



# STRENGTHENING PROTECTION OF SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC RIGHTS IN GEORGIA

*Contributing to the sustainable democracy in Georgia*



European  
Social  
Charter

Charte  
sociale  
européenne

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



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# STRENGTHENING PROTECTION OF SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC RIGHTS IN GEORGIA

Project implemented by the Council of Europe, Directorate General Human Rights and Rule of Law (DGI): Department of Social Rights and financed by Council of Europe Action Plan for Georgia 2020-2023

**March 2021 – December 2023**

**STRENGTHENING PROTECTION  
OF SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC  
RIGHTS IN GEORGIA**

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This publication is developed within the framework of the Council of Europe Project “Strengthening Protection of Social and Economic Rights in Georgia”.

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Nino Beradze, Goga Davtyan

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December 2023

## ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THIS BROCHURE

<b>CoE</b>	Council of Europe
<b>CSOs</b>	Civil society organisations
<b>ECSR</b>	European Committee of Social Rights
<b>ESC/Charter</b>	European Social Charter
<b>IDPs</b>	Internally Displaced Persons
<b>LIO</b>	Labour Inspector's Office of Georgia
<b>MoH</b>	The Ministry of IDPs from the Occupied Territories, Labour, Health and Social Affairs of Georgia
<b>NGOs</b>	Non-governmental organisations
<b>NHRI</b>	National Human Rights Institution
<b>PDO</b>	Public Defender's Office of Georgia
<b>TSPC</b>	Tripartite Social Partnership Commission TSPC

# PROJECT IN BRIEF



## OBJECTIVE

The Project *Strengthening Protection of Social and Economic Rights in Georgia* had aimed at enhancing capacities of Georgian authorities in delivering social rights and social services, as well as contributing to the alignment of the Georgian legislations - specifically in the area of labour rights - to the European standards. The other objectives of the Project were to promote acceptance of new provisions of the Charter, contribute to the enhancement of the quality of the country reports and consolidate the capacities of the Public Defender's office in monitoring the observance of social rights and submitting alternative reports to the European Committee of Social Rights (ECSR).

## KEY PARTNERS

- ▶ The Ministry of IDPs, Labour, Health and Social Affairs of Georgia
- ▶ The LEPL Labour Inspection Office
- ▶ The Public Defender's Office of Georgia
- ▶ The Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia
- ▶ The Ministry of Justice of Georgia
- ▶ The Healthcare and Social Issues Committee of Parliament of Georgia
- ▶ The Human Rights and Civil Integration Committee of Parliament of Georgia
- ▶ Relevant civil society and non-governmental organisations



## END BENEFICIARIES

General population of Georgia,  
in particular:

- ▶ Labour inspectors
- ▶ Legal professionals
- ▶ Academia
- ▶ Social partners
- ▶ Local authorities
- ▶ Social workers

## IMPACT

Social and economic rights are enhanced  
in line with European standards  
contributing to the sustainable  
democracy in Georgia.



## PROJECTS OUTCOMES

### INTERMEDIATE OUTCOME 1

Social and economic rights, policies and practices at the national level are aligned with relevant European standards, providing for proper protection and implementation of social rights.

**Immediate Outcome 1.1:** The state of affairs regarding social rights in Georgia are assessed, up-to-date baseline data is provided defining the scope for further co-operation

**Immediate outcome 1.2:** The national legislation particularly in the area of employment and labour rights is analysed, a comprehensive policy and legislative framework on the protection and promotion of these rights is further developed in line with the European standards and best practices.

### INTERMEDIATE OUTCOME 2

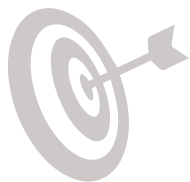
Knowledge and capacities are enhanced among target groups (policy makers, social workers, labour inspectors, Ombudsperson's office and NGO representatives) in promoting and protecting social rights in line with the European standards and best practices.

**Immediate outcome 2.1:** Awareness on human social rights and the system of the European Social Charter is increased among target groups (policy makers, social workers, labour inspectors, Ombudsperson's Office and NGO representatives).

**Immediate outcome 2.2:** Institutional capacities of the LEPL Labour Inspection Office are consolidated leading to efficient implementation of its mandate.

**Immediate outcome 2.3:** National reports on the implementation of the European Social Charter are prepared in an inclusive process and the quality thereof is improved. Alternative (shadow reports) are submitted to the ECSR.

# KEY PROJECT ACHIEVEMENTS: 2021-2023



**Social and economic rights, policies and practices at the national level are aligned with relevant European standards, providing for proper protection and implementation of social rights**



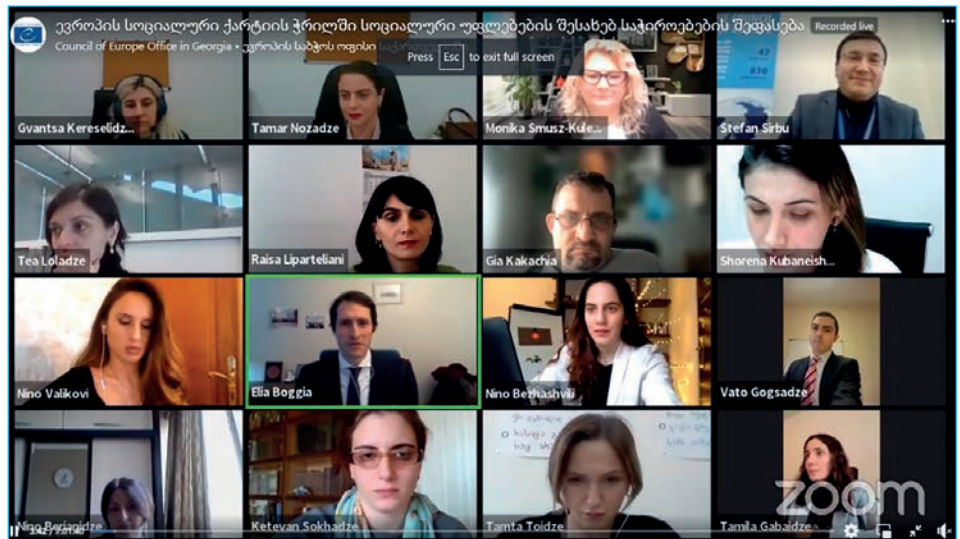
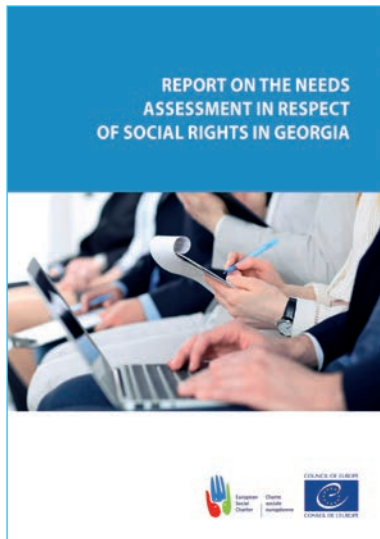
**Enhanced capacities of Georgian authorities in delivering social rights and social services through a comprehensive needs assessment**

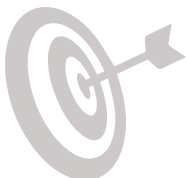
A comprehensive needs assessment conducted by CoE experts in respect to the current state of social rights in Georgia vis-à-vis the European Social Charter **paved the way for further cooperation** with the Georgian authorities. With an emphasis on the importance of increased protection of social rights – *particularly in the realms of labour and employment rights*, the recommendations **encouraged Georgia to resume discussions on the acceptance of further provisions** of the Charter, and the dialogue has enhanced to develop **a strategic roadmap to facilitate ratification process of the Charter's additional articles.**

## **A milestone achievement**

The Project not only promoted awareness but also actively contributed to the integration of the Charter's standards into Georgia's legislative and policy frameworks.

## TIMELINE OF KEY EVENTS





**Social and economic rights, policies and practices at the national level are aligned with relevant European standards, providing for proper protection and implementation of social rights**



**Contributed to the alignment of the Georgian legislation, specifically in the area of labour rights, to the European standards**

The Council of Europe supported Georgian authorities to **further improve implementation of the Georgian legislation** and was actively involved in the **Social Reform** process by participating in a number of working group meetings – *particularly on employment*. The support resulted in recommendations to the legislation on **equal remuneration and practices in Georgia**, review and comments were provided to the **concept papers on minimum wage, unemployment social insurance, formalising informal work and self-employment in Georgia**.

### A milestone achievement

CoE prepared five expert reviews and recommendations for MoH as an added value to the social reforms platform as it expects that relevant changes can be implemented at the horizontal level when drafting respective legislation.

#### TIMELINE OF KEY EVENTS





### MoH, Parliament, PDO

October 2022

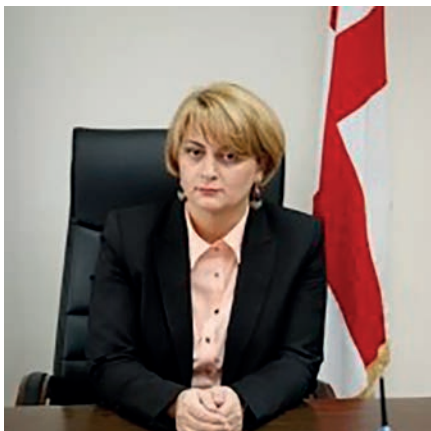
CoE conducted bilateral meetings with the Ministry of Health and Labour, Parliament's Health and HR Committees, and PDO to further discuss the ESC implementation in Georgia and the possibility of acceptance of non-accepted provisions



### TSPC, PDO, Parliament

October 2023

CoE organised a series of events to better align the Georgian legislation with the standards of the European social Charter and promote further acceptance of non-accepted provisions.



**Tamar BARKALAI**A

*Deputy Minister of IDPs, Health,  
Labour and Social Affairs  
of Georgia*

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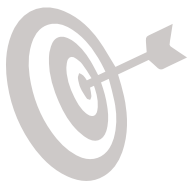
*The Council of Europe Project “Strengthening protection of social and economic rights in Georgia” is the first project in the field of social rights protection with the support of which a number of important steps have been taken.*

*A series of support activities in relation to the European Social Charter will significantly help the state to identify where we are now and what we can do to get as close as possible to European standards in the direction of social rights protection.*

27 October 2023

### **Where Georgia stands vis-à-vis European Social Charter today and what comes next?**

In 2005, Georgia ratified the European Social Charter, accepting 63 out of its 98 paragraphs, signifying the nation's commitment to ensuring its citizens' well-being and standard of living. However, 35 vital provisions, such as safe working conditions and fair remuneration, have yet to be ratified, highlighting areas for further improvement. To address these gaps and enhance social rights protection, the Project organised a series of events in October 2023 to help align the Georgian legislation with the Charter. The events marked a significant step towards strengthening social and economic rights in Georgia, showing the shared commitment to achieving the standards outlined in the European Social Charter. Continued collaboration and ratification of remaining provisions are essential to furthering this goal.



**Knowledge and capacities are enhanced among target groups (policy makers, social workers, labour inspectors, Ombudsperson's office and NGO representatives) in promoting and protecting social rights in line with the European standards and best practices**



**Awareness of project partners and key target groups on human social rights and the system of the European Social Charter raised**

Based on the result of a small-scale evaluation to gauge the level of awareness on the European Social Charter among targeted audiences back in December 2021, the Council of Europe hosted a **wide range of tailored awareness raising workshops and meetings** with project partners and key target groups from the government, relevant parliamentary committees, president's administration, as well as civil society organisations, trade unions, lawyers association and other development partners.

In addition, the Project created valuable resources for all stakeholders by **translating/adapting, publishing and disseminating** a number of awareness raising materials on the European Social Charter and relevant European standards.



*Check 'Publications' on page 29*







**Media is an instrumental stakeholder for promoting social rights.** A **media workshop**, co-hosted by CoE, brought together journalists from central and regional broadcasting and online media to improve an understanding and awareness of the European Social Charter. Current practices, including ethical dilemmas and respective solutions were part of the group discussion.



@euneighbourseast.eu

**Lika ZAKASHVILI**

*Editor-in-chief at Publika.ge*



*I had only superficial information about the Social Charter. After listening to the workshop, my knowledge has deepened - I learned what topics are covered by the Charter and also what progress Georgia has made in implementing the recognised provisions within the Charter. The implementation of the provisions of the Charter will significantly improve the realisation of the rights of Georgian citizens in a number of areas and the quality of their life, so I think it is very important for the media to monitor the implementation of the provisions of the Charter and to cover the activities of the bodies responsible for these topics. This will contribute to increasing the accountability of the government and raising awareness in the society about the issues covered by the charter*

7 June 2023





The Council of Europe Project organised a study visit for the Public Defender's Office of Georgia in Ireland in July 2022, which among other important topics such as reporting was dedicated to learn more about the NHRI's role in **promoting the European Social Charter**.

This visit was preceded by a **wider awareness-raising seminar - The European Social Charter and its importance in Georgia** - organised by CoE in December 2021 for representatives of various state and non-governmental organisations.

**Dr. Tamar GVARAMADZE**

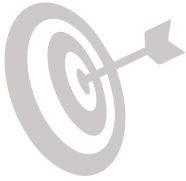
*The First Deputy Public Defender  
Public Defender's Office of Georgia*



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*The information and experiences shared by our colleagues from the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission, Ombudsman for Children, Ombudsman and relevant NGOs were very useful. We will use their insights and advice in our future work and activities. We have already determined some ways of implementing all of this in practice.*

*2 August 2022*



**Knowledge and capacities are enhanced among target groups (policy makers, social workers, labour inspectors, Ombudsperson's office and NGO representatives) in promoting and protecting social rights in line with the European standards and best practices.**



### **Capacities of the LEPL Labour Inspection Office enhanced through a comprehensive institutional assessment**

An **in-depth institutional needs assessment of the Labour Inspection Office (LIO) of Georgia** was carried out. The report provides recommendations on institutional, regulatory and practice levels to support LIO to enhance its efficiency. The needs assessment exercise was followed by number of **tailor-made capacity enhancement activities**, including training of the LIO staff in effective communication with public and media.

In addition, **a high-level study visit** – very successful and highly appreciated by the beneficiaries – was organised for the LIO representatives to Poland to meet the needs of the institution in getting hands-on experience and exchange of good practices.

### **A milestone achievement**

LIO has institutionalised training programmes for labour inspectors. Around 120 staff members enhanced their knowledge and skills in communication. This training model was recognised as exemplary, and the methodology has been implemented in other countries. Furthermore, the LIO staff members advanced their knowledge by completing the Council of Europe HELP course on labour rights.



**Beka PERADZE**

*Chief Labour Inspector  
Labour Inspection Office of Georgia*

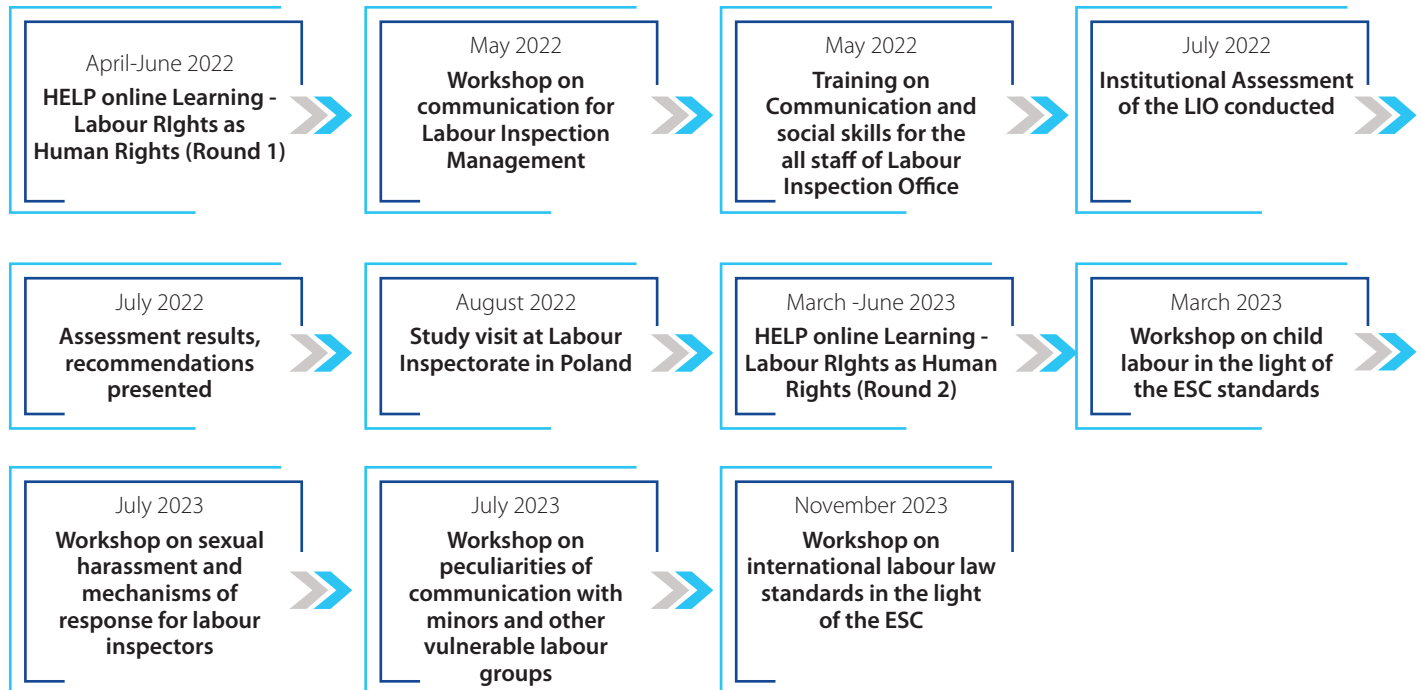
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*In parallel of improving and enhancing social and economic rights in Georgia, it is critical to ensure institutional enhancement of an oversight body of labour norms. Thanks to our international partners, a number of successful interventions have been made. Support provided by the Council of Europe Project - Strengthening Protection of Social and Economic Rights in Georgia - has proved to be important on our path to institutional strengthening.*

*This support entailed the “Institutional Needs Assessment” prepared by the CoE experts, which strategically is very important for us as it has identified key findings and recommendations that will gradually be introduced by the Labour Inspection Office.*

17 November 2023

## TIMELINE OF KEY EVENTS





**Nato NATENADZE**

*First Deputy Labour Inspector  
Labour Inspection Office of Georgia*

”

*Since 2022, with the support of the Council of Europe Project, the staff of the Labour Inspection Office successfully completed the online HELP course on Labour Rights as Human Rights in Georgia, which was launched by the Council of Europe through its central educational platform. In addition to impressive results by our participants, the staff has improved their knowledge of fundamental European standards that are used by labour inspectors in their daily work when inspecting labour norms.*

*Learning materials of the HELP online course is actively used by our Office during training of new (on-boarding) staff and is a very important learning portal, which we plan to introduce systematically and develop further.*

*17 November 2023*



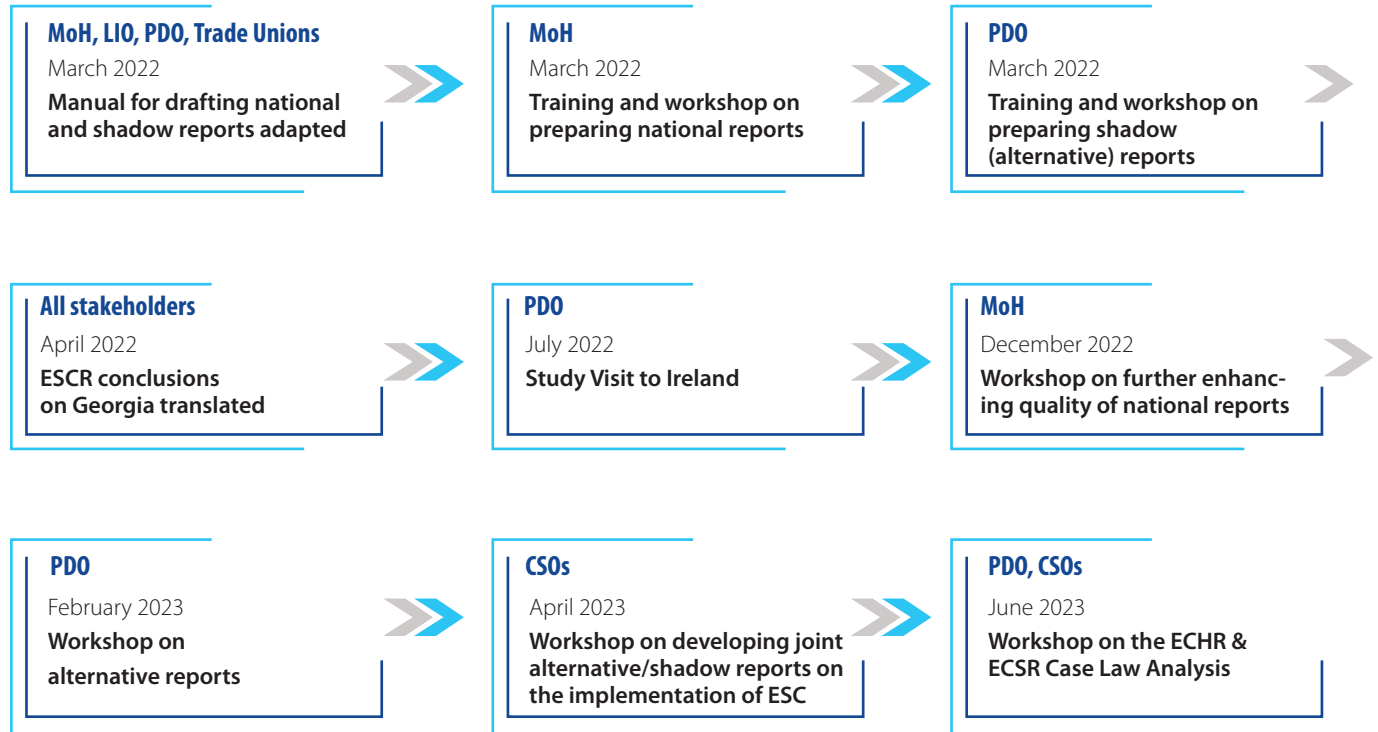
### ✓ Enhanced accountability through improved reporting

The Council of Europe has made a significant effort to improve the **quality of reporting** on the Charter provisions, which would enable the European Committee of Social Rights (ECSR) to fully assess the situation in Georgia and to provide comprehensive conclusions helping policy-makers take better-informed legislative and policy steps. This intervention has resulted in **Georgia's submission of annual reports prepared in a more inclusive manner**, and the methodology of gathering and processing the required information was aligned with the requirements and best practices of the reporting procedure under the Charter. The latest report will be considered by the ECSR in the course of 2024 and the relevant conclusions will be published in due time.

### A milestone achievement

Capacity-building initiatives helped the PDO and CSOs submit alternative reports to the ECSR with PDO now regularly submitting reports highly praised by the ECSR. Another milestone achievement is GYLA becoming the first NGO in Georgia to submit an alternative report in 2022. In 2023, GYLA, Social Justice Center and the Partnership for Human Rights NGO collectively submitted a consolidated report by demonstrating an increased engagement by CSOs.

## TIMELINE OF KEY EVENTS



# OPERATIONAL AND PROFESSIONAL ENHANCEMENT OF PARTNER INSTITUTIONS

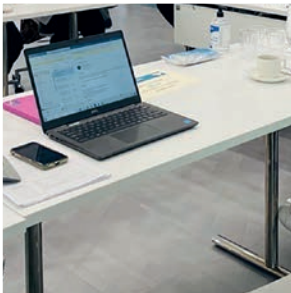
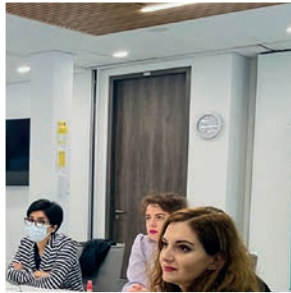
During 2021-2023, the Council of Europe organised or hosted:

- 21** workshops
- 5** seminars
- 9** face-to-face training courses
- 3** online training courses
- 2** distance learning courses (HELP)
- 2** study visits

for **647** participants  
/ 443 female, 204 male /

from all partner institutions and targeted groups, which include: the Ministry of Health/other line ministries, Labour Inspection Office, relevant committees from the Parliament of Georgia, Public Defender's Office, CSOs, trade unions and associations, as well as legal professionals, including judges and lawyers.





# PROMOTING MULTI-STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND DIALOGUE



Throughout the Project implementation, the Council of Europe paid particular attention to the **coordination of its actions with other donors and partners**. In February 2022, the Council of Europe brought together international organisations working in different areas related to strengthening protection of labour rights in Georgia. Inviting all partner Georgian institutions to the meeting, the primary aim was to better align the government's priorities, and map and coordinate donors' sectoral interventions. This meeting has laid foundation to a much stronger multi-stakeholder engagement and dialogue among donors and partners with the Council of Europe establishing a **Donor Coordination Platform on Social Rights**, which unites up to 20 international and non-government organisations, as well as government institutions. The initiative has been very positively praised by CSOs in particular as it has enabled their active engagement and contribution to the enhancement of social rights in Georgia.



**Dimitri TSKITISHVILI**

*President, Georgian Progressive Forum*



*Despite legal and institutional reforms in the field of labour rights protection, our society still faces a number of challenges. Coordination of work conducted by stakeholders, international and local organisations, which has been carried out with the initiative of the Council of Europe Project, makes it possible for us to see existing challenges and problems from different expert prism on one side, and using limited resources more effectively and efficiently, on the other.*

*17 November 2023*



**Nino TSAGAREISHVILI**

*National Programme Manager,  
Swiss Agency for Development and  
Cooperation*

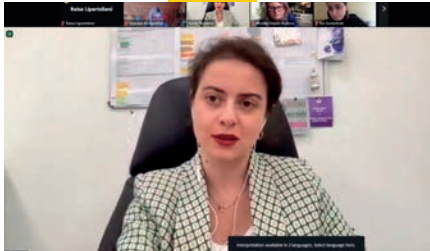


*The Council of Europe's initiative came at a crucial time, enhancing donor coordination. This allowed for improved coordination of activities, fostering synergies and complementarities among various projects.*

*17 November 2023*

## DONOR COORDINATION MEETING

# #1



*The Council of Europe brought together international organisations working in different areas related to strengthening protection of labour rights in Georgia, attended also by major donor organisations and key stakeholders from Georgian authorities. The meeting's objective was to map and coordinate donor activities in the field, including current goals and objectives so as to help achieve a better alignment of government's priorities and donors' sectoral interventions.*

24 February 2022

## DONOR COORDINATION MEETING

# #2



*The Council of Europe, willing to coordinate its actions with other development partners to exchange information and experience on implemented and planned activities, brought together all key partners and stakeholders working in different areas related to strengthening protection of labour rights in Georgia for the second time. The aim was to identify gaps in donor activities and funding, develop a holistic approach and make donor interventions more targeted and streamlined.*

7 December 2022

## DONOR COORDINATION MEETING

# #3



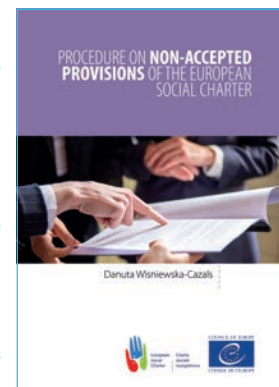
*The Council of Europe hosted another round of discussions to further enhance coordination among international organisations and key partners and stakeholders, including from the government authorities. Practice from first two meetings has shown the need and urgency of such platform that informs each other, avoids duplication and contributes to the synergies. The Council of Europe hopes meetings continue in the future to ensure continuity and efficient use of donor support in the area of labour rights protection in Georgia.*

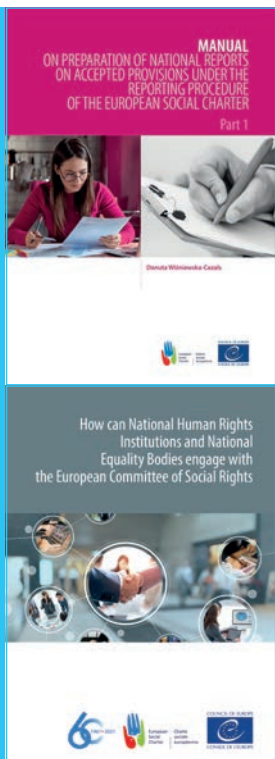
14 September 2023

# PUBLICATIONS

Throughout the Project, the Council of Europe developed, translated, adapted and disseminated a significant number of resources, which among others include: Conclusions on Georgia by the European Committee of Social Rights (2018/2019/2020/2021/2022), handbooks/manuals for lawyers and CSO engagement, as well as reports, assessments, and digests.

TITLE OF PUBLICATION	WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?
<b>European Committee of Social Rights – Conclusions on Georgia 2018/2019/2020/2021/2022</b>	Access to the ECSR Conclusions in Georgian language will help the Georgian authorities, decision makers and members of tripartite social dialogue – as well as the general public – to understand where Georgia stands vis-à-vis the European Social Charter and make informed decisions on next steps.
<b>How can (I)NGOs engage with the European Committee of Social Rights under the monitoring procedures</b>	This manual is an important tool for NGOs and other institutions in Georgia to increase their awareness about the ECSR monitoring procedures and boost the possibility of their engagement as needed.
<b>Children’s Comic brochure - Tell me, what is the European Social Charter?</b>	This brochure is intended for children to increase their awareness on the European Social Charter.
<b>Procedure on Non-Accepted Provisions of the European Social Charter</b> <i>(For Georgia)</i>	This manual, adapted in Georgian language, is intended for the Georgian authorities and decision makers to have a clear understanding of the procedures on non-accepted provisions of the ESC and help in further discussions on the topic. Its additional value is that it provides detailed analysis of the current status of Georgia vis-à-vis non-accepted provisions.





**“Handbook for Lawyers: European Social Charter (Revised) and the case law of the European Committee of Social Rights**  
*(For Georgia)*

This manual has been adapted to Georgian context, using examples of Georgian reality, analysing European Social Charter provisions respectively.

**“How can National Human Rights Institutions and National Equality Bodies engage with the European Committee of Social Rights”**

This manual is an important tool to be available for NHRIs in Georgia to increase their awareness about the ECSR monitoring procedures and boost the possibility of their engagement as needed.

**Report on the Needs Assessment in respect of Social Rights in Georgia**

This report outlines the findings and makes recommendations for actions to be taken and proposes cooperation to the Georgian authorities with the Council of Europe in order to address the identified shortcomings and to enhance respect of social rights in line with CoE standards and best practices.

**Institutional Assessment of the Labour Inspection Office of Georgia**

This document assesses the needs of the Labour Inspection Office and highlights areas in which reform is imminent or most urgent, recalling the standards applicable and the challenges faced by LIO.

**Digest of the Case Law of the European Committee of Social Rights – June 2022**

With this digest, the Georgian authorities, decision makers, members of tripartite social dialogue, legal professional and wider public have access to the ECSR Case Law in Georgian language.

**3rd Report on the Non-Accepted Provisions of the European Social Charter – Georgia**

This report, prepared in Georgian language, provides an up-to-date information and analysis on the examination of the non-accepted provisions in Georgia for its users to understand where the country stands vis-à-vis ESC and make informed decisions on next steps.



<p><b>Preparation of National Reports on Accepted provisions under the reporting procedure of the European Social Charter</b> <i>(For Georgia)</i></p>	<p>This manual, adapted in Georgian language, uses examples of Georgian reality, analysing the ESC provisions based on the ECSR conclusions on Georgia.</p>
<p><b>Guide on the case-law of the European Convention on Human Rights</b></p>	<p>This guide provides access to the case-law of the ECHR in Georgian language for the Georgian authorities, decision makers, members of tripartite social dialogue, legal professionals as well as the general public.</p>
<p><b>Guide on identifying discrimination, sexual harassment - Psychological Part</b> <i>(For Employees of the Labour Inspection Office)</i></p>	<p>This guidebook was prepared for the staff of the Labour Inspection Office and is intended to support them to enhance professional capacities to identify victims of discrimination and sexual harassment and lead an adequate communication with the victims. This shall enable them to obtain information easily in the cases of discrimination and sexual harassment and avoid secondary victimisation.</p>
<p><b>Guide on peculiarities of communication with minors and other vulnerable groups</b> <i>(For Employees of the Labour Inspection Office)</i></p>	<p>This short guidebook was prepared for the staff of the Labour Inspection Office to help them improve their understanding on peculiarities of communication with minors and other vulnerable labour groups. It shall assist the LIO staff to develop practical skillset and use approaches focused on minors and other vulnerable persons during inspection.</p>
<p><b>Methodology on studying sexual harassment cases at work</b></p>	<p>A practical guide intended for the Labour Inspection Office staff.</p>



# SUSTAINABILITY



The Project forms an integral part of the Council of Europe's unique strategic triangle of standard setting, monitoring and co-operation. It's sustainability is deeply rooted in the collaborative foundation established through close coordination with partner authorities and stakeholders. **A cornerstone of our sustainability strategy lies in the creation of comprehensive assessments and recommendations by the Project.** These, coupled with thoroughly designed roadmaps, are intended to serve as invaluable, step-by-step guides for relevant authorities to further align Georgian legislation and practices in line with European Social Charter standards.

To fortify sustainability and ensuring the respective Government authorities and institutions are provided with the knowledge and information they need in order to submit quality national and alternative reports, respective manuals have been created for all thematic groups so that new staff, when needed, gets all the relevant information and guidance. **It is our hope that these resources will empower authorities and institutions to continually align Georgian legislation and practices with the esteemed standards set forth by the European Social Charter.**







# PROJECT TEAM



**Margarita GALSTYAN**  
*Program Manager*



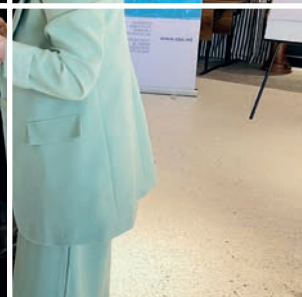
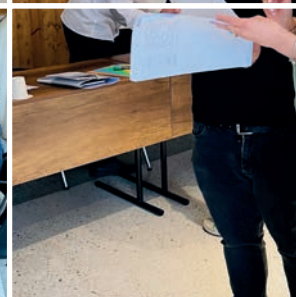
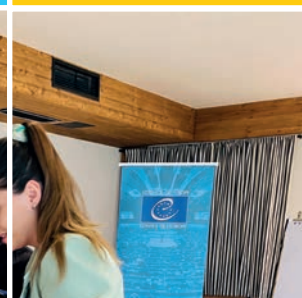
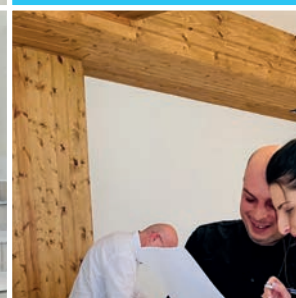
**Diana DAVITADZE**  
*Project Officer*

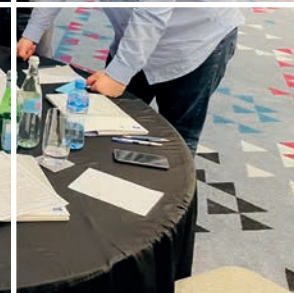
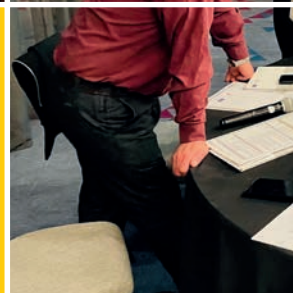
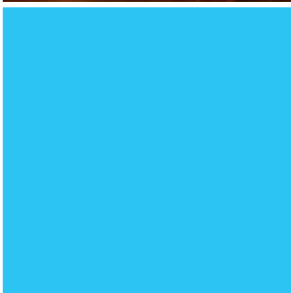
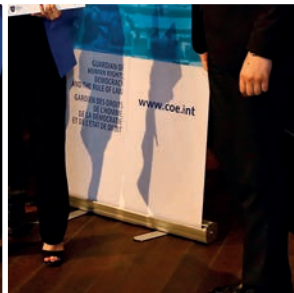
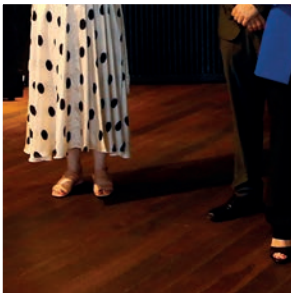


**Tamar NOZADZE**  
*Senior Project Officer*



**Gvantsa KERESOLIDZE**  
*Project Assistant*





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.

[www.coe.int/socialcharter](http://www.coe.int/socialcharter)

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.

[www.coe.int](http://www.coe.int)

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