

TRANSFORMING JUSTICE: Advancing Gender Equality Through Legal Action



**Application
deadline:
16 June 2025**

TRANSFORMING JUSTICE: Advancing Gender Equality Through Legal Action

Summer School for Law Students

28 July - 1 August 2025

Organised by the Council of Europe in co-operation with Sulkhani-Saba Orbeliani University.

Introduction

Legal profession plays a pivotal role in advancing gender equality and combating violence against women and domestic violence. Future legal practitioners require both theoretical knowledge and practical skills to implement international standards effectively. To strengthen the capacity of law students in Georgia to promote gender justice through legal frameworks the Council of Europe and the Sulkhani-Saba Orbeliani University are organising a 5-day summer school.

The programme of the school addresses the implementation gap between robust legal mechanisms—such as the Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention)—and their practical application. Gender equality and human rights frameworks face increasing challenges. For this reason, it is essential to invest in youth leadership within the legal profession to ensure the continued advancement of gender equality principles.

Programme

Participants will examine comprehensive legal frameworks governing gender equality and violence against women, with particular emphasis on the Council of Europe standards, primarily the Istanbul Convention and its implementation in Georgia. The summer school will explore the structural causes of gender-based violence, analyse relevant case law of the European Court of Human Rights, and address emerging challenges such as technology-facilitated violence against women.

Key thematic areas include:

- Structural and legal foundations of gender equality
- State obligations under the Istanbul Convention framework
- Findings of the Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO) and recommendations for Georgia
- Victim-centred and trauma-informed justice approaches
- Technology-facilitated violence against women, including analysis of digital misogyny

- Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation (SLAPP) cases targeting gender-based violence survivors
- Intersectional challenges facing vulnerable groups of women
- Legal advocacy skills through moot court competition

SLAPP Cases Against Gender-Based Violence Survivors

This programme component will examine the growing phenomenon of Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation (SLAPP) used to silence and intimidate survivors of gender-based violence. Participants will engage with comprehensive analysis of legal mechanisms used to counter survivors' testimony—including defamation suits and privacy claims—while studying landmark cases where perpetrators have weaponised legal systems against those who speak out. The module will integrate exploration of defence strategies protecting survivors' freedom of expression, development of practical skills for identifying and responding to SLAPP cases in a gender-sensitive manner, and review of Council of Europe standards on whistleblower protection as applied to gender-based violence contexts.

Intersectional Vulnerabilities and Access to Justice

This module will address the compounded discrimination and barriers faced by vulnerable groups of women seeking legal remedies for gender-based violence. The curriculum encompasses examination of specific legal protections, accessibility issues, and procedural accommodations for women with disabilities; consideration of specific vulnerabilities and legal challenges within existing frameworks for LGBTI+ women; assessment of heightened vulnerabilities in detention, care facilities, and other closed environments for women in institutional settings.

Target Audience

The summer school is designed for advanced law students in Georgia, including those in **the final year of their Bachelor's degree or Master's degree (at the time of application)** in legal studies who demonstrate strong interest in human rights, gender equality, and international law. To ensure broad representation and inclusivity, participants will be selected from diverse universities across Georgia, including outside Tbilisi.

Faculty and Methodology

Participants will benefit from the expertise of distinguished specialists from the Council of Europe, including representatives from the Gender Equality Division, alongside Georgian legal professionals with extensive experience in gender justice. The summer school will feature guest lecturers specialising in anti-SLAPP litigation and advocates with

expertise in supporting vulnerable groups of women. The programme employs interactive learning methodologies in accordance with adult learning principles, combining expert-led discussions with practical exercises, case analysis, and peer learning activities.

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the programme, participants will:

MASTER pioneering legal frameworks combating violence against women and domestic violence

ANALYSE landmark European Court of Human Rights jurisprudence and the Istanbul Convention's transformative impact

IDENTIFY and **COUNTER** Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation (SLAPP) targeting survivors

DEVELOP intersectional approaches to legal advocacy for vulnerable groups of women

APPLY advanced advocacy skills through interactive workshops and competitive moot court sessions

CONNECT with renowned international experts and practicing attorneys at the forefront of human rights law

Practical Information

Summer School dates: **28 July - 1 August 2025**


Travelling dates:

- Arrival to the venue: 27 July 2025
- Departure from the venue: 2 August 2025

Venue: Outside Tbilisi, Georgia (exact location to be confirmed)

Language: Georgian (interpretation into Georgian will be provided for sessions conducted in English with international experts).

Selection Process: The call for applications will be published on the Council of Europe Office in Georgia's and Sulkhani-Shabagashvili University's website and disseminated to universities nationwide. Applicants must submit a comprehensive CV detailing their academic background, relevant experience, and extracurricular activities related to human rights and gender equality. Additionally, participants will need to provide a short motivation letter (maximum 500 words) explaining their interest in the programme, relevant experience, and how they plan to apply the knowledge gained. Applicants must also provide one letter of recommendation from a university lecturer attesting to their academic capabilities and commitment to gender equality principles. Following the evaluation process, 20 participants will be selected based on their academic performance and demonstrated interest in the subject matter.



Financial Support: All costs for selected participants will be covered by the Council of Europe, including travel, accommodation, and meals. *Accessibility accommodation will be provided as needed.*

Certificate: All participants will receive certificates of completion in recognition of their engagement and contribution to the programme.

Training and Practical Application:

Following the Summer School, participants will have the opportunity to engage in activities organised by the Sulkhani-Saba Orbeliani University Legal Clinic, with a primary focus on *street law* initiatives - community-based legal education programmes that aim to raise public awareness of legal rights and promote access to justice through simple, practical, and accessible training.

This combination of theoretical learning and hands-on experience will prepare participants to develop and deliver legal education sessions on gender equality and women's rights within their communities.

As a follow-up to the Summer School, all participants will also receive a dedicated *Training of Trainers (ToT)* on how to conduct effective community training specifically on gender equality and women's rights.

Academic Publication Opportunity: five participants will be selected for an academic mentorship programme to develop scholarly articles on gender justice themes for publication in a special edition of the Sulkhani-Saba Orbeliani University law journal. The mentorship program will last from September to November 2025. Selected students will receive dedicated mentorship from experienced academics and practitioners.

The deadline for submitting the applications is **16 June 2025, 23:59 (Tbilisi time)**. Any submissions received after the deadline will be automatically rejected.

All applications to be sent to Genderequality.georgia@coe.int with the subject **"Summer School for Law Students 2025."**

Organised within the Council of Europe project **"Reinforcing gender equality and implementing GREVIO recommendations to combat violence against women and domestic violence in Georgia"** in co-operation with Sulkhani-Saba University. The Project is a part of the **Council of Europe Action Plan to Georgia 2024-2027**.

