

# **The State Concept on the Gender Equality**

## **1. Introduction**

According to the Constitution of Georgia, every human being is born free and is equal before law without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, language, sex, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property and birth and place of residence;

The State Concept on the Gender Equality (hereinafter referred as 'the Concept') is based on the international acts and instruments Georgia is a signatory to and which represent the integral part of the Georgian legislation:

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights;
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights;
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights;
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women;
- European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms;
- Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action;
- Programme of Action of the Cairo Conference on Population and Development;
- The UN Security Council Resolution 1325;
- Millennium Declaration and Millennium Development Goals.

The Concept aims to encourage the equal and effective implementation of the rights and opportunities for women and men. The Concept recognizes the principles of gender equality in all spheres of public and social life and provides for the relevant measures for prevention and elimination of all forms of discrimination on the ground of sex as well as for the advancing gender equality.

The Concept determines the state's obligation to provide the relevant legislative and other measures in order to amend the legal framework, which constitutes the discrimination on the ground of sex, and to ensure its implementation.

## **2. Definition of Terms**

### **Gender**

Gender refers to cultural expectations towards the behaviour, attitudes, personal traits, and physical and intellectual capabilities of women and men.

### **Gender Equality**

Gender equality is an integral part of human rights. It refers to an equal presentation, rights, responsibility and participation of women and men in all spheres of private and public life.

### **Discrimination on the Ground of Sex**

Direct discrimination on the ground of sex occurs when a difference in treatment relies directly and explicitly on distinction based exclusively on sex and characteristics of men and women, which may not have an objective justification.

Indirect discrimination occurs when a law, policy or programme does not appear to be discriminatory, but has a discriminatory effect when implemented.

### **Special Measures**

Special measures are specially tailored actions aimed at reducing the disadvantages and gender stereotypes. The special measures entail elaboration and implementation of legal reform, educational programs and other specific strategies and projects in order to secure equal improvement of the situation for men and women.

### **Incorporation of the Gender Equality Principles (Gender Mainstreaming)**

Gender Mainstreaming is consideration of principles of the gender equality in all spheres and at all levels of policy-making and its implementation.

## **3. Major Directions for Achieving Gender Equality**

Currently, the gender equality is becoming one of the major priorities of the Georgian state policy aimed at providing effective conditions for the equality of women and men and securing this equality.

The Georgian Government commits itself to secure effective implementation of the equal rights and opportunities for women and men in political, economic and social spheres. The Georgian Government will elaborate and implement the government strategy based on the main directions determined by this Concept. Creation and implementation of the reporting and monitoring systems represent an important factor in the process of implementing the international obligations, national law and administrative and other statutory documents and implementing the state strategic programs related to Gender Equality.

## **4. Mechanisms for implementation of Major Directions of the Gender Equality**

In order to implement the main directions of gender equality the Georgian Government employs the relevant mechanisms and measures aimed at ensuring equality between women and men in Georgia.

The Government of Georgia recognizes that the elaboration, implementation and monitoring of the gender equality government strategy should be carried out through the effective cooperation and partnership between the government and civil society, thus supporting the increase of public awareness on the value of gender equality

In order to ensure gender equality one of the most important and primary measures involve the development of relevant legal framework. When forming the government strategies in different spheres, the special attention should be paid to persistent incorporation of gender principles and

elaboration and implementation of the specific programmes, including regular implementation of special measures, gathering and analysing the statistical data, as well as promoting the research and education on gender issues.

Today there are two interim structures – The Gender Advisory Council under the Chair of Parliament and The Governmental Commission working on gender equality issues in Georgia. But, due to the priority of gender equality, it is preferable to establish a standing national machinery and ensure its effective operation in both, legislative and executive branches, on central and local levels.

## **5. Political sphere**

By supporting ‘the Rose Revolution’, the citizens of Georgia expressed their will to build a democratic state. The implementation of gender equality principles is one of the most essential parts of the democratic processes. Every citizen –woman or man - is equally responsible for the transparent and accountable political system based on the principles of the rule of law and equality of citizens before the law.

In order to achieve these goals it is necessary to:

- promote the full and equal participation of women and men at all levels and in all branches the government;
- encourage the equal participation of women and men in political parties and within their executive and oversight structures;
- encourage the full and equal participation of women and men at all levels of the conflict resolution and peace-building processes.

## **6. Economic Sphere**

Economic development is the major priority of the population of Georgia. The Government of Georgia aims at providing proper environment for sustainable development of market based economy. Provision of equal participation of women and men is an important mechanism in implementation of the policy of economic security, which will facilitate the achievement of this goal.

The integration of gender equality perspectives in the state programmes for the economic development and poverty reduction, as well as in the employment policy, will stimulate gender balance at the labour market and especially in entrepreneurial activities. Equal access of women and men to fiscal, credit and production resources is one of the mechanisms for private sector development and for creation of jobs.

The Georgian Government should pay particular attention to the development of gender-sensitive, social justice-oriented budget both at central and local levels.

## **7. Social Sphere**

The Government of Georgia actively implements reforms in the social sphere. Incorporation of gender principles in the social policy will encourage the establishment of the social justice in the society. To achieve this goal, the state should elaborate and implement the programmes aimed at gender equality in healthcare and social security systems. The Georgian Government should recognize and give proper consideration to the work of the caretaker for children, elders and other members of the family in its social strategy.

In the process of implementing the education reforms the Government should ensure the equal access of women and men to the basic, vocational, higher and continuous education, as well as to the information and communication technologies.

## **8. Concluding Provisions**

To implement the State Concept on Gender Equality, the Government of Georgia should:

- elaborate special measures, including legislative ones, aimed at achieving gender equality;
- integrate gender equality principles in every strategy and program;
- exercise monitoring, reporting and evaluation of the Gender Equality National Action Plan, elaborated and adopted by the Government of Georgia;
- secure the development of the standing gender equality national machinery and its effective operation at the legislative and executive branches, as well as at the central and local levels.

The state and local budgets are the major source for implementation of the State Concept on Gender Equality together with financial and technical support of international and local organizations.

The adoption and amendment of the State Concept on Gender Equality is made by the Resolution of the Parliament.