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NATIONAL GENDER EQUALITY REPORTS

Main purpose of these national gender equality reports was for participants to observe various sides of gender inequality and discuss its possible social implications in their countries. By doing this, they became more aware of their local reality and gender inequality.

Here are some points that were taken into account:

1. What do you think, how aware are people in your country about gender inequality? You can mention some stereotypes and prejudices about men/women, gender based roles, etc.
2. What is the biggest influence on gender inequality in your society (social conditionality, religion and gender roles, media, upbringing, etc.). You can mention some examples. Mostly, you should share your opinion about this issue, however, if there is some research about it, feel free to mention it.
3. Politics and gender equality - what is estimated ratio of men to women in politics, number of seats occupied by women in parliament, are there any political parties encouraging women to engage more in politics,...
4. Gender pay gap in your country - the average difference between men's and women's aggregate hourly earnings
5. LGBTIQ community in your country and problems they are facing
6. Representations in the media and popular culture and gender equality - find some good examples of media representation and bad ones. Also, plenty of examples should be found in marketing industry.
7. Name some organizations (both governmental and non-governmental) that are focused on problems regarding gender inequality. Can you give us more information about their work (projects, are they recognized in local communities)
8. In your country, do you have an ombudsperson for gender equality (The Ombudsperson for Gender Equality is an independent body in charge of combating discrimination based on sex, marital and family status, pregnancy and maternity, sexual orientation and gender identity)? How familiar are you with his/her work?
9. Do you have some personal stories about gender inequality you would like to share with us?
10. Is there something specific about gender problems in your country (gender based violence, sexual and reproductive rights, problems of LGBTIQ community, ...)

Partner organization: PINK Armenia, Armenia

Since now a lot of researches and deep interviews have been carried out for discovering the level of awareness about gender equality among Armenians. The majority of respondents faced the cases of gender inequality among their surroundings, some other even in their families. There are some stereotypes which were mentioned by the respondents:

“The family is incomplete without a son”

“The traditional Armenian mentality implies the existence of the son”

“I was sad that my first child was a girl, I even didn't approach and hug her. I was not comfortable about the second child, what I would do if it will be a girl again. I calmed down when my son was born”

“I was feeling not comfortable with my friends that I hadn't a son yet”

“The son is the one who continues the nation”

“People have sons as a memory”

“The son is the pride of the parent”

“The son is the working hand, the keeper of the family smoke”

“The girl is the one who cries on the parent, and the son is the one who takes care about them”

Inequality in Armenia has many and different aspects, but the main and biggest ones are national values with its' many layers and of course religion. Saying national value we should mention, that society in Armenia is very patriarchal and masculine mentality and it has a very big influence on people living in Armenia. What we call national value is what the main part of society believes to be, but it sometimes covers on the masculine thinking and religious views. In a result of this we now have different groups, like Pan Armenian Parent Committee, which is propagandizing anti gender believes. The biggest issues are also social conditionality and the lack of right information about what gender is and anti discrimination law.

Women have been poorly represented in Armenian politics for the last several decades. Currently, there are 14 women out 131 members in Armenia's National Parliament. The percentage of women ministers and deputy ministers has never risen above 11% during the past 5 years. Among various obstacles preventing women's political participation in Armenia are: gender stereotypes, gender roles, women's lack of economic independence and social capital, low self-confidence among women, and the overall political culture.

Table 1: Parliamentary Elections in Armenia: an Overview

Year	Total number of seats	Women MPs	% of women MPs
1995	190	12	6%
1999	131	4	3%
2003	131	7	5%
2007	131	12	9%
2011	131	12	9%

2014	131	14	11%
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Table 2: Ministers and Deputy Ministers

Year	Women Ministers and Deputy ministers	%
2002	8	8%
2003	7	7%
2004	7	7%
2005	5	5%
2006	6	6%
2007	5	5%
2008	7	7%
2009	7	7%
2010	10	10%
2011	10	10%
2012	11	11%

Source: National Statistical Service RA, 2003–2012

Source: CAUCASUS ANALYTICAL DIGEST No. 71, 30 March 2015.

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<http://www.laender-analysen.de/cad/pdf/CaucasusAnalyticalDigest71.pdf>

Among the primary contributors to gender inequality in Armenia are the persistent disparities in the political, social, and economic opportunities enjoyed by men and women. Basic targets of gender equality are yet to be achieved and engagement of women in political, economic, and public life remains limited. Moreover, during the past few years the political and economic participation of women in Armenia has decreased. According to the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Index, in 2016, Armenia is in 102rd place out of 144 countries in the world, with a score 0,669. In 2014, Armenia was ranked 103th out of 135 countries. In 2011 84th. In Armenia's current position actually marks a decline from 106th place in 2009.

Year	Rank	No. of countries
2007	71	128
2008	78	130

2009	90	134
2010	84	134
2011	84	135
2012	92	135
2013	94	136
2014	103	142
2015	105	145
2016	102	144

Sources: <http://reports.weforum.org/global-gender-gap-report-2015/economies/#economy=ARM>
<http://reports.weforum.org/global-gender-gap-report-2016/economies/#economy=ARM>
<http://www.feminism-boell.org/en/2016/05/03/structural-and-cultural-causes-gender-based-violence-armenia>
<http://www.laender-analysen.de/cad/pdf/CaucasusAnalyticalDigest71.pdf>

It is worth to mention here the annual and the latest report made by Pink Armenia about LGBTIQ community and the problems they are facing, which is very detailed one and does not need to be just cited. Follow [here](#) to get it in english.

In Armenian reality it is very common to glorify men while women are usually objectivised in the media and especially in advertisement industry. For example on the way from Hrazdan to Yerevan, there are huge posters titled "The Great Armenians" where only men are pictured, which means that only men can be Great and no single woman, and or according to job requirement only young 18-25 age and beautiful women can get hired.

This is an advertisement of a gym company, only for ladies, which says "Dear, get thinner and I will come back".



These images were taken from heating system advertisement, where women are compared to boilers, saying " There are different heating devices in the market, some of them are too big, ecologically not clean, some of them make lot of noise, but there is one, that you can take home".

There are plenty examples like this, most of them are not gender sensitive, but recently there are few companies, that are trying to do their marketing based on gender equality, like showing that they have female employees working as a drivers for delivery or female taxi drivers etc.

The biggest body that is focused on problems regarding gender inequality and gender based violence is “The Coalition to Stop Violence against Women” which consists of several active NGOs: “Women’s Resource Center”, “Women’s Rights Center”, “Women’s Support Center”, “Society Without Violence”, “Public Information and Need of Knowledge”, “Sexual Assault Crisis Center”, “Real World, Real People”.

“The Coalition to Stop Violence against Women” operates on different levels, concentrating efforts on the formation of public opinion and changing the existing mentality. Through public events such as press-conferences, TV programs reports, articles, marches, outdoor screenings, concerts they say no to violence and raise awareness among women about their rights. “The Coalition to Stop Violence against Women” apply its efforts to prevent violence against women and to support victims of domestic violence in Armenia. Meanwhile, the coalition is working with all stakeholders, the government, parliament, international organizations, civil society and the media of Armenia for the adoption of legislation to prevent domestic violence.

We do not have an Ombudsperson for Gender Equality in Armenia. In reality we can see that gender based problems are discussed only on the level of NGOs, not on the governmental level. Of course, we have an Ombudsman whose work is also to study the cases of gender inequality, but other independent body we do not have yet.

We can undoubtedly mention that we face gender inequality cases every day. They can be seen at our families, at the universities, at our workplaces, just everywhere. For example, I (Ani) am the second girl child of our family. Everyone (especially my father)expected me to be a boy child before my borning, and after it they were shocked. As I was told my father was so upset that some days he got drunk and couldn’t come and see me. Surely, this comes from the stereotype that every family should have a son. But, fortunately this was just my father’s first reaction, he loved me very much and now, he is very happy and proud with his two daughters.

Abortion has been legal in the country since 1920, was banned in 1936 and reintroduced in 1955. In independent Armenia, abortion is covered in the 2002 law on reproductive health and rights. Today it is authorized on request up to the 12th week of pregnancy. Prices for an abortion vary, usually costing around 30-50 USD. Under the Law on Reproductive Health and Reproductive Rights passed in 2002, abortions can be performed later than 12 weeks only under specific health conditions or in cases of rape. Nowadays in Armenia every year there are around 1400 girls who don't born because of SSAs. After 1993s the proportion of male births is around 110-120 per 100 females' /in normal there should be 102-106 males per 100 females/. If we keep on this way in 2060 in Armenia won't have born around 96 000 girls.

Mostly, according respondents SSAs are made in case of pregnancy with second or third female child, but there are also cases when it is about the first child as well. According a woman respondent in their village «everyone would do an abortion in case of first child to be a girl, but they are afraid of the words of the doctors who tell that they can stay without child». Besides, during the survey another important conclusion was made: according to respondents SSAs more often are made not in the hospitals, but via medicaments and in “home-based, popular, traditional” ways. This has shown that SSAs can be implemented in ways and in places which are very dangerous for women.

Introducing these kinds of facts by respondents evidently shows that the count of SSAs only by the number of women who addressed to doctors doesn’t show the real volumes and the spreading of the phenomenon.



Generally in the context of initiating SSAs we have the following picture: the decisions made mostly by man or his representative (his parents). Woman is free to make decision on abortion if “the problem with a son is solved or the family has no plans to have more children.”

Sources: <http://www.yso.am/files/Anna%20Voskanyan%20pdf%20eng.pdf>
http://www.unfpa.am/sites/default/files/Sex_Imbalance_report_Eng_final-with%20cover-final.pdf
<http://kvinnatillkvinna.se/en/2016/02/09/female-fetuses-deselected-in-armenia/>
<https://www.facebook.com/346986125011/photos/a.10153167430535012.1073741840.346986125011/10157233358535012/?type=3>

Applicant organization: Association Impress, Croatia

In the Croatian society women in families are generally equal to men in decision-making and managing money, but it is believed that women, despite the fact that both partners are employed, should take over the care of children and household. But, not all women are in the same position. Gender discrimination in the family against women is higher in lower educated classes of society and in rural areas (Kamenov i Galić, 2009).

In the research of Kamenov and Galić (2009) participants thought that the most unequal treatment between men and women are in the job market and in the area of family life. Even though more than half of them believe that the situation of women in all tested areas improved compared to ten years ago, the most deterioration is perceived in the area of work / labor market. Half of the participants consider that the situation of women in politics in relation to the period of ten years has improved, but do not have a clear idea of whether a sufficient number of women's presence in politics. At least unequal treatment compared to other areas perceived to be in the area of education, although participants believe that gender is still an important criterion in guiding students in the professions.

We think that in Croatia, the biggest influence on gender inequality has the upbringing which is connected with religion and lack of education because the least egalitarian attitudes have less educated people, people living in the countryside, elderly people and residents southern Croatian regions (Kamenović i Galić, 2009).

Dichotomization of the male/female pathways in education is another possible influence of gender inequality. The biggest discrepancy among male and female graduates is in the following disciplines (data for the year 2012, *ibid*):

- Teacher training (W 95,4%, M 4,6%)
- Social services (W 95,7%, M 4,3%)
- Education science (W 87,8%, M 12,2%)
- Computing (W 15,3%, M 84,7%)
- Engineering and engineering trades (W 18,8%, M 81,2%)

(<http://www.zenstud.hr/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Pathways-of-Education-for-Gender-Equality.pdf>)

Kamenov & Galić research – on the statement „If I had to make a choice between two candidates with the same amount of points to enter the technical high school, I would choose male over female applicant.“, 45.1% agreed (52.5% M, 38.2% F)

Estimated ratio of women in Croatian parliament is 25% (39 of 153) which is a high number, in comparison with 1990. when there was just 3,8% of women in the parliament. Last year in the world's parliaments there were 19.2% of women, and in the representative bodies of European countries 20%.

The total number of women in parliament parties is mainly grown in the two largest parliamentary parties, the HDZ (15 women) and SDP (19 women), while women are under-represented in small parties (www.sabor.hr).

According to research of croatian job searching site (MojPosao.hr), which is conducted in the first quarter of 2016, women in Croatia have 10% lower wages than men (5028 in comparison with 5521 kunas).

The biggest differences are in the sales and service sector, where women are paid on average 28 percent less than men. Women are better paid than men in insurance, telecommunications and electricity supply, but the differences are smaller. In ensuring companies women have a 16%, in telecommunications 12%, and in the field of electricity supply on average 11 percent higher salary.

In the category of information technology, as a predominantly male profession, this difference between the sexes is the smallest (<http://www.express.hr/ekonomix/zene-u-hrvatskoj-zaraduju-10-posto-manje-od-muskaraca-4340>).

Croatia is still a fairly conservative country under the strong influence of the Catholic Church, which especially shows in public reactions to topics related to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons. Same-sex relations between men and between women are not prohibited, but households headed by same-sex couples do not enjoy the same level of legal protection as household of heterosexual couples.

Croatian Medical Chamber and Croatian Psychiatric Association, since 1973, treat homosexuality as a normal variation of human sexuality. Sexual activity between same sex is legal in Croatia since 1977.

Croatian Parliament (since 2003.) approved the Law of Gender Equality: In Article 6, paragraph 3, the law prohibits "discrimination based on sexual orientation." Article 16 Paragraph 2 of the same act prohibits "public presentation and representation of women and men in an insulting, disparaging or demeaning manner, with regard to gender and sexual orientation."

Croatia admits *life partnerships* of the same sex since 2014. Despite this, the Civil Partnership Act of 2014 gave same-sex couples the same rights as male-female couples, except the possibility of adopting children. However, there are laws that allow an individual adoption in which one of the partners adopt a child, and in the event of the death of a life partner, the care of the child takes second life partner. In Croatia, the law prohibits all forms of discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

ILGA 2015. ranked Croatia as fifth out of 49 countries that are for the rights of LGBT people, which is an improvement compared to 12th place in 2014. In 2016, Croatia fell on the same scale by 4 places and is now in 9th place.

Croatia is one of 11 members of the LGBT Core Group of the United Nations to combat violence and discrimination.

Women are extremely under-represented as carriers of activities in the news, but also as relevant persons and experts who are required statements on a particular topic or issue. The enclosures in which women are carriers of activities they are often emotional, they are presented as victims and are either praised or blamed. The data that women more often than men gain a diploma in higher education institutions confirm that the unequal representation of women and men in television news is not a reflection of their lack of involvement in socio-political life, but the reflection of choosing the journalists and the editors (Knezević and Car, 2011).



Governmental organisations: Government Office for Gender Equality, County Commissions / Committees for Gender Equality, City Commission, Municipal Committee, From the work of county / local committees

Nongovernmental organisations: B.a.B.e. (<http://www.babe.hr>), Women's room (<http://zenskasoba.hr/>), Cesi (<http://www.cesi.hr/>)

The head of an independent body to combat discrimination in the area of gender equality is Visnja Ljubicic. She is pronounced the Ombudsperson for Gender Equality by the Croatian Parliament on 28 October 2011.

Joint custody under the current law is only possible with the agreement of both parents, but when it does, the practice is more sympathetic to the mother. Of the 4,000 children whose parents were divorced in 2014, 3,500 of them were awarded to mothers. The reason is the fact that fathers often do not want custody, and that we are still a patriarchal society (članak s portala, travanj 2016).

The mother of the child, who has the beneficiary rights to maternity exemption from work, after the expiration of 70 days from the delivery she can, because of employment or self-employment, discontinue the use of the right to maternity exemption from work. The father of the child has the right to use the remaining part of the unused rights, in accordance with his employment status, with the mother's written consent and regardless of employment status of the mother (www.hzzo.hr).

Partner organization: International Center for Peace and Integration, Georgia

Georgian society is quite interesting in Gender, in our culture in some point women and men are equal but this itself has many discriminations. However, the country still belongs to traditional/closed societies, with a traditional culture, where patriarchal norms are dominant and it is accepted to think that women, due to their gender role, should be engaged in household chores and child raising and that they are not required to be active in social and political life. Even in language there are many discriminatory stereotypes: for ex. when man is getting marriage people say: “he has got wife” and same with woman they say: “she has got married” – like she moved from one owner (family) to another (husband). Most dramatic situation in Gender inequality is in villages, where people are very traditional and new generation are rising on same ideas and values, where man is the head and the leader of family and woman has rights in theoretical level but not practically. They are driven by man.

The biggest influence on gender inequality, in our country has religion, where the men are the main important role-players and leaders, where women have to accept men’s ideas, where women have to bring kids, not just regular one, “really good kids”, where women are mothers and their main and primary goal is to be the mother and then other all duties. It comes through traditions, like same mechanism is controlling and killing women rights. Most curiosity is what mechanism do men have to control wives, daughters, mothers. As tradition man is one who has to work and to maintain family, not so clear what it involves if you don’t really go deeply in this “rule”, if only man works, then it come only he will have money and he will control how to spend it, no work for woman, no money, no finance independence which is the main reason in many cases that women cannot leave husbands. Next to me there are many people that cannot work because their husbands does not wants, and a lot that they cannot divorce because of their families, who are thinking that it's shame, if you divorce.

Here we want share with you live example, how the society thinks about family roles in Georgia.

In respondents asked about whether men make better executive leaders, a great majority again approved when a large number of youth said that they would not vote for a woman in presidential elections. As we see, in general, a manager is still seen as an exceptionally masculine role. In 20th century it started that women in Georgia took part in politics but nowadays this statistics get fewer, after what Georgian politician women used politic discrimination and they made kvot for political parties and they are forced by women to take them in their parties but people still are not accepting women in politics, which I can say from statistics where The last results are from the data of 2011, when a large number of youth said that they would not vote for a woman in presidential elections. As we see, in general, a manager is still seen as an exceptionally masculine role.

Georgia ratified the “Millennium Development in Georgia” (2007) document, according to which the Georgian government was obliged to take responsibility for eliminating the gender gap in employment and ensuring equal access for women’s enrollment in politics, both of which are to be fulfilled by the year 2015. Even after this, we still have big problem in employment of women, where woman has “cheap-worker” function, on the same job woman and man has different salary, in 2014s statistic women average salary was 618 and men's 980.

According to Rainbow Europe’s ranking, Georgia came 31th from among 49 European countries, winning a higher score than Switzerland, Italy, and the majority of Central and Eastern European states which assessed each country’s legislation regarding rights of LGBTI people. (2016) <https://rainbow-europe.org/country-ranking>

The parliament adopted a new law against discrimination in all spheres, covering both sexual orientation and gender identity; a court agreed that gay and bisexual men shouldn’t be banned from

donating blood; and the ombudsman proved supportive of LGBTI issues. The government and parliament also adopted comprehensive human rights strategies, and Georgia signed international treaties with both the European Union and the Council of Europe. However, the country found itself under pressure from pro-Russia forces labelling LGBTI people as a Western import.

On the other hand, there are many unsolved and ongoing problems. That's true, we have the law, but there are serious obstacles in implementation of it. Members of the LGBTIQ group still continue to face violence, oppression, and harassment from the general public, as well as specific institutions, including medical facilities and the workplace. The high level of aggression towards lesbian women may be attributed to the iconic role, function and understanding of sexuality prescribed to the woman in Georgian culture – it is this asexual archetype of the Georgian mother that lesbianism essentially violates, and, it is likely that this precipitates a higher degree of aggression towards this group.

Stigma, Discrimination and Violation - these are main problems for LGBTIQ community in Georgia. Religion is against for “not traditional orientation” relationships, which motivates local people not to be tolerant, to behave aggressively and stigmatize LGBTIQ people. That is fact, Georgian Orthodox Church has huge impact on majority of population.

We live in a world that is stratified along lines of gender, race, ethnicity, class, age, disability, sexuality and in which the privileges, disadvantages and exclusions associated with such categories are unevenly distributed. We also live in a world which is increasingly saturated by media, information and communication technologies. Media if don't shape, definitely influences how we perceive gender relations. In post structural terms representations of gender in the media and reality are unsuitable. Most women who appear in the media are young, white, with able bodies, apparently heterosexual and conventionally attractive. In most commercials women are portrayed as loving wives and mothers, responsible for raising children and doing housework, while men have been perceived as the head of the household. Usually women are more often presented in commercials because they are thought to be in charge of everyday purchases. While man generally advertise cars, cigarettes, alcohol women mostly advertise cosmetics and domestic products. On the other hand, male stereotypes are also perpetuated in the media, depicting “an ideal man” model, who is successful, athletic, seducer of women with a fancy car. Moreover, lots of commercials are directed to children, indicating what is proper for boys and girls. For example, girls are shown as babysitters playing with dolls, cleaning house, cooking whereas boys play computer games, war games, and other games based on power and dominance.

Center for social sciences - The mission of the center is to support the development of a creative, evidence-based research in Social Sciences in Georgia that would be useful for society. They have many programs and one of them is Gender Equality. The main objective of the program is to examine Gender Equality issues in Georgia based on academic and applied research, as well as conduct an effective analysis and foster political models essential for institutional development and establishment of Gender Equality. The Centre for Social Sciences explores different aspects of Gender Equality. On the one hand, it examines the processes ensuring promotion of Gender Equality at the institutional and public level, and attempts to identify the barriers hindering successful implementation of Gender Equality policy in the country, on the other.

The research interests of the Centre entail the following aspects: reveal the attitudes of the Georgian population towards gender-related issues, evaluate the current gender policy, study different aspects of gender equality and provide recommendations, analyze the gender equality legislation and carry out comparative analysis of Georgian and International legislation.

The main goal of the Gender Equality Program is to lay the foundations for the mainstreaming of gender issues in Social Sciences in Georgia. Correspondingly, the studies conducted by the Gender



Equality group will be accessible for the specialists in the respective field, experts, political circles and the general public.

In The Office of the Public Defender of Georgia is created a structural unit on gender equality issues – the Department of Gender Equality - and pays special attention to integrate gender equality issues in human rights protection activities.

Well, we have this department, but in general, no one is listening to them. They are working on recommendations, but it stays on the paper and is not taken in consideration by government.

In gender equality most problematic force meets in public transport, when man has to give own chair to woman, if she does not have one. In high level they think it comes from polity but it is not really pleasure for men. For girls discrimination is when people saying that, also in my case, that I can't do because I am woman and not man.

Sex- selective abortions in Georgia: <http://eca.unfpa.org/video/gender-biased-sex-selection-georgia>

Partner organization: Inceptus, Lithuania

On one hand woman's situation in Lithuania all the time is a specific and more difficult, because we still have quite a strong patriarchal context. Of course, we cannot say that we still live in a classical Patriarchate conditions, but Lithuanian men believe that women's duty is primarily a house and children, rather than a professional activity and self-expression. Sometimes man cannot ensure the financial welfare of the family and they wish that his wife has to work, but women's work must not interfere with family. Also we think that the widespread prejudice is that women can't hold high and responsible posts and earn more than men. Jokes like this reflect very basic roles in the family: "Man tells friends: responsibilities in our whole family are divided so, that my wife is engaged in internal affairs - such as food, housing, clothes, children's education and health, spending holidays and etc., and me – in external, such as whether to enter the army in Syria or not".

Very common in Lithuania also is the distribution of the "feminine" and "masculine" professions and jobs. For example, in education system the workers are mostly women, a teacher (man) at school is very rare, and almost impossible to find at the kindergartens. Sewing factory in Visaginas accept men to work on the stereotype that men are not enough due diligence for such work.

On the other hand, there is strong stereotype in Lithuania that women suffer most from violence in the family, but research shows that women are more psychological violent with their husbands. There are even cases where women are physically violent.

According to Gender Equality Index Lithuania scored 43.6 out of 100 points and by this measure was 18th out of 28 countries of the European Union. Best Lithuanian result was in health, the worst - time distribution and politics. This is related to the country's past - Lithuania peasant and catholic country with strong family traditions and the traditional approach to gender roles in the family and in society. It is also influenced by the Soviet experience, where the woman was required to be not only a mother and wife, but also a useful member of society and work in the same way as a man.

Politics, as already mentioned, this is an area where Lithuania is very lacking visible gender inequality. There is a view that the policy and decision-making - is unfeminine work. There are only 24 % women in Lithuanian politics. This can be explained by the fact that political parties led by men only and they do not encourage involvement of women in the politics. So our country has no a quota system – such as in some Scandinavian countries.

But in spite of this fact our President since 2009 is woman; in 2012-2016 the head of the Lithuanian parliament was also woman. But there are only 2 ministers-women (out of 14) in the government. It is worth to mention that in the previous government, a woman was a minister of national defence.

In Lithuania the situation with gender pay gap is better than on average in European Union. In 2013, the gender pay gap stood at 13.3% and it was 3% lower than EU average. If we look at the gender overall earnings gap in Lithuania the situation is even better as it stands at 12.3%. In comparison the average gender overall earnings gap in the EU is 41.1% or 3 times (!) more than in Lithuania. The gender pay gap in Lithuania stands in double digits percentage because of a few reasons:

Firstly, Lithuanian women tend to spend periods off the labour market more often than men, so these career interruptions not only influence hourly pay, but also impact future earnings and pensions;

Secondly, management and supervisory positions are overwhelmingly held by men. Within each sector men are more often promoted than women, and paid better as a consequence. This trend culminates at the very top, where amongst CEOs less than 4% are women;

Thirdly, women take charge of important unpaid tasks, such as household work and caring for children or relatives on a far larger scale than men do. Working men spend on average 9 hours per week on unpaid care and household activities, while working women spend 26 hours – that's almost 4 hours every day. In the labour market this is reflected by the fact that more than 1 in 3 women reduce their paid hours to part-time, while only 1 in 10 men do the same.;

Furthermore, segregation in education and in the labour market. This means that in some sectors and occupations, women tend to be overrepresented, while in others men are overrepresented. In some countries, occupations predominantly carried out by women, such as teaching or sales, offer lower wages than occupations predominantly carried out by men, even when the same level of experience and education is needed;

Lastly, pay discrimination, while illegal, continues to contribute to the gender pay gap

Lithuanian Gay League defences and represents the interests of the non-traditional sexual minorities.

Lithuanian approach to homosexuals is quite tolerant, particularly among the young generation. But given the fact that the country has a very strong Catholic tradition, the society does not support the idea of marriages of such people and especially children to adoption. Politicians talk about partnership, but it is not recognized as a marriage and family.

(-) In Lithuanian media sometimes we can read negative information about the country's President, such as she is not a real woman, because is not married and has no children.

(++) In 2014 there was a big scandal in connection with the advertising of the meat shop. Importantly, the man filed a complaint, an investigation was conducted and shop's administration paid a fine.



(-) In some cases, tickets to the same event - such as the party at nightclub costs differently for boys and girls. For girls they can cost three times cheaper.

(+) Almost each job description does not indicate the employee's gender now.

There are some organisations in Lithuania; the oldest and the most recognized in the country non-governmental organization is Women Information centre which was established in 1996. The centre implements programs to combat violence against women, to prevent the trafficking of women to combine family and work commitments, to promote women's entrepreneurship, women and men equal opportunities, organizes educational campaigns to raise awareness. As an example - educational

project "Gender Equality - a profitable investment", which took place almost in all the country's municipalities.

Also centre provides free legal advice to women, is the European Women's Lobby and the Equal Opportunities Commission members

<http://www.moteruinformacijoscentras.lt/>

There is no special ombudsperson for gender equality. But Lithuanian Parliament adopted the Republic of Lithuania Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men on 1 December 1998. This law came into effect on 1 March 1999. The first Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson (hereinafter – Ombudsperson) was appointed on 20 April 1999. The Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson (hereinafter – Office) was established on 25 May 1999 by the Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania. On 1 January 2005, a new Law on Equal Treatment came into force. At present, the Law on Equal Treatment establishes 13 prohibited grounds of discrimination: gender, race, nationality, language, origin, social status, belief, convictions or views, age, sexual orientation, disability, ethnic origin or religion. In 2014-2015 the newly appointed Ombudsperson visited all the country's municipalities. Youth Job Centre and Visaginas House of Creativity organized after it informational seminar for school people about equal opportunities and gender equality. We follow their work in Facebook, the media and on its website www.lygybe.lt

Last year in the local group on Facebook we initiated discussion about the invitation to the party for the men in one of the clubs in Visaginas. This ad looks like this:



We wanted to know whether it is advertising a striptease, or is it a picture applies to all women attenders.

The most specific thing in Lithuania on our opinion is that employers in our country reluctantly employ women, as they can have a baby and get away for a year or two. While in Lithuania since 2008 the law allows men also to take leave for child care.

Partner organization: Tineri in Europa, Romania

In Romania, we think that people are very unaware of gender inequality. Everybody thinks that is normal for women to have less rights and also less skills. A very important stereotype in our country are women from the countryside where they have to obey the man.

The estimated ratio of men to women in the Romanian politics is very low. According to a study, only 11% of seats from the parliament are occupied by women. This percent puts Romania in one of the last places from Europe, regarding the presence of women in the parliament. At the moment there are some political parties that encourage women to engage in politics, we even have some projects to attract women to engage in politics.

In Romania the medium gender pay gap is around 7%. Men tend to have better earnings than women. Also in the work field at the moment there are 53% men and 47% women.

The LGBTIQ community in Romania may face various legal challenges. Romanian population, in general, are very conservative when it comes to LGBT rights. We are not very aware of the LGBTIQ community in Romania, but we think many people hide their feelings because of the fear that the society will not accept them. Although people are having a very bad time accepting this community, they have become more visible in the last 5 years as a result of the annual parade from Bucharest ([Bucharest Pride](#)).

One of the good examples of mediatisation for gender equality is represented by the movements from the IT industry that encourage young female students and women to enter in the area. In the last years, many NGOs and IT companies have organised events for female participants in order to attract them into the IT world, one believed to be, until now, a men's world. Some bad examples of media campaigns may be represented by the movement of the traditionalist organization "Coalitia pentru Familia Traditionala" which started a campaign against legalizing same sex marriage based on the fact that "3 million people represent the voice of Romania and they must be heard", where the 3 million people are the sympathisants of the movement that signed their petition.

The most important non-governmental organizations from Romania are: "ACCEPT" organization, "ActiveWatch", "CPE - Central Parteneriat pentru Egalitate", etc... As an example ACCEPT is the first organization from Romania that defends and promotes the LGBT rights. Their biggest realization the the first LGBT parade from Romania, named GayPride 2005.

In Romania, the Ombudsperson is named Victor Ciorbea and amongst others principles, the second one states that everybody has equal rights and equal chances, that everybody is equal in front of the law and that the Romanian state guarantees equal chances for men and women to occupy position in the public sector. Regarding media coverage, or notoriety of this man's job in Romania, it is very little.

We can give like a personal example the small villages from Romania (usually where are grandparents live), where women are often beaten by men and discriminated just because of the gender

The biggest gender problem in Romania is found in the poorest and uneducated counties from the region called Moldova, where the rape rate is very high and has been growing 2.5 times the average in the last years. Probably, the issue comes from the lack of education caused by poverty, leaving people with centuries old mentalities, still treating women like objects, as this cases mostly occur at the countryside, where access to education is almost impossible.

Partner organization: Renaissance Institute, Turkey

In addition to the KSGM and the Ministry for Family and Social Policies, there are a number of platforms composed of governmental units, civil society actors and stake holders that are working in the field of gender equality policy. In 2005, an Advisory Board on the Status of Women headed by the Minister of Women and Family Affairs, later the Family and Social Policies, was established with the participation of representatives from the ministries, academic institutions and NGOs. In addition, women's associations are very active. For example, 126 women organizations participated in the Medeni Kanun Kadın Platformu [The Civil Code Women Platform] as well as in the Women's Penal Code Platform. In addition, a women's platform composed of 220 women organizations, Şiddete Son Platformu, participates in the movement to stop all kinds of gender based violence. Since 2011, there is also a Women Platform for the Constitution, formed by women's associations which lobby for their demands on gender policy in the Constitution Platform and Constitution Reconciliation Platform.⁶ The Women Platform actively presents its own views by sending its proposals to all the main policy makers (Anayasa Kadın Platformu 2007).

Culture and Religion is the biggest two factors of the gender inequality. Turkey is not a unified society it is country that is the heritage of a big empire. In terms of culture we cannot say one word about it. Because there are lots different kind of people around and different life styles. In Turkish old culture woman is important and it is as strong as men in the society. But if you think about the religion because of the origin, you can feel the Arabic life style. And in Arabic life style woman is very at the back of the real life.

Women's political participation is one of the most important indicators in the assessment of gender inequality in all countries. In order to increase female political representation in localities; structural, social and cultural burdens that create barriers to women's empowerment should be considered. In the case of Turkey, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's contribution should be noted, as he believed in the absolute equality between men and women. Particularly, human rights were given to women within a short period of time, during the nation state building. At this time, only 27 countries other than Turkey gave women the right to vote for their political leaders.

Tansu Çiller (female), the 22nd prime minister of Turkey, was in office from 1993 to 1996; and remains far the Country's sole female prime minister. Women deputy ratio at the Turkish National Grand Assembly was %4,5 in 1935. It has been raised upto %14,7 (82/550), after 80 years. Sweden and Finland have the best women deputy ratio in Europe, respectively %45 and %42,5. As far as United Nationdata's, Worlds women deputy ratio is %22; Turkey ranks 91th. Nowadays in Turkey, there are 27 ministers in the council; however, only %3,7 (1/27) of them those are women. If wed were to make a comparison amongst the countries in Europe, the highest women ratio could be seen in Sweden (%54,2) and Norway (%50). According to the 2014 statistics, %2,9 of the mayors in Turkey are women. When we look at the Municipal Council, this digit raises to %10,7.

When it comes to the 'situation of the parties in the assembly'; women deputy ratio varies from %7 to %39: Hdp (Peoples' Democratic Party): %38,9, Chp (Republican People's Party): %15,5, Akp (Justice and Development Party): %11, Mhp (Nationalist Movement Party): %7,5.

The principle of equal pay is reflected in Article 5 of the Turkish Labour Law. The principle of 'equal pay for equal work or work of equal value', and that the application of certain protective measures on the basis of sex shall not justify the payment of a lower wage, are explicitly expressed in this Article. However, the Turkish law does not indicate how work can be assessed to be of equal value. Because of different sources, as well as different calculation methods; data, regarding the gender pay

gap in Turkey, has to be considered with caution. Sources point toward a significantly higher gender pay gap in favor of men; of between %10 to 30%. Particularly, according to the (latest) OECD statistics, 2010, gender gap -in favor of men- in Turkey is 20,06, amongst at a total average of 15,345. On the controversy, in a study, dated 2011, using the 2006 Household Labour Force Survey of the TUIK (Turkish Statistical Institute), it is seen that when it comes to the prime working age (25-54 years), the wage gap (between male and female) in urban Turkey, is rather narrow. Measured in terms of geometric means of monthly wages, the gap between the two demographic groups is found to be %8 in favour of men. With this ratio, Turkey would be evaluated with a low gender wage gap, among other countries. The study concludes and shows that the main reason for the narrow pay gap is the highly selective nature of women wage workers. Working women are not randomly selected in the labour market; female workers earning a wage have above average observed and unobserved skills. This is an interesting feature of the Turkish labour market.

LGBTIQ communities in Turkey;

Kaos GL - Ankara - www.kaosgl.com

Pembe Hayat - Ankara - www.pembehayat.org

SPoD LGBT - Istanbul - www.spod.org.tr

LGBTT İstanbul - www.istanbul-lgbtt.net

Lambda İstanbul - www.lambdaistanbul.org

Siyah Pembe Üçgen - İzmir - www.siyahpembe.org/

Bursa Özgür Renkler - Facebook.com / Özgür Renkler Derneği

Gökkuşağının Kızılı - Facebook.com / GokkusagininKizili

Sosyalist EBT - Sosyalistebt.wordpress.com

Queer Adana - Facebook.com / [lgbtadana](https://www.facebook.com/lgbtadana)

Mersin LGBT 7 Renk - Facebook.com / [MersinLgbt7Renk](https://www.facebook.com/MersinLgbt7Renk)

Hebun LGBT Diyarbakır - Facebook.com / [groups](https://www.facebook.com/groups/hebunlgbtdiyarbakir)

Voltrans - Trans Erkek İnsiyatifi - vol-trans.blogspot.com/

Kırmızı Şemsiye - Ankara - Facebook.com / [Kirmizi Semsiye](https://www.facebook.com/KirmiziSemsiye)

T-KULÜP, Trans Erkek Kültür Üretim Platformu - [www.transsicko .blogspot.com.tr/](http://www.transsicko.blogspot.com.tr/)

Queer Kıbrıs - Facebook.com / [queercyprus/](https://www.facebook.com/queercyprus/)

-Other Groups



Afyon LGBTİ İnisyatifi : Facebook.com / afyonlgbt

Bursa Hayatın Renkleri ve Özgürlük : Facebook.com / Hayatın Renkleri ve Özgürlük

Çanakkale LGBTİ İnisyatifi: Facebook.com / canakkalelgbt/

Çorum - Gökkuşığı Çorum LGBTT Dayanışma Derneği : Facebook.com / groups /
840094459382634/

Dersim Roştıya Asmê (Ay Işığı) LGBTİ: Facebook.com / groups / 590585604341271/

Diyarbakır LGBT Amed Hevjin Facebook.com / groups / 220580981427901

Ekişehir - Kuir Eskişehir : Facebook.com / kuirskisehir

Gaziantep Zeugmadi : Facebook.com / ZeugMadi/

HEVI LGBT : Facebook.com / groups / 572188219494275/

İskenderun Özgürlüğün Renkleri LGBT : Facebook.com / iskenderunlgbt

Kars LGBT Blok : Facebook.com / groups/205473029611865/

Kocaeli LGBT İnisyatifi : Facebook.com / kocaeli lgbt nsiyatifi

Malatya Gökkuşığı LGBTİ : Facebook.com / groups / 1745003112401963/

Mersin LGBT 7 Renk : Facebook.com / Mersin7Renk

Trabzon Mor Balık LGBT: Facebook.com / trabzon lgbt

-University Groups

LGBTİ Öğrenci Hareketi: Facebook.com / lgbt ogrenci hareketi

Akdeniz Ün. Pembe Caretta LGBTQ: Facebook.com / pembe caretta lgbt

Bilgi Gökkuşığı: Facebook.com / Bilgi Rainbow

Bilkent Renkli Düşün: Facebook.com / groups / 164604536894670/

Boğaziçi Üniversitesi LGBTİ: Facebook.com / bogazici LGBTIarti

Dokuz Eylül Eşit Şerit: Facebook.com / DeuEsitSerit

Ege Üniversitesi LeGeBIT: Facebook.com / legebit/

Hacettepe H.T.K.O: Facebook.com / groups / hacettepe.htko/



iÜ Radar - İstanbul Üniversitesi : Facebook.com / iuradar

iTÜ Cins Arı: Facebook.com / itucinsari

Liseli LGBTİ : Facebook.com / liseligbti

ODTÜ LGBTİ Dayanışması: Facebook.com / groups / 5633719938/

Yeditepe Ün. 7 Tepe 7 Renk : Facebook.com / 7tepe7renk/

- Politic groups

SDP LGBTİ: Facebook.com / sdplgbti

CHP LGBT: Facebook.com / CHPlgbti

Milliyetçi LGBT: Twitter.com / ulkuculgbt

AK LGBTİ: Facebook.com / aklgbti/

Komünist LGBT: Facebook.com / komunist lgbt

The LGBT community in Turkey faces powerful threats:

1. Harassment and discrimination of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender individuals is a daily occurrence in Turkey. Discrimination is reinforced by the government's attitude. Turkish officials have described homosexuality as "a disease" and rejected proposals for legal protections for LGBT citizens. Homophobic comments from prominent government officials are the norm rather than the exception.
2. Violence. With horrifying frequency, this culture of discrimination has sparked violent attacks. Transgender Turks, in particular, have been subject to widespread violence. Complaining to the police can be risky; Turkish police often treat those filing complaints as criminals rather than victims.
3. Freedom of Expression. The government has attacked expressions of LGBT identity through public morality laws. Often these cases can be as absurd as they are tragic. "Gay" is one of the terms blocked by a government-sponsored internet filter.
4. Freedom of Association. Turkish officials have also attacked the rights of LGBT citizens to Freedom of Association. LGBT groups in Turkey have been subjected to repeated audits and officials have attempted to shut them down under public morality laws. The government reportedly fined one LGBT group, Pembe Hayat, or Pink Life, for submitting required documentation too early!
5. The problem of military conscription. Turkey has universal male conscription and, because it treats homosexuality as a disease, precludes gays from serving. Those who do serve in the military but are later discovered to be gay are treated as criminals, charged with having committed "unnatural intimacy," and subject to dismissal.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XaXuRWAt03g>



Governmental:

Advisory Board on the Status of the Women: It belongs to the office of the prime minister, and aims to increase gender awareness in public policies. Women's Status Directorate General: It belongs to the State Ministry Responsible for Women and Family, and aims to protect and promote women's rights, improve women's social, economic, cultural and political status and ensure that women enjoy equal rights and opportunities.

Women's NGO's Projects:

KAGIDER (Business Women Association)

KAGIMER: Women Entrepreneurs Development Center

KAGIMER aims to support women candidates to start-up small enterprises. All women entrepreneur candidates are equipped with necessary knowledge about running a small business. Later, they are evaluated according to their business plans; and some are selected for start-up assistance. The project includes entrepreneurship trainings and an office to selected 60 participants, and a start-up support to 5 potential entrepreneur projects.

Projects of KA-MER (Women's Center)

KA-MER is one of the main women organizational networks, centrally managed in Diyarbakır; and is working through its 23 provincial branches in East and Southeast of Anatolia. KA-MER is specialized on sexual violence; and especially on honor killings. It has a wide network, from local to global; not to mention the fact that it was also nominated as 'one of the best examples of good practices in combating against violence', by the government of France, -with the award of Legion D'honneur-.

AÇEV Anne Çocuk Eğitim Vakfı (Foundation for Mother and Child Education)

Project for Gender Equality in Education and Social Life, The Project aims to reduce gender inequalities in education, and to increase the participation of women in activities outside of the domestic sphere. The project is being implemented in Diyarbakır, Mardin and Şanlıurfa, which are all provinces with low literacy rates in Turkey; and also in Istanbul, which is Turkey's most highly populated metropolis that takes in the highest number of migrants from the eastern provinces. Illiterate women, parents who have primary school-aged daughters, community members, local authorities, journalists, non- governmental organizations, national policy makers, and media organizations comprise the target group of this three year project.

Ombudsperson for women and children rights: The establishment of an ombudsperson institution (hereinafter referred to as the "Institute" or "Institution") under legislation (in Turkey) was approved by the Parliament, in June 2012. The institution is to investigate complaints about the legality and fairness of the acts, procedures, attitudes and behavior of the public administration within a human rights-based concept of justice; and accordingly, to make recommendations to the public administration.

The chief ombudsperson is elected by the Parliament and is assisted by five ombudspersons; one of whom is specifically responsible for women and children rights. In the present time, Mrs. Serpil ÇAKIN is the Ombudsperson in Turkey, responsible for women, children and disabled persons rights. In order to raise the applications of the institute, they place emphasis on communication with universities, with the ministry of family and social policies and with the women research centers of the Bar's of Turkey. Additionally, the institute organizes visitations to women shelters. An important point about applying to this institution is that; according to Article 7 of the Bylaw of the Ombudsman Institution Law, "infringement of interest shall not be sought in the event that the complaint is about



human rights, fundamental rights and freedoms, women rights, children rights and general issues concerning the public".

To illustrate the studies of the Institute, here is an example from 2015:

At the time of the civil servant recruitments for the Airport Rescue and Fire Fighting (ARFF), -organized by the General Directorate of the State Airports Management (DHMI), Turkey-, it was stated that: being a "male" is required as a qualification to apply for the job. This was reported to the Institution. As a result, the Institution came up with a resolution that; "this requirement of qualification is a breach to law, equity and to the international conventions Turkey is a party of, and therefore that this requirement of qualification should be abolished and that DHMI should change their implementation in this respect.

The Constitution clearly states that Turkish laws do not discriminate on the basis of gender, and guarantees equality before the law. Yet when it comes to protecting Turkish women against violence, ensuring their rights of education and employment, and even their right to choose their own spouse, women face layers of discrimination. Child marriages and domestic violence are the most visible forms, with around 30-35% of all marriages in Turkey involving under-age girls, rising in rural southeastern Turkey to up to 75%. Domestic violence against women is reckoned to have reached epidemic proportions. The women killed by their partners every year. Many Turkish politicians reinforce the view that women's role in society is that of traditional home makers and mothers.

Partner organization: NGO Unit, Ukraine

The biggest problem of gender equality in Ukraine is that the most of the people can't see any difference between gender and sex. Religion, tradition, social norms, which based on it, makes unacceptable for majority to get this difference, especially about LGBTIQ. So gender equality in Ukraine associated with male/female equality. Almost all materials, which we found in Ukrainian segment of internet, was built around men/women equality. Also the problem is that ukrainian gender equality more declarative than real. and it's not a problem of social politic, but problem of traditional division of roles for each sex. In people's minds it is same as for long time ago. Needless to say that LGBTIQ community always faced with discrimination.

Biggest influence on gender equality in society is religious tradition and and upbringing according to it. That's the basic things, that forms world vision, which discluding gender as a notion. And also people in Ukrainian doesn't have enough of information about this issues and defining the concept of gender in wrong way. But even if we will look at the "Ukrainian gender", we will see different conflicting points in male/female equality. Social poll showed that 50% of people participate in it thinking that occupy the highest executive post more right for man, 30% thinking it is better for woman, and only 20% thinking it is same right for both sexes. It's just a short but so truthful sample of social system in Ukraine. The patriarchy society can't accept new roles for women and judging new roles for men as well. It's treating like strange thing when husband stays at home as housewife when his wife making business or just working and earning good money.

Politics and gender equality - what is estimated ratio of men to women in politics, number of seats occupied by women in parliament, are there any political parties encouraging women to engage more in politics.

The situation with women in politics seems to be rather disappointing, yet not hopeless.

According to the statistical data, gathered by International Center of Perspective Studies (Міжнародний центр перспективних досліджень), Ukrainian parliament is occupied by 12% of women, 50 women in total. Their political affiliations are following:

15 women in Block of Petro Poroshenko.

12 in National Front («Народний фронт»). 15% from the general membership. Victoria

Siumar holds a position of a deputy chairperson of the parliamentary faction.

12 in 'Self-help' party («Самопоміч»). 34% from the general membership.

5 in Homeland («Батьківщина»). Yulia Tymoshenko holds a position of a chairperson of the faction.

3 in Radical Party of Oleh Liashko.

3 in Oppositional Block.

8 of 21 committees are without women representatives at all.

Mostly, women tend to occupy the committees of humanitarian scope of interest.

In 2011, a study concerning the issue of women presence in politics has revealed that voters' attitude to it is far more loyal and encouraging that the one asserted by actual deputies'.

Recently, a couple of sites has been created to conduct an effective gender monitoring of the women participation in politics and provide the public with the necessary information:

<http://vybory2012.wcu-network.org.ua>

<http://50vidsotkiv.org.ua/>

In various sectors, the pay gap today is 25-41%, where males earn more than females for comparable jobs. However, on the entry level the disparity is only around 28%, while at the higher ranks it is over 40%. Analysts point out that women typically head companies that earn money in hryvnia, while the firms that create income in hard currencies (US dollars, Euro) are habitually headed by men. As the

national Ukrainian currency keeps falling, the pay gap between genders widens. The findings are based on data of the Ukrainian employment portal Rabota ('Work').

With the subsequent ousting of pro-Russian president Viktor Yanukovich – who was known to court president Vladimir Putin's favour by emulating his infamous "anti-gay laws" – the LGBT community was optimistic that attitudes would change. However, two years on many have since found that persecution and prejudice continues, and that the freedoms called for by the protesters in Kiev's independence square have been unevenly applied in postrevolution Ukraine – particularly when it comes to sexuality. In the western city of Lviv local authorities announced earlier they could not protect a festival organised by an LGBT organisation, allowing the hotel where the event was about to take place to become surrounded by farright activists in masks shouting "kill, kill, kill". The organisers were forced to cancel the event and leave the city over fears for their safety.

<https://youtu.be/ipz79x5Ag2k> - good one

<https://youtu.be/qUS4my23RVU> - in Ukrainian.

Article 51 of the Constitution specifically defines marriage as a voluntary union between a man and a woman. No legal recognition exists for same-sex marriage, nor is there any sort of more limited recognition for same-sex couples. On 23 November 2015, the Government approved an action plan to implement the National Strategy on human rights in the period up to 2020, which include the promise to draft a bill creating registered civil partnerships for opposite-sex and same-sex couples by 2017, among others.[9][10][11] On 25 September 2016, the European scientific studies detected that Ukrainians display higher levels of homophobia than Albanians and Italians, confirming the central role of cultural differences in homophobic attitudes. After having failed to gain enough votes on 5 and 9 November 2015, the Ukrainian Parliament approved an anti-discrimination law banning sexual orientation or gender identity discrimination at work on 12 November 2015.[13][14] A similar law (that law would have barred employers from rejecting workers based on their sexual orientation) was indefinitely postponed on 14 May 2013.[15][16] The law passed on 12 November 2015 was an EU requirement for Ukraine to move forward in its application for visa-free travel to the Schengen Area.[13] Before the vote of this bill Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada Volodymyr Groysman strongly spoke out against same-sex marriage. There is a national hate crimes law that could be interpreted as including sexual orientation and gender identity, but that has not been decided by the courts.

We have the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights Valeriya Lutkovska. Since 2012, she has appointed Aksana Filipishyna as a chairperson for Children Rights, Non-discrimination and Gender Equality Department. Her recent concerns appear to be the widely ignored rape cases on the Eastern Ukraine, in the conflict zone. Nevertheless, her work has been hugely lacking press support. The necessary information one can find on certain sites, yet mass media sphere is primarily concerned with another set of problems. Internet, in particular Facebook, keeps performing the role of a main medium to translate gender issues.