

WOMEN IN GEORGIAN POLITICS



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Lack of finances hinders women's participation in winning of majorities.



Georgian government is not trying to fulfill undertaken international commitments in a comprehensive and effective manner;

Women's political participation is not a priority for the government. Political party representatives believe that low number of women in politics is the government's political will.

There is a demand for a more active civil society not only at the central level but

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There is no sense of solidarity among parties about gender-related issues. Parties refuse to abandon their oppositional sentiments even when it comes to these issues and fail to come together for addressing the problem;



GEORGIAN YOUNG LAWYERS' ASSOCIATION

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There is a demand for a more active civil society not only at the central level but also in the regions.

Fear that she may be attacked by the society hinders women from making a step to get involved with politics;

Women should do what they are good at, and it's not politics;

Media is not interested in women's political participation while it has the most effect on formation of public opinion.

Almost parties recognize that women's participation in the country is low but they do not recognize the problem in their own party;

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Georgian Young Lawyers' Association

WOMEN IN GEORGIAN POLITICS

**STUDY OF THE ENVIRONMENT FOR WOMEN'S
ENGAGEMENT IN POLITICAL/ELECTORAL PROCESSES
DURING THE 2016-2018 ELECTION CYCLE IN GEORGIA**

Part I

Analysis of the 2016 Parliamentary Elections

**Tbilisi
2017**

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INTRODUCTION

Women account for more than a half of Georgia's population¹, while their representation in Georgian Parliament is 16%. As a result, Georgia ranks 120th among 193 countries in the worldwide classification of women in national parliaments², outperforming as few as only 2-3 countries in Europe. Analysis of the parliamentary elections conducted since the time Georgia gained its independence illustrates that at this pace it will take a long time for Georgia to achieve a minimum gender balance³.

The contemporary world has long agreed that women's participation in politics is one of the most important preconditions for democratic development of any Country. Without participation of women, it will be impossible to develop equal and fair policies tailored to interests of all groups.

It is very difficult to achieve women's equal political participation by allowing equal representation to run its natural course. This will require decades and today none of the countries including Georgia have the luxury to wait this long. Therefore, to accelerate the process and eliminate the inequality created over the centuries, it is necessary to intervene at the legislative level.

In addition to many other mechanisms, one of the most effective ways to increase women's political participation is a temporary special measure known as a gender quota. If aligned correctly with the electoral system, gender quota can be very effective for fast-tracking women's participation in politics. The measure of gender quota quickly spread throughout all continents of the world and today it is among the main recommendations provided by international organizations for accomplishing gender equality in politics. Due to the alarming gender balance, the CEDAW Committee recommended that Georgia introduce a gender quota. However, implementation of the legislative reform by the Georgian authorities to achieve gender balance has proven to be quite a challenge and nearly impossible.

In the history of independent Georgia, women have been fighting for their

¹ http://census.ge/files/pdf/Population%20press_30%2004%20Geo_last.pdf

² <http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm>

³ For information about the international standard for gender balance in politics, see Chapter 2 of this research: importance of women's political participation in the state's democratic development.

political rights for about 20 years now⁴. Throughout this time, civil society representatives have conducted numerous activities to draw the authorities' attention to the issue and increase visibility of the problem. In addition to raising civil awareness, training women candidates and working with political parties, a number of legislative initiatives or proposals have been initiated. Despite these efforts, increasing women's political participation in Georgia has not gained much support, with only a few exceptions. The latest Parliamentary elections have demonstrated once more that despite slight improvements, Georgia still has a long way to go to achieve gender equality in politics. Unless the authorities intervene and introduce special measures, the problem will manifest itself even more during the upcoming local self-government elections in 2017.

No matter the type of an electoral system that exists in a country and no matter the incentives that are introduced, it is ultimately up to political parties to increase women's political participation. They are the ones responsible and it is their political will to provide balanced electoral lists. Therefore, development of political party culture in the country is crucial. It is impossible to achieve gender balance in the country without having stable and strong political parties that realize importance of women's political participation and their role in addressing the problem.

And lastly, gender quota is not the only way to eliminate the inequality. It is a mechanism that ensures women's representation in elected bodies in a shorter period of time. However, in addition to gender quota it is also important to widen women's movements, continue submission of recommendations about women's issues on the State Level and most importantly, conduct a large-scale educational campaign for raising public awareness, in order to create a public demand to ensure gender equality in the country.

PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH

Purpose of this research is to examine the causes of women's low participation rate in politics in Georgia, identify natural or artificial barriers that hinder women's promotion in politics, analyze local and international legislative frameworks with regards to introduction and implementation of

⁴ We should not forget the fight that took place at the turn of the 20th century in Georgia for improving women's rights.

mechanisms for promotion of women in politics, and develop recommendations for increasing women’s political participation in Georgia based on the best international practice.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

We used the following two research methods: desk research and qualitative research. Within the desk research we studied the international framework for women’s political participation, with a particular focus on Georgia’s international commitments (The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the UN Security Council Resolution 1325, the Beijing Platform for Action, the EU Association Agreement, etc.). Within the research we also analyzed the national legislation: the Constitution of Georgia, the Organic Law of Georgia: the Election Code of Georgia and the Organic Law of Georgia on Political Union of Citizens). In addition, for purposes of the research we examined different international studies and recommendations about gender equality in politics, as well as policy documents and works about gender equality and women’s political participation published after Georgia gained its independence. For statistical data we relied on Georgian and foreign official websites, sources are cited in this research.

Within the qualitative research we interviewed members of political parties – nearly 50 representatives of 11 political parties⁵, majority of which are regional and local leaders. We conducted a targeted selection of mid-level leaders, because unlike political party leaders at the central level they have not declared their vision about mechanisms for increasing women’s political participation. Within the research we selected political parties based on the criterion of qualification – we focused only on parties that had the status of qualified electoral subjects⁶ for the 2016 Parliamentary elections or gained such status following the elections.

⁵ Georgian Dream – Democratic Georgia, the United National Movement, Nino Burjanadze – United Democrats, Irakli Alasania – Free Democrats, Alliance of Patriots of Georgia – the United Opposition, Georgian Conservative Party, the Industrialists, the National Forum, Usupashvili – the Republicans, Shalva Natelashvili – Labor Party, Paata Buchuladze – State for the People.

⁶ Based on the Election Code, a qualified electoral subject is a qualified party or electoral bloc registered under the Election Code of Georgia, which receives financing under the Law on Political Union of Citizens.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

During our study of the environment for women's participation in political/electoral processes in the period of the 2016 Parliamentary elections we identified a number of important issues. Taking these findings into account will be important for achieving gender equality in the upcoming elections.

Electoral System

- ❖ It is wrong to assume that increase of women's political participation is an irreversible process in Georgia. Unless the issue is addressed in the legislation, women's political participation will continue to depend on goodwill of a certain political group;
- ❖ Current electoral system in Georgia does not promote or encourage women's political participation;
- ❖ Majoritarian electoral system limits the possibility for women politicians to be nominated as candidates (by the party);
- ❖ Lack of finances hinders women's participation and winning of majoritarian elections;
- ❖ Women's poor positioning in proportional lists (women are usually relegated at the bottom of the party list) essentially leaves them without a chance of winning;
- ❖ The last two parliamentary elections have demonstrated that the voluntary financial incentives do not work, especially during the Parliamentary elections, and large parties never make use of it;
- ❖ The existing regulation about financial incentives does not require positioning of women in ten candidates; therefore, it ultimately does not reflect the proportion of women for which the party receives additional funding;
- ❖ Legislation of Adjara AR is not harmonized with the Georgian national legislation; in particular, financial supplement for achieving a gender balance is not included in the electoral legislation of Adjara AR, while elections in Adjara are otherwise conducted in compliance with the requirements of the Election Code of Georgia.

Political Parties

- ❖ Most political parties in Georgia do not support mandatory gender quotas;
- ❖ Most political parties in Georgia support gender quota only within the financial incentive. Receiving additional financial support for majoritarian women candidates would be an additional incentive for them;
- ❖ Women's political participation is not a popular topic among political parties and often they are reluctant to discuss this issue at the central as well as at the and regional level;
- ❖ Party representatives in the regions have a poor understanding of the essence of women's political participation. They view appointment of women as zone or district coordinators and high rate of women's participation in electoral commissions as women's political participation;
- ❖ There is a problem of coordination between central and regional offices about party's gender policy and position.
- ❖ Most parties recognize that women's participation in the country is low but they do not recognize the problem in their own party;
- ❖ Party representatives believe that they work on women's issues in the region; however, they fail to provide any facts to prove it;
- ❖ There is no sense of solidarity among parties about gender-related issues. Parties refuse to abandon their oppositional sentiments even when it comes to these issues and fail to come together for addressing the problem;
- ❖ It has been found that women members are more loyal to their respective parties. When there is a problem, men are the first to leave their parties, while women remain in the party;
- ❖ Although women are to credit for a party's most important accomplishments, they are less ambitious than men when it comes to promotions. Most women believe that they are not ready for a certain office and/or they don't deserve to be promoted yet.

The Government

- ❖ Georgian government is not trying to fulfill undertaken international commitments in a comprehensive and effective manner;
- ❖ Reports submitted by the Georgian government are not informative and fail to provide the actual picture;
- ❖ The Georgian government does not provide adequate support to legislative reform necessary to achieve gender equality in politics;
- ❖ Women's political participation is not a priority for the government. Political party representatives believe that low number of women in politics is the government's political will;
- ❖ The government does not pay adequate attention to civil society recommendations for women's political participation;
- ❖ The government is not proactive and does not call upon relevant stakeholders (e.g. political parties) to increase the number of women in their lists;
- ❖ Implementation of the government's gender policy is not monitored, evaluated, reported in a comprehensive manner and made known to the public at large.

Civil Society

- ❖ Regional representatives of political parties are inadequately informed or not informed at all about civil society activities for women's political empowerment;
- ❖ There is a lack of information in the regions about bills initiated by civil society about women's political participation (e.g. in 2015);
- ❖ Regional representatives of political parties are more sensitive than before about gender equality issues, which they think is the result of civil society's involvement;
- ❖ There is a demand for a more active civil society not only at the central level but also in the regions.

Stereotypes

- ❖ Widespread patriarchal stereotypes have a negative effect on women's political participation, especially in rural areas;
- ❖ There is a deeply rooted issue of family – family is preventing women from participating in politics;
- ❖ Fear that she may be attacked by the society hinders women from making a step to get involved with politics;
- ❖ Women should do what they are good at, and it's not politics;
- ❖ Media is not interested in women's political participation while it has the most effect on formation of public opinion.

CHAPTER 1.

STATISTICAL OVERVIEW OF WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN GEORGIA

Georgia ranks 120th⁷ among 193 countries in the worldwide classification of women in national parliaments - an indicator for women's political participation⁸, while in the Global Gender Gap Report, Georgia ranks 90th among 144 countries in terms of women's political participation in political, economic and social life; however, as to women's political participation and the number of women in parliament in particular, Georgia ranks 114th.⁹ In these rankings Georgia is far behind not only European and Western countries but also countries that are much more conservative than Georgia. Therefore, it is safe to conclude that women's political participation in Georgia is extremely low and needs a particular attention.

The Parliamentary Elections in October 2016 was a step forward for women's political participation considering that previous Parliament had a fewer number of women. In 2012-2016, there were only 18 women MPs in Georgia, accounting for as low as 12% of all 150 MPs. Following the elections in 2016, 24 women were able to gain seats, accounting for 16% of the total number of MPs. In the process of formation of the government and after some candidates turned down their Parliamentary seats, the number of women MPs remained 23.

To analyze women's political participation in Georgia, it is important to conduct a gender analysis of several past elections. Following declaration of Georgia's independence 25 years ago, from 1991 to present, a total of 7 Parliamentary and 7 local self-government elections have been held¹⁰. Each time the parliamentary elections were held, electoral systems and the number of seats to be distributed among winning candidates differed but women's representation always remained low – see Chart 1.

⁷ The source of the data is the Inter-parliamentary Union (IPU) that analyzes both houses of parliaments. Here we used comparative analysis of lower houses only or unicameral parliaments: <http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm>

⁸ Here we only used unicameral parliaments or lower houses of parliaments for comparison

⁹ <http://reports.weforum.org/global-gender-gap-report-2016/economies/#economy=GEO>

¹⁰ Elections in 1991 were held in parallel with the referendum about restoring Georgia's independence and therefore, it is not included in the given statistics.

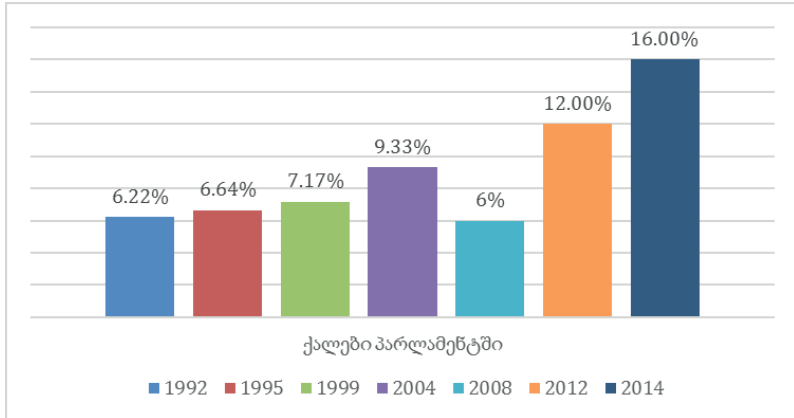


Chart 1: Women in Georgian Parliament

The statistics show that women’s representation rate in Georgian Parliament increased following every Parliamentary election but the increase was very slow and incremental. From 1992 to 1999, there was almost no increase in women’s representation in parliament, and there was a 2% increase following the elections in 2004; however, the rate greatly declined in 2008, in hands of the same government, and women’s share in parliament dropped to 6%. The Parliamentary Elections in 2012 were an important step forward for women’s political participation as it increased women’s representation to 12%.

The statistical analysis suggests that despite a more or less increasing trend of women’s participation, it is wrong to assume that the process is irreversible i.e. that each subsequent election will bring about increased representation of women. In light of the constantly changing political landscape in Georgia, fragile political parties and inconsistency of decisions that they make, no one can assume safely that women’s representation will improve or at least remain the same after each new election. Therefore, without having a mandatory legal requirement about gender balance in Georgia, equality will never be stable and will always be dependent on goodwill of certain politicians.

To provide a more illustrative picture of women’s political participation in Georgia, it is important to analyze representation of women in other

political institutions, including the executive and local self-government authorities, as well as the Supreme Council of Ajara AR.

The Parliamentary Elections in 2016 led to changes in the government and the executive team. There are only two female ministers in the government of 19 ministers (including the Prime Minister), accounting for as low as 10.53% of the government. As to the state representatives, none of the nine governors are female.

Women are also underrepresented in local self-governments. Following the 2014 local self-government elections, proportion of seats held by women in representative bodies – Sakrebulo is 11,6%. Women are even more underrepresented in local executive bodies: in 59 municipalities, only one elected Gangebeli is a woman and there are no women among Mayors of 12 self-governing cities.

Following the last elections of the Supreme Council of Ajara AR held in parallel with the parliamentary elections in 2016, only one out of 21 members of the Council is a woman, i.e. proportion of seats held by women in the Supreme Council of Ajara AR is 4,76%.

The only positive exception to the low level of women's participation is the judiciary: 128 out of 238 active judges are women (i.e. 53% of judges in Georgia are female).¹¹ This proves the hypothesis according to which where there is a competition and preference is given to qualified candidates, women can be as successful as men.

We should also review gender balance in the Supreme Court and the Constitutional Court. While male to female ratio in city courts and appellate courts is equal, proportion of female judges is lower in the Supreme and the Constitutional courts. Although the Chairperson of the Supreme Court is a woman, only four out of 12 Supreme Court justices are female. As to the Constitutional Court, there are 9 judges there, including 5 male and 4 female. Clearly, in higher levels of the judiciary where political decisions are made, there are more men than women.

¹¹ All but the Constitutional and the Supreme courts

CHAPTER 2.

IMPORTANCE OF WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN THE STATE'S DEMOCRATIC DEVELOPMENT

Low level of women's political participation is a challenge in any developing or developed Country. There are three basic arguments as to why women's political participation contributes to the democratic development of a state:

- ❖ **Human rights** – women as well as men have the right to equal participation in the government of the country;
- ❖ **Equality** – as male to female ratio in the world population is more or less equal (50/50), women and men are equally entitled to equal participation and responsibility in the government of the country;
- ❖ **Voice of voters:** when sex ratio of voters is equal but either sex is underrepresented in politics, it means that their voice cannot be heard. As a result, their problems are not taken into account in policy-making or advocated.

Human rights – according to the human rights-based approach to women's political participation, in today's world men and women have equal political rights, as evidenced by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948 which reads: *“Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives; Everyone has the right to equal access to public service in his country.”*¹² Therefore, women's political participation is a universally recognized human right, while protecting this human right is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world.

Although women's political rights have been recognized by nearly all national or international legislation, exercise of passive suffrage by women remains a problem in the 21st century in most states, including in Georgia.

Equality – women account for 49,6%¹³ of the world population but worldwide rate of their participation in politics (women in parliament) is 23%. Clearly, the rate of participation differs across countries but is lower than

¹² The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 21, paras. 1 and 2

¹³ As of January 18, 2017 - <http://countrymeters.info/en/World>

23% in most states, meaning that the principle of equality is violated – while half of the world’s population are women, they remain underrepresented in decision-making positions.

The low level of women’s participation is even more alarming in Georgia where women account for 53,76%¹⁴ of voters but the proportion of seats held by women in the legislature is 16%. On the other hand, men account for 46,24% of voters while the proportion of seats held by men in parliament is 84%.

Voice of constituents – when any particular group is underrepresented in politics, naturally their interests are disregarded. In order to reflect and respond to everyone’s interests, politics must be inclusive, especially when half of the population is concerned. It means that unless women are adequately represented in the government, interests of women voters will not be considered as much as men’s.

Many studies confirm that making a policy change requires having a critical mass of proponents of a concrete change in the legislature – in this case, a critical mass of women. Based on the UN Security Council Resolution 1235, the critical mass for women is 30%, it is the minimum representation required for women as a group to exert a meaningful influence in parliament¹⁵, while the CoE recommends having a sex ratio of at least 40% in political or public life.¹⁶

This is clearly evidenced by the performance of previous parliament in Georgia, where half of the population was represented by only 12%. Quantitative analysis of the eighth parliament suggests that over the four-year period, only as few as 7 bills were adopted for improving women’s human rights situation. None of the seven bills was initiated by men MPs: 6 were initiated by female MPs and one was initiated by the government. It is also important to note that female politicians were reluctant to support bills initiated by women, and 42.85% of bills initiated by women were voted down or withdrawn. This shows that on the one hand, women’s issues are

¹⁴ During the elections in 2017, according to the CEC estimates

¹⁵ <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/wps/publication/Chapter1.htm>

¹⁶ [https://wcd.coe.int/ViewDoc.jsp?p=&Ref=Rec\(2003\)3&Language=lanEnglish&Ver=-original&Site=CM&BackColorInternet=C3C3C3&BackColorIntranet=EDB021&BackColorLogged=F5D383&direct=true](https://wcd.coe.int/ViewDoc.jsp?p=&Ref=Rec(2003)3&Language=lanEnglish&Ver=-original&Site=CM&BackColorInternet=C3C3C3&BackColorIntranet=EDB021&BackColorLogged=F5D383&direct=true)

not a priority for men while on the other hand men tend not to support bills initiated by women.

Today's parliament is also ineffective in addressing problems of women voters. Unfortunately, 16% is far lower than the critical mass required for making the legislature hear the voice of 53% of voters.

In addition to equality and human rights, another argument as to why countries need more women in politics is that they can greatly benefit from women's political participation. Because it wasn't until recently that women's representation in politics started growing, comprehensive and exhaustive information about important changes that women can bring about is not available. However, several studies have shown that in countries where women have more representation in politics, more emphasis is put on healthcare and social issues, education and children's matters, and that's not everything. Countries where the proportion of women's representation is high have seen improvement in economy in a number of areas.¹⁷

Because quantitative studies about policies pursued by women are still a few, it is interesting to analyze local experience in this regard. Quantitative research of female MPs' performance in the eighth parliament in Georgia suggests that compared to previous parliament, female MPs are more active. As noted earlier, in the previous parliament women accounted for 12% of MPs and sometimes even less. However, out of 304 bills initiated by individual MPs, 42 (or 14%) were sponsored by female MPs while out of 141 co-sponsored bills, 69 (or 49%) were co-sponsored by women. We must also analyze performance of female MPs in terms of their activity on the floor, compared to their male counterparts. Women's share was 20%. 16 male MPs have never had the floor, while we didn't find any female MP that has never once spoken before parliament. 29 MPs, including one female MP, were on the floor one or two times. Qualitative analysis of performance of female MPs would have been even more interesting but this is impossible to do based on the information currently available.¹⁸

The above factors clearly illustrate that women's participation in politics is important for politics itself, in order for it to become more inclusive, equal

¹⁷ <http://reports.weforum.org/global-gender-gap-report-2015/the-case-for-gender-equality/>

¹⁸ Letter № 8766/2-4, 14/11/2016.

and outcome-oriented, which will promote democratic development of the state.

Because most countries throughout the world have found that the issue is impossible to overcome by letting nature run its course, in the second half of the 20th century, an international framework was set up for women's political participation, which continues to serve as a cornerstone of the fight for women's rights. The most important international women's rights documents include:

- The UN International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, adopted in 1966¹⁹;
- The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), adopted in 1979²⁰;
- The CEDAW General Recommendation 2, adopted in 1997²¹;
- The CEDAW General Recommendation 25, adopted in 1999²²;
- The Beijing Platform for Action, adopted in 1995²³;
- CoE Recommendation (3) of 2003²⁴;
- UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, adopted in 2000²⁵.

The following OSCE commitments are also very important in this regard:

- The Helsinki Final Act of 1975²⁶,
- The Moscow Document of 1991²⁷,

¹⁹ <http://www.cirp.org/library/ethics/UN-covenant/>

²⁰ <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/text/econvention.htm>

²¹ <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/recommendations/recomm.htm>

²² [http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/recommendations/General%20recommendation%2025%20\(English\).pdf](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/recommendations/General%20recommendation%2025%20(English).pdf)

²³ <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform/plat1.htm>

²⁴ [https://wcd.coe.int/ViewDoc.jsp?p=&Ref=Rec\(2003\)3&Language=lanEnglish&Ver=original&Site=CM&BackColorInternet=C3C3C3&BackColorIntranet=EDB021&BackColorLogged=F5D383\)&direct=true](https://wcd.coe.int/ViewDoc.jsp?p=&Ref=Rec(2003)3&Language=lanEnglish&Ver=original&Site=CM&BackColorInternet=C3C3C3&BackColorIntranet=EDB021&BackColorLogged=F5D383)&direct=true)

²⁵ <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/issues/women/wps.shtml>

²⁶ <http://www.osce.org/helsinki-final-act?download=true>

²⁷ <http://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/14310?download=true>

- The Gender Equality Action Plan of 2004²⁸ and
- Decision No. 7/09 about Women's Participation in Political and Public Life, dated²⁹.

These international declarations and commitments obligate member states and partner states to ensure equal access to civil or political rights for men and women. Contribution of international organizations to the cause of increasing women's political participation throughout the world is humongous.

²⁸ <http://www.osce.org/mc/23295?download=true>

²⁹ <http://www.osce.org/mc/40710?download=true>

CHAPTER 3.

MECHANISMS FOR INCREASING WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION – ANALYSIS OF INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE AND GEORGIAN CONTEXT

3.1. International Experience

It has been stated numerous times that women's political participation in Georgia is extremely low, while promotion of democratic development in the country requires increasing women's political participation and implementing meaningful measures in this regard. Here we must also note that this is an urgent issue not only in Georgia but also in nearly every country throughout the world. Average rate of women's representation in parliament is 23% worldwide and this is what the regional estimates look like: the Americas – 27.8%, Europe – 25.9% (OSCE countries), Africa – 23.5%, Asia – 19.5%. The only positive exception is Scandinavia, which seems to have achieved gender equality with both women and men equally participating in the government of the country (41.6%)³⁰. Scandinavia together with the Kingdom of Netherlands has been raking on top with regards to women's political participation.

It took these countries nearly 100 years to achieve such equality.³¹ Today none of the states have the luxury of waiting around for 100 years for equality. Therefore, the contemporary world has started working on different mechanisms for increasing women's political participation, in order to fast track gender equality.

One of the most effective mechanisms for achieving a gender balance in politics is a temporary special measure known as a gender quota. Gender quota is a special measure that ensures minimum representation for minorities – in this case, for women. There are many different types of quota, which can be divided into the following three categories:

- ❖ Countries with election list quotas for candidates;
- ❖ Countries with reserved seat quotas for women;
- ❖ Countries with internal party quotas.

³⁰ <http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/world.htm>

³¹ <http://kvinno.org/history/women-nordic-politics-continuing-success-story>

Election list and reserved seat quotas are regulated in the law while internal party quotas are generally voluntary.

Quotas for candidates are targets for setting aside a fixed percentage of places on the candidate lists for different sex. Such quotas are regulated by the Constitution or electoral legislation. There are a total of 54 countries worldwide that practice quotas for candidates and the average proportion of seats held by women in the legislature in these countries is 24,9%.³²

Reserved seat quotas are targets for setting aside a fixed number of seats for women in the legislature. Such quotas, similar to the quotas for candidates are often enshrined in the constitution or in the electoral legislation. 23 countries worldwide practice reserved seat quotas and the average proportion of seats held by women in the legislature in these countries is 20%. Reserved seat quotas are mostly practiced by Asian and Arab countries.

And lastly, internal party quotas are practiced in 55 countries throughout the world. Party quotas are minimum targets set by political parties themselves for gender balance on the party lists. Such quotas are usually voluntary and are regulated in party constitution or other internal regulatory documents. In 55 countries that practice internal voluntary party quotas, at least one of three major political parties has such quota.

Gender quotas can be gender-specific or gender-neutral. Gender-specific quotas target women and promote their participation, while if a quota is not limited to either males or females it is gender-neutral. Clearly, gender-neutral quota is closer to democratic standards because it ensures gender balance for equality.

As noted earlier, gender quota is a single most effective mechanism for fast-tracking women's political participation. However, introducing a gender quota is not the only precondition for increasing women's representation. In order to increase number of women not only among candidates but also among elected officials, researchers that support gender quotas recommend taking the following factors into account:

- ❖ **Electoral system** – effectiveness of gender quota largely depends on electoral system. Based on the international practice, gender quotas

³² <http://www.quotaproject.org/legislated-candidate-quotas.cfm>

are most effective in proportional representation systems, when legislation guarantees gender balance in proportional lists. Implementation of quota in majoritarian electoral systems is rather complicated. In countries with proportional representation systems only, proportion of women in the legislature is twice as much as in countries with only majoritarian representation systems. As to the countries with mixed representation systems, women's share is average.

To elaborate more, in proportional representation systems a political party can easily nominate representatives of both genders for its list, while in majoritarian electoral systems where candidates are competing for a single office, it is physically impossible to nominate representatives of both genders. In such cases, political parties tend to prefer male candidates. The only exception is multi-member majoritarian representation system where both genders can be nominated.

Effects of gender quotas for open and closed lists are also viewed within the context of the electoral system. However, researchers believe that women's representation in open or closed lists depends on the local context and opinion of voters about women candidates.

- ❖ **Strong list placement** – even a 50% gender quota may fail if it does not require strong list placement of candidates. When introducing a quota, no matter the target percentage, it is important to ensure gender balance not only in the list as a whole but also in its subsections – e.g. one woman in every three candidates, two women in every five candidates, etc. A party may practice a 50% gender quota and may have a list of 100 candidates where 50 candidates are male and another 50 are female, but if these women are placed in the second half of the list, they essentially have a zero chance of winning. To achieve substantial equality, the 50% quota must be used in combination with the zipper system, i.e. alternation of men and women in every two candidates.
- ❖ **Magnitude of an electoral subject** – the success of candidate quotas for women's participation also depends on magnitude of an electoral subject, i.e. number of seats garnered by an electoral subject following elections. The higher the magnitude of an electoral subject (a political party), the higher the chances of women candidates in the proportional list to win parliamentary seats, and vice versa – the lower

the magnitude of an electoral subject, the less likely it is for women candidates to win parliamentary seats because they will most probably not be placed in winnable positions (even when there is a quota). In addition to party magnitude, it is also very important to consider the percentage of votes that the party was able to garner and where the electoral list stops. This differs across countries, depending on their electoral legislation. For instance, in Georgia because following parliamentary elections number of MPs for an electoral subject is rounded up to six, it is important that a woman is placed in the sixth position, not the seventh.

- ❖ **Election threshold** – for women to be able to secure more seats in elective bodies (in view of their placement in election lists)³³, a high election threshold is recommended. Low election threshold means that parliamentary seats will be distributed among many electoral subjects and because they usually don't have women in top positions, female candidates are less likely to win seats. However, high election threshold has negative effects as well – for instance, it does not promote multi-party democracy and hinders political pluralism, which is important for democratic development of a country.
- ❖ **Sanctions** – the effectiveness of gender quotas depends on legal sanctions for non-compliance. Parties rarely follow voluntary quotas. There are two types of common sanctions: financial penalty for parties that violate quotas (e.g. France), and abolishment of registration for failing to ensure gender balance; as a result the party whose registration was abolished will no longer be able to participate in elections. Most experts support abolishment of registration, because a financial penalty may not be much of an obstacle for some political parties. Only smaller and weaker political parties fear a financial penalty.

The above factors key determinants of success of gender quotas but it is also important to consider other smaller factors as well.

³³ Women are usually placed at the bottom of the list

3.2. Analysis of the Georgian Context

As noted many times before, many countries throughout the world have introduced gender quotas but outcomes are not always the same. This is due to the above-enumerated factors as well as local context. For an increased and effective participation of women in politics, it is very important that corresponding measures are introduced in consideration of national legislation and local social, economic and cultural situation. For developing successful mechanisms for women's political participation in Georgia, it is important to study local context and past experience.

Low level of women's political participation in Georgia is due to a number of visible or invisible obstacles. Most of all, this has to do with deeply rooted patriarchal values, according to which women's role is mostly limited to raising a family. It also has to do with political barriers created by parties that hinder promotion of women, and national legislation and state institutions that lack gender sensitivity.

The first factor – deeply rooted patriarchal values, is perhaps a subject of a whole new research. For purposes of this research, we will focus on the second factor – role of parties and state institutions in both impeding and supporting women's political participation.

3.2.a. Gender Sensitive Analysis of Georgian Legal Base

The analysis of international experience has revealed that promotion of women's political participation largely depends on the electoral framework and electoral systems. Elections in Georgia are regulated by the Constitution of Georgia, the electoral legislation of Georgia – the organic law of Georgia: the Election Code, and the organic law of Georgia on Political Union of Citizens, as well as other bylaws that are now unrelated to gender equality.

By virtue of the Georgian Constitution, everyone has the right to a public office and the right to participate in elections by exercising their active or passive suffrage. This means that the supreme law of Georgia is gender-neutral and at the very least, it doesn't impede gender equality in the country.

Similarly, the Election Code is gender-neutral but the system envisaged by the Code does not promote gender equality. The Election Code establishes

a mixed electoral system for Georgia: 73 members of the 150-seat legislature are allocated from single-mandate constituencies known as “majoritarian” electoral districts and remaining 77 seats are allocated from party lists in a national proportional system. As noted earlier, mixed system and especially the single-member majoritarian system that exists in Georgia not only doesn’t promote but also serves as a barrier to women’s political participation.

In addition to the international practice, this is also evidenced by analysis of elections held in Georgia. The analysis (see Chart 2) illustrates that women elected through the proportional voting system were more than women elected through the majoritarian voting system. This way, it is safe to conclude that had the elections been held under the proportional system only, there would have been far more women MPs in Georgia than we have now.

To sum up, the Election Code of Georgia and in particular, the electoral system established by the Code in Georgia, not only does nothing to promote but also hinders women’s advancement in politics.

Parliamentary Elections	Elected in proportional voting system	Elected in majoritarian voting system
1992	8 %	2, 67 %
1995	9,21 %	1, 35 %
1999	9,33 %	2, 74 %
2004	12 %	4 %
2008	10, 67 %	1, 33 %
2012	14, 29 %	9, 59 %
2016	23, 38 %	8, 20 %

Chart 2: women MPs elected in proportional and majoritarian voting systems in Georgia.

The third important law that needs to be examined for analyzing issues pertinent to elections is the organic law of Georgia on Political Unions of Citizens. Unlike the two laws discussed earlier, the law of Georgia on

Political Unions of Citizens is more gender-sensitive. It stipulates that if a qualified electoral subject³⁴ presents a gender-balanced proportional list where at least 30% of candidates are of different sex, will receive a 30% increase in the supplement from the state budget. This is a voluntary financial incentive, a type of gender quota, and is certainly commendable because it is an important motivation for political parties in Georgia with limited financial resources. This norm applies to both parliamentary and local self-government elections but it does not apply to elections of Ajara AR Supreme Council.

In addition to its positive effects, the above rule and financing regulations in general have important flaws, which allows uneven application of the regulations by political parties.

Although the law requires having three candidates of different sex in every ten candidates, it does not regulate placement of these candidates, while analysis of international practice proves that placement of male and female candidates is one of the key determinants of effectiveness of gender quota. A party may receive a financial supplement but fail to ensure that women candidates take the proportion of seats required by the law. For instance, during the local self-government elections in 2014, political parties made use of the regulation about the financial incentive and received a supplement for gender representation but they failed to ensure that 30% of candidates that won seats in Sakrebulo were women. Although they nominated three women in every ten candidates to receive the financial incentive, they placed these women at the bottom of a group of ten candidates (8th, 9th or 10th positions), which is why winning candidates didn't include women.

The last two parliamentary elections suggest that political parties that usually win elections and gain many seats do not make use of the voluntary financial incentives. Therefore, it is safe to conclude that these incentives have not been successful in Georgia.

³⁴ "Qualified" election subjects are parties and/or candidates of parties that received at least three per cent of votes in the last parliamentary elections or local elections.

3.2.b. Political Parties and their Opinion about Increasing Women's Political Participation in Georgia

Generally, women's political participation most of all depends on political parties and their will, and Georgia is no exception. Similar to other countries, political parties in Georgia are not very keen on working on gender equality issues. On the contrary, development of political parties is a novelty and there are far more challenges to ensuring gender equality in Georgia than in any other country with more political experience.

After analyzing the survey of political party members, it is safe to conclude that there are several problems about political parties that hinder increase of women's political participation.

First problem that hinders increase of women's political participation is lack of stability of political parties. A political party created for a short period of time, for electoral purposes only, will not ensure advancement of women in politics. Women's political participation is related to a systemic type of work, which is impossible to perform in a short period of time. In addition, political parties come and go easily, forcing party members to join a different political party or to exit politics. The research has shown that female members are more loyal to their party than their male counterparts, and they don't usually leave a "losing party"; instead, they become ordinary inactive members or choose to exit politics in general.

Lack of political party ideology and platform is another barrier. When a party has no ideology, it has no election program, strategic action plan and especially a gender policy. This means that a political party has no policy for recruiting members, including women, or mechanisms for training and promoting these members. The research has found that most of the important work in a party is done by women who work diligently but are rarely placed in winnable positions in election lists.

Another barrier is not having a well-organized structure in political parties, as most parties in Georgia lack structure, especially at lower levels, and a comprehensive database of members updated on a regular basis. As a result, election lists often include people close to party leaders instead of ordinary members of the party. Having an active database of members, especially female members is very important for local self-government elections when parties nominate more candidates and gender balance needs to be ensured. Political parties often state that they don't have enough

female members, which wouldn't be an argument if parties had a well-organized structure.

The research has also revealed that political parties don't understand the essence of women's political participation, especially at the lower levels. They view appointment of women as zone or district coordinators and high rate of women's participation in electoral commissions as women's political participation. This is an important problem but apparently political parties are using it to their advantage. As they employ women as election coordinators, they declare that they promote women's political participation. Unfortunately, often female members of political parties are left deceived because they think that working as a coordinator is political work.

During the research we also identified another trend that has a negative effect on female members of political parties. Although political parties nominate only a few women in their party list, especially in winnable positions, ones that are included are usually new to the party – women who are more or less well known but without any political experience. Recruiting new faces is very important and a step forward towards political party development; however, failure to use the existing resources of female members has a demotivating and negative effect on women that have faithfully served the party for many years and have a significant political experience.

Another important problem with political parties in Georgia is their low interest towards issues of women. Most respondents surveyed for this research stated that they rarely receive instructions to work on women's issues in the regions from the party's central leadership. Parties rarely lobby for women's issues at the central level. For instance, as civil society advocate for gender quotas, none of the political parties took the leadership initiative about the issue, meaning that parties are less interested in the women voter segment.

The most frequently cited barrier to women's political participation is lack of finances. Almost all political parties, especially when competing in majoritarian elections, try to find candidates that won't be an additional burden for the party and can afford to financially support his/her own election campaign. On top of the disadvantages of the majoritarian system, such approach of political parties further impedes that want to participate in elections, especially in majoritarian representation system.

Lastly, women often turn down high positions in political parties or offers to be nominated as majoritarian candidates, thinking that they are not ready for the position or they don't yet deserve to be promoted. This is another problem with parties. While political parties are looking to govern the country, at the very least they should be able to persuade women and train them for higher offices. Political parties don't care much about internal democratic processes, gender policy and women's motivation. None of the parties in Georgia have an effective mechanism for recruiting, training and promoting women, which has a direct proportional effect on women's engagement in politics in Georgia.

3.2.c. Possible Mechanisms for Increasing Women's Political Participation in Georgia

Analysis of both international and local context demonstrates that increasing women's political participation in Georgia by having voluntary regulations in place is nearly impossible, meaning that it is important to introduce temporary special measures – gender quotas to promote political participation of women. Clearly, gender quota should be effectively aligned with the electoral system that exists in the country.

Achieving substantive gender equality requires transitioning to a proportional representation system and integrating gender quota into the proportional system, based on a strong list placement of both genders. Target percentage must be determined through public discussion but it should not be lower than 'the critical mass' of 30%. Here we must also note there is a strong public support. According to 74% of Georgian voters³⁵, proportion of seats held by women in the Georgian Parliament must be at least 30%, while 35% of these voters support 50/50 gender balance in parliament.

If the mixed system continues to exist in Georgia, it is important that the proportional representation system is utilized to its maximum extent. A high target rate for proportional lists must be set, since introducing 20 and/or 30% gender quota is basically pointless: 30% of 77 equals to 23 seats, while 23 women in parliament amount to only 15% of total MPs.

³⁵ According to the report published by the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs in January 2017

Such proportion of women will not guarantee equality. Substantive gender equality requires setting a 50% target rate for proportional lists.

In a mixed system it is also important to incentivize women candidates in elections under the majoritarian system. During the research it was found that some political parties would like to see financial incentives for nominating women candidates for elections held in majoritarian voting system. Judging from applicable international experience, mandatory regulations are more effective than financial incentives. We recommend introducing a new regulation that will obligate political parties to take more interest in and participate more in election campaign of women candidates.

To sum up, at this early stage it is important to agree on the principle of introducing gender quota; details of gender quota should be decided on the basis of a broader political consensus, according to best international experience.

CHAPTER 4.

ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT PRIOR TO 2016 AND THEIR OUTCOMES

In addition to the process of development of democratic institutions, the 90s were marked by the work for improvement of women's rights. This was encouraged by appearance of international organizations in Georgia and establishment of local non-governmental organizations specializing in women's issues. Women's political participation, which used to be far lower than it is now, became one of the key areas for improvement of human rights situation for women.

Both civil society and the state started working on women's rights.

4.1. State's Initiatives for Women's Political Participation

Georgia as a member of the UN became a party to a number of international agreements or covenants, including agreements about women's political rights. Georgia signed the following documents and agreements that are crucial for women's political participation:

1. *The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) adopted by the UN* – Georgia joined the Covenant in 1994 and by doing so it undertook responsibility to ensure equal rights for men and women, allow both men and women to enjoy all civil and political rights (Part II, Article 3);³⁶

2. *The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)*, ratified by Georgia in 1994. Articles 7 and 8 of the Convention obligate state parties including Georgia to take all measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the political and public life of the country. Para."b" of Article 7 regulates passive suffrage for women. According to the Convention, women must "participate in the formulation of government policy and the implementation thereof... hold public office and perform all public functions at all levels of government".³⁷ Here we must also note that in its July 2014 Recommendation, the UN Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women recommended that Georgia adopt temporary special measures for improving the low level of women's political participation, and gave the country two

³⁶ <https://treaties.un.org/doc/publication/unts/volume%20999/volume-999-i-14668-english.pdf>

³⁷ <http://www.supremecourt.ge/files/upload-file/pdf/aqtebi9.pdf>

years for taking necessary steps. The deadline expired in 2016 and unfortunately Georgia didn't take any steps for implementing the recommendation about temporary special measures and didn't introduce gender quota ahead of the 2016 parliamentary elections. Here we must also note the report provided by Georgia in follow-up to the concluding observations³⁸, a smaller portion of which deals with women's political participation. It is stated in the report that among steps made by Georgia for ensuring gender equality was the legislative initiative of a former MP Nana Keinishvili for introducing a gender quota for proportional lists; however, the report says nothing about actual reasons why the bill was not successful. Among important steps made for political empowerment of women, the report lists the voluntary financial incentive established by the law but it also fails to mention that political parties that are in power have never made use of the regulation.

3. *Beijing Platform for Action* – in 1995, during the fourth world conference of the UN about women's issues, 189 countries came together to develop an action plan that continues to serve as a pillar of the fight for women's rights. Chapter 7 of the Platform is dedicated to women's political participation, while strategic objectives 7.1 and 7.2 aim to increase women's political participation and engage them in the decision-making process. The Platform recommends to individual state party, political parties and other stakeholders what actions to take for improving women's low political participation. Georgia attended the Beijing Conference as a UN member state and began to work on women's rights afterwards.

4. *UN Resolution 1325* – in 2000, the UN Security Council adopted the Resolution 1325 about "women, peace and security", with the aim of ensuring that member states guarantee women's active political participation in conflict resolution and peace. Georgia as a member state of the UN is obliged to comply with the Resolution. Georgia started working on the national action plan shortly afterwards, in 2002, and developed the first action plan in 2006, but the process has not gone any further.

5. *The EU Association Agreement* – the Association Agreement between the EU and Georgia was signed in 2014 and became effective as of July 1, 2016. In addition to many other commitments, the Association Agreement envisages the obligation to strengthen gender equality and ensure

³⁸ goo.gl/nx7rFK

equal opportunities for men and women. Here we must also note that the Association Agreement requires harmonization of Georgian legislation with EU laws, which means that the principles envisaged by the Agreement will be reflected in the national legislation.

In addition to undertaking international commitments, since 1998 Georgia has also been working on a number of national action plans for improving the situation of women. However, it is very difficult to collect comprehensive information about implementation and monitoring of these action plans. According to the 2014 report of the Gender Equality Action Plan, a total of 5 action plans were developed and approved³⁹ (1998-2000, 2001-2004, 2007-2009, 2010-2013, and 2014-2016).

Among steps made by the state for gender equality we must also note creation of the Gender Equality Council in 2004 under the Chair of the Parliament of Georgia, which proved to be instrumental in development of gender policy. Later in 2001, the Council became a permanent body. In addition, in 2010 Georgia adopted the Law on Gender Equality. It is difficult to evaluate performance of the Gender Equality Council and effects of the law, but both events were important steps for creating institutional mechanisms for gender equality.

4.2. Civil Society Activities

Despite the above-enumerated actions, women's political participation remained a challenge throughout years, after each subsequent election, which is why civil society members started fighting for women's rights...

There were a few waves of the fight for women's political rights in Georgia. The first attempt was in 2002, when two independent initiatives for gender quotas were prepared. First initiative envisaged at least 40% representation of different sex in a group of every ten candidates in the party list and was tabled by the Women's Political Forum. Another initiative also envisaged a gender quota and was introduced by MP Ada Marshania and co-sponsored by a founder of the Women's Club in parliament, Nani Chashvili. None of the initiatives could garner parliament's support.⁴⁰

³⁹ goo.gl/uLdV11

⁴⁰ Gender Equality Policy and International Commitments. Experience of Georgia and Countries of the Visegrad Group. M.Kuprava-Sherwashidze

The second wave was the legislative initiative about a gender quota introduced in 2008, solidified with 32 400 voter signatures. The bill established a 50% gender balance in the proportional party list. If a party failed to fulfill the requirement, its base funding would be reduced by 5% for every 5% violation, and by 10% for majoritarian candidates (both main and reserve) for each violation of gender proportionality requirement. The proposal was registered in parliament in May 2008 but unfortunately, just like the previous proposal, it was never discussed by the legislature.

The third and the latest attempt was made on June 10, 2015, when the Task Force for Women's Political Participation submitted a legislative proposal to parliament.⁴¹ The proposal requested introducing gender quota for proportional lists for parliamentary elections, with a target of 50% gender balance, meaning that half of MPs elected in a proportional representation system would be women (38 women); 38 women amounts to 25% of the total MPs. The initiative did not envisage any special measures for majoritarian representation system, because all members of the Task Force supported scrapping of the majoritarian system that hinders women's advancement in politics.

The legislative proposal, similar to other previous proposals, did not make it to the plenary session for discussion, because no one was willing to sponsor it. However, the proposal was discussed by two parliamentary committees: human rights committee and the committee for civil integration and legal affairs. The former supported the proposal and the latter didn't. According to the opinion of the legal affairs committee, the proposal was rejected because it didn't envisage a gender quota for a coalition, which is clearly not a heavy argument considering that the law should not be regulating the number of coalition members. In addition, it was never the intention of the legal affairs committee to support the proposal; otherwise, it could have easily agreed on the principle and improved "the gap" later. Lack of will was also evidenced in the case of alternative legislative initiative submitted to parliament by two active MPs Nana Keinishvili and Teimuraz Chkuaseli around the same time the civil society submit-

⁴¹ The Task Force for Women's Political Participation was set up in March 2014, bringing together more than 20 organizations working on women's political participation, both local and international, with the aim of ensuring that gender quota is introduced in the legislation. To this end, members of the group are actively lobbying the initiative before political parties and the state institutions.

ted its proposal. The initiative, which established the requirement of having a different sex among every three candidates in the proportional list, was not supported by the legal affairs committee. The initiative was also considered during a plenary session of parliament, which is a historic fact because gender quotas had never been taken on the floor of the house. Unfortunately, voting was postponed for an indefinite period of time and never took place in the eighth parliament.

Here we must also note that along the process of development of legislative initiatives, women's movement in Georgia started gaining traction. A number of protest rallies were held in Tbilisi as well as in other cities of Georgia, where participants demanded women's political participation and a gender quota in particular. Although the previous parliament never adopted the gender quota initiative, these attempts have proven to be successful. Public awareness about women's issues has been increased and more people support women's political participation. Most importantly, the issue of women's political participation became a central issue, prompting political parties to start thinking about women's political participation and seek argumentative answers. However, the idea of women's active participation in politics was seriously threatened by leaking of videos of the personal lives of public figures in spring 2016, which also contained threatening messages. In view of the Georgian context, the videotape scandal had important gender implications.⁴²

Later in 2017, within the Constitutional reform, GYLA proposed a new regulation, a constitutional principle, establishing an obligation of the state to implement special measures for eliminating inequality between women and men and promoting substantial equality.⁴³

Despite these attempts, women's political participation did not become a subject of a wide public interest, which has mostly to do with the social and economic situation in the country. In 2016, 61% of Georgia's population stated that economic development of the country was more important than democratic systems (29%)⁴⁴.

⁴² <https://gyla.ge/ge/post/saqartvelos-akhalgazrda-iuristta-asociacia-tsinasaarchevno-periodis-shefaseba-mokle-mimokhilva>

⁴³ <http://constitution.parliament.ge/uploads/masalebi/konstitucia-gadasinjva-cvileba.pdf>

⁴⁴ http://www.iri.org/sites/default/files/wysiwyg/georgia_2016.pdf

CHAPTER 5.

GENDER ANALYSIS OF THE 2016 PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS

Ahead of the parliamentary elections, most political parties pledged to include more women in their proportional lists, whether the law mandated this or not. All attempts for introducing gender quotas were terminated in the run-up of the parliamentary elections.

5.1. Gender Balance in Lists Presented for the Parliamentary Elections

September 8, 2016, was the deadline for submission of election lists and candidates in the Central Election Commission (CEC). A total of 25 electoral subjects registered to participate in elections under the proportional component⁴⁵, while number of candidates that registered to participate in elections under majoritarian component was 816,⁴⁶ including 35 candidates nominated by initiative groups and 763 nominated by political parties or blocs.

Based on the analysis of proportional and majoritarian lists submitted to the CEC, number of women among candidates nominated for the 2016 parliamentary elections had increased compared to the previous parliamentary elections in 2012. In the 2016 parliamentary elections, women's share among candidates registered for the proportional component was 37%, for the majoritarian component – 17.52% (17.65% in lists nominated by parties and blocs, and 15.09% in lists nominated by initiative groups). In the 2012 parliamentary elections, share of women among candidates for the proportional component was 31.3%, meaning that share of female candidates for the proportional component in the 2016 elections was 6% more, and 13.35% for the majoritarian component – 4% less than in 2016.

A total of seven electoral subjects made use of the financial incentives provided in the Election Code and the Organic Law on Political Unions of

⁴⁵ <http://cesko.ge/geo/list/show/108817-saarchevno-subieqtetbis-mier-saqartvelos-parlamentis-2016-tslis-8-oqtombris-archevnebtvis-tsardgenili-partiuli-siebi>

⁴⁶ http://cesko.ge/res/docs/majoritarebi-REGISTRIREBULEBI_29SEQTEMBERI_PARLAMENTI.pdf

Citizens⁴⁷ and submitted lists with 30% gender balance in every 10 candidates.

Below is detailed information about each electoral subject for a more visible gender analysis of the 2016 parliamentary elections. Please, note that this research focuses on electoral subjects that had the status of qualified electoral subjects for the 2016 parliamentary elections or gained such status following the 2016 parliamentary elections.

⁴⁷ Full list of electoral subjects is available at: <http://cesko.ge/geo/list/show/108817-saarchevno-subieqtebis-mier-saqartvelos-parlamentis-2016-tslis-8-oqtombris-archevnebis-tsgenili-partiuli-siebi>

Georgian Dream – Democratic Georgia (hereinafter, the Georgian Dream)

For the parliamentary elections under the proportional representation system the Georgian Dream nominated a total of 155 candidates, including 18 women (11.61%) and 137 men (88.39%), and for the parliamentary elections under the majoritarian representation system, it nominated 72 candidates including 5 women (6.94%) and 67 men (93%).

Placement of women candidates is as important as their number. Georgian Dream had 4 women among the first group of ten candidates, 2 women among the second group of ten candidates, while the third group of ten candidates had no women. In other groups of ten candidates, the Georgian Dream had only one or two female candidates at most. In some cases, it had no female candidates at all – see Chart 3.

Here we must note that 5 women nominated for elections under the majoritarian system were also included in the list for proportional system and therefore, we cannot include them in the total number of female candidates.

The Georgian Dream nominated a total of 18 women for the parliamentary elections.

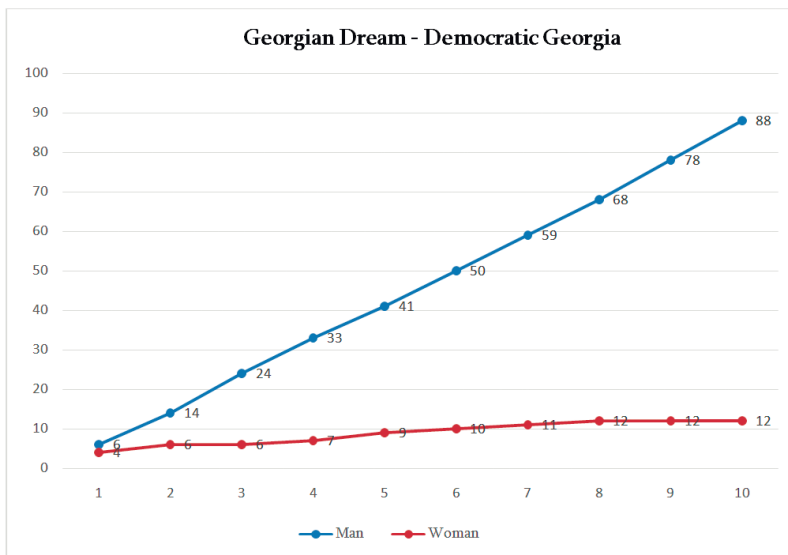


Chart 3

The United National Movement (UNM)

The United National Movement nominated a total of 199 candidates for the parliamentary elections under the proportional representation component, including 50 women (25.13%) and 149 men (74.87%), which is an improvement compared to previous years. For the parliamentary elections under the majoritarian representation component the UNM nominated 72 candidates, including 5 women (6.94%).

Similar to the Georgian Dream, the UNM didn't ensure gender balance in groups of ten candidates. In particular, in the top two groups of ten candidates it had 3 women per group, but in subsequent groups it had one or two women at most – see Chart 4.

Although the UNM didn't make use of the financial incentives, it had a guaranteed supplement from the state budget because it had ensured gender balance in the 2014 local self-government elections.

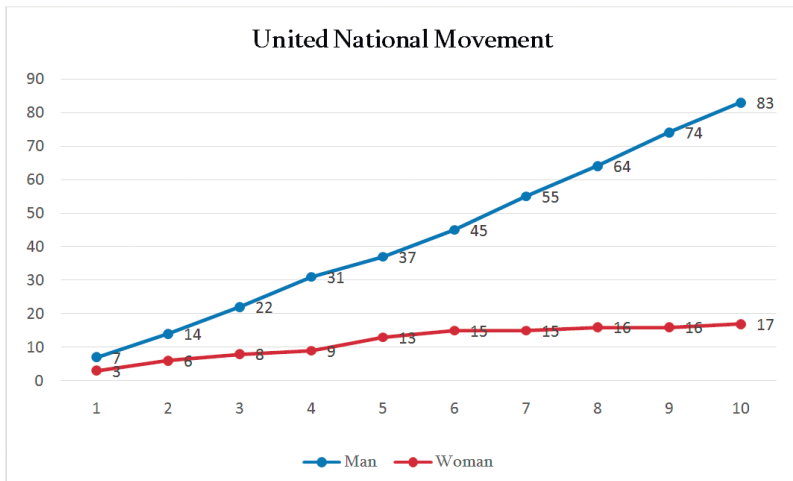


Chart 4

Irakli Alasania – Free Democrats (hereinafter, Free Democrats)

Free Democrats is among parties that made use of the 30% financial incentive by ensuring gender balance required by law.

The party nominated a total of 200 candidates, including 66 women (33%) and 134 men (67%). It nominated a total of 64 candidates for elections under majoritarian system, including 8 women (13%).

Because the Free Democrats made use of the financial incentive, it included at least 3 women in every ten candidates; it had more than 3 female candidates in groups of ten candidates in the bottom of the list – see Chart 5.

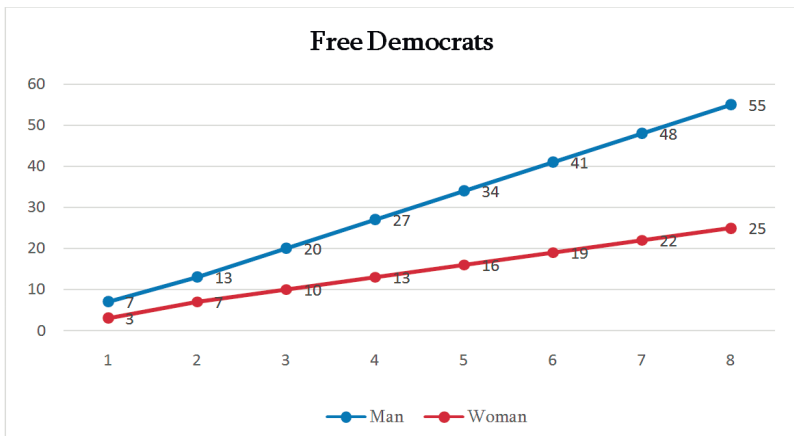


Chart 5

Paata Burchuladze – State for the People

The election bloc nominated a total of 177 candidates for elections under the proportional system, including 31 women (17.51%). For elections under the majoritarian component, it nominated 72 candidates, including 10 women (14%).

31 women is not very few; however, placement of female candidates in the list reveals that had the party cleared the election threshold, none of its female candidate would have gotten seats because it didn't have any women in top two groups of ten candidates – see Chart 6.

Placement of women in subsequent groups of ten candidates is completely pointless because a party magnitude is rarely large enough to allow candidates positioned after the top two groups of ten in the election list to get seats under the proportional system with only 77 seats. Here we must also note that all electoral subjects have their own projections about election results.

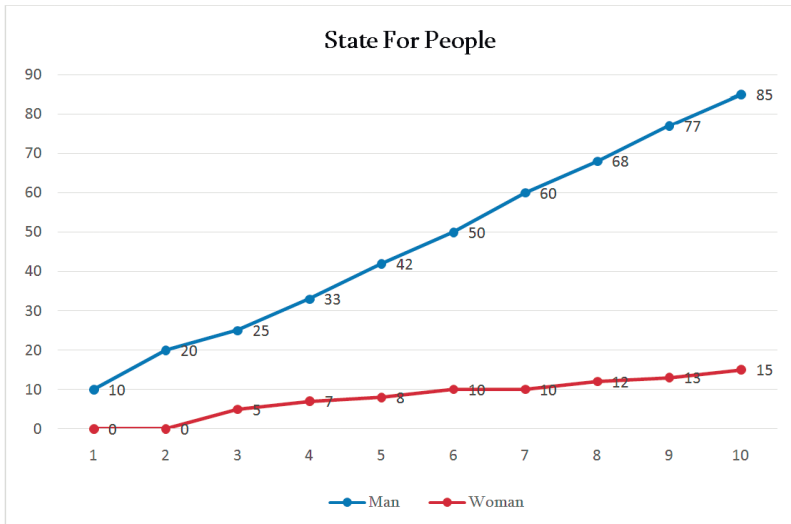


Chart 6

The National Forum

The party nominated a total of 131 candidates in their list for the proportional component, including 42 women (32.06% of candidates), and for majoritarian component it nominated candidates only in 53 majoritarian constituencies, including 15 women (28%).

It is safe to say that out of all electoral subjects the National Forum had the highest share of women for both majoritarian and proportional components. However, although women accounted for more than 30% of candidates in the National Forum list, the party could not make use of the financial incentive because it didn't ensure gender balance in every group of ten candidates. The National Forum had one woman among top ten candidates, two women among the second group of ten candidates and three women among the third group of ten candidates – see Chart 7.

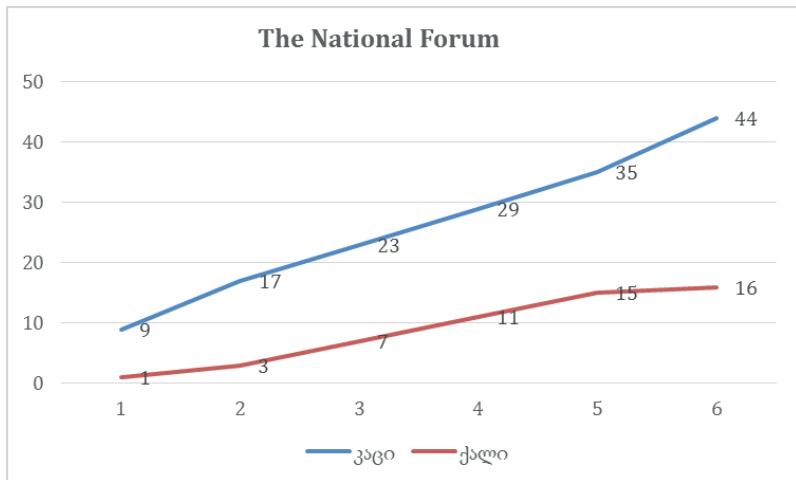
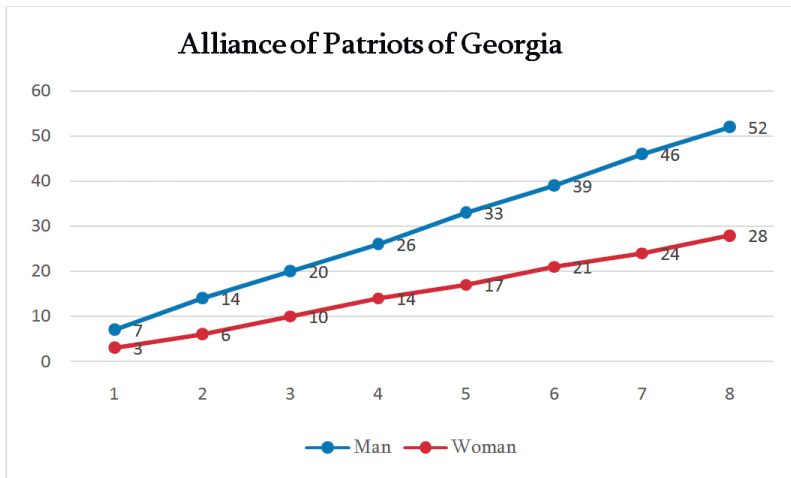


Chart 7

Davit Tarkhan-Mouravi, Irma Inashvili, Alliance of Patriots of Georgia, United Opposition (hereinafter, the Alliance of Patriots)

The party nominated 195 candidates for the proportional component, including 74 women (37.95%) and 121 men (62.05%). It nominated 71 candidates for the majoritarian component, including 13 women (18%).

Similar to a few other parties, the Alliance of Patriots made use of the financial incentive and ensured gender balance and submitted a list where 30% of every ten candidate was of different sex.



Nino Burjanadze – Democratic Movement (hereinafter, the Democratic Movement)

The Democratic Movement nominated 163 candidates for the proportional component including 66 women (40.49%), and 50 candidates for the majoritarian component including 9 women (18%).

The Democratic Movement made use of the financial incentive by nominating at least three women in each group of ten candidates. As a result, its distribution chart is quite similar to that of Free Democrats'. The Democratic Movement followed the gender balance requirement for local self-government elections and received corresponding supplement from the state budget.

Usupashvili – the Republicans (hereinafter, the Republican Party)

The party nominated 135 candidates for the proportional component, including 46 women (34.07%) and 89 men (65.93%). It nominated 27 candidates for the majoritarian component including 9 women (33%).

The Republican Party ensured 30% gender balance in its list for the proportional component. It is the only party in Georgia that introduced a voluntary internal party quota for promotion of women's representation.

Shalva Natelashvili – the Labor Party of Georgia (hereinafter, the Labor Party)

Another party that ensured gender balance in every group of ten candidates in the list was the Labor Party. It nominated 160 candidates for the proportional component, including 66 women (41.25%) and 94 men (58.75%).

The share of women in candidates nominated by the Labor Party for the majoritarian component was 24% - i.e. out of 45 candidates 11 were female.

Topadze – the Industrialists, Our Homeland (hereinafter, the Industrialists)

The Industrialists nominated a total of 109 candidates for the majoritarian component, including 36 women (33.03% of total candidates) and 73 men (66.97%). It registered a total of 34 candidates for the majoritarian component, including 6 women (18%).

Interestingly, similar to a few other parties the Industrialists had more than 30% women in their list; however, due to the women's weak positioning the Industrialists were not among the parties that made a use of the voluntary financial incentives and ensured gender balance.

5.2. Results of the Parliamentary Elections

Out of 25 electoral subjects that competed in the parliamentary elections, only three were able to clear the 5% threshold and subsequently, seats under the proportional representation system were distributed among these electoral subjects. As to the elections under the majoritarian representation system, a single party gained victory in 71 out of 73 majoritarian constituencies, independent candidates won in the remaining two.

In 77 representatives elected under the proportional system, 18 were women, i.e. women's share in MPs that won proportional seats was 23.38%. 6 out of 73 MPs elected under the majoritarian system were

women, i.e. women's in MPs that won majoritarian seats was 8.3%. In total, women's share in MPs elected in the parliamentary elections is 16%, i.e. out of 150 MPs only 24 are women.

Gender statistics by parties for both voting systems are as follows:

The Georgian Dream

- 44 MPs elected under the proportional representation system, including 8 women (18.8%) and 36 men;
- 71 MPs elected under the majoritarian system, including 5 women (7%) and 66 men.

The United National Movement

- 27 MPs elected under the proportional representation system, including 7 women (25.9%), and 20 men.
- None of the UNM's candidates for the election under the majoritarian system were able to win.

Alliance of Patriots

- 6 MPs elected under the proportional system, including 3 women (50%) and 3 men.
- None of the party's candidates for the majoritarian system were able to win.

Candidates nominated by initiative groups

- Out of two MPs elected under the majoritarian system, one was a woman (50%) and another was a man.

Here we must also note that following formation of the government, several MPs from the Georgian Dream that had won the elections left parliament to join the government. Next successful candidates on the party list occupied their seats, and as a result another woman joined parliament. At the same time, a woman candidate from the UNM turned down her seat and was replaced by next successful candidate on the party list, who was a man, so a total number of women in parliament remained the same, as the Georgian Dream gained a new woman MP and the United National Movement lost a woman MP. We didn't take this into account in our analysis of the election results, because it has nothing to do with formation of lists.

Based on the results of the Parliamentary Elections in 2016, share of women in parliament for 2016-2020 has grown by 4%: there were a total of 18 women in the previous parliament while current parliament has 24 female members. This is clearly a step forward but Georgia still has a long way to go for achieving substantial gender equality.

In addition to gender analysis, it is also important to analyze other data. Share of women in parliament is one thing but share of women MPs in the total number of women in the party list is a different issue.

The Alliance of Patriots has the most substantial, 50% gender balance, while the Georgian Dream has the highest share of women MPs from the total number of women in the party list. The share of women in the party was 11.61%, and following the elections under the proportional system women accounted for 18.8% of the Georgian Dream's winning candidates – 8 out of 44 proportional seats won by the Georgian Dream were filled by women. This means that the share of women in the Georgian Dream's winning candidates was more than the share of women in the party list. In addition, the Georgian Dream was able to get all five majoritarian women candidates in parliament.

The Alliance of Patriots ranked the second: share of women in the Alliance of Patriots' party list was 37.95% while the share of women in the party's winning candidates was 50%. 3 out of 6 seats that the party was able to win are filled by women, while another three are filled by men. This means that the share of women among the Georgian Dream's winning candidates was 13.1% more than the share of women in the proportional party list by.

As to the UNM, share of women in the party's list was 25,13% while the share of women in the UNM's winning candidates was 25,9% as 7 out of 27 seats won by the UNM were filled by women. It is safe to conclude that owing to the strong placement of women candidates in the party list, the share of women among successful candidates of the UNM is equal to the share of women in the party list.

For each electoral subject, share of women among winning candidates was more than share of women in the party list. It was the lack of women candidates that was the problem and therefore, despite strong positioning of women, we cannot say that these parties made efforts for increasing women's political participation. This is especially true for the ruling party

that had the highest magnitude and gained an overwhelming victory in elections under the majoritarian system.

Lastly, parties that were or became qualified following the elections were able to receive a gender supplement for following the voluntary gender equality rule. The following electoral subjects received a gender supplement: Nino Burjanadze – Democratic Movement, the Alliance of Patriots, the Labor Party, and the Free Democrats. Because the Alliance of Patriots participated in the elections as an electoral bloc, the additional funding was distributed among all parties that are members of the bloc.

Because under the Georgian legislation, a qualified electoral subject can receive additional funding based on results of parliamentary or local self-government elections, a number of political parties continued to receive gender supplement given to them based on results of local self-government elections. As a result, a total of 12 political parties are receiving additional funding for ensuring gender balance. 3 of these parties are receiving the funding based on the 2014 local self-government election results and 9 based on results of the 2016 parliamentary elections. Below is the list of political parties that are receiving additional funding:

1. United National Movement – 2014
2. Christian-Conservative Party of Georgia – 2014
3. Free Democrats – 2016
4. Labor Party of Georgia – 2016,
5. Democratic Movement – Unified Georgia – 2016
6. United Democratic Movement – 2014
7. Alliance of Patriots of Georgia – 2016
8. Union of Traditionalists of Georgia – 2016
9. Free Georgia – 2016
10. Freedom – Zviad Gamsakhurdia's Way – 2016
11. Political Movement of the Law Enforcement and Armed Forces Veterans and Patriots of Georgia – 2016
12. New Christian Democrats – 2016

Some of the above-listed parties are not well-known and their contributions to increasing women's political participation are not known.

RECOMMENDATIONS

A special consideration must be given to most findings of this research. Below we provide a list of recommendations categorized by different stakeholders, for achieving increased participation of women for next elections and ensuring irreversibility of the process.

The Authorities:

- The Constitution should define political equality of men and women and in particular, their equal access to seats in representative bodies;
- Electoral system must be reformed to ensure that the new system promotes increase of women's political participation;
- A temporary special measure – gender quota must be introduced to ensure gender balance in elected bodies;
- Gender quota should be fully aligned with the electoral system. If the mixed system continues to exist, proportional system must be utilized to the fullest extent;
- Regulations about party funding must be revised and changes must be made to ensure that political parties receive a gender supplement only if they actually ensure the required gender balance, by placing women in winnable positions;
- Monitor spending of gender supplement by political parties; relevant state institution should be put in charge of the monitoring;
- Make changes in the election legislation of Ajara AR in a way that will ensure its compliance with Georgia's national legislation;
- Promote participation of women candidates in majoritarian component of the electoral system; political parties should make more efforts to support election campaign of women candidates;
- Ensure that gender equality is included among the state's priorities and active efforts are made in this regard;
- Establish institutional mechanisms for support of gender balance and empower existing ones;
- Delegate the Gender Equality Council under Parliament with meaningful functions;

- Implement a large-scale educational campaign in cooperation with other stakeholders, to eliminate stereotypes and clichés that exist in the country. The campaign should be extremely comprehensive and should cover all areas of education: educational programs, students, teachers, school monitors (mandaturebi) and all other stakeholders. The campaign should cover all three areas: pre-school, primary, secondary and higher education.

Political Parties:

- Develop an effective system for recruiting and promoting women members;
- Create and regularly update database of active members;
- Appoint women members to decision-making positions;
- Introduce internal voluntary party quota. This will promote development of internal party democracy;
- Constantly work for development of capacity of women members;
- Develop internal gender policy and gender budget;
- Design a pre-election gender program and implement it if they are elected;
- Submit gender balanced election lists for elections;
- In addition to gender balance also ensure that women candidates are placed in winnable positions;
- Support introduction of the temporary special measure to ensure gender balance in elective bodies;
- Raise awareness of public, including their voters about gender issues.

Other stakeholders, including civil society and media

- Continue a strong and a large-scale women's movement for women's political participation;
- Civil society should continue pressuring political parties and the authorities for introducing temporary special measures;

- ❑ Conduct a large-scale education campaign about importance of women's political participation, taking into account stereotypes that exist in the society, and work to eliminate these stereotypes;
- ❑ Provide more support to civil society organizations working on women's political participation, for their active and effective involvement;
- ❑ Continue developing recommendations for increasing women's political participation and submitting these recommendations including initiatives to the legislature;
- ❑ Ensure more intensive coverage of importance of women's political participation by different media outlets;
- ❑ Promote success stories of women politicians;
- ❑ Use new methods for raising public awareness, outside of trainings and workshops;
- ❑ For the education campaign, design different approaches tailored to needs of each target audience, in consideration of different regions of Georgia, ethnic, religious and other groups;
- ❑ Create a public demand for women's political participation.