

BASELINE ASSESSMENT REPORT

SOCIAL RIGHTS IN GEORGIA

European Social Charter



European
Social
Charter

Charte
sociale
européenne



BASELINE ASSESSMENT REPORT

The report evaluates the current level of awareness,
understanding, and implementation
of the European Social Charter
among key stakeholders in Georgia

Council of Europe

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

COE	Council of Europe
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
ECSR	European Committee of Social Rights
ESC	European Social Charter
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
HR	Human Resources
IDP	Internally Displaced Persons
KII	Key Informant Interview
LGBTI	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex
PDO	Public Defender's Office
PWD	Persons with Disabilities

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This baseline assessment was conducted as part of the Council of Europe project “[*Further Enhancement of Social and Economic Rights in Georgia*](#)” and aimed to evaluate the current level of awareness, understanding, and implementation of the European Social Charter (ESC) among key stakeholders in Georgia. The assessment aligns with the [**Council of Europe Action Plan for Georgia 2024–2027**](#) and serves as a foundational reference point for tracking progress toward strengthening the country’s compliance with European standards on social and economic rights.

Using a **mixed-methods approach**, including an online stakeholder survey, key informant interviews (KIs), focus group discussions (FGDs), and a nationwide public opinion (omnibus) survey, the assessment engaged over 100 participants from government institutions, civil society organisations (CSOs), professional sectors, and the representative sample of general public. The findings highlight both promising areas of engagement and serious structural gaps that hinder effective implementation of the Charter.

1. Key Findings Across Stakeholder Groups

The assessment reveals highly **uneven levels of awareness and engagement with the ESC** across different groups:

- Public Defender’s Office (PDO), relevant policy makers and selected CSOs demonstrate the highest levels of awareness and engagement. These actors actively use the Charter in reporting, advocacy, and legal analysis, particularly in areas such as labour rights, disability inclusion, and the rights of the elderly.
- **Social sector professionals**, such as social workers, report limited familiarity with the ESC and are rarely involved in ESC-related training or reporting. Awareness is largely individual-based, rather than institutionalised.
- **Legal professionals and trade unions** show mixed levels of engagement. While some lawyers are aware of the ESC’s relevance, few have used it in litigation or professional practice. Trade unions, despite being key actors in social dialogue, are mostly unfamiliar with ESC standards or mechanisms.
- **University students**, particularly those in law and social sciences, report **low awareness** of the ESC. Few have encountered it in formal education, and most had not heard of the Charter before participating in the assessment. However, they expressed strong interest in learning more and being engaged in ESC-related initiatives.
- Among the **general public**, awareness of the ESC is very limited. Nearly half of respondents could not identify the ESC, and many confused it with unrelated institutions or concepts. This points to the complete absence of public outreach and education around ESC rights.

Despite these gaps, across all groups the **perceived relevance** of the ESC is high. Stakeholders broadly agree that the Charter provides a valuable framework for addressing systemic social and economic challenges, especially those affecting vulnerable groups such as persons with disabilities, older persons, informal workers, and low-income households.

2. Summary of Awareness, Knowledge, and Implementation Gaps

The assessment identifies several **systemic and recurring gaps** that limit the Charter's visibility, utility, and enforcement in Georgia:

- **Poor integration of ESC in law, policy, and practice:** Although Georgia has ratified many ESC articles, key provisions, such as Article 23 on the rights of the elderly, remain unratified, and the **collective complaints mechanism** has not been accepted. As a result, the ESC is often seen as declarative rather than enforceable.
- **Data challenges:** Rights-related data is limited, non-disaggregated, and inconsistently shared between institutions. This significantly hampers evidence-based policymaking and reporting, both at the national and shadow level.
- **Minimal use of ESC jurisprudence:** The case law of the European Committee of Social Rights (ECSR) is rarely accessed or cited in legal or policy work. Language barriers, poor-quality translations, and lack of institutional promotion contribute to this gap.
- **Weak public visibility:** The Charter is virtually unknown among the general population and poorly integrated into civic education or public discourse.
- **Underutilisation of the education system:** Universities and training centres have not mainstreamed ESC-related content into their curricula, missing a critical opportunity to cultivate a future generation of informed professionals.

3. Priority Recommendations: Policy, Capacity Building, and Public Engagement

The assessment offers targeted recommendations to close these gaps and leverage existing momentum. These are grouped into four key priority areas:

a) Policy Reform and Legal Alignment

- Gradually ratify the **remaining ESC provisions** and the **Additional Protocol on Collective Complaints**, starting with Articles most relevant to national needs (e.g., Article 23).
- Align national policies (e.g., minimum wage, informal work, unemployment protection) with ESC standards.

b) Capacity-Building

- Develop and deliver **ESC-focused training** for public servants, labour inspectors, judges, legal professionals, and social workers.
- Build sustained capacity for **alternative (shadow) reporting** among CSOs and the PDO.
- Translate and disseminate ESC materials and case law in Georgian, including user-friendly summaries for different sectors.

c) Public and Educational Engagement

- Launch **nationwide awareness campaigns** on ESC rights, targeting youth, women, and marginalised groups.
- Integrate ESC content into **university curricula**, legal clinics, and professional training programs, starting with law and social sciences faculties.
- Support student-led initiatives, internships, or workshops to increase youth engagement in rights-based work.

d) Data and Monitoring

- Create a national framework for the **collection of disaggregated data** on social and economic rights.
- Improve **inter-agency data sharing** and collaboration on ESC-related reporting and monitoring.
- Invest in digital infrastructure and tools to make ESC data and reporting accessible to civil society and the public.

In conclusion, the baseline assessment confirms that while Georgia has made some progress in labour and social policy, the **ESC remains significantly underutilised** as a legal, advocacy, and policy tool. Strengthening institutional ownership, legal education, and public communication, particularly among youth, will be essential to turning ESC standards into lived protections for all.

II. INTRODUCTION

The protection and promotion of social and economic rights is an important topic and issue in Georgia, especially in light of the country's commitments under the [Council of Europe's Action Plan for Georgia 2024–2027](#). In this context, the Council of Europe has launched the project "[Further Enhancement of Social and Economic Rights in Georgia](#)", which aims to strengthen the protection of social rights in line with European standards. This includes increasing public and institutional awareness of the [European Social Charter](#) (ESC), encouraging alignment with its provisions, and fostering a stronger culture of rights-based governance, particularly for vulnerable populations such as persons with disabilities and older persons.

The present report summarises the findings of a comprehensive **baseline assessment** conducted under this project. The assessment was designed to establish the current level of awareness, understanding, and engagement with the ESC among key stakeholders in Georgia, including government institutions, civil society organisations (CSOs), legal professionals, trade unions, business associations, students and the general public. This exercise serves both a diagnostic and strategic purpose: to identify knowledge gaps and barriers, and to inform future project activities such as capacity-building, legal harmonisation, and awareness-raising initiatives.

• Objectives and scope of the assessment

The overall objective of this baseline assessment was to evaluate the level of awareness and understanding of the European Social Charter among key stakeholder groups in Georgia, and to map

the challenges and opportunities for better alignment with its standards. More specifically, the assessment sought to:

- Measure the familiarity of professional stakeholders with ESC provisions, procedures (e.g. collective complaints), and case law;
- Understand how national actors perceive the Charter's relevance to Georgia's social and economic rights context;
- Identify barriers to the implementation and monitoring of ESC-related obligations;
- Capture public knowledge and attitudes towards social and economic rights;
- Provide data-driven insights that can guide targeted interventions and track progress throughout the project's lifecycle.

The assessment focused on both state and non-state actors, as well as the general public. Special attention was paid to the situation and rights of vulnerable groups, including persons with disabilities, older persons, women, informal workers, and ethnic minorities, who are often the most affected by the gaps in social protection frameworks.

- **Relevance of the European Social Charter to Georgia**

The European Social Charter is a core Council of Europe instrument that guarantees a wide range of social and economic rights, such as the right to work, social protection, health care, education, and housing. For Georgia, which has ratified the revised Charter but not all its provisions, the ESC offers a critical normative framework for addressing social exclusion, inequality, and institutional gaps.

Despite a wave of labour reforms and incremental progress in aligning national laws with European standards, significant gaps remain in Georgia's legislative and policy frameworks. These include the lack of a living minimum wage, insufficient regulation of informal employment, and limited access to services for marginalised populations. The Charter, therefore, provides both a benchmark and a tool for reform. However, its transformative potential remains underutilised due to limited awareness, fragmented institutional responsibilities, and low public visibility.

This baseline assessment demonstrates that while the ESC is considered highly relevant by key institutional actors, its practical application is still minimal. Moreover, knowledge of its scope, ratification status, and implementation procedures is uneven - even among professionals tasked with social rights protection. The findings underscore the need for broader systemic efforts to translate Georgia's ESC commitments into tangible, enforceable outcomes.

- **Overview of the methodology (KIs, FGDs, participant profiles)**

The baseline assessment employed a **mixed-methods research design** to ensure a comprehensive understanding of awareness, perceptions, and knowledge gaps regarding the European Social Charter among key stakeholders in Georgia. This approach allowed the triangulation of quantitative and qualitative data, ensuring both breadth and depth in the analysis and reflecting the complexity of the socio-economic and institutional context in which social rights are discussed and implemented.

1. Quantitative Research

- An **online survey** was conducted among approximately 60 stakeholders, including staff of the Public Defender's Office, social workers, legal professionals, CSO representatives, Law and Social Sciences Students and others. The survey was designed to assess knowledge of ESC provisions, engagement in reporting processes, awareness of relevant case law, and perceptions of social rights implementation in Georgia. The questionnaire used a combination of multiple-choice, Likert-scale, and open-ended questions. Microsoft Forms was selected as the data collection platform for its accessibility, ease of use, and secure data handling features.
- A nationally representative (1,238 completed interviews) **omnibus survey** was carried out by CRRG Georgia to assess public knowledge and perceptions of social and economic rights and the ESC. Stratified sampling ensured demographic representativeness in terms of age, gender, and settlement-type. The average theoretical margin of error does not exceed 3%.

2. Qualitative Research

- Eleven semi-structured interviews were conducted with individuals in decision-making or expert roles, such as policy makers, senior officials from the Public Defender's Office, Persons with Disabilities, social workers and Business Association representatives. The interviews explored strategic views on the role of the ESC in Georgia, institutional practices around reporting and implementation, perceived legal and policy gaps, and barriers to more effective use of ESC mechanisms. Interviews lasted approximately 45–50 minutes and were conducted online, via Zoom platform.
- Three FGDs were held online with key stakeholder groups, including legal professional, CSO and trade unions representatives. Each group brought together 6–9 participants and was guided by a semi-structured FG guide. Discussions covered participants' experiences with social rights, their awareness of the ESC and its relevance to their work, and their capacity-building needs. Each session lasted around 90 minutes, and insights from FGDs served to validate and contextualise survey and interview findings.

The combination of these methods allowed for a rich triangulation of perspectives across sectors and levels, ranging from national policymakers to frontline workers and the general public.

The baseline assessment was conducted in full adherence to international ethical data collection standards to ensure the dignity, safety, and privacy of all participants. Informed consent was obtained prior to participation, with clear communication that involvement was voluntary and could be withdrawn at any time. Anonymity and confidentiality were strictly maintained, survey responses were collected without identifiers, and data from interviews and focus groups are confidential and securely stored. During the assessment process diverse and fair representation across all stakeholder groups was ensured. Data protection protocols were followed throughout, and participants were informed about the purpose of the study, the use of their data, and their rights within the process.

- **Structure of the report**

This report is structured to reflect the core areas of inquiry and to highlight the interlinkages between knowledge, policy, practice, and perception:

- **Section I** offers an executive summary of key findings and recommendations.
- **Section II** provides background information and methodological details.
- **Section III** analyses the levels of awareness and understanding of the ESC across different stakeholder groups.
- **Section IV** explores stakeholder knowledge of ESC provisions and procedures, including the reporting obligations and relevance of unratified articles.
- **Section V** assesses the awareness and use of the case law of the European Committee of Social Rights (ECSR).
- **Section VI** presents the current situation of social and economic rights in Georgia, including key systemic issues and the status of vulnerable groups.
- **Section VII** reviews the legal and policy frameworks governing social rights in Georgia.
- **Section VIII** analyses the institutional capacities for data collection and reporting on ESC obligations.
- **Section IX** examines strategies for promoting the ESC and enhancing outreach among professionals and the public.
- **Section X and XI** present the main conclusions and evidence-based recommendations for strengthening Georgia's alignment with the ESC.

The findings presented in this report aim to support policymakers, practitioners, and civil society in designing informed, inclusive, and actionable steps towards realising social rights in Georgia, in line with European standards.

III. AWARENESS AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE EUROPEAN SOCIAL CHARTER

General awareness levels across stakeholder groups

Across all data sources, awareness of the ESC in Georgia is uneven and often superficial. Institutional stakeholders such as policy makers and representatives of the Public Defender's Office show relatively strong familiarity with the Charter. These actors use the ESC as a reference for evidence-based advocacy and legal analysis, particularly in areas like labour rights, housing, and the rights of the elderly. The Public Defender's Office (PDO) actively prepares alternative reports for the European Committee of Social Rights and monitors national legislative alignment with ESC provisions. Specific references were made to the importance of unratified articles, such as Article 23 on the rights of the elderly.

In contrast, awareness among frontline professionals (e.g., social workers), grassroots communities, and persons with disabilities is considerably lower. Some respondents expressed vague familiarity or recalled attending meetings where the Charter was mentioned but could not recall substantive information. One active member of the disability community noted participation in NGO-led meetings but admitted receiving little detail about the ESC itself.

Focus group data echoed these trends. Civil society organisations (CSOs) displayed the highest engagement levels, having used the ESC in research, advocacy, and shadow reporting. On the contrary, trade union representatives demonstrated minimal or no prior exposure to the Charter. One employer association representative remarked, *"To be honest, I hadn't read it before. I printed it out yesterday and read the general provisions, before the FGD."* Lawyers showed mixed awareness - while some had cited the Charter in legal disputes, many struggled with the poor quality of the official Georgian translation, often resorting to the English version for clarity.

The online survey results confirm these disparities. Only 33.3% of respondents (19 out of 57) had ever participated in a training or discussion on the ESC, despite many respondents working in legal, academic, or human rights sectors. The 66.7% majority had not received any structured exposure, revealing a significant gap in outreach and professional education. Students of Law and Social Sciences were mostly unaware of Charter's functions and wished to attend any trainings or workshops on the topic. Notably, the Council of Europe was the most frequently cited source of information among those who had attended such events.

The broader public awareness, as shown in the representative opinion poll, is low. Nearly 46.4% of respondents reported they "don't know" what the ESC is. Only 9.2% correctly identified it as "an international treaty protecting social and economic rights." A further 7.6% provided incorrect answers, mistaking it for a political party, NGO, or international organisation. Even among the younger population (under age 34), awareness was marginally higher at 13%, but still significantly low overall.

Sources of information

Among those familiar with the ESC, information is typically obtained through professional or organisational channels. PDO departments utilise Council of Europe training materials and participate in capacity-building efforts tied to alternative reporting. CSOs and lawyers encounter the ESC through donor-funded initiatives, or legal advocacy networks. However, structured and coordinated public dissemination is largely absent, including in academic curricula. Outside formal mechanisms, awareness is strongly tied to individual or organisational initiative rather than any national strategy.

Trade union representatives reported incidental exposure, typically during labor disputes or policy negotiations. Some legal professionals admitted to relying on unofficial or hard-to-interpret translations due to poor language quality in the Georgian version of the Charter.

Perceived relevance and function of the ESC

Despite awareness gaps, the ESC is widely regarded as highly relevant to Georgia's socio-economic context. Institutional actors recognise its importance in safeguarding the rights of vulnerable groups such as children, persons with disabilities, elderly individuals, and informal workers. However, this perceived relevance is not always matched by practical utility. Stakeholders across all groups frequently described the Charter as "declarative" or "aspirational", with limited real-world application. One CSO representative noted, *"We have some internationally binding obligations... but their implementation is not taking place or is taking place very superficially."*

Legal practitioners highlighted the weak enforcement mechanisms and noted the limitations posed by Georgia's non-recognition of the collective complaints' procedure, which undermines the Charter's utility as an applicable legal tool.

Understanding of Georgia's ratified obligations under the ESC is also limited outside of those directly involved in reporting or advocacy work. PDO staff are relatively well-informed, actively participating in monitoring and reporting activities. However, this knowledge does not appear to extend to broader sectors, including trade unions, business associations, or even some legal professionals. Survey participants admitted confusion about which articles Georgia had ratified and which government bodies are responsible for implementation and reporting. This lack of clarity was evident even among CSO representatives and those with legal backgrounds.

The focus groups revealed a perception among trade union and CSO representatives that the government is reluctant to ratify critical articles and fails to take a proactive stance on implementation. A civil society participant emphasised the political nature of ratification decisions, arguing that many important articles remain unrecognised due to lack of political will.

Awareness of national policies or actions linked to ESC

There is minimal awareness of any national policy reforms directly linked to the ESC. A handful of participants referred to labour-related reforms, such as the establishment of the Labour Inspection Office or changes to the Labour Code, but these were often attributed to EU Association commitments rather than the ESC. CSOs and PWDs expressed frustration at the lack of state accountability, transparency, and engagement in policy-making processes. While the PDO is involved in inter-agency working groups, there is little evidence of a wider communication or engagement strategy with civil society or the general public.

IV. KNOWLEDGE ON SCOPE AND PROCEDURES OF THE ESC

Key ESC provisions considered most relevant in Georgia

A consistent finding from interviews, focus groups, and the online survey is that **labour rights** are widely seen as the most relevant and recognisable dimension of the ESC in Georgia. These include rights to fair wages, safe working conditions, protection from unjust dismissal, and collective bargaining. Vulnerable populations, such as informal workers, women, ethnic and religious minorities, persons with disabilities, children, and the elderly - were frequently identified as those most in need of stronger ESC protections.

Stakeholders from civil society and the Public Defender's Office noted that despite recent reforms, serious implementation gaps persist in areas such as informal employment, wage protections, and labour safety. Article 4 (right to fair remuneration) and Article 23 (rights of the elderly) were repeatedly flagged as especially important, though the latter remains unratified, a fact highlighted as a serious omission by PDO representatives.

Respondents working with or representing persons with disabilities were particularly vocal in identifying employment discrimination as a chronic and structural issue. A poignant example was cited regarding "token compliance," where the hiring of a single person with a disability is treated as full inclusion. Legal protections exist on paper but fail in practice, and the ESC is rarely invoked in legal or policy arguments.

Despite this thematic engagement, understanding of the full scope of the ESC, including its many substantive rights and the procedural structure behind them remains limited. Even among legal professionals and trade unionists, many admitted to never using it for their professional practice and having superficial knowledge on the provisions.

The public opinion poll confirms these findings at the population level. About half of respondents correctly identified core socio-economic rights protected under the ESC:

- 54% recognised the **right to social security**;
- 50.2% identified **healthcare and education**;
- 49.6% selected **fair wages and work conditions**.

However, misconceptions were common:

- 38.6% mistakenly included the **right to vote**;
- 37.1% believed **ownership of private property** is covered under the ESC.

This points to an intuitive recognition of socio-economic rights but a lack of formal understanding of the ESC's framework.

Awareness and engagement with Georgia's reporting obligations (national vs. alternative reports)

The ESC's procedural mechanisms, especially Georgia's reporting obligations to the European Committee of Social Rights are understood by only a limited set of actors, primarily within the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Health, Labour and Social Affairs of Georgia, Public Defender's Office and select civil society organisations (CSOs).

Among 57 online survey respondents, only 7 individuals (12.3%) reported ever participating in the preparation of national or shadow reports, all of them being PDO and CSO representatives. Of those, five rated the process as "moderately difficult," and two as "quite difficult," citing poor coordination, data shortages, and minimal institutional support. As one respondent stated: *"We work hard on these reports, but they disappear into a void."*

Interviews with PDO department heads revealed a more sophisticated engagement. They described alternative reporting as a vital accountability tool, developed through internal casework, thematic reports, and departmental collaboration. However, major obstacles limit its effectiveness:

- **Lack of disaggregated, timely data** from state agencies;
- **Delays or non-responses** to information requests;
- **Jurisdictional limitations:** for instance, labour violations in the private sector often fall outside the PDO's legal mandate unless clear discrimination is involved;
- **Access restrictions** to shelters and community-based institutions, which hampers monitoring of rights for the homeless, elderly, and other vulnerable groups.

These challenges are echoed by CSOs. Focus group participants shared repeated frustrations about institutional resistance or bureaucratic indifference when trying to collaborate with state bodies such as the Ministry of Health or Labour Inspection Office. As one CSO representative put it: *“Statistical data is either not produced at all or is inaccessible, especially on issues like housing, minimum wage, and local-level needs.”*

Another layer of complexity is the confusion about roles and responsibilities. Some stakeholders assumed the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was responsible for ESC reporting, while others cited the Ministry of Health or the PDO. Even among professionals, there was limited clarity on how frequently reports are submitted, what they contain, or how to access them.

Crucially, Georgia has not accepted the collective complaints mechanism under the ESC, which affects the capacity of CSOs or marginalised groups to initiate formal action against rights violations. Many civil society and legal stakeholders viewed this as a structural barrier to real accountability, reducing the Charter’s utility in practice.

A key critique running through all data sources is that ESC-related reporting processes lack genuine participation. While the government does convene meetings around national reporting, these are often perceived as formalities with minimal input from affected communities or independent experts. One interviewee described these meetings as events where *“we are invited to listen, not to contribute.”*

The disability rights community, in particular, reported **almost no direct involvement** in reporting processes. Where involvement occurred through government-organised events stakeholders often felt their input was ignored or superficial. Concerns were raised about the exclusion of deaf communities and the lack of disability-sensitive health services, none of which are adequately captured in official reporting.

Even where PDO and CSOs manage to submit **well-documented shadow reports**, they expressed skepticism that these translate into **policy influence** or tangible follow-up. One focus group participant remarked, *“No matter how good an advocacy campaign we run, there’s little hope that the government will actually join any point, or implement it honestly in practice.”*

V. Awareness and Use of ECSR Case Law (*SPECIFIC TO POLICYMAKERS AND PDO*)

Accessibility and use of ECSR case law in Georgia

The evidence gathered paints a picture of fragmented awareness and sporadic application of ECSR case law within Georgia’s legal and policy systems. Interviews with PDO representatives reveal that awareness of ECSR jurisprudence is concentrated within specific departments, primarily those engaged in international monitoring, alternative reporting, or human rights documentation.

Despite this recognition, the use of ECSR decisions is far from systematic. The PDO does occasionally reference this jurisprudence to reinforce recommendations in reports to Parliament or international bodies, but such engagement is not institutionalised. Rather, it relies heavily on the initiative of a small number of informed professionals. Even these individuals acknowledge the barriers they face, particularly the lack of accessible and regularly updated information in the Georgian language.

Across all sources, several barriers emerged that holt the integration of ECSR case law into national frameworks. Both legal professionals and CSO actors emphasised that the ECSR’s jurisprudence is rarely

available in Georgian and that existing translations are often “practically unreadable.” The technical nature of the legal texts, combined with a lack of translated summaries or practical guidance, renders the case law inaccessible even to experienced professionals. One lawyer captured this gap: *“If anyone wants to understand the Charter, they have to read it in English. The Georgian version is practically unreadable... and when it comes to jurisprudence, we rarely see it in our courts or government reports.”*

Equally absent is a centralised state mechanism to promote or disseminate ECSR case law. No dedicated department within the Ministry of Health, the PDO, or any other relevant government agency is tasked with ensuring the case law reaches legal practitioners, judges, or municipal officials. As a result, references to ECSR decisions in domestic court rulings or government strategies are virtually nonexistent as mentioned by the legal professionals. Even among those working closely on labour rights, references to ECSR decisions were rare and mostly anecdotal. Efforts to use the case law in advocacy or litigation were described as ad hoc and heavily reliant on individual initiative rather than part of institutional practice. As one civil society representative noted, *“The state actors we engage with, including the Public Defender’s Office, do not seem to have internalised the Charter or its case law. It’s just not part of their everyday toolbox.”*

The findings from the online survey further corroborate the qualitative data. A significant majority—64.9% of respondents—reported that they had *never* encountered the ESC being used in legal or political decision-making, and only 35.1% (20 respondents) could recall such use, primarily in civil society reports or legal briefs.

Influence of ECSR jurisprudence on national laws/policies

There is complete absence of documented instances where ECSR case law has directly influenced Georgian legislation or administrative policy. Neither interviews nor focus group participants were able to provide concrete example of a law, regulation, or state policy that had been amended or adopted in response to ECSR jurisprudence.

This lack of traction is strengthened by Georgia’s decision not to ratify the ESC provision allowing collective complaints, as mentioned above, a crucial mechanism that would permit NGOs or trade unions to bring cases before the ECSR. Without this avenue, Georgia’s engagement with the ECSR remains passive, with the Committee’s decisions perceived as abstract or aspirational rather than authoritative. As one focus group participant lamented, *“Even when you present well-reasoned arguments based on international standards, there is no political appetite to listen without the ratified provisions”*.

VI. CURRENT SITUATION OF SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC RIGHTS IN GEORGIA

General state of protection of social and economic rights and key systemic issues

A recurring theme across interviews, focus groups, surveys, and public polling is the recognition that while legal frameworks in Georgia may appear adequate, they are often not operationalised effectively. One trade union representative summarised the sentiment bluntly: *“Everything is on paper and declared, but their realisation is difficult... it all sounds good, but something is not working properly.”* Civil society and legal professionals echoed this, emphasising that the problem lies not in the absence of rights, but in the failure to enforce them.

The PDO representatives have repeatedly highlighted the chronic underinvestment in social infrastructure, weak accountability mechanisms, and an alarming lack of disaggregated data. These limitations obstruct meaningful interventions and prevent a data-driven response to pressing issues such as homelessness, employment discrimination, and poverty. A PDO official noted: *"We do not have a unified concept of the homeless, nor do we have any statistics on who and how many homeless people we have."*

Despite reforms to the Labour Code and the establishment of the Labour Inspection Office, informal employment, wage insecurity, and limited protections for precarious workers remain widespread. For example, the minimum wage of 20 GEL, unchanged since the early 2000s, is seen as merely symbolic. One respondent noted, *"It sounds a little funny,"* pointing to the dissonance between legal norms and economic reality.

Construction workers and informal labourers, such as couriers and taxi drivers, were repeatedly mentioned as groups operating outside formal labour protections. Efforts to challenge this, have largely failed, further entrenching their vulnerability.

The survey and polling data reinforce these findings: 11.95% of the population reported personal experiences of labour rights violations, while an additional 49.3% had heard of such cases, over 61% public awareness of rights violations in workplaces. Despite this high level of awareness, mechanisms for redress remain poorly known and underutilised. Fear of retaliation and a lack of trust in institutions further contribute to widespread underreporting.

Groups identified as most vulnerable or under-protected

Findings from interviews, focus groups, the online survey, and the poll consistently identify several population groups in Georgia as facing the highest levels of exclusion from the protection and realisation of social and economic rights. These groups experience multiple, overlapping barriers, with risks compounded by weak enforcement mechanisms, limited political attention, and low public awareness.

- **Older Persons:** 35.5% of respondents in the national opinion poll identified elderly individuals as the least protected group in terms of social and economic rights. Interview data highlighted failures in oversight and monitoring of elder care institutions, with cases of extreme neglect (e.g., beneficiaries not washed for over a year) reported by the Public Defender's Office. Georgia not ratifying Article 23 of the ESC on the rights of the elderly was mentioned as hindering factor by multiple target groups. Additionally, local governments often offer no dedicated programs for older persons, treating them as eligible for general services, despite their specific needs.
- **Women:** 20.6% of the population mentioned women as among the most under-protected social groups. Focus group participants cited wage inequality, lack of childcare infrastructure, and inadequate maternity support as persistent challenges. Survey responses pointed to single mothers as especially vulnerable, with caregiving responsibilities unrecognised in social policy. Gendered perceptions emerged in the poll: women were more likely than men to see social and economic rights as poorly protected, particularly for women, older adults, and persons with disabilities. More women have heard of cases where workers' rights were violated. Women also see employers mainly responsible for ensuring socio-economic rights, then men do.
- **Youth:** 12.7% of poll respondents identified youth as a group with poorly protected rights. Representatives of target groups further highlighted high unemployment, job insecurity, emigration, and barriers to independent living as key challenges. Focus group discussions also referenced youth involvement in informal labour without adequate protections or legal safeguards,

as one of the main violations of their labour rights. Interestingly, compared to other age groups, youth more often see civil society organisations and international actors as primarily responsible for protecting socio-economic rights.

- **Children:** Mentioned in all data sources as facing multiple vulnerabilities, frequent school dropouts linked to poverty, engagement in informal labour, particularly in agriculture and rural areas, without labour protections, lack of disaggregated data impeding targeted interventions for children in poverty or state care.
- **Persons with Disabilities (PWDs):** Strongly emphasised across all sources as structurally marginalised. The online survey and interviews indicate exclusion from the labour market due to inaccessible environments and deep-rooted societal stigma. In focus groups, employers were described as assuming “substandard” work performance from PWDs. One interviewee, a Paralympic athlete, highlighted the tokenistic hiring practices in the public sector, while non-existent practices in private one. Interestingly, in the capital, PWDs were most frequently perceived as least protected compared to rural or other urban areas.
- **Low-Income Households:** Frequently cited in interviews and focus groups as suffering from systemic neglect. Both field professionals and policy makers agree that lack of guaranteed minimum wage (official 20 GEL) and informal employment practices deepen poverty. Online survey respondents frequently selected *“Not protected at all”* for low-income families.
- **Ethnic Minorities:** Focus groups and interviews revealed persistent barriers for ethnic minority communities, especially in remote and mountainous regions. Limited access to health, education, and legal services, language barriers and poor municipal awareness further impede access. One respondent noted: *“Even the municipalities with high numbers of ethnic minorities didn’t know why we were writing these recommendations [on translation of information on municipal services] or what their obligations were.”*
- **LGBTI Persons:** Consistently marked as among the least protected in the online survey and poll. 15% of youth in the public poll specifically identified LGBTI persons as the most unprotected group - more than any other age group. LGBTI-related protections are largely absent from mainstream social policy discourse, as confirmed in interviews and focus groups. They often face systemic discrimination, especially in employment and informal work contexts.
- **Informal Workers:** A cross-cutting risk group spanning many other categories, particularly youth, low-income individuals, and women. Focus group participants cited construction workers, agricultural labourers, and independent contractors as key examples of employment force constantly being at risk, with minimum wage jobs and lack of social and physical security.
- **Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and Migrants:** Mentioned in interviews and focus groups as under-served. Access to services for them is uneven, and documentation issues arise especially among Roma community. Language access and labour market integration remain significant challenges, despite limited formal inclusion in policy frameworks.

A cross-cutting barrier to progress is the lack of reliable data. Civil society actors repeatedly highlighted how the absence of statistics - particularly disaggregated by region, age, disability, and ethnicity, prevents problem recognition and intervention. *“When there’s no data, the problem seems not to exist,”* said one CSO expert. Institutions were also criticised for being closed to civil society. Respondents described ministries and the Labor Inspection Office as non-transparent and unwilling to engage. *“You call, you write, you follow up... and still, no answer. And this is with formal requests. Imagine what it’s like for an ordinary citizen,”* one civil society participant reflected.

Level of public awareness of existing services and resources

One of the main challenges is the low level of public awareness. Interviewees described how even professionals often “don’t know who to call or where to go,” let alone marginalised citizens. The public poll confirms this, with generally lack of knowledge on their social and economic rights.

Lack of awareness is compounded by distrust and fear. Workers avoid contacting inspectors due to concerns over anonymity, while PWDs fear losing the few employment opportunities available to them if they complain. Trade union representatives have highlighted several door-to-door awareness raising efforts in the regions, especially on the topic of labour rights. However, the existing outreach efforts, such as trainings or awareness events are sporadic and uncoordinated, as mentioned by several target groups.

VII. LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

Recent legislative and policy developments aligned with ESC

Across all sources, stakeholders acknowledged that the most notable area of progress has been in the labour sector. Reforms in the Labour Code and the expansion of the Labour Inspectorate's mandate have led to improved monitoring of workplace conditions. A trade union representative reflected on this progress: *"After 2018, when the Labour Inspectorate started working fully, the statistics on workplace accidents started increasing, not because accidents didn't happen before, but because no one had recorded them."*

The adoption of the Organic Law on Labour Safety and improvements in competitive hiring within the public sector were also cited as positive steps. However, these developments are often perceived as superficial or symbolic. Most participants across all data collection methods viewed these reforms as insufficient to tackle the deep-rooted structural problems, especially concerning informal work, occupational safety, and income security.

Gaps and inconsistencies in current frameworks

Despite these legislative advances, systemic gaps remain acute. The minimum wage in Georgia, unchanged for over two decades, stands at just 20 GEL per month (approximately €6), a figure consistently described as *"laughable"* and *"nonexistent in practice."* Respondents across interviews and focus groups emphasised the symbolic nature of this wage, which fails to reflect living costs or economic realities. One CSO representative remarked: *"This right is guaranteed in the Charter, but in Georgia, we are just pretending."*

Other critical gaps include:

- **Lack of unemployment insurance:** No functional safety net exists for those who lose their jobs, exposing thousands to immediate poverty.
- **Unclear regulation of overtime and night shifts:** Court interpretations vary widely, creating legal uncertainty and unequal application.
- **Legal exclusion of informal workers:** Platform workers, agricultural labourers, and independent contractors remain without legal protections. A lawyer explained: *"They are working full time, under complete control, but still have no rights. It's legalised exploitation."*
- **Housing and homelessness policy gaps:** There is no national definition of homelessness, no unified legislation, and no reliable statistics. One PDO representative summarised: *"We do not have a unified concept of the homeless, no national legislation, and no reliable statistics. Local governments operate in a policy vacuum, leading to drastic regional disparities."*

- **Social assistance** systems are similarly flawed. The methodology used to determine vulnerability relies on outdated indicators, such as flooring material and often excludes those in genuine need. This not only undermines fairness but also trust in the system.

Gender sensitivity and inclusiveness of labour and social policies

Across all focus groups and interviews, stakeholders expressed strong concerns about the gender-blind nature of both labour and social policies. While anti-discrimination provisions and gender-based violence legislation have been introduced, structural gender inequalities persist, particularly in the labour market. Women, especially single mothers, women with disabilities, and those from ethnic minorities, face invisible yet systemic barriers such as limited childcare, lack of flexible work arrangements, and discriminatory hiring practices.

One CSO participant noted: *"Care work is still treated as a private burden, not a social issue. Women carry the weight, and the law looks the other way."* Female-dominated professions (e.g., nursing, teaching, and social care) remain underpaid and poorly protected. CSO representatives highlight, that sexual harassment and workplace discrimination are widely acknowledged but rarely prosecuted, due to inaccessible or weak enforcement mechanisms.

Inclusivity for other marginalised groups is also lacking:

- **Persons with disabilities:** Despite Georgia's ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, implementation is often symbolic. Physical accessibility remains poor, employment opportunities limited, and societal attitudes discriminatory.
- **Ethnic minorities and LGBTI persons:** Though some legal language on anti-discrimination exists, actual enforcement is weak. Structural barriers and social stigma continue to marginalise these groups, particularly in employment and access to services.

Urgent legislative or policy priorities identified by stakeholders

Stakeholders across all formats voiced an urgent need for comprehensive and enforceable reforms, particularly those that align Georgia's commitments under the ESC with actual policy practice. The most frequently cited legislative and policy priorities include:

- **Ratification of the ESC's collective complaints mechanism** to enhance accountability through international legal channels.
- **Introduction of a living minimum wage** and the establishment of an **unemployment insurance system** as foundational elements of a functional social safety net.
- **Formal recognition and regulation of informal workers**, especially those in platform-based employment (e.g. couriers).
- **Clearer labour standards** for working hours, overtime compensation, and safety conditions, especially in agriculture, construction, and public work.
- **Reform of the Labour Inspectorate** and other oversight bodies to ensure transparency, consistent data collection, and engagement with civil society.

- **Gender mainstreaming and diversity budgeting** in all labour and social policies, along with stronger legal guarantees for childcare, care leave, and protections against workplace harassment.
- **Comprehensive national policies on housing and homelessness**, including a legal definition of homelessness, standardised municipal responses, and reliable data systems.

VIII. INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITIES FOR DATA AND REPORTING

Existing capacity for data collection, management, and reporting

Across stakeholder groups, including public officials, civil society representatives, and human rights defenders, there is broad consensus that data systems in Georgia are fragmented and poorly coordinated. While the formal responsibility for national reporting under the ESC lies with state institutions such as the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Labour Inspection Office, there is significant confusion, even among engaged professionals, about which body leads the process and how coordination occurs.

CSOs and PWDs highlight, that public institutions tend to operate in silos, using inconsistent standards and formats, which makes data consolidation and comparative analysis nearly impossible for them. For instance, in the area of homelessness, there is no unified national definition or standardised registry. Municipalities apply different criteria and often do not maintain any records, leaving a significant segment of the population invisible to policymakers.

Main challenges in national and shadow reporting (data availability, inter-agency coordination, HR limitations)

The lack of disaggregated, case-specific data was repeatedly highlighted as a central obstacle to rights-based governance. In areas such as child protection, education (e.g., dropouts), labour rights, and services for persons with disabilities, relevant statistics are either missing or generalised. Even where basic numbers exist, such as through the Social Service Agency's monthly updates, the data is described as superficial. As one civil society actor put it: *"It's just dry numbers, no breakdown by region, no gender, no insights into impact or access."*

This lack of specificity makes it exceedingly difficult to track rights violations or identify patterns of systemic exclusion. In particular, statistics on marginalised populations, such as women, children, and persons with disabilities are rarely disaggregated by age, location, or other indicators of vulnerability, severely limiting both national and shadow reporting efforts.

Another significant barrier lies in the limited technical and human resource capacity within state agencies. Staff often lack the specialised training necessary for rights-based data collection and international reporting. Many institutions do not have personnel dedicated to ESC-related tasks, and even where responsibilities are assigned, high staff turnover and weak institutional memory frequently result in processes having to start from scratch with each reporting cycle.

The Public Defender's Office, while relatively experienced in ESC alternative reporting, is itself constrained by its dependence on data from under-resourced state agencies. As one official noted, *"There are circumstances that no longer allow us to assess the basis on which the termination or suspension of education actually occurred... appropriate statistics are not being produced."*

Despite formal obligations to share information with the PDO and other monitoring bodies, several public agencies reportedly delay, withhold, or provide incomplete data. Often, information is only produced upon specific request, and even then, responses may be framed by bureaucratic resistance or resource limitations. One interviewee described a typical scenario: *"They told us they were working on their own report and couldn't provide [the data] to us on time."*

The Labour Inspection Office exemplifies this dynamic. Despite its expanded mandate, it is widely perceived as unresponsive and closed off. Civil society actors reported years-long efforts to access inspection data or findings, with little success. The institutional tendency to avoid sharing sensitive information fundamentally erodes trust in the system and in Georgia's commitment to ESC obligations.

Training and capacity-building needs

Stakeholders consistently highlighted a set of urgent needs to address the structural weaknesses in Georgia's institutional capacities for data and reporting under the Charter. These needs include:

- **Technical Skill Development:** There is a strong demand for practical training for state agencies, PDO and CSOs in effective data collection, disaggregation by key indicators, and alignment with international standards, particularly those set by the ESC.
- **Collaborative Learning Spaces:** Stakeholders stressed the need for joint training programs that bring together government officials, PDO staff, and CSOs to foster a shared understanding of reporting obligations and facilitate more meaningful collaboration across sectors.
- **Evaluation-Driven Training Design:** To maximize the effectiveness and relevance of training efforts, stakeholders emphasised the importance of incorporating pre- and post-training evaluations. This would allow content to be better tailored to participants' needs and help assess the long-term impact of capacity-building activities.
- **Digital and Structural Resources:** A pressing need was identified for investment in digital infrastructure, including centralised and open-access data platforms, standardised reporting templates, and modernised data management systems that enable real-time access and analysis.
- **Institutional Coordination Mechanisms:** The establishment of cross-sectoral working groups was seen as essential to improving inter-agency coordination, promoting institutional learning, and ensuring more coherent and integrated approaches to reporting and rights monitoring.
- **Cultural and Attitudinal Shift:** Finally, beyond technical gaps, stakeholders underscored the need to transform the institutional mindset. There is a clear call for building a culture of transparency and accountability, where data is not viewed as a liability but as a shared public good that underpins evidence-based governance. As one participant noted, *"Data should not be treated as a risk to be hidden, but as a public good to be shared."*

IX. PROMOTION OF ESC RIGHTS

Institutional roles in promoting ESC and its guarantees

Across all sources, there was consensus that the institutional infrastructure for promoting and reporting on ESC rights is underdeveloped. While multiple state bodies, including the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Labour Inspection Office, and PDO, were identified as responsible, there is no clear coordination mechanism, leading to confusion and passive engagement. One respondent described this as *"a system where responsibility is everyone's and therefore no one's."*

The PDO stands out as the only institution consistently engaging with ESC-related processes, particularly in alternative reporting and public awareness raising on social and economic rights. While they have developed some child-friendly brochures on social rights and partnered with UNICEF, such efforts are limited in scale and sustainability.

On the other hand, policy makers also see the need for ESC promotion, however, cannot identify their specific role, especially with limited resources in this effort. Majority of target groups rely on international organisations (e.g. Council of Europe) both for capacity building and promotion of ESC's role among groups such as lawyers, students, municipalities and marginalised communities.

The online survey confirmed this knowledge gap but also demonstrated a strong demand for improvement:

- 98.2% of respondents agreed there is a need for additional training on the ESC.
- 96.5% expressed personal interest in participating in such training.
- Respondents proposed content covering the basics of the Charter, state obligations, ECSR case law, complaint mechanisms, and sector-specific applications.

Potential strategies to improve outreach and implementation

Despite the gaps, the findings reveal strong demand and concrete ideas for reform. Civil society, unions, and legal professionals are not only aware of the ESC's potential, they are actively seeking ways to use it more effectively.

Survey respondents and interviewees proposed multiple solutions, including:

- **Comprehensive training programs** for public servants, legal professionals and judges;
- **Translation and dissemination** of ESC standards and case law into accessible Georgian;
- **Educational integration** in law schools and public administration programs;
- **Joint platforms** for inter-agency cooperation;
- Creation of a **national ESC focal point or coordination mechanism**;
- **Ratification of the collective complaints mechanism** to allow NGOs and social partners to raise systemic issues internationally.

X. CONCLUSIONS

This baseline assessment of the European Social Charter in Georgia reveals a pronounced disconnect between the country's formal commitments to social and economic rights and the actual levels of awareness, institutional capacity, and practical implementation. Despite Georgia's ratification of parts of the revised ESC and recent policy developments, particularly in the labour sector, the Charter remains poorly understood, inconsistently applied, and largely absent from public and professional discourse.

Main Conclusions

The assessment confirms that awareness of the ESC in Georgia is **fragmented and generally low** across both state and non-state actors. Among institutional stakeholders, such as the PDO, select civil society organisations, and some legal professionals, there is a stronger familiarity with ESC standards and procedures. These actors have used the Charter in alternative reporting and advocacy work and recognise its potential relevance to Georgia's policy landscape.

However, this contrasts sharply with the majority of other target groups, including **trade unions, business associations, social workers, and law students**, who report little to no practical knowledge of the Charter, its core provisions, or its mechanisms such as the **European Committee of Social Rights (ECSR)** and the **collective complaints procedure**. Many professionals view the ESC as declarative and legally remote, rather than as a practical tool for rights enforcement or policy reform.

The **general public's awareness** is especially limited. As reflected in the Omnibus survey, fewer than 10% of respondents correctly identified the ESC as a human rights treaty, and nearly half had never heard of it. Even among those working in fields related to law, social policy, or human rights, structured exposure to the Charter is rare.

Despite low familiarity, the perceived **relevance of the ESC is high**. Stakeholders recognise the Charter's potential to address persistent challenges related to labour rights, informal employment, social security, and the protection of vulnerable populations such as persons with disabilities, older persons, and low-income households. The discrepancy between this perceived value and actual engagement underscores the urgency of addressing the systemic and structural barriers to effective use of the Charter.

Students' Awareness and Engagement: A Missed Opportunity

One particularly significant finding is the **lack of awareness and engagement among students**, especially those in law and social science faculties. These students, future legal professionals, policymakers, and civic leaders, represent a critical group for the long-term integration of ESC standards into Georgian institutional life. However, most students surveyed or interviewed had never studied the ESC, and many had never even heard of it.

At the same time, the assessment found **high levels of interest** among students in participating in trainings or academic programs focused on the Charter, signaling a key opportunity to foster a new generation of professionals equipped with the knowledge and tools to protect and promote socio-economic rights.

Cross-Cutting Gaps

The assessment identifies several recurring, structural gaps that cut across stakeholder groups and levels of governance:

- **Institutional fragmentation:** There is no central coordination mechanism or clear institutional lead for ESC implementation and reporting. Responsibilities are dispersed, leading to confusion and inaction.
- **Weak data systems:** There is a lack of disaggregated, timely, and rights-sensitive data, particularly on vulnerable groups. This severely limits both national and alternative reporting and policy planning.
- **Limited accessibility of ESC case law:** The jurisprudence of the ECSR is poorly translated, rarely used, and largely unknown, even among legal professionals. There is no systematic mechanism for its integration into legal education, litigation, or public policy.
- **Symbolic reforms:** While Georgia has introduced labour reforms and established the Labour Inspection Office, these are seen as insufficient to address deep-rooted issues such as low wages, informal work, and lack of unemployment protections. Many legal norms remain unenforced in practice.
- **Minimal stakeholder participation:** Reporting processes are often top-down and formalistic, with limited input from CSOs, grassroots communities, or affected populations. Groups such as persons with disabilities and trade unions reported being consulted only superficially, if at all.

Opportunities for Action

Despite the above challenges, the baseline assessment also points to **significant and actionable opportunities** for strengthening the role of the ESC in Georgia:

- **High demand for training and capacity-building:** Across all professional groups, there is a strong appetite for practical, accessible learning on ESC content, reporting mechanisms, and its relevance to Georgian law and policy.
- **Existing expertise and commitment:** Institutions like the Public Defender's Office and several CSOs have demonstrated experience and commitment to advancing ESC principles. These actors can serve as hubs for wider institutional engagement.
- **Alignment with the Council of Europe Action Plan:** The findings and identified gaps are well-aligned with the priorities of the Council of Europe Action Plan for Georgia 2024–2027, which emphasises improved protection of social and economic rights and enhanced engagement with the ESC system.
- **Public interest in rights awareness:** Even among the general public, there is an intuitive concern about socio-economic rights, such as fair wages, housing, and employment conditions. This provides a foundation for public awareness campaigns and more inclusive policy dialogue.

In sum, the assessment highlights a fundamental contradiction: **while the ESC is seen as relevant and valuable**, it remains **invisible in practice** due to systemic gaps in knowledge, institutional ownership, data systems, legal application, and public communication. Addressing these gaps, especially through investments in education, inter-agency coordination, stakeholder participation, and rights-based capacity-building, offers a clear path forward. With the right political will, technical support, and civil society engagement, ESC can be transformed from a distant legal instrument into a living framework for equality and social justice.

XI. RECOMMENDATIONS

- **For government institutions (policy, law reform, implementation)**

Strengthen alignment with the European Social Charter:

- Initiate a structured legal review of existing legislation and administrative practices against ESC provisions, particularly focusing on unratified articles (e.g., Article 23 on the rights of the elderly, Article 15 on persons with disabilities).
- Establish a formal inter-agency coordination mechanism or ESC focal point within the Ministry of Health or Ministry of Foreign Affairs to oversee national implementation and reporting obligations.
- Develop and adopt a national roadmap for the gradual ratification of additional ESC articles and the **Additional Protocol on the Collective Complaints Mechanism**, including a transparent public consultation process.

Improve policy implementation and protection of social rights:

- Revise key policy areas such as minimum wage standards, unemployment protection, informal labour regulation, and access to housing and social services to ensure they reflect ESC obligations.
- Establish national guidelines for the collection, analysis, and publication of social and economic rights data, with disaggregation by gender, age, disability, income level, ethnicity, and region.
- Integrate ESC-relevant indicators into national statistical systems, labour inspections, and administrative data sets.

Promote institutional ownership and accountability:

- Ensure that all relevant ministries and local government bodies are aware of their responsibilities in ESC implementation and reporting.
- Mainstream ESC-related obligations into annual institutional plans and reporting frameworks, including dedicated budget lines where relevant.
- **For civil society and PDO (awareness, advocacy, reporting)**

Expand public and professional awareness of the ESC:

- Design and implement public information campaigns (in print, online, and media) to promote basic knowledge of ESC rights, procedures, and relevance, particularly targeting youth, rural communities, and marginalised groups.
- Collaborate with academic institutions to integrate ESC standards into university curricula and legal education programs, with particular focus on **law and social science students**.

Strengthen alternative reporting and monitoring:

- Build a sustainable network of CSOs and human rights actors engaged in shadow reporting to the European Committee of Social Rights, supported by regular training and peer exchange.
- Use findings from national monitoring to produce accessible, advocacy-oriented materials that can be used with local communities, media, and policymakers.

Advocate for legal and policy reform:

- Engage in strategic advocacy to push for the ratification of unaccepted ESC articles and the collective complaints mechanism.
- Use evidence from baseline and future monitoring to influence discussions, national policy planning, and inter-agency working groups.
- **For international actors (support areas, technical assistance)**

Support policy dialogue and legal harmonisation:

- Facilitate expert-led consultations between Georgian authorities and ESC experts to support legal alignment, ratification planning, and institutional coordination mechanisms.
- Provide technical assistance to review and harmonise Georgian labour and social legislation with ESC standards.

Invest in institutional capacity development:

- Offer long-term support for institutional training programs, including tailored modules for judges, lawyers, public servants, and municipal officials on ESC rights and ECSR case law.
- Include pre- and post-training evaluations to ensure learning outcomes and adjust content accordingly.
- Fund translation and dissemination of ESC materials and ECSR jurisprudence into Georgian, in user-friendly formats for different target groups.

Strengthen civil society's engagement and education:

- Continue to support CSOs, the PDO, and academic institutions to enhance outreach, shadow reporting, and training efforts related to ESC.
- Support pilot initiatives that introduce ESC-based education into formal teaching, professional certification programs, or local government practice.

Institutionalise ESC knowledge and practice:

- Create a digital platform or knowledge hub dedicated to ESC awareness, featuring translated materials, guidance notes, case law summaries, and training tools.
- Establish an annual national ESC forum or multi-stakeholder platform to promote dialogue, share good practices, and track progress in implementation.

ANNEXES

Annex 1 - KII/FGD guides, and survey questionnaires used in Georgian

Annex 2 - List of KIIs/FGDs conducted

Annex 3 - Online survey dataset

Annex 4 - Omnibus survey dataset

The European Social Charter, adopted in 1961 and revised in 1996, is the counterpart of the European Convention on Human Rights in the field of economic and social rights. It guarantees a broad range of human rights related to employment, housing, health, education, social protection and welfare. No other legal instrument at pan-European level provides such an extensive and complete protection of social rights as that provided by the Charter. The Charter is therefore seen as the Social Constitution of Europe and represents an essential component of the continent's human rights architecture.

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The Council of Europe is the continent's leading human rights organisation. It comprises 46 member states, including all members of the European Union. All Council of Europe member states have signed up to the European Convention on Human Rights, a treaty designed to protect human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The European Court of Human Rights oversees the implementation of the Convention in the member states.



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