

# **SOCIAL ASPECTS OF CYBERVIOLENCE & THE ISTANBUL CONVENTION**



Lela Akiashvili  
Advisor to the Prime Minister of Georgia on  
Human Rights and Gender Equality

# ადამიანის უფლებათა საბჭო HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

ყველა ადამიანი იბადება თავისუფალი და თანასწორი  
თავისი ღირსებითა და უფლებით. მუხლი 1. ადამიანის  
უფლებათა საყოველთაო დეკლარაცია.

All human beings are born free and  
equal in dignity and rights.

Article 1. Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

ყველა ადამიანი სამართლის წინაშე თანასწორია.  
მუხლი 11. საქართველოს კონსტიტუცია.

All persons are equal before the law.

Article 11. Constitution of Georgia.

Globally the number of internet users increased from **413 million** in 2000 to over **4.57 billion** in 2020 (as of July).

**59%** of the global population has access to internet.

Every day over the past five years,  
an average of **640,000** people went online for the first time.

**More than half** of internet users worldwide are **under 35 years**.

UN Human Rights Council Resolution (2016)

“The promotion, protection and enjoyment of human rights on the Internet”

**”The same rights people have offline must also be protected online...”**

# Violence Against Women & Domestic Violence

Prevention

Protection

Prosecution

Co-ordinated policies

“...I was ashamed to tell anyone, so I kept going to his house. I hated myself for that, but I did not know what to do. He had my naked pictures and threatened to show them my parents.”

“...For years, I simply did not know whom to ask for help...”

“...Obviously, it was my fault. I shared pictures with him in a first place. I did it because I was in love and he promised not to show them to anyone...”

“...It is such a shame! I won't be able to look into my parents' eyes if they learn about it...”

## Women

### Specific groups of women

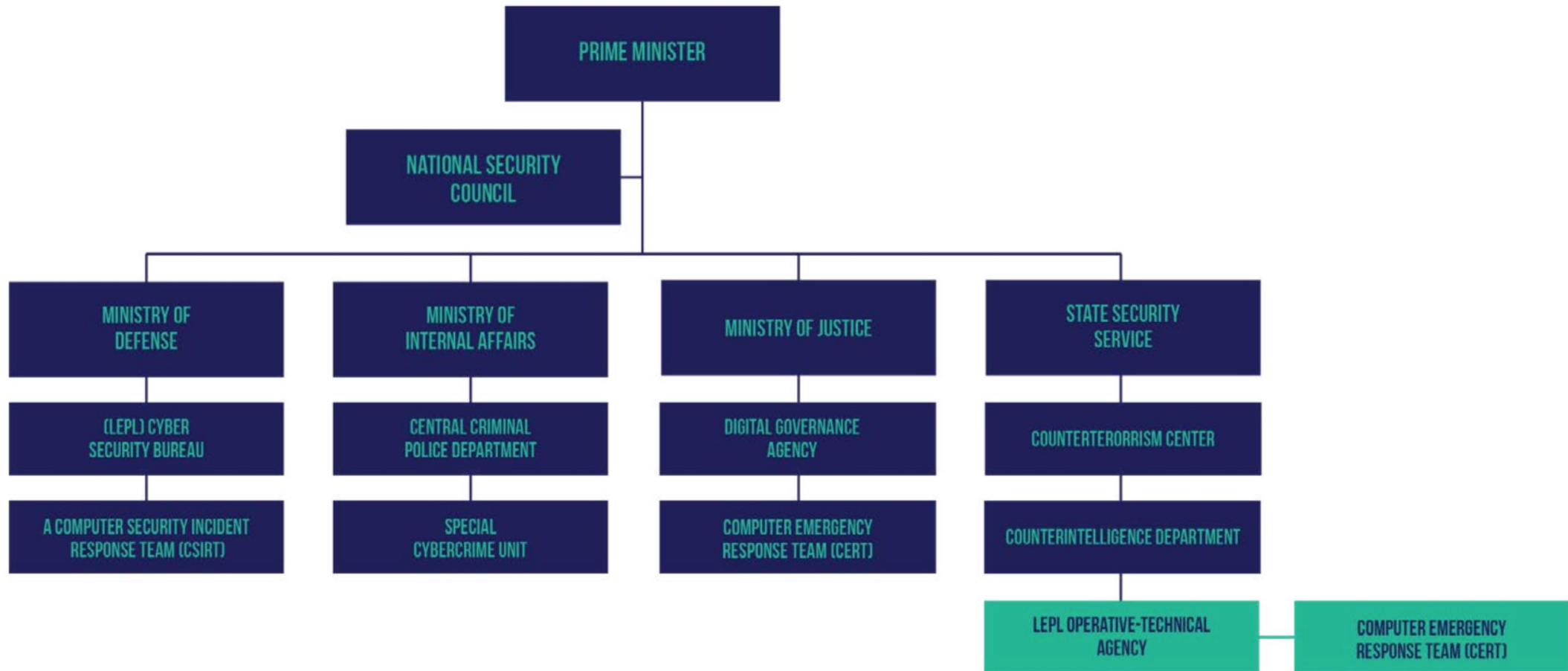
- women living in small rural communities
- Women living abroad
- Divorced/separated women
- women in politics

## Children

## LGBTQI+ People and other minorities



# CYBERVIOLENCE AS A **SOCIAL** PHENOMENA



COE Convention on Cybercrime (ratified in 2012)

Lanzarote Convention (ratified in 2014)

Istanbul Convention (ratified in 2017)

Law of Georgia on Information Security (2012)

Criminal Code of Georgia (1999)

Law of Georgia on the Elimination of Violence Against Women and/or Domestic Violence, and the Protection and Support of Victims of Such Violence (2006)

Labour Code of Georgia (2010)

Law of Georgia on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination (2014)

- **Criminal Code of Georgia**
- **Law of Georgia on the Elimination of Violence Against Women and/or Domestic Violence, and the Protection and Support of Victims of Such Violence**
- **Labour Code of Georgia**
  
- Unauthorized access to computer system
- Illegal use of computer data and/or computer system
- Unauthorized handling of computer data and/or computer systems
- Cyberterrorism
  
- Engagement of minors in illegal production and sale of pornographic works or other similar items
- Offering a meeting of a sexual character to a person under 16 years of age by using information and communication technologies for the purpose of committing the offence
- Threat
- Violence
- Psychological violence [offence, blackmailing, humiliation, threats, or any other action that violates a person's honour and dignity]
- Domestic crime
- **Stalking**
- **Sexual harassment**

# **ISTANBUL CONVENTION**

# In an 85-to-0 vote, the Parliament of Georgia ratified the Istanbul Convention on May 5, 2017

## As a result

Legal amendments package (affecting 24 bills)

- Stalking
- Forced sterilization
- Forced abortion
- Female genital mutilation
- Sexual Harassment
  - Sexual Harassment response mechanisms at state entities
- Improved response to VAW/DV
  - Restraining orders (from 2722 in 2015 to 10266 in 2019)
  - Risk assessment system
  - Electronic bracelets
  - Victim/survivor support
- First GREVIO report (2020)

## **Prohibition of communication with a victim through restraining orders**

- Communication using technologies
- Communication via social media

Challenge: cannot restrain freedom of expression

# **BREAKING ONLINE SILENCE**



- Coherent policy making process
- Strengthening personal data protection systems
- **State Inspector's Service**
- Effective response and support to survivors
- Awareness raising among wider population
- Knowledge building among state employees responsible for the response to VAW/DV, including cyberviolence
- Information sharing through formal and **informal channels**

|  
closed social media groups

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, building on Istanbul Convention and in cooperation with international partners, the Government of Georgia continues its proactive policy on combating violence against women and domestic violence in offline and online spaces.