of the focus group discussions in Tbilisi and the regions underlined the importance of fathers in their upbringing, and at the same time expressed regret in their inadequate involvement.

“The role of a father in upbringing is considerable; a mother cannot manage well to raise children if the father is weak and uninvolved”- young female participant of focus group discussion in Akhaltiske.

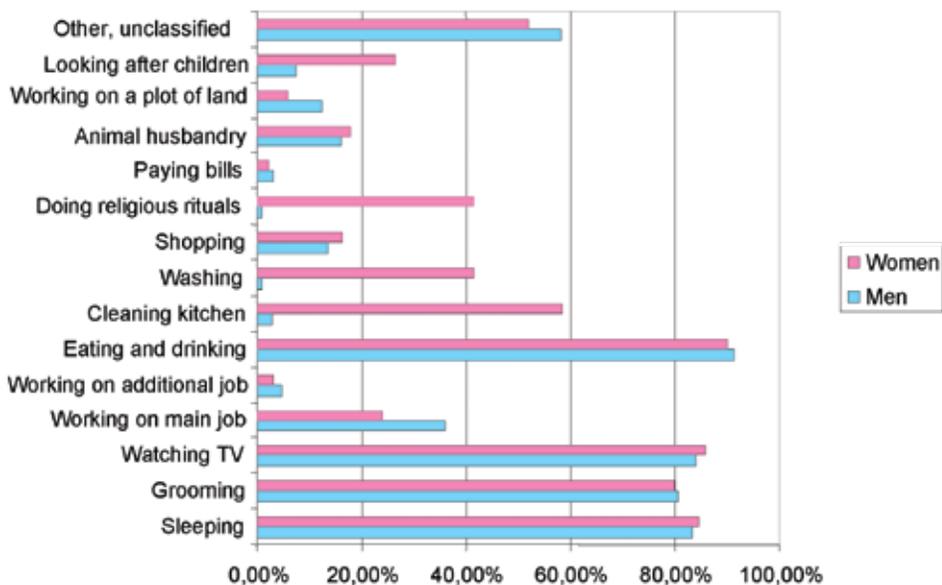
Students also discussed the different roles that fathers and mothers play in upbringing.

“Father shapes a child’s personality. Fathers express more love to girls and mothers towards boys. There are some things associated with mother and others with father. Father teaches child how to behave, what kind of a person to be, while mother teaches warmth and life”- young male participant of focus group discussion in Tbilisi.

“Father is closer to the society and he teaches the child the relationships within it”- young male participant of focus group discussion in Akhaltsikhe.

Young people pointed out that involvement of father in upbringing begins at the time of child’s maturation at the age of 15, that fathers helps a child in forming values and in becoming more assertive.

Time is a valuable resource. Overall supply of the time cannot be expended, it’s impossible to create it (Jacobs & Garson, 2004). Therefore how one allocates or spends time, speaks a great deal of the life one leads. In the section of our survey dealing with the analysis of time use - we asked respondents to describe their activities during the last 24 hours from 6 a.m. of the previous day till 6a.m. of the day of the interview. The response was in line with the above discussed results of tasks carried out by women and men. More men were engaged, and spent more time than women on the main job and leisure activities, while women were more engaged in household duties, caring for children and performing religious rituals.



Graph 25
Engagement in different activities during a day by women and men

The time use survey has a problem, as commonly found in most survey data requiring self-assessment, it is subject to some degree of biasness, and hence is not an accurate representation of the time consumed or the activity. As seen from the graph, not all respondents reported on activities which they most likely performed, e.g. sleeping, grooming and eating. For the respondents it was a problem to identify the exact time spent on each and every mentioned activity. Despite such limitations, reported time spent on different activities nevertheless provides valuable information on the daily lives of men and women. Statistically significant gender differences were found in the time allocated to work and watching TV, with men being more engaged in those activities and women spending more time on cooking.

Besides being busy at home, women are often employed too, thus having a dual burden of serving both as a provider of the family and a homemaker, while men are mostly attached to the solitary role of being a breadwinner.

“Women share their generated income with men, but men do not share women’s burden”- young female participant of focus group discussion in Tbilisi.

Furthermore, due to unprestigious nature of women’s work at home, men are reluctant to share women’s tasks.

“Women take up men’s role, which is associated with money and prestige, but men are reluctant to engage in family responsibilities, such as upbringing children, which is not considered prestigious and in that regard nothing changes”- interview with a female expert, Lela Khomeriki.

Men’s unwillingness to take up women’s role is not unique to Georgia. As J. Georgas (2006 p.49) points “despite modernization in western societies, husbands have resisted helping wives with household chores”.

Cross- cultural study of families in 27 countries demonstrated that mothers across all countries performed more housework than fathers. It also showed that traditional family values – respect of the elders, importance of kinship ties and men’s power in the family are associated with affluence of the society. Modest affluence is linked with subscribing to more traditional values and males enjoying additional power in families. In addition, gender equality issues are closely connected with religion, with some religions allowing for more and others less equality. Moslem religion is largely associated with patriarchal attitudes in family life (Georgas, Berry, & Kagitsibasi, 200?).

Wedding rituals convey many symbolic manifestations of the family’s stability, acceptance of daughter in law and her expected behaviour. The wedding ritual of Moslem Meskhetians, representatives of the group deported from the Southern part of Georgia in 1944, returned to the country a decade or so ago, clearly points to the obedience required from the daughter in law.

Wedding ceremony of Moslem Meskhetians in Georgia

Marriage is considered as a very important ritual and is dealt with all due deliberations.

Wedding takes place in both, the bride's and bridegroom's houses, although the bride can have a small get-together.

The wedding consists of the following rituals: Arrival of the groom at the bride's place and his reception; Arrival of mother-in-law and her reception; Giving gifts to the bride and their public inspection in the presence of the bride; Presenting the bride to the bridegroom; Appearance of bridegroom and bride before the guests; Eating and dancing; Departure of the bridegroom and bride back to the house; Cutting of the wedding cake and exchange of rings.

Tables are laid in Sepa, - a sheltered place outside, usually in the yard. A special sofa is placed at the end point of Sepa for the newlyweds. The Sepa is decorated with colourful balloons and artificial flowers.

At the wedding women are colourfully dressed, mostly clad in red with bright coloured socks and scarves.

The wedding is accompanied by live music, besides contemporary songs, ethnic music using Zurna and Duduki (traditional instruments) are also performed. The musicians are hired, most often from Azerbaijan.

The food served at the wedding are Meskhetian and Georgian. Upon arrival at the bride's place, the groom along with people accompanying him is taken to the room where table is laden with sweetmeats. Mother-in-law and people accompanying her enter the yard. They place gifts on the ground and dance around them. They carry small bags and packages, tied with red ribbons filled with sweets and fruit, while the bigger bags contain presents for the bride. Women then go to a room and sit on a floor. They greet each other by placing their palms on the other person's elbows. When an elderly woman enters the room, all the women stand up to greet her. Finally, the bride clad in white with her face covered, enters the room, she is accompanied by a female married relative "Ianga" to assist her with the proceedings. The gifts are opened and the presenter's name is declared, all gifts are accompanied with red flowers. During the opening of gifts the bride uncovers her face, and after observing all the gifts she covers her face again and leaves the room. The bride is then taken to the room where the groom is waiting for her. Her passage is accompanied by music performed on Zurna and Duduki. The bride and bridegroom come out of the room in the company of their witnesses, close kin and friends. One of the women carries the bride's cake and all head for Sepa. Earlier there was a tradition of the newlyweds passing under an arch made exclusively by males, which was arranged in two rows and made from twisted branches of trees (or knives). Meskhetians do not have the tradition of appointing a Tamada (Georgian tradition of appointing person for leading the table and pronouncing toasts), but now under

the influence of Georgians they sometimes appoint one. Eating and drinking is followed by dancing. The table is served by young men in weddings, which is usually attended by around 200 people including children of all ages.

The newlyweds accompanied by a small number of close friends and kin, leave the Sepa and go back into the house, to a special room where table is laid with sweets and drinks. Wedding cake is then brought in, which is decorated with red ribbons, and at the ends of the ribbons wedding rings are attached. The bride cuts the ribbons with scissors, followed by the bride and the groom placing rings on each other's fingers. After which, they cut the cake together and give each other a small piece of cake. This gesture is accompanied by applause and felicitations. The cake is cut and distributed among the guests. The newlyweds do not go out any more. They stay at home and rest.

Newlyweds do not spend the night together in bride's house, although the guests may stay until early morning.

Next day the bridegroom along with people accompanying him returns home and wait for the bride, who must be brought by the groom's father or another male kin. The groom's female relatives that stayed overnight at the bride's house, must accompany the bride. At the bride's house, a room is specially prepared for the arrival of the groom's father. The ritual of gift giving and the ritual of buying the bride are performed there. The bride with covered face, accompanied again by Inga enters the room. She unveils her face. The relatives of the groom holds two trays with cheese pie, sweets, fruit and scarves. At the edges of trays three candles are lit. Two small girls take the trays and circle them three times over their heads. After doing this the girls are given scarves and the food on the tray is offered to guests. One of the girls approaches the bride and combs her hair; she receives a present for this action. The other girl makes a dot with henna on bride's right palm, and she is also given a gift. Inga, who is always next to the bride, wipes out this dot. She then receives presents from the groom's family members. Next, the ritual of buying the bride begins which is accompanied by Doli and Zurna. The bride once again covers her face. She must be sold by her brother or other male kin. She puts a scarf on his waist and the ritual begins. With scarf around his waist, the brother imitates the action of closing and opening of belt. These movements are accompanied by placing money in the scarf, which is given to the bride's female kin. The bride is now considered bought and she is taken to a car by her father-in-law with her face again covered. She is accompanied by Inga and the groom's female relatives. Once again the ritual of buying begins. A local male stands in front of the car and does not allow it to move. He is given money; however he does not let the car move until he is satisfied with the sum he has received. Earlier, the tradition was to wrestle. The mother is not allowed to bid her daughter farewell, and the father cannot approach the bride either. Only her uncle says goodbye to her. Women then adjust the coloured scarves on the car, the bride uncovers her face and the car leaves.

Later, a religious ritual is performed where the bride is present only for a short period

of time for acknowledging if she agrees to be married. No written registration is done. The bride is received in the house by the husband who showers her with sweets. She is also greeted by her mother-in-law. On the entrance of the house, the bride breaks a plate placed on a scarf with her feet; the mother-in-law gathers the pieces, wraps them in the scarf and takes them into the house. Father-in-law accompanies the bride to the house. At the door of the house, the bride whose face is covered and who has white and red scarves on her head, is accompanied by Ianga is met by her sister-in-law or a female witness. She is offered a cup with honey, in which she dips her finger and puts it on the wall of the house three times, as a symbol of sweet relations. When she comes into the house, knives are crossed over her head and pronounced loudly that her tongue is shortened, so as not to contradict her mother-in-law. Following which pieces of bread are tied to her waist as a sign of family's stability. The father-in-law throws rice as a symbol of wealth, saying that everything he has is hers as well. Mother-in-law blesses the bride. Then she is taken to her husband and her face is uncovered. The wedding begins, with men and women sitting at different tables and dancing separately. Ianga stays with the bride in the house for three days.

Key Issues

For adapting to social changes, family as an institution is subject to change. The collapse of the Soviet Union had manifold, long lasting and grave consequences. Adaptations to the changes induced alterations in the composition and power structure of the family, altering gender relationships. Nevertheless, despite the fact of women assuming functions of income generation, principal division of roles, of a male as a breadwinner and a female as a home carer still remains. The problem is not so much about division, but about devaluation of the domestic work undertaken by women.

Chapter 6

Human and Social capital

Personal well-being to a great extent depends on human and social capitals one possesses. The level and composition of these capitals differ among women and men.

Human capital comprising health and education define the ability to labour and relish life, and therefore is of paramount importance for survival. Better education and health can, not only improve the quality of life directly, but also can increase a person's ability to earn more. Another important factor for survival is a social capital, which is determined by a person's interpersonal relations and networks, as well as the support of which she or he enjoys.

Health

Health is probably the most important human asset. The overwhelming majority of the respondents (97.1 percent) of the survey (SUR) evaluated it as the most important aspect of their life.

On average women have better health and live longer than men.

Life expectancy showed an increase of 4.4 years in the period of 2001-2007. The degree of increase in life expectancy reflected upon both men and women, although it was to a greater degree among women. This explains the increase of gap between men's and women's life expectancy which fluctuates between 6.6 and 8.9 years.

Table 9

Life expectancy at birth

Years	Total	Males	Females	Difference
2001	71.5	68.0	74.8	6.8
2002	71.5	67.9	74.8	6.8
2003	72.1	68.7	75.3	6.6
2004	71.6	67.9	75.1	7.2
2005	73.8	69.9	77.4	7.5
2006	74.3	69.8	78.5	8.7
2007	75.1	70.5	79.4	8.9

Source: Department of statistics

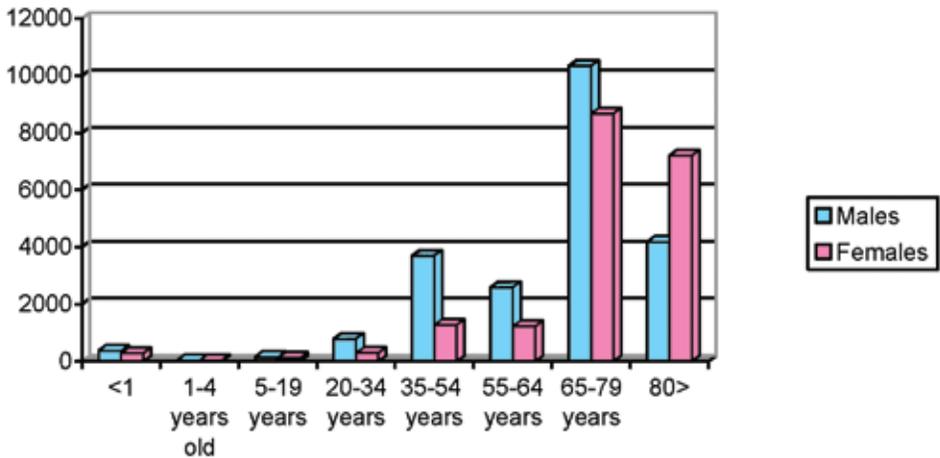
Death rate is higher among men compared to women.

Table 10
Number of deaths

Years	Males	Females	Total
2004	24,642	24,151	48,793
2005	21,091	19,630	40,721
2006	22,458	19,797	42,255
2007	22,091	19,797	42,255

Source: Department of Statistics

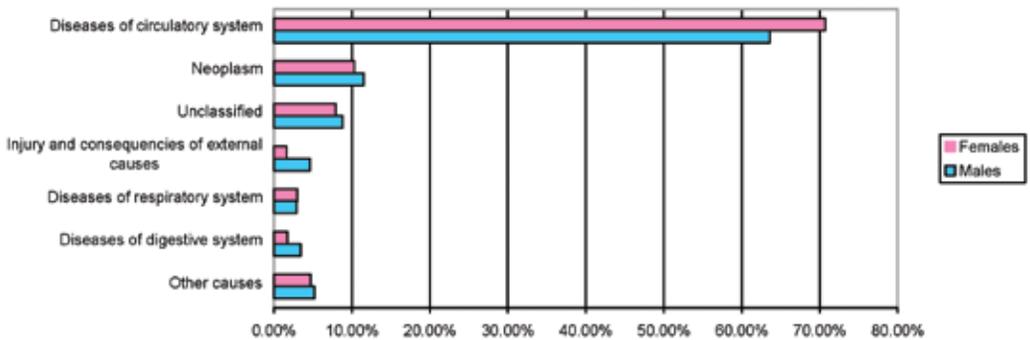
The most number of deaths among both genders occurs in the age range of 70-74. In 2007, 18.5 percent of all deaths occurred within this age bracket.



Graph 26
Number of deaths by age-groups

Men and women mostly die from the same causes, but the share of the causes in women and men differs. Diseases related to heart and circulatory system, along with cancer is the main cause of deaths. The incidence of diseases related to circulatory system is higher among women. A gender-related specificity is that heart disease usually reveals among women in a later age than in men (Conway, Ahern & Steuernagel, 2005).

One big human killer is cancer and its occurrence is somewhat gender-specific. Relatively little gender difference is exposed when all types of cancers are taken into consideration, but differences are revealed when the disease is looked at in respect to its location. The most widespread among women are genital, breast and digestion tract cancers, while among men it is digestion, respiratory and urinary systems. More men than women die due to physical injuries and other external causes.



Graph 27

Share of different illnesses among the causes of death of men and women in 2007

Source: Department of Statistics

Health of the population dramatically deteriorated after the dissolution of the Soviet Union.

All health service facilities became privatized or were auctioned, and health care which was free during the Soviet period became paid. Budget allocations for health decreased, comprising e.g. 7.3 USD per capita in 2001, while the minimal expenditure for performing basic functions set forward by WHO for the same period was 60 USD. The total expenditure on healthcare per capita in the country is 108 PPP (International Dollar), while the state covers 38 percent, i.e. 41 PPP. Corresponding numbers in Latvia are 509 PPP, 52.0 percent covered by the state or 267 PPP and in the Netherlands 2612 PPP with the state covering 63 percent or 1654PPP. Thus budget allocated to health care is

6.4 percent of GDP in Latvia, 8.9 percent in the Netherlands, and only 3.6 percent in Georgia (Global Initiative for Psychiatry-Tbilisi. 2008)

Impoverished population did not have the means for paying out-of-pocket medical expenses for visiting doctors. Instead people sought and still seek informal advice from friends, at drugs stores on how to treat the symptoms and take medications based on such advice. Almost any drugs, apart from psychoneurological can be obtained without prescriptions and over-the-counter. Such pattern of treatment often leads even to more aggravation of patients' health condition. People, especially the poor and rural inhabitants do not have information regarding state programmes providing free health services, and therefore economic barriers, in addition to inadequate information regarding entitlement to services, are two of the main reasons for the population not seeking for medical services. People usually visit health care facilities when the illness is in an advanced stage and often cannot be treated.

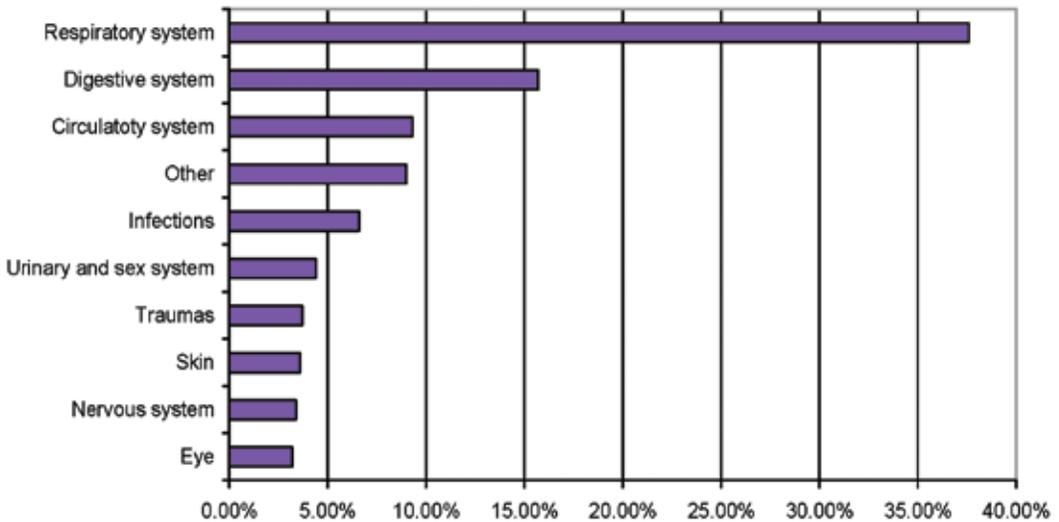
Illness of one person in the family can have a lasting effect on economic condition of the entire family as the "Safety net" is very thin, enjoyed only by a small portion of the population and covering very limited number of services. The restricted number of state programmes, i.e. treatment of tuberculoses, health care of children under the age of one, immunization, prenatal care, certain categories of disability, and treatment of some diseases, such as cancer, psychosis, tuberculosis, malaria, HIV/AIDS, are free. But even in case of these diseases, patients often have to supplement with out-of-pocket payments. Health insurance has only taken basic measures in the country. It is provided by the state to some groups of population and individuals registered at state targeted assistance programme, such as IDPs and by some employers. Very few people have private insurance. Only 5.3 percent of the surveyed reported having health insurance (SUR).

Health is considered as women's issue, since usually women care for the health of family members.

"When a man becomes ill, woman of the family usually takes the responsibility of his health care, but when a woman falls ill, man rarely takes responsibility for her health care"- interview with an expert Lela Khomeriki.

Perception of health condition seems to be contrary to the general trend of woman being in better health. A higher percentage (45.9 percent) of male respondents of the survey (SUR), than women (31.8 percent) (Chi-Square 23.7; df 2, $p < .001$) evaluated their health as good. In addition, lower percentage of men (35.8 percent) than women (50.1 percent) reported as being ill and unable to visit a doctor (Chi-Square 22.0; df 1, $p < .001$) during the year when the survey was carried out. Among 464 respondents who were ill and did not attend the doctor, 71.6 percent indicated that they did not visit doctor due to the lack of money.

Statistical data indicates that the population suffers most often from diseases related to respiratory and digestive systems.



Graph 28
Share of different diseases in 2007

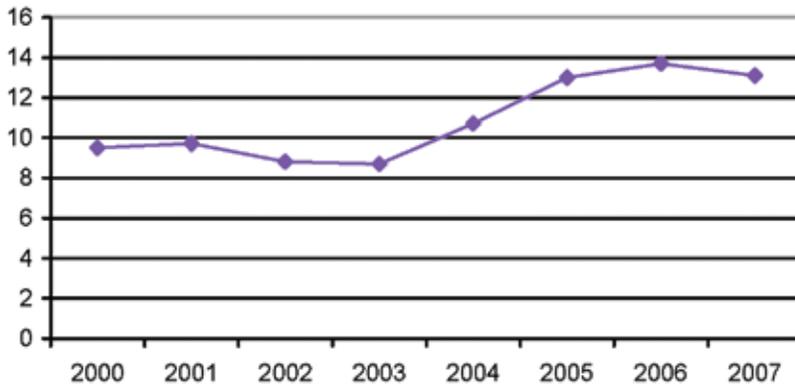
Source: Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Security

Difference in health related needs of women and men are mostly associated with reproduction.

Women require reproductive health services between the ages of fifteen and forty-four. Prenatal care is probably the most important component of preventive measures in reproductive health, as it has long-term consequences on the health of both, the mother and child. Pregnancy and child birth expenses are covered by the state program, although pre-natal care does not provide the possibility for repeated scanning in case of complication. As a result most risk-prone cases could be left unattended.

In 2007, 639 children died due to conditions originating in the pre-natal period, and inborn anomalies. The situation with the death rate due to above mentioned causes has improved compared to 2005, which saw the death of 915 children.

Family planning is not in an advanced stage. The number of abortions is high and in general, shows tendency to increase.

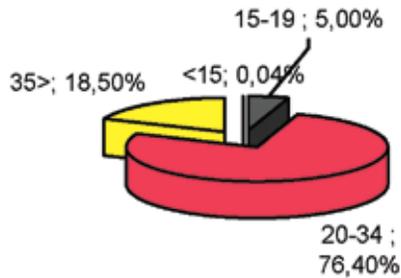


Graph 29

Number of abortions over the years 2000-2007 in thousands

Source: Women and Men in Georgia, 2008

The majority (76.4 percent) of abortions are carried out in the age group of 20-34.



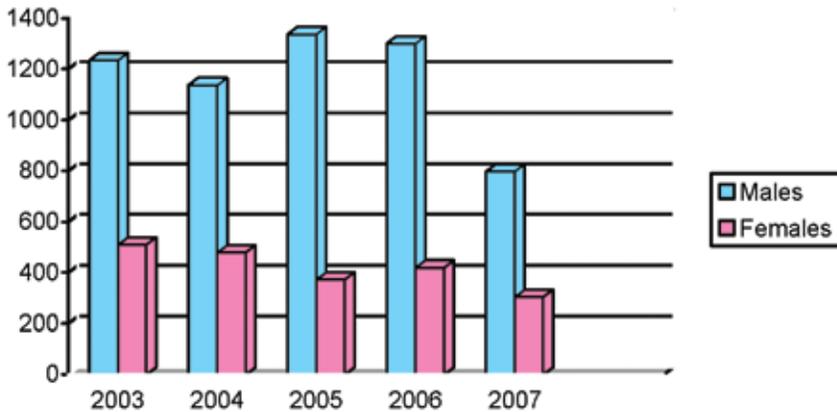
Graph 30

Share of abortions by age bracket

The health problems of many IDP women are primarily connected with reproduction.

“IDP women have many gynaecological problems due to multiple abortions they were induced to undergo, often outside health care facilities. Seeing no possibilities to raise them, women were afraid to bear children”- interview with state official, Dalila Khorava. Sexually transmitted diseases, HIV/AIDS among them are linked with gender.

They are more common among men compared to women. Occurrence of new cases of Syphilis and Gonorrhoea show irregular pattern, the highest numbers being registered in 2005, and the lowest in 2007.



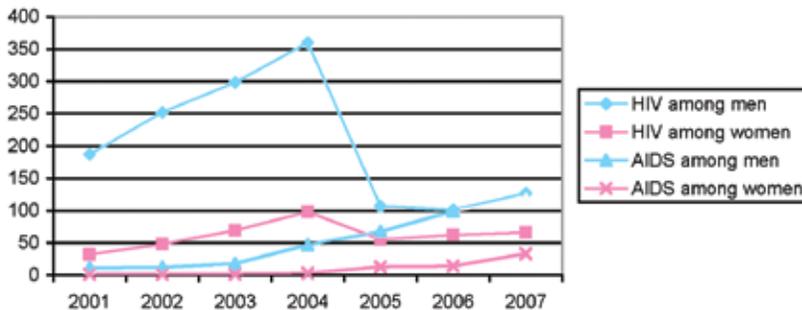
Graph 31
New cases of Syphilis and Gonorrhoea

Source: Ministry of Labor, Health and Social security

According to the data of Reproduction Health Survey, the number of HIV infections in Georgia in 2005 was around 50 per million of population, which is higher compared to the region, with Azerbaijan at 20, and a bit over 30 in Armenia.

The number of registered cases of HIV infection is rapidly on the rise.

The number of registered cases of HIV infection is rapidly on the rise.



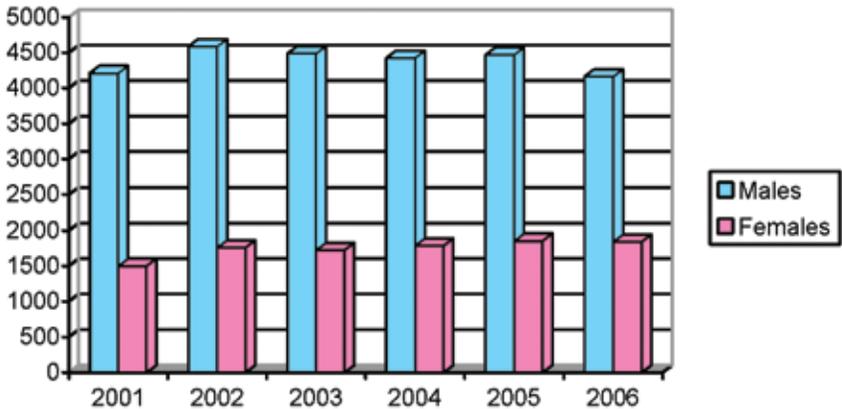
Graph 32
Number of new cases of HIV/AIDS

Source: Men and Women in Georgia, 2006 and 2008.

By August 2008, 1726 cases were registered, and among infected 75.6 percent are men, mostly in age bracket of 29-40 years. The illness among men is mainly (50.8 percent) transmitted through syringe sharing and is predominantly spread among drug addicts, while among women it is mostly (31.6 percent) transmitted through intercourse. The death toll of the infected individuals stands at 371.

Men are also more prone to tuberculosis and occurrence of tuberculosis is on the rise, with the exception of 2006 during which the number of cases decreased slightly. In 2007, 6,450 cases of tuberculosis were registered.

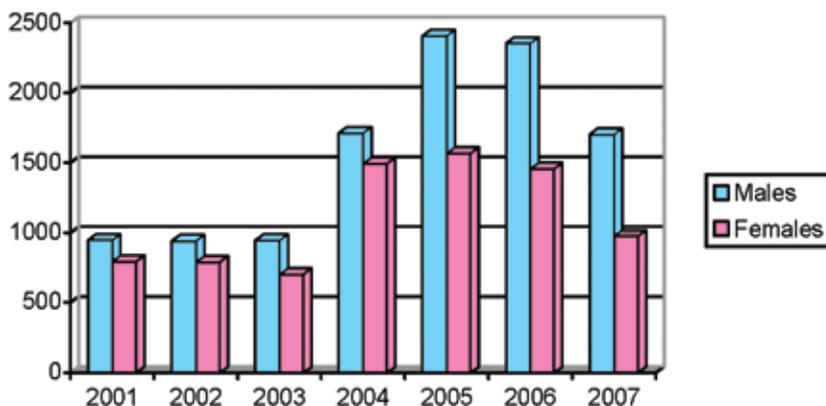
One of the factors contributing to the widespread infection among men could be its prevalence among the prison population, where overwhelming majority are men.



Graph 33
Cases of Tuberculosis

Source: Department of Statistics

Psychic disorders are among the most prevalent forms of morbidity worldwide. Their impact is severe not only on the persons suffering, but also on their families and on society as a whole. Due to stigma and economic constraints, the registered number of incidents of psychic disorders is much lower than factual. In 2007, 106,921 persons with psychic disabilities were registered in Georgia (Global Initiative on Psychiatry-Tbilisi 2008). Georgia’s per capita expenditure on psychiatric patient is very low at 0.9 PPP-International dollars. In comparison, it is 5.5 in Armenia, 12 in Bulgaria and 90 in France. The registered number of new cases of psychic disorders is on the rise. More men than women are registered. The difference may be accounted to people increasingly seeking help in cases of schizophrenia, which is more common among men, than in cases of other less severe forms of disorders.



Graph 34
New cases of psychic disorders

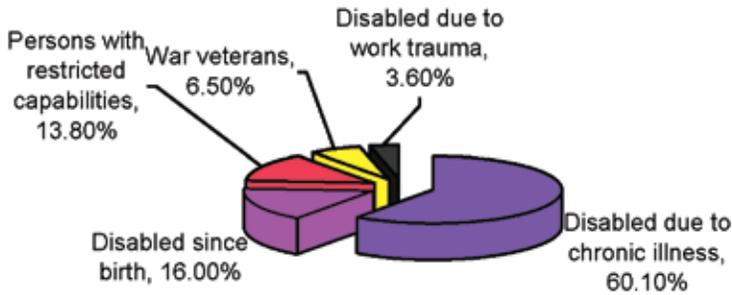
Source: Women and Men in Georgia, 2006 and 2008

The nature of psychiatric problems also varies among men and women.

“Manic-depressive psychosis, neuroses, depression and hysterics are more prevalent among women and schizophrenia among men”- interview with a psychiatrist, Maia Khundadze.

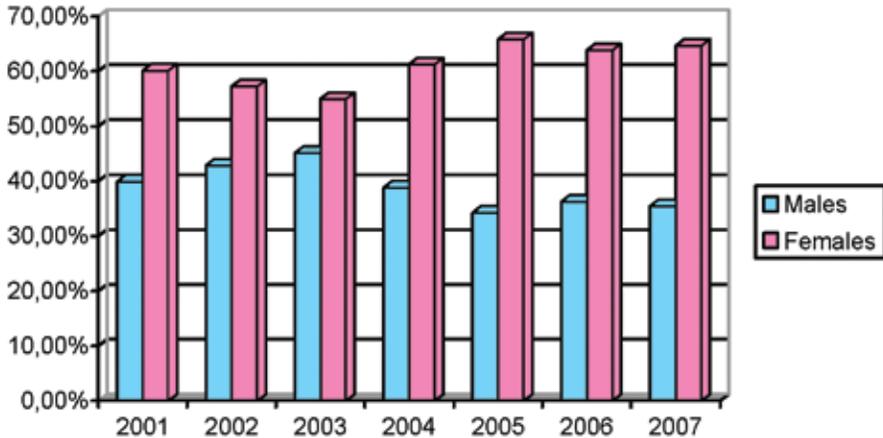
Disability seriously hinders a person’s ability to work and enjoy life. It often results in social isolation and depressions. 213,184 disabled persons were officially registered in Georgia in 2004, of which 13.9 percent had the first category of disability (“very severe”), 65.6 percent had the second category (“severe”) and 15.5 percent had the third category (“medium”) of disability, which was caused by physical, mental or chronic disorders.

However, the actual number of disabled people in Georgia is likely to be higher than 213,184, and is estimated at being around 400,000 by experts. Among newly registered cases of disability women (51.8 percent in 2007) slightly outnumber men.



Graph 35
Disability by causes

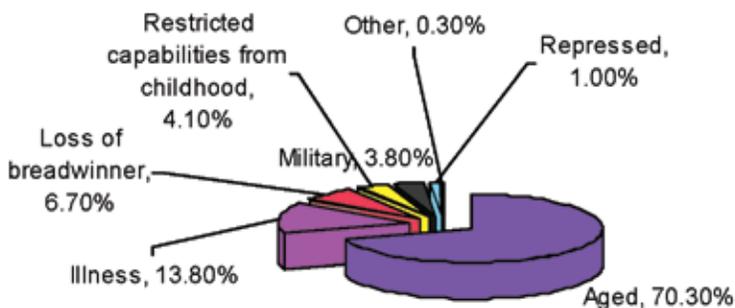
838,130 persons or 19.2 percent of country’s population receives eight different kinds of pensions from the state. Women pensioners (64.6) are nearly twice as much as men pensioners (35.4 percent)..



Graph 36
Percentage of male and female pensioners

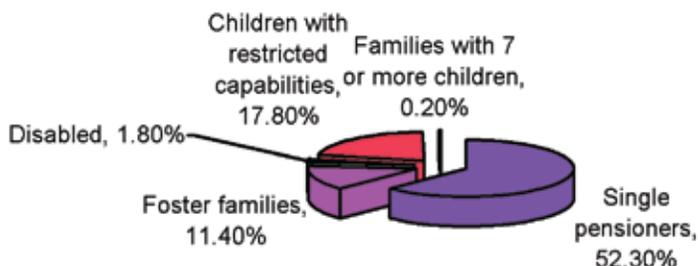
Source: Department of Statistics

The majority of pensioners (70.3 percent) receives pension for being aged.



Graph 37
Structure of pensions

The state also provides entitlements to certain vulnerable groups of the population. In 2007, 12,306,400 GEL was assigned for 6 different types of entitlements. The biggest share (52.3 percent) was allocated to single pensioners.



Graph 38
Composition of state entitlements in 2007

There are only four homes for the elderly and disabled, which accommodated 637 individuals in 2007. Overall, 1,182,200 GEL was allocated, i.e. 1855 GEL (approximately 1,300USD) per capita for a year.

Health policy is disproportionally focused on curative care, while preventive care is neglected to a great deal. As a consequence there is lack of knowledge on health issues and healthy life style among the population.

Men lead unhealthier life style than women. 79.7 percent of men and 19.4 percent of

women consume more than three glasses of alcoholic beverages on a regular basis (Chi-Square 4.1; df 3, $p < .001$). Among them, 6.3 percent of men and 2.3 percent of women drink daily. 52.0 percent of men and 7.8 percent of women reported of smoking (Chi-Square 2.8; df 3, $p < .001$) (SUR). Smoking has different effects on men and women. In both genders it increases the risk of cancer, heart and respiratory diseases, but its effect is more devastating for women. Female smokers have a greater probability of developing lung cancer than male smokers. Moreover, smoking contributes to women's reproductive disorders, which can cause complication with pregnancy and therefore can reduce fertility (Conway, Ahern & Steuernagel, 2005).

At the same time, although on the general background of little involvement in exercise and other physical activities, men engage more in exercising (26.7 percent of men and 12.3 percent of women) (Chi-Square 38.7; df 3, $p < .001$), walking (90.0 percent of men and 87.4 percent of women) (Chi-Square 22.4; df 2, $p < .001$) and working physically (72.1 percent of men and 58.4 percent of women) (Chi-Square 29.8; df 2, $p < .001$). Economic conditions prevent people from taking a break and going out for holidays. More women (31.3 percent) than men (25.7 percent) managed to go for holidays during the last 3 years (Chi-Square 29.8; df 2, $p < .001$), which was probably hard-pressed by the necessity of taking the children for some rest (SUR).

Alongside morbidity, disability, old age and violence also diminish human capital. Violence represents the most significant difference between men and women. Men are more aggressive than women (Maccoby, 1963). They are more often, both perpetrators and victims of violence. Wars, ethnic or community conflicts pose further threat to the lives and health of men. In relation to men, violence is mostly inflicted by strangers, while women are more prone to become victims of violence inflicted by intimate people, such as current or ex-spouses.

Domestic violence can be considered as an extreme case of gender inequality.

“Family violence is a full-fledged demonstration of power struggle and gender inequality. One person allows himself to beat, punish or bring up another person; this means that he does not see her as an equal”- interview with female expert, Tamar Sabedashvili.

Besides being a human rights problem, domestic violence is also a public health problem. Victims of violence often require hospitalization or treatment by physicians. Apart from physical harm it incurs psychological damage too, resulting in depression and other mental disorders. Violence affects reproductive abilities of women, stimulates miscarriage, still-birth and giving birth to a low birth-weight baby. Domestic violence is underreported in every country and Georgia is not an exception.

Opponents to the adoption of Law on Domestic Violence argued that it was not wide spread in Georgia, and therefore there was no need to adopt. However, there were even more extreme positions. As one of the respondents put across:

“There was no need to adopt the Law on Domestic Violence. If a man is acknowledged as the head of the family and the woman subordinates him, there will not be any problem. Policemen will not help domestic violence” - interview with a male notary.

The information on exact number of domestic violence cases is not available. In 2007, police registered 2388 cases of domestic violence, and following these incidents 493 restricting orders were issued. (Subari, 2008)

Georgian Reproductive Health Surveys conducted in 1999 and 2005 revealed underreporting, it also showed that the number of individuals experiencing domestic violence during the last 12 months (2.0 percent) and (5.0 percent) during life time, was is much lower than in other countries. The low level can be partially attributed to stricter cultural restrictions of acknowledging as being victims of violence. As for the respondents of our survey (SUR), more women (31.5 percent) than men (24.4 percent) admit being aware of families where husbands physically abuse wives (Chi-Square 6.9; df 2, $p < .05$). Men and women do not differ in having the knowledge of families where mothers beat their children (39.6 percent), where fathers beat their children (27.3 percent), and where elderly family members are abused (15.7 percent). Besides being knowledgeable on cases of domestic violence men and women differ in their attitude on the subject. Although both men and women (90.0 percent) agree that it is unacceptable to beat 10-15 years old child for upbringing purposes, they differ (Chi-Square 8.9; df 2, $p < .05$) in the approval of beating a wife in the event of adultery, 25.0 percent of men and 19.0 percent of women consider this acceptable. Domestic violence is mostly considered as a private and family affair. Therefore many oppose reporting to the police on cases of violence. However, more women (72.0 percent) than men (51.0 percent) are in favour of woman taking some measures in case of domestic violence. Among measures the most often mentioned is divorce, seeking help from family members and from kin.

The Law on Elimination of Domestic Violence, Protection and Support of its Victims was adopted in May, 2006. Adoption of the law is a step forward in combating violence, but without supporting systems its effectiveness is questionable. The law requires establishment of shelters and social services. Opening of state funded shelters was scheduled for January, 2008, but this has not happened. Until now only two shelters, funded by international organizations and run by NGOs are operating in the capital, but their capacity is very limited.

“After adoption of the law, many appeals were made to the Administrative Court for the issuance of protective and restricting orders. Much more appeals are made in Tbilisi Courts than in regions. Although in regions more violent crimes are committed, such as murder”- interview with Justice Rusudan Chanturidze.

Other forms of crime against women are rape and bride kidnapping. In 2007, 258 cases of rape or attempt to rape were registered. This is more than the 180 cases registered in the previous year. In 2006, 326 and in 2007, 238 cases of bride kidnapping were registered. In general, society and justice system are relatively tolerant to this type of crime. Often parties reach agreement and consequently the perpetrator escapes trial. In 2007, from among the 258 registered cases, only 89 were presented to the court, and in 35 cases the offenders pleaded guilty.

Private realm is not the only place where abuse against women occurs. It is also often committed in working environments. Women are more vulnerable in the informal sector of employment where they work in big numbers, which is neither regulated nor controlled by the state.

“Female discrimination is evident among nannies, cleaning ladies, street vendors and seasonal workers. Women do not have many options. They have to act on the situation by involving some street “authority” or policemen; they know how to defend their own rights”- interview with a female expert, Tamar Sabedashvili.

Trafficking is another extreme form of discrimination. As a consequence of deteriorating economic conditions, trafficking and prostitution has increased. In 2007 29 crimes were qualified as trafficking, among them 14 were committed against women.

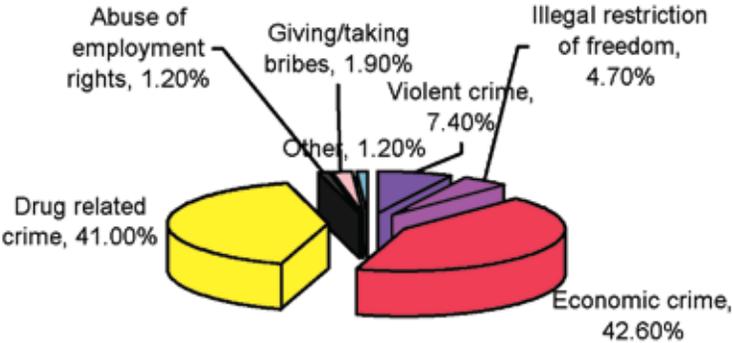
Prostitution is not considered as an offence by law, only organization of brothel and child prostitution is punishable (Sanikidze, L. Et al. 2006).

Crime causes depletion of human capital not only in victims, but also in perpetrators. Criminality is much higher among men than women, and it is on the rise. In 2006, 228 crimes committed by women and 17575 committed by men were registered, while in the first 8 months of 2007, the number crimes committed by women has already reached 254, and the number by men at 15,422. (Information provided upon request, by the Ministry of Internal Affairs on 02.10.2007, and the Ministry of Justice on 17.10.2007).

Prison population in Georgia is very high. By July 2007, it constituted 401 persons per 100,000 of population. To compare, the corresponding numbers for other countries are: 750 in USA, 628 in Russia, 202 in Azerbaijan, 104 in Armenia, 112 in Turkey, 163 in Bulgaria, and 92 in Greece. From 2003 to 2006, the number of people imprisoned increased both among men and women, but more rapidly among women, which increased the proportion of women among prison inmates. In 2003, 147 women constituted 2.4

percent of all prison inmates (6137), while in 2004, 191 women constituted 2,5 percent of all inmates (7750), and in 2006, 323 women constituted 3.6 percent of all inmates (9064). By October 2007, 14,519 men and 577 women were in prison; with a further 8562 men and 211 women in preliminary detention. Women thus comprised 3.8 percent of convicted prison population and 2.5 percent of those awaiting court ruling. For comparison, the share of women prisoners in USA in 2002, when women comprised 6.8 percent of all prison inmates.

Based on the information of 578 women prison inmates and on the type of offence committed, the highest percentage 42.6 percent were imprisoned on economic crimes such as robbery, 41.0 percent on drug related crimes, and 7.4 percent on crimes involving violence.



Graph 39
Composition of female crime

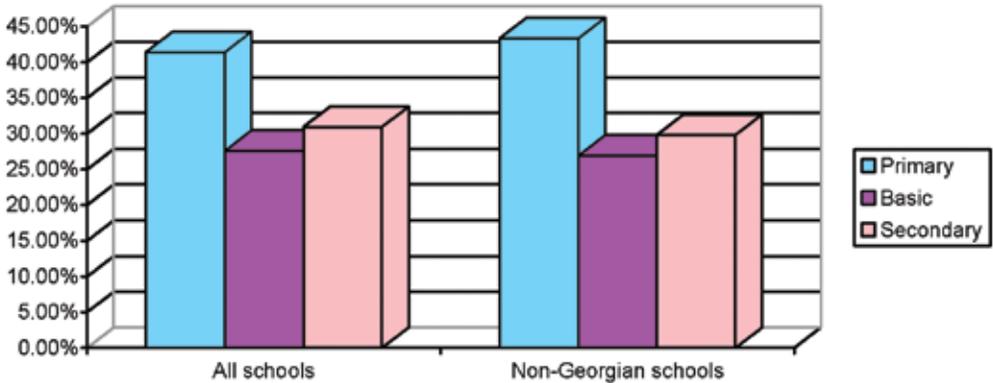
Education

Education is one of the assets that a person possesses. It is a competitive advantage that can be allocated to some individuals or groups at the expense of others. Education can be consumed differently by different individuals, as they can be socialized or encouraged to choose certain types of careers (Conveiy, Ahern, Steuernagel, 2005). In meritocratic societies, the kind of society where a person's merit is defined by his knowledge, skills and capacity, rather than by ethnicity, influential friends or gender, and therefore education has its merits, and in the kind of the society Georgia is striving to become, education has a great value. Availability of opportunities for education is one of the key dimensions of the quality of life.

Traditionally, the situation with education has been good in Georgia. It is considered as one of the principal values. Children's health, proper development and good education are together considered as the most important goals of the family, for which much is sacrificed (Hentschel ; Sumbadze ; & Schoon, 2001).

Georgia has traditionally scored relatively well in terms of average indicators of educational attainment, and has low levels of gender inequality by international standards.. "Millennium Development Goal 2" in original wording relates to universal access to primary education, but since universal primary school enrolment in Georgia is achieved, given that in 2003, 97.3 percent were enrolled in primary education, the goal was adjusted to the country and was formulated as: "Ensuring coherence of Georgian education systems with education systems of developed countries through improving quality and institutional set up". (Millennium Development Goals in Georgia, 2004)

In the 2007 to 2008 scholastic year, 2462 schools were registered in Georgia, in which 614,666 children were enrolled. Private schools comprised 10.0 percent, which was attended by 6.2 percent of all schoolchildren. 16.1 percent or 396 non-Georgian schools operate in the country, which was attended by 12.4 percent or 76,205 of all schoolchildren. Georgian school system consists of three levels; primary (classes 1-5), basic (classes 6-8) and secondary (classes 9-12). In primary education 41.4 percent, in basic 27.6 percent and in secondary 30.9 percent of all pupils were enrolled. Enrolment of pupils in non-Georgian schools is slightly different, the share of primary education is higher, while basic and secondary a bitgi lower than overall in the country.

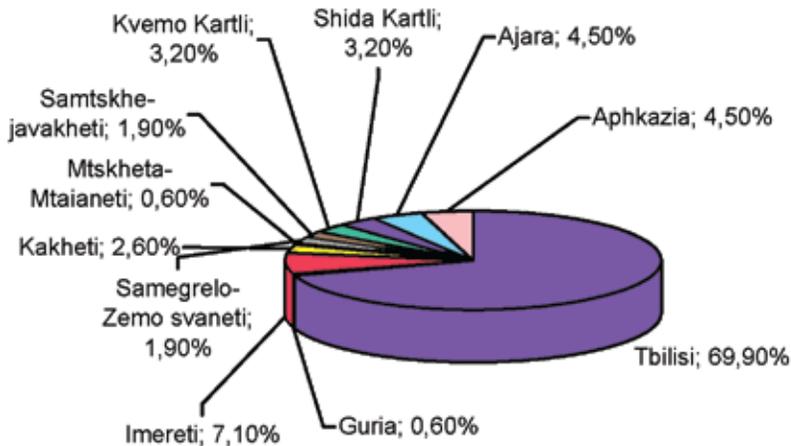


Graph 40
Enrolment of pupils in all schools and non-Georgian schools by levels

The data of the survey reflects the high educational standing of population. About a half of our respondents (SUR) had university education (46.7 percent of men and 46.5 percent of women), and around a third of surveyed (30.1 percent) indicated that they could work on a computer, among them 55.0 percent were internet users.

Respondents demonstrated preference for giving education to males in case of equal capabilities of male and female off-springs. Both men and women (70.8 percent) agree that in a situation of having equally gifted son and daughter, but being able to provide education only to one child, they would prefer to provide it to the son. Genders differ in regard to gender preference in case of children with varying level of capabilities. More women (79.2 percent) than men (73.7 percent) favour giving education to a daughter, if she is more gifted than her brother (Chi-Square 7.6; df 2, $p < .05$).

In Georgia there are 156 Universities, of which 19 are state and 138 private. Universities are very unevenly distributed across the country. The overwhelming majority (69.9 percent), i.e. 9 state and 100 private, are located in the capital itself. Apart from Racha-Lechkumi, there is at least one University in every region.



Graph 41
Distribution of Universities by regions

Source: Ministry of Science and Education

In 2007, among the students admitted at universities (37,455 persons enrolled in bachelor's and master's programmes) 64.6 percent were enrolled in state and 35.4 percent in private universities.

Reform of education undertaken by the country as outlined in the Millennium Development Goals, aspires harmonization with the study programmes in European and American institutions. Georgia became a part of the Bologna process, aimed at adjusting the education system for international recognition of qualifications, and introducing a compatible system of scientific degrees based on bachelors and masters courses

The state Universities enroll approximately twice the number of students enrolled in private Universities, both in bachelor's (63.9 percent at state and 36.1 percent at private universities) and for master's (64.4 percent at state and 35.6 percent at private universities) programmes. Those admitted for master's degrees, comprised 10.6 percent of all admitted students.

Women slightly outnumber men in having university education or studying at universities. For the 2007-2008 academic year, among those admitted at state and private universities, females comprised 56.5 percent at bachelor's program, 55.3 percent at master's program, 42.2 percent in vocational program and 67.5 percent in doctoral program.

Gender affects the careers people choose. More women are in teaching profession, linguistics, and journalism, although women are increasingly entering into judicial profession.

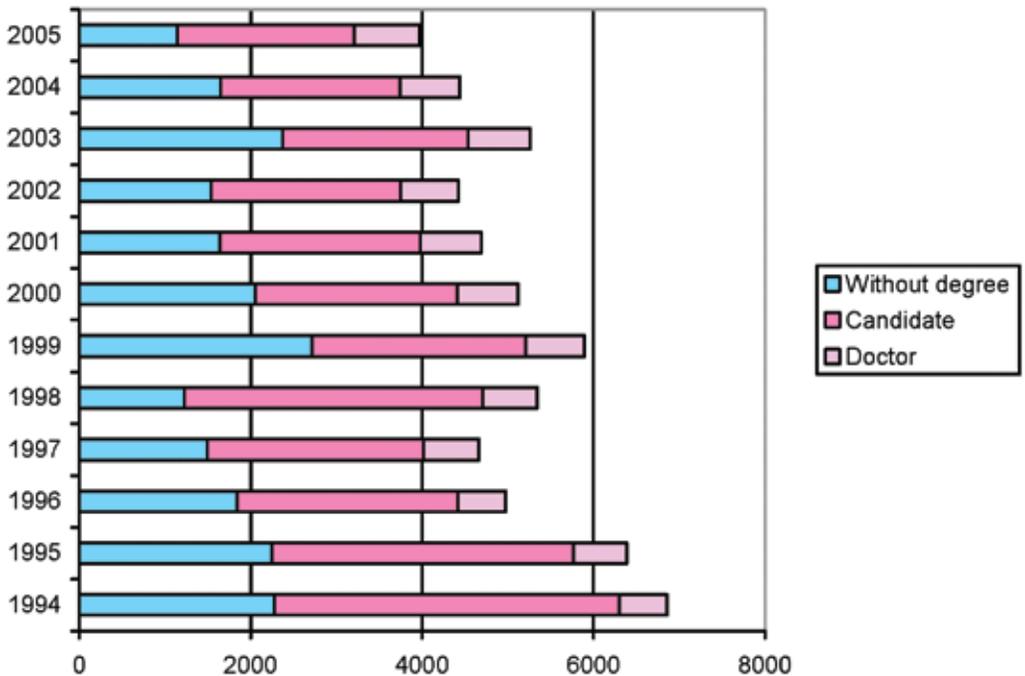
State universities as a rule are much bigger compared to private. The majority (71.1 percent) of instructional staff of all degree-granting institutions instructional faculty work at state universities. Women, comprising 54.9 percent outnumber men among professors. This is very high proportion comparing even with gender distribution of professors at US Universities. But similar to US, bigger portion of women can be found at lower academic ranks. In Georgian Universities, women comprise 66.7 percent of assistant professors (45.0 percent in US), 50.8 percent of associate professors (35.3 percent in US) and only 30.2 percent (20.8 percent in US) of full professors.

Existing two post-graduate degrees of the candidate and doctor of science are substituted by one doctoral degree. The candidate's degree equated to doctoral degree. In 2007 among doctoral students women outnumbered men (59.9 percent). The procedures for defending a degree are still in formation stage in many disciplines, which explains the small number of 44 doctoral degrees earned in 2007, of which 59.1 percent were earned by women.

Reform of the educational system also resulted in a dramatic decrease of researchers. The latest data available on researchers' dates back to 2005, moreover, the data provided by Ministry of Education and Science and the Department of Statistics is not identical in all cases. There are 66 research institutes, with research staff comprising 58.4 percent in 2005. The number of researchers almost halved during the last decade, from 6860 researchers in 1994 to 3976 in 2005 (data provided by the Ministry of Education and Sciences). The number of women researches decreased more than that of men. If in 2003 women comprised 61.9 percent of the research staff, in 2005 it reduced to 50.5 percent (Source: Women & Men, 2006).

Besides being more prone to sacking, as in almost any employment setting, women's careers are additionally obstructed by "glass ceiling". There are more women at lower levels of academic hierarchy. In 2005, women constituted about half the candidates among research staff, but only a fourth among Doctors of sciences.

Among the 135 members of the Academy of Science, there were only 9 women (N.Javakhishvili-experimental morphology, A.Kalandadze-linguistics and literature, K.Lomtadidze, Linguistics and literature, T. Kaukchishvili-philology, E.Kemertelidze -pharmaceutics, M.Lortkipanidze history, M.Andronikashvili-linguistics, T.Dekanosidze-physiology and experimental medicine, and M.Shanidze-language and literature. Source: www.acnet.ge).



Graph 42
Number of researchers at research institutes

Universally, men scientists are more productive than women. According to Maccoby (1963), the reason behind this difference can be in the lack of motivation or time, or some existing restraint among women. Although women are preoccupied with family responsibilities evidence shows that those without families do not differ from women with families when it comes to productivity, therefore lack of time should not be the reason. Scientific productivity is determined more by the analytical capabilities of the researcher. There is no difference in women's and men's intellects taken as a whole, although there is clear difference in some functions. Males have better analytical abilities, better spatial abilities, are less field dependent, and are less rigid (Witkin, 1954) than females. Men are innately more aggressive than women and this aggressiveness is revealed in dominance and initiative. Women have a different way of handling information; their thinking is less analytic, more global and conservative. They also show more interest in other people's point of view, in what others think of them, are more influenced by other's opinions, and are more conforming to the demands of the situation.

Social Capital

Social capital refers to the benefits of membership within a social network (Narayan, 2000). It is a very important asset and a powerful resource through which a person can reach her or his goals. People build their networks to satisfy their needs, to realise their wishes, and to gain access to the limited resources through the help of others. Social network is defined as consisting of those individuals with whom a particular person interacts directly and the interconnections between all these persons (Boissevain, 1974). Network rules require reciprocation, so that besides being an asset, networks exert a tension on its members for the claims made on their resources as well.

People expect to get help from their immediate surroundings in situations of acute crises, as well as for solving their more mundane problems. Perception of unavailability of support or failure of actually obtaining it, has a detrimental effect on longevity, physical and mental health (Lynch, 1979; Uchino, Cacioppo & Kiecolt-Glaser, 1996), therefore social capital is closely linked to another human asset, the human capital.

The people in a person's network can diminish the adverse effect of stress in a number of ways: They can either deal directly with a stressor or with the person in stress. They can change the person's perception of the threat, they can enforce the person's coping abilities, or they can distract the individual from a problem (Wallston, Alagna, & DeVellis, 1983). In general people of the network can provide the following kinds of support: material, informational, emotional and companionship (Walker, Wasserman, & Wellman, 1994).

Networks could be described as being of different types and having different features. Ego-networks, comprising only those people with whom the focal person has close, and emotionally laden relationships, are distinguished from potentially wider networks by relationship types, e.g. friendship or professional networks.

Any network could be described in terms of size-number of its members; type of relationships-kin/non-kin, friends, colleagues, etc.; emotional closeness- emotional distance experienced towards the network member; density-degree of interconnectedness of network members; frequency of contacts-number of face-to-face and remote types (telephone calls, contacts by e-mail, Skype, etc) of communication.

In any country, during any historical point of time and for any individual, social network represents a valuable resource, but features and functions of networks change under myriad of factors, both societal, such as culture, development of social services, socio-economic features, and of demographic, as well as personal features, such as gender, age, human capital and personality traits.

Cultures can be described as differing by the extent of interdependence of its members, and people's evaluation of the importance of its group (Triandis, 1987), social networks being more important for collectivistic cultures, members of which care more about relationships among different groups and members within a group, compared to members of individualistic cultures where values are centred more around pursuing and fulfilling

personal goals. Networks have more functions, and at the same time are more important for survival in countries with underdeveloped social services, as network members have to take on themselves a number of functions, like looking after small children, ailing, disabled and elderly, which are provided for in countries with more developed social security system. Historical time is another factor shaping the social networks. In times of social and economic transitions which typically impose much stress on individuals and creates greater need for adjusting to social changes, people rely more heavily on their networks. Demographic and personality features are important aspects that influence all the characteristics of social networks. The background characteristics, i.e. gender, age and marital status constitute powerful factors. Human capital also exerts an influence on social networks, as health and education to a great extent determine a person's needs and her or his possibilities in engaging in relationships.

The pattern of network changes over the life cycle. As a person grows, the number of ties increases, reaching maximum in early adulthood. With advancing age the need for relationships changes, depletion of emotional, physical and often economic resources, along with the time left to be lived discourages not only in forming new relationships, but also in sustaining the existing ones. Women's networks are larger, more intimate and diverse compared to men's, in addition, men have lower expectations of obtaining aid and are less satisfied than women with the perception on the availability of support from their friends and family members (Shmitt & Kurdek, 1985).

Georgian culture belongs to cultures characterized by high interdependence of its members (Georgas, Berry, & Kagitsibasi, 2006), therefore social networks play a very important role in the lives of individuals, and to a considerable extent substitute the very weak "social security" system. The socio-economic crises experienced by the Georgian society during the last decade and a half, exerted more demand on one's social surrounding.

Survival of many families became possible due to the support system deeply rooted in traditions of the Georgian society. There are commonly shared norms concerning provision of support in the community, even in cases of extreme difficulties. When asked in surveys to name the biggest inconvenience in the present time of austerity, the most frequent answer was the impossibility of providing social support, as well as attending social events that entail expenditures, such as transportation and financial assistance. Families usually receive financial assistance in the event of death of a family member and weddings. In rural areas, families are usually assisted in building a house and in performing domestic and agricultural work requiring several hands – this is called "nadi." The number of kin in a family is increased by the act of baptism. The godparent is considered to be an important person for the child, who during the child's development attends his or her birthdays and all major get-togethers of the family. The godparent is obligated to provide help to the child in case of need, and to give presents to the godchild on special occasions (Sumbadze, 2006).

Cross-cultural study of families clearly demonstrated the high value that the society in Georgia places on family and kin relationships. Georgian respondents scored second to highest among 27 countries when it came to the frequency of visits to extended family members, and the highest in the closeness of emotional bonds both with nucleuse and extended family members (Georgas, Berry, & Kagitsibasi, 2006).

Gender and age exercise much influence and shape social networks. Study of the ego-networks of adult population of Georgia (Sumbadze, 1999) pointed to the gender and age related differences in almost all features of networks.

At corresponding age, women's networks are bigger than that of men's. Kin and non-kin are represented in almost equally in ego-networks. The share of non-kin relationships decreases with age and women name more kin than men. The number of kin increases among women with age, and decreases among men. Women also name more friends than men, although among both genders the number of friends decreases with age.

On the subject of social networks for men, early adulthood between the age of 18 and 25 appears to be the best period, during which they have more satisfying and close relationships. On the other hand, for women it is a more trying period, during which they are less satisfied with their relationships and crave for intimacy more than at any stage later in their lives. Middle adulthood, between the age of 26 and 45, is the period of family and career building when more family members and co-workers appear in social networks. Compared to early adulthood, women are more satisfied with the closeness experienced in their relationships during middle adulthood. This period seems to be the most satisfying period of adulthood for women.

Late adulthood (age ranging from 46 to 65) is shaped by gradual depletion of physical resources. Detachment from the outer world, a characteristic for this period manifests itself in the shrinkage of social environment and distancing from the members of ego-networks. Women focus more on the future generations, showing more care for grandchildren, they also show more satisfaction with relationships. With men, the same period is marked with numerous negatively evaluated relationships and at the same time their social space becomes shallower.

Time affects the assets of women and men in different ways. When it comes to men, traditional assets such as career development and financial sustainability increase at least up to the first half of late adulthood, while women's assets such as physical attractiveness and professional growth decrease or develop at a slower pace, due to the time allocated to family in the earlier period. This is one reason why it is more difficult for women to achieve high positions at work or to remarry in the event of divorce.

Key issues

Human and social capital to a considerable extent determines a person's well-being, her/his ability to work and to enjoy life. Women and men differ in the level, character

and needs associated with these capitals.

Health condition of the population severely deteriorated after the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Due to the limited coverage of population by the state programmes and health insurance, people often visit health facility when the disease is already in an incurable stage. Health care has a very small budget and it is almost entirely allocated for curative purposes, not leaving much for preventive care.

Women in the country are more educated than men. There are more women students in every level of education. Women also comprise the bigger share of faculty, although more men occupy academic positions further up the ladder.

Social capital of men and women differs at different stages of adulthood, men being most satisfied in their early, while women in their middle adulthood.

Chapter 7

Steps forward

Existence of gender inequality in the country is acknowledged as a fact, but not as a problem. It is rather viewed as a part of the cultural heritage, and hence any attempt at reducing it is considered as a threat to traditional values. Moreover, gender inequality is deeply ingrained, although not always obvious and readily recognized.

As a demonstration of country's striving to universal human rights values and integration with Europe, Georgia is a party to almost all important international documents targeted at the achievement of gender equality. Legal framework is gender neutral, and does not allow discrimination on the grounds of sex, but the compliance to international documents or domestic laws is mostly of a formal character, activities for combating discrimination are not supported by effective action plans or budget lines. Country's main policy documents such as "Georgia without Poverty and ENP are not targeted on gender issues, and there is no permanent state body with a mandate to promote and monitor gender equality. The establishment of Gender Advisory Council under the Chair of the Parliament of Georgia and adoption of Gender Equality Concept by the Parliament were steps forward, however due to the fact that on executive level Gender Commission is not functional, realization of gender equality concept is not foreseen.

For improving the situation, it is of utmost importance to achieve the change in mindset of population, to place significant importance on women's equal rights, freedoms and capabilities.

More effective state policy targeted at achieving gender equality is to be formulated and implemented. Gender equality should not be viewed in isolation, as it constitutes a wider issue of values. However, until human rights are violated, and people's rights as well as welfare, rather than economic efficiency constitutes the central theme and guiding principle of the country's development policy, drastic changes in the road to achieving gender equality and meeting the goals set up by MDGs cannot be expected.

Gender inequality manifests itself in both, public and private realms. These two realms are far from being isolated from one another, as change in one eventually results in the change of the other. Public realm is considered as men's, and private as women's domain. However, inequality is often more pronounced in a private realm. The problem is not just inequality, but the value ascribed to these two realms. Work outside home, traditionally performed by men is valued much more than the housework done by women.

The past decade and a half was marked with positive changes in gender equality. These changes were not induced by state policy, but by social changes and the need for adapt-

ing to the drastic deterioration of economic situation, which induced women to get actively involved in income generation. Economic independence, being the most potent base for power, increased women's bargaining possibilities and positioned them more in the public sphere. Another powerful factor of change has been modernization and access to information through TV programmes, internet and Skype, which had a powerful changing effect on attitudes, among others, on gender related issues.

There is much to be done yet for achieving more gender justice. Listed below are some steps to be taken in this direction. We do not discuss the more obvious and broader measures, such as alleviation of poverty or providing a security net, but concentrate on more specific measures that could contribute to gender equality, targeted at the change of the overall attitude towards equality, issues of women's participation, human capital, and the needs of various groups.

A number of suggestions presented below restate recommendations outlined in "Concluding comments of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women: Georgia (CEDAW, 2006)". We decided to reiterate them, as they have been only partially considered and as such, the problems remain.

The measures taken for achieving equality should encompass many actors - state and non-state entities, church, general population, donor community, it should cover men and women alike, and it should use multiple means, such as printed and electronic media, public meetings, educational materials, etc.

Measures of General Character

- **Change the attitude towards equality.**

Probably the most fundamental change, that should occur is the change in the attitude of population towards equality. The change of attitude is a complex and lengthy process, needing multiplex and orchestrated measures, entailing state policy, legislation, public awareness and educational measures, besides the targeted actions of state and non-state actors.

- **Substitute the term "gender equality" with "gender justice".**

Due to the negative attitude towards the concept of gender equality and for reducing resistance, it could be more productive to substitute gender equality, which in fact means gender equality for social justice, with the term "gender justice".

- **Formulate country policy for achieving further gender justice and incorporate in the framework of pro-family policy.**

In the existing acute demographic problem which poses a threat to nation's development, a special policy targeted at supporting families is to be formulated and prioritized. Gender justice is a central issue for family functioning. Special policies should guarantee maternal and child health, family friendly workplace, and opportunities for childcare. Men's parental role is to be emphasized and popularized. Church and Media are to be fully involved in the realization of pro-family country policy. Labour code is to be changed encouraging working women's reproduction, rather than restricting as under the current Code.

- **Create institutional mechanisms for achieving more gender equality.**

Create a permanent body in the government for planning and implementing gender related state policies and programmes. Establish an elected body with the participation of high level executive authorities, non-state actors, and representatives of church among others, for monitoring state policies and its implementation.

- **Ensure gender justice in educational setting.**

Considering that gender attitudes are already formed at early childhood in the family and at schools, special focus is to be made in ensuring gender justice in the classrooms. For this purpose schoolteachers should be trained on gender sensitivity, text-books should be scrutinized for gender inequality. In addition, special programmes should be introduced targeted at non-violent conflict resolution, of family conflicts among others, as well as on family values and upbringing, on emphasizing the importance and values associated with fulfilment of parental roles, on respect and value of differences in opinion, and of gender difference among others.

- **Ensure access to gender disaggregated information.**

Regularly collect gender disaggregated information on the main indicators of the country including human development, and make it accessible to the public (refer CEDEW, 2006. Art.10). Adopt Law on Statistics where demand for presenting sex diaggregatid data will be outlined.

Publish an annual report on gender. Support studies on gender issues, manifestations of gender discrimination, and on masculinity and male problems, an area which is very much under-investigated.

- **Support gender mainstreaming.**

Gender mainstreaming is to be targeted, as well as realized in all important programmes and major organizations (refer CEDAW, 2006. Art. 12). Gender concepts are to be introduced and gender awareness is to be increased among men and women alike.

Women's participation in public realm

The analysis of the situation clearly points at gender imbalance in the participation of Georgian citizens in public life. The need of greater representation of women in elected and executive structures is overwhelmingly recognized. Women's participation in public life is instrumental for broader consideration of gender perspective in important decisions of the country.

While men and women do not differ in their interest on public affairs and politics, the impact they have on decision making varies significantly, men having incomparably higher power than women.

Cultural stereotypes, little gender awareness and sensitivity, insufficient perception of the need plus the lack of coherent state policy for achieving gender equality on one hand, and on the other hand time deficiency, lack of motivation and capacity of women, are acknowledged reasons of the low level of women's participation.

Another important factor of participation is opportunities. On the importance of opportunities, observation of women's activities in post-Soviet period speaks for itself. As windows of opportunities provided by the change of system opened, women flooded in. Since then, number of women's activities or achievements is outstanding in religious sphere, movement for country's independence, functioning of non-state sector and in informal economy.

A variety of measures could be taken for increasing women's participation in public life.

- **Change popular attitude of seeing women predominantly in private and men in public realms.**

Appointment of women in high ranking positions, increasing women's visibility in public sphere through media campaigns, promotion of gender equality at all levels of public life, and the entire period of formal education beginning with pre-school education could be used as a potent tool for change.

- **Provide opportunities for women's participation in public life.**

Conditions should be created for allowing women the time for public activities, through the improvement of economic conditions of women, and enabling them to hire help or acquire services. The labour code is to be changed so as to conform to international standards, whereby increasing job security and rights of the employee. Family friendly work environment should be created providing the possibility to have a control over working hours, such as, work part-time, short working hours, parental leaves, child-care services, and the possibility to work from home. Steps should be taken towards regulating the informal sector of employment and ensuring observance of human rights, as well as job security in the sector.

- **Increase women's capabilities essential for their engagement in public life.**

Creation and subsequently involvement of women in different types of clubs and other voluntary organizations will build their capability. Supporting women's organizations in rural areas and areas inhabited by ethnic minorities is especially important, where there are more restrictions on women to work alongside men. Broadening lifelong learning opportunities and providing courses for attaining special skills will enable women to respond to the demands of new challenges. Empower and equip women with leadership skills for ensuring their possible participation in politics. Provide women with the possibilities to acquire high professional standards, which they failed to accomplish due to the family responsibilities during early years, interrupted or late entry into work force.

- **Actively support women's participation in elected and executive bodies.**

The dynamics of women's participation in politics demonstrates the urgent need of taking special legislative measures for ensuring women's representation in political life. The discussion should begin on introducing quota system. Based on positive support of the parties which nominated women in the upper section of election lists, it should be introduced as a temporary measure.

- **Create pressure groups to increase participation, consider gender perspective and achieve job security.**

There are many women's NGOs, but they are more NGOs of women, than for women. Their efforts and resources are scattered. Creation of a strong women's movement can exert sufficient pressure and achieve a radical change in considering women's perspective. The movement can be based on one or two specific goals to achieve. Trade Unions should become more active in achieving results through collective bargaining for increasing the existing level of job security.

- **Increase women's economic independence and provide self-employment opportunities to families.**

Economic independence is an important factor contributing to power. Special efforts are to be made to increase women's ability to earn. The access to cheap credits and bank loans for women is to be increased (refer CEDAW, 2006. Art.28). Small and family businesses should be supported. The possibilities for selling agricultural products and processed food should be provided.

- **Strive for achieving gender balance in traditionally imbalanced professions.**

Entry of men in traditionally women's professions and of women in men's professions

should be encouraged through state policy supported by economic means and media promotion (refer CEDAW, 2006. Art.18).

Human capital

Human capital is closely linked with the wellbeing of a person, her or his likelihood of leading a satisfactory life, of working and contentment. Health issues and life expectancy stand very differently among women and men, with women enjoying better health and longer life than men. The needs of men and women in regard to health services differ significantly. Education is one area where equality has been attained.

The following steps will contribute to the improvement of situation.

Place emphasis on preventive health care and promote healthy life-style.

- In a situation of meagre health care expenditures preventive care acquires significant importance. The health policy should emphasise on prevention, and media campaigns should explain to the population benefits of exercising plus the basic rules of healthy life style and eating habits. Engagement in sports should be encouraged. Educational institutions of all levels should have some sports facilities, and should enrol all students in sports classes. Attending sports facilities by the entire family should be economically encouraged.

Assist men to overcome effects of stress associated with unemployment and war.

- Men are more vulnerable than women in economic crises, since the burden of providing for the families is heavier on their shoulders. Besides, work is more central for male, than for female self-concept. Therefore, unemployment or underemployment has a detrimental effect on men's self-esteem, psychological wellbeing and health, often resulting in drug-addiction, alcoholism, heavy smoking or even criminality. A study on the effect of unemployment on men is to be conducted. Programmes should be implemented aimed at decreasing the adverse effects of unemployment, in supporting entrepreneurial activities in men, providing them with bank credits and vocational retraining. The Russian military assault of August, 2008 created much stress, which had different effect on men and women; in men it generated a feeling of shame since they could not defend their family and country. The need of cushioning its adverse effect for a population experiencing military action, with programmes designed for men and women separately is urgently to be realized.

- **Move domestic violence from private to public realm.**

Change population's perception of domestic violence as a family issue, to its perception as a criminal offense. Implement requirements of the law and open shelters for victims

of violence and their children. Provide treatment and psychological consultation to perpetrators. Train victims on preparedness, teaching techniques of avoiding violence and on what needs to be done in the event of its occurrence.

- **Create conditions to reduce the effect of isolation of women-offenders from their families.**

Make legislative changes allowing more contact of women inmates with their families.

Different groups

Situation with gender equality differs among compactly inhabited ethnic minorities, i.e. Armenian minorities in Javakheti and Azeri minorities in Kvemo Kartli. Unacquainted with Georgian language coupled with very little contact with ethnic Georgians on everyday basis restricts their access to information and determines the need for more efforts on achieving equality.

Another group with specific gender related problems, and which increased due to the Russian assault of 2008 are IDPs.

- **Support gender equality and integration of women in areas inhabited by ethnic minorities.**

Special measures should be taken for increasing gender equality and integrating the population in the social fabric of the country. Knowledge of Georgian language is an important factor for integration. Given that much less women than men know any, but their native language, special efforts should be directed at teaching women the state language. Women from the minority should be more involved in trainings carried out by women's organizations. Public rendezvous, such as women's club or café, should be organized and supported.

- **Take gender considerations into account in defining the policy towards IDPs.**

Involvement of IDP women in the process of formulation of policy on IDPs and conflict resolution can introduce gender perspective in the strategy, and tactics of dealing with the problems of displaced persons.

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