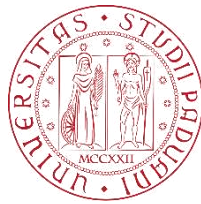


UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI PADOVA

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**Master's degree in
European and Global Studies**



**Good Governance and Institutionalisation of Gender Impact
Assessment (GIA)**

With the focus on a case of Georgia

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Abstract

Gender inequality remains a persistent challenge in contemporary society, almost in all domains of life. Despite the shared commitment among nations to integrate gender mainstreaming approaches into domestic policy frameworks following the 1995 Beijing Conference, the desired progress towards promoting gender-sensitive policies and closing gender inequality has remained unresolved, even after 28 years. Hence, this underscores the strong need to focus on gender mainstreaming tools such as the Gender Impact Assessment (GIA) and foster better implementation of them, in order to close gender gaps and promote gender-sensitive policy approaches on a global scale.

The thesis tries to explain how gender mainstreaming tools, especially evaluation tools such as the Gender Impact Assessment (GIA), can play a crucial role in achieving gender equality and improving better governance at national levels. For this purpose, the thesis collects theoretical and empirical knowledge related to Good Governance, Gender Mainstreaming and Gender Impact Assessment and delivers a case study coming from Georgia, a country with economics in transition, as the United Nations (2023) labelled. By using the Georgian case, the thesis tries to find an explanation for why Gender Impact Assessment (GIA) matters and how it should be institutionalised, what the crucial benefits of the process are, and how the instrument should close gender inequalities, provide better governance, and achieve better gender sensitivity in public institutions, especially in developing countries.

Focusing on the case of Georgia develops new knowledge and contributes insights for Georgian public policymaking, due to the fact that it reviews challenges, progress, and opportunities for institutionalisation of Gender Impact Assessment and better Governance at the domestic level. Nevertheless, the thesis attempts to frame the process of institutionalisation of Gender Impact Assessment by providing examples coming from European and non-European states and by using empirical evidence remarked by international organisations.

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List of abbreviations

AGE	Agency for Gender Equality
CPI	Corruption Perception Index
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EQI	Gender Equality Institute
EU	European Union
GA	Gender Analysis
GBA	Gender-Based Analysis
GDP	Gross Domestic Production
GEC	The Permanent Parliamentary Gender Equality Council
GEOSTAT	National Statistics Office of Georgia
GGI	Good Governance Initiative
GIA	Gender Impact Assessment
GII	Gender Inequality Index
GIZ	The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
GRPFM	Gender-Responsive Public Financial Management
IRI	International Republican Institute
IA	Impact Assessment
IE	Impact Evaluation
ILO	International Labour Organization

IMF	International Monetary Fund
NDI	National Democratic Institute
NCPE	National Commission for the Promotion of Gender Equality
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development
OGP	Open Government Partnership
PEFA	Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability
PDO	Public Defender's Office
RIA	Regulatory Impact Assessment
SDIA	Sustainable Development Impact Assessment
UNHCR	United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WB	World Bank
WESP	World Economic Situation and Prospects

Introduction

General overview of the topic

Traditionally, government policies and legislations are considered gender-neutral instruments based on the assumption that the specific policies, programs, or adopted changes benefit all members of society equally. Regrettably, structural gender inequalities are still firmly rooted in our society. Despite the fact that domestic laws at different national levels treat gender groups equally, women still do not have equal access to material or non-material assets. Inequality in accessing material resources fosters inequalities between women's and men's economic, political, or social lives. Based on this fact, strong economic support by states is highly invaluable. States have to juggle between identifying gender inequalities between social groups and staying focused on defining specific target groups while also planning policies in order to maximise outcomes of adopted policies in a broader picture and from a long-term perspective. However, state policies are not always neutral. If policies do not consider the needs of the genders in a broader term, we should label it as a non-neutral but gender-blind approach. Some countries still do not take any or effective measures to conduct gender equality at the state level. Gender bias may be hiding in government decision-making, which raises risks of promoting inequality or discrimination.

The Global Gender Gap score published in 2023 by the World Economic Forum vividly shows that the overall progress for all 146 reported countries does not excel in gender equality adequately. The average number of gender gap worldwide stands at 68.4%. The data for 146 countries show that the overall score improved from 68.1% to 68.4% from the 2022 and 2023 editions, highlighting a 0.3 percentage point improvement. However, if we look at the score of the 102 countries continuously covered from 2006 to 2023, the average score of the gap is 68.6% (World Economic Forum, 2023). Unfortunately, the average score for the gender gap is still low despite slow progress. As World Economic Forum (2023) notes, at the current rate of progress, it will take more than a hundred years to reach full parity and increase the overall gap rate from 68.6% to 100%.

The core roots for adopting an actionable and result-oriented approach for states toward implementing gender-sensitive policy-making and gender mainstreaming, in general, started 28 years ago when the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action were adopted and shared

by 189 member states. One of the core aspects of the Platform requires states to adopt and commit to implement action plans to ensure that gender perspectives are reflected in all policies or programs at the state level (United Nations, 1994). The significance of the The platform was shared by all ratifying states, and the roadmap for achieving gender equality was clearly set out. Sadly, the mission of the member states has not been accomplished yet, and gender equality still remains undiminished.

If states promote gender aspects in their work and strengthen gender equalities, we assume that they support gender-responsive policies. The International Republican Institute (IRI) (2020) records that gender-responsive policy-making does not only help women or promote their work. It also addresses the needs of specific groups. Gender-responsive policy-making focuses on the different needs of all people, regardless of their sex or gender. Gender-responsive policy-making is considered as smart policy-making by the IRI, since policies are more productive, outcome oriented and effective for social groups. As it is given by the report prepared by the IRI (2020), by taking into account the needs of both men and women, including gender components in policy planning helps to ensure higher-quality policies. As a result, needs and demands are taken into account equally at all stages of policy development. It helps policies to effectively respond to the needs of the majority of citizens - women, men, girls, and boys - rather than just the needs of men as a socially dominant group. The social benefits of achieving equality in any sector or field are significant. This is especially evident in public policy management, because the goal of public policy is to adequately provide for public needs and requirements. It is particularly crucial for governments to consider the power, authority, and capital they have to influence people and social gender groups through the policies they develop. If governments are not interested in or have the resources to implement gender policies, this creates the risk of creating gender insecurity in the country or deepening existing inequalities. The integration of the gender component in the policy-making process does not only include identifying the needs of women and men in social programs. It is essential to carry out a gender analysis of the legislation for all areas in order to examine gender inequality or gaps in the law that contribute to the strengthening of inequality in the long term (IRI, 2020).

Incorporating gender components and thinking about achieving gender equality in the policy planning stage can have positive outcomes in the long term and promote closing gender inequalities in different fields of life. Firstly, incorporating gender analysis in public policy design deliberates better content of policy proposals and improves outcomes of it. Moreover,

it fosters the maximisation of resources available to satisfy all needs of social groups equally, including women and men. Secondly, allocating disaggregated data by sex and gender and promoting using this exact data for policy planning process promotes better policy-making. Generating such data strengthens the visibility of challenges society or particular sex/or gender groups face, gender inequality gaps getting clearer and obstacles that affect women's life negatively become better understood by public servants or other professionals involved in policy drafting. Lastly, thinking about gender components in public policy also requires using gender-neutral and gender-sensitive language communication through policy-making. EIGE (2019) recommends that policy and lawmakers have always used gender-sensitive language, because gender visibility in policies has a positive effect on society.

Gender mainstreaming, as an approach and a concept to policy-making that focuses on taking into account both women's and men's concerns, needs, or interests, still remains an actual, key working dimension for the Beijing Declaration and the Platform. States continue improving conditions in this specific area. According to the Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD), gender mainstreaming can be defined as a strategy that incorporates a gender lens into policy-making, and can assist governments in achieving more equitable outcomes. This can also aid in increasing public trust in governments, strengthening democratic institutions, and combating gender stereotypes (OECD, 2016).

Gender mainstreaming is a broad concept that includes some instruments under the umbrella term. One of these, is the Gender Impact Assessment (GIA) which should be considered as a basic method that the governmental structures could use for gender mainstreaming when it refers to policy evaluation. As we have already noted, gender inequality is an important and permanent social problem. Public policy can have a major impact on gender equality, tackling social inequality, including gender inequality, and promoting equal access to opportunities, resources, and rights for women, men, and other gender identities. Therefore, the thesis aims to examine how the institutionalisation of GIA helps states to respond to gender inequality at national level, conducting gender mainstreaming through using this specific instrument and how the process affects good governance.

Since the GIA tools are linked to conducting gender mainstreaming, deep research toward understanding GIA is highly valued. It has to be highlighted that most of the scientific research with the focus on adapting or institutionalising GIA tool is mainly focused on the

European Union country's experience. Thanks to scientific and practice-based research, we have a clear understanding of how EU member states achieved success in implementing gender-based evaluation systems and gender mainstreaming in public policy, institutionalised GIA and promoted gender equality.

Research methodology: goals, objectives, research questions

The research aims to investigate the link between the concept of Good Governance and the policy evaluation instrument - GIA, for which we aim to bring up the case of Georgia. By using the case of Georgia, the thesis aims to analyse how the adoption of evaluation tools like GIA can influence the provision of better policy-making and therefore, improve good governance in the long term.

The goal of the thesis is to analyse the institutionalisation of GIA in the case study of Georgia to understand whether and how the institutionalisation process of this instrument is beneficial for good governance in Georgia. Before we argue more about the case study itself, it has to be highlighted that most of the existing research studies have a qualitative nature due to the fact that the GIA requires in-depth case studies and of the process itself. Most of the academic work is mainly done using case studies, learning best practices, and reviewing existing literature and through desk research. In qualitative analysis, the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) represents the most important institution in the European Union with gender equality aims. Manuals like the “Institutional Transformation, Gender Mainstreaming Toolkit” (2016) published by EIGE, for example, aim to guide the European Union and its member states to promote better inclusive policies. Some other studies, like the “OECD Toolkit for Mainstreaming and Implementing Gender Equality” (2015) has also focused on statistics and numbers, and has particularly looked at how the GIA was adopted, in which countries, and how the scope expanded in these countries through the process of institutionalisation.

There is a lack of research regarding institutionalisation of GIA practices in developing countries, learning its effects on good governance and gender-sensitive governance approaches. In their reports and manuals, organisations like OECD and EIGE primarily focus on developed countries and best practices from mostly EU member states. For example, in the manual “Gender Impact Assessment, Gender Mainstreaming Toolkit,” published in 2016, EIGE only concludes achievements and practices coming from European Union states. The

same approach is shared by the OECD as well. For better understanding, in the article “Governance tools and evidence to promote inclusive decision-making,” OECD collects practices and lessons mainly from EU member states which are also covered by EIGE studies. As it seems, reports and manuals highlight experiences from countries that have a long history of conducting GIA in their practices, which are mostly EU member states. Some other reports, like “Guidance: Gender-based Analysis Plus in Impact Assessment.” published in 2021 by the Impact Agency in Canada, also focuses on a single case coming from a specific country. Moreover, many academic papers also prioritise learning cases from developed countries. For example, Fray (2008) overviews a case of Germany, learning gender mainstreaming practices and adoption of the GIA process at the national level, Sauer (2018) in the article “Gender in the Impact Assessment of the European Commission” analyse GIAs at European Union level and EU approach toward implementing gender-sensitive policies.

Only a few studies are related to learning the adoption of GIA in developing countries or countries with economics in transition. Primarily, these papers analyse specific cases. For example, the article “Gender-impact assessment: Toward a universal application in large development projects in Vietnam” prepared by Pham (2022) investigates gaps and challenges for hydropower development projects in Vietnam. Another example comes from Ukraine, where “Gender Impact Assessment of the COVID-19 Pandemic in Ukraine” was learned by Ivanov and Bronchekov in 2023. It still seems like a challenge to learn the adoption practices of GIAs in developing countries.

With the aim of addressing aforementioned gaps in research, the thesis analyses the institutionalisation process GIA in economies in transition, and specifically the case of Georgia. The thesis focuses on learning practices from countries classified as “Economies in transition,” by the United Nations (2023). The United Nations uses three main categories of states (developed economies, economies in transition and developing economies) based on their economic conditions, as defined by the World Economic Situation and Prospects (WESP). According to the latest data by the United Nations published in 2023, the “Economies in transition” group of countries includes: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia, Macedonia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Republic of Moldova, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan (United Nations, 2023).

The reasons for choosing Georgia are twofold. First, my deep familiarity with the state context and previous work experience regarding strengthening gender-sensitive policy at the national level in Georgia. Second, Georgia has significantly improved gender-sensitive policy-making processes over time and especially in the last seven years, mainly because Georgia started continuous ratification of international conventions on closing gender inequalities. International agreements significantly promoted improving domestic legal framework and state policies on gender equality. As it is highlighted by a study published by the Parliament of Georgia in 2021 titled “Gender Equality – Barriers and Recommendations,” since 2017, Georgia has made significant strides in promoting gender equality and eliminating violence against women through changes in legislation and domestic policy, including measures in order to implement international obligations taken by the state. Georgia managed to create a solid legal framework for achieving meaningful gender equality in the last few years. For example, some amendments were made to the Law on Elimination All Forms of Discrimination, which had a positive impact on compliance with international standards. In particular, a record about the Public Defender was included in the Organic Law of Georgia. This record extended the Public Defender's mandate to individuals through legal regulation, just like it did for public agencies. Under private law, individuals and legal entities were required to provide information to the Public Defender (Parliament of Georgia, 2022). Additionally, Georgia started working on the adoption of gender mainstreaming instruments like GIA and strengthened work on Gender Audit and Gender Budgeting as well (Parliament of Georgia, 2022). A few important changes happened in Georgia between 2014-2020 but we highlight some of them, which significantly promoted discussion on adoption of gender mainstreaming instruments, specifically GIA, Gender Audit and Gender Budgeting. Firstly, within the decree of the Government of Georgia November 1, 2019, №2328 on the National Document on Sustainable Development Goals, Georgia defined relevant objectives and relevant indicators for the state. Secondly, Georgia took its responsibility to ensure and promote gender equality, provide social policies in terms of equality, accessibility and financial sustainability through Association Agreement between Georgia, European Union and the European Atomic Energy Community and its member states. Moreover, Resolution of the Government of Georgia №629 of December 20, 2019 provides a responsibility for relevant bodies to take into consideration various cross-cutting issues (like gender, ethnic minorities, vulnerable groups) while formulating goals and objectives in sector policy documents (Parliament of Georgia, 2020). Later on, Georgia started promoting gender mainstreaming instruments for better policymaking.

We believe that it is interesting to investigate how Georgia takes some examples and best experiences coming from European Union member states regarding GIA and its adoption at the national level, especially because Georgia was granted candidate status by the European Union in December 2023 (Council of the European Union, 2023). It is crucial to analyse how the GIA is institutionalised in Georgia in order to have a clear understanding of existing challenges and gaps.

The process of institutionalisation of GIA is not investigated from an academic point of view for the case of Georgia. There are only a few reports that summarise the process of GIA in Georgia, like “Gender Equality in Georgia: Barriers and Recommendations,” published by the Parliament of Georgia in 2022, and “Review of Georgia’s gender mainstreaming obligations and their fulfilment status,” published by the Public Defender’s Office of Georgia (PDO) in 2021. No research papers were found that analysed the process of adoption of GIA in Georgia and the challenges related to this process.

Another important point regarding the case of Georgia is the Soviet background of the state. Post-Soviet countries put much effort into shaping democracy and protecting human rights effectively (Juviler, 1998). As Bingham (2012) argues, concepts such as gender equality or even gender mainstreaming are mostly seen as Western concepts in post-Soviet states that are not indigenous to the region. Moreover, gender issues and women’s rights take a longer path to be seen in domestic political agendas because women were often identified as wives, mothers, and secondary workers in the Soviet Union, and patriarchal thoughts were pretty strong under Soviet Union ruling (Bingham 2012). Furthermore, it has been argued that “Soviet-style gender equality, limited as it was, was abandoned in favour of the promotion of “traditional” gender roles for women, meaning a focus on the home and motherhood” (Rutland, 2023, p.16). In the Soviet Union, women had limited employment opportunities; there were labour inequalities and a high rate of poverty among women. Moreover, women did not play a role in decision-making, either in parliaments or other representative bodies or agencies. Based on the rigid patriarchal thoughts in societies it was a challenge for newly independent states to bring up the issue of providing gender equality in their political agendas (Bingham, 2012). The research done by Bingham (2012) highlights that gender mainstreaming, as a strategy to improve the quality of public policies, programmes and projects, has been mostly studied within the context of the European Union (EU) enlargement process to Central and Eastern European countries, like the Baltic States, which, in the middle of the 1990s, were asked to

ensure an adequate approach toward gender mainstreaming in compliance with international agreements (such as Beijing Platform for example) as criteria to become members of the EU. As Bingham (2012) notes, the Baltic States have adopted policies regarding gender-based violence because of their membership in the EU.

Even though Georgia has a post-Soviet political background, the state managed to have some significant achievements in protecting human rights. Bingham (2012) notes that Georgia has been one of the most productive countries in this regard, passing most of the legislation to combat gender-based violence. Joining international agreements and conventions significantly helped Georgia to take further steps against gender inequality. These steps are explained in Chapter 4 in detail.

Georgia made rapid progress in conducting good governance and improved its principles over time. Democratic and public administration changes after the 2000s shaped Georgia's discourse regarding good governance. The term of good governance is linked to a new mode of governance where private actors, and civil society are in cooperation with governmental institutions, take part in formulation and implementation phases of public policies (Mayntz, 2003). Regarding good governance, a few aspects have to be mentioned to understand better the changes that occurred in Georgia. The Caucasus region was characterised by electoral fraud, manipulation of widespread apathy, and resignation in the early 2000s (Charles & Fairbanks, 2004). In the fall of 2003, these trends dominated the presidential elections in Armenia and Azerbaijan and the parliamentary elections in Georgia. Shortly after the presidential election in Georgia in 2003, a brief, non-violent series of protests started in the capital Tbilisi. Participants in demonstrations made Mr. Eduard Shevardnadze, a president of Georgia, resigned. The revolution, called the "Rose Revolution," ended up democratically choosing a new president. Mr. Mikheil Saakashvili, a newly chosen president of Georgia, developed rapid systemic reforms in public administration governance and democracy (Charles & Fairbanks, 2004). The main focus of Mr. Saakashvili was promoting good governance principles, and some success was seen over time. International indexes and reports show the significant changes in Georgia in the years 2003-2004. For example, Georgia scored 53 out of 100 (on a scale where 0 is the worst and 100 is the best result) on the 2023 Corruption Perceptions Index reported by Transparency International, while in 2003 the country scored only 18 (Trading Economics, 2024). Moreover, on the rule of law, one of the core principles of the concept of good governance, Georgia is named the best performer in Eastern Europe and

Central Asia in (2021). Regarding the principle of the absence of Corruption, Georgia occupies first place in Eastern Europe and Central Asia and 31st place at global level. In the dimension of Open Government - Georgia holds first place in Eastern Europe and Central Asia and 45th at global level (OECD, 2022).

In recent years, Georgia improved its position not only in rankings and indexes toward good governance or ensuring its principles, but also related to providing gender equality. For example, Georgia ranks in 55th place worldwide in the Global Gender Gap Index of 2022 (World Economic Forum, 2022), ranking better than EU member countries, like Italy, Slovak Republic, Czech Republic, Poland, Hungary, etc. Moreover, Georgia ranks as first in the Caucasus region in this index in 2022 while only two years earlier (in 2020) the position of Georgia was 74th (World Economic Forum, 2020). Positive results have been seen for Georgia in the Gender Inequality Index (GII) data of (2020), which reflects gender-based disadvantage in three dimensions - reproductive health, empowerment and labour market. It illustrates the loss of human development potential brought about by the disparity in male and female accomplishments in these areas. It goes from 0 (equal performance for men and women) to 1 (maximum performance for one gender across all measured dimensions). According to international rankings and indexes, Georgia has continuously decreased its inequality rates over the years. Georgia achieved significant achievements for gender equality in the past 30 years (Asian Development Bank, 2018). Over the years 2006-2017 Georgia's ranking in the World Economic Forum Global Gender Gap Index (WEF GGI) declined gradually. The GGI index benchmark progress towards gender parity and compare countries' gender gaps across four dimensions: economic opportunities, education, health and political leadership. A parity score of 1 indicates full parity. The gender gap is the distance from full parity (World Economic Forum, 2023). Parity scores were improved for Georgia over time and the state managed to improve its position in global rankings. For example, In 2017, Georgia ranked 94th out of 144 countries, compared to 90th in 2016, 88th in 2010, and 54th in 2006 (Asian Development Bank, 2018).

In this thesis will be investigated the relationship between GIA as a policy evaluation tool and good governance, as well as it will aim to understand how the institutionalisation of GIA might affect better governance and in which way. Hence, the thesis **aims to answer the following questions:**

- a) How has the instrument of GIA been institutionalised at the national level in Georgia, and to what extent does it align with the core elements of institutionalisation defined by international organisations such as EIGE and the OECD?
- b) What are the key barriers, challenges, and necessities in the institutionalisation of GIA in Georgia, and how can the adoption of GIA contribute to boosting good governance and its principles in the country?

Structure of the thesis

Regarding the organisation of the paper, it comprises five chapters in total. **Chapter 1** provides a review of the literature on institutionalisation. The subsequent section introduces the concept of good governance, exploring its various dimensions and how it intertwines with policy evaluation. A particular focus is placed on understanding the interplay between good governance and the evaluation of policies. Furthermore, Chapter 1 analyses how good governance and policy evaluation should be institutionalised and what are main characteristics of the processes. For this purpose, we overview some scholars and experiences from European countries. At the end of the chapter we collect insights on how and why gender components have to be incorporated in good governance and policy evaluation. **Chapter 2** shifts the focus towards GIA. It elucidates the process, highlighting the essential steps and considerations involved. Chapter 2 also explores the needs and utility of GIA, drawing insights from practices in use in the European Union member states and in Canada.

Chapter 3 provides an examination of good governance in the specific context of Georgia. It explores the existing practices, challenges, and successes in achieving good governance over the period (2004-2022). Moreover, it delves into the state of gender equality in Georgia, examining both international and domestic measures in place to promote gender equality. The chapter concludes with an overview of how GIA is integrated into the national framework and what is a historical involvement of GIA in Georgia.

Chapter 4 is devoted to the research insights of the thesis and expands analysis of GIA and its institutionalisation in Georgia. This chapter collects core insights from interviews, done with Georgian experts in gender issues. Chapter 4 provides an in-depth analysis of GIA in

Georgia: it reveals challenges, gaps and needs of the state and finally, it raises a question on how the landscape should be improved for adopting GIA in Georgia,

The last chapter, **Chapter 5** brings together all insights coming from literature review and findings from the research. This chapter synthesises key takeaways and brings up concluding remarks regarding institutionalisation of GIA in Georgian context.

Chapter 1: Literature review

This chapter is devoted to reviewing the literature that addresses institutionalisation and good governance and its main principles and characteristics. The chapter also discusses the importance of policy evaluation both in terms of general and good governance and explains how the evaluation tools and good governance should be institutionalised in practice. We also refer to the specific instrument of GIA, for which we use empirical knowledge, reports, and studies developed by Governments, the European Union, and International and European organisations. The chapter revises both theoretical and empirical research by providing an understanding of the theories of good governance and institutionalisation, describing the policy evaluation tools such as GIA, and presenting best practices, especially regarding institutionalisation.

1.1 Theories of institutionalisation

There are a variety of terms and understanding approaches to the concept of “Institutionalisation,” and there is no one widely accepted yet. David Selznick (1966) was one of the first to develop a theory of institutionalisation as a process requiring more elements than technical requirements (Bhasin, 2017). According to the online Encyclopaedia Britannica, the process of institutionalisation should be understood as “a process that aims to regulate societal behaviour within organisations or in societies” (Britannica, 2023). The term by Britannica includes three core elements of the process. Namely: a) Rulemaking, b) Rule adaptation or developing best practices, and c) Rule of change, replacing old rules with new ones (Britannica, 2023). The term is “associated with becoming accepted, permanent, stable and normative” (Abeygunasekera, Bandar, Wynn & Yigitbasioglu, 2021, p.3). It is also connected to the practice of adoption or routinisation process (Abeygunasekera et al., 2021, p.3). To sum up, “institutionalisation” should be understood as a term related to the process of adapting something somewhere to make this specific ‘x’ product part of the whole.

For example, the Cambridge Dictionary suggests understanding the term as: “to make something become a permanent or respected part of a society, system or organisation” (Cambridge Dictionary, 2023). Merriam-Webster Dictionary explains the term as “to make

into an institution: give the character of an institution, especially to incorporate into a structured and often highly formalised system” (Merriam-Webster, 2023).

Weber's core analysis focuses on examining economic institutionalism and, precisely, how changes in economic practices are correlated to a change in cultural mentality (Nau, 2005). According to Nau (2005), Max Weber develops an idea of the rules of the game and considers institutions as a representation of such rules. This author also argues that institutions represent a collective value system coming from society and that all ideas, interests, or needs have to be reflected by institutions (Nau, 2005). Hence, if institutions adequately represent the rules of the game in a society, they can define approaches to problems and promote stability of behaviours in society (Nau, 2005).

Institutionalisation is a complex process. Since institutions have power to change rules and processes in society and manage the process of governance, conducting efficient rules and procedures are important in order to manage institutional change and provide an adequate process of institutionalisation itself. The organisations in systems have a significant role to create and define norms to regulate major units and organisations. The process of institutionalisation is linked to the possibility of change (Eisenstadt, 1964). These are possibilities not only for general, unspecified change, but also for more specific changes that emerge not randomly, but in relatively specific directions, which are largely determined by the institutionalisation process itself. As a result, a systematic structural analysis is required for an adequate change analysis (Eisenstadt, 1964).

Eisenstadt (1964) sees institutionalisation as an organisation of societally prescribed systems of different behaviour oriented to the solution of problems seen in main areas of social life. Analysing ancient empires such as Roman, Byzantine, and Ottoman Empires and some European states in the period of Absolutism, Eisenstadt (1964) develops an idea that it is significant for rulers to realise their aims toward dependants and building up strong links and cooperation opportunities with political entrepreneurs and Emperors who had vision and ability to develop new political entities. Moreover, this scholar argues that making a large population freed from ascriptive, like kinship, aristocracy, made better commitments for rulers and improved human capacities (Eisenstadt 1964).

Bhasin (2017) highlights that institutions are those who work for society and the ones who build up rules. Institutions can be defined as a collection of procedures (informal or formal), routines, norms in the organisational structure. They also include perceptual learnings and more rules within the organisation. Moreover, according to Bhasin (2017), all institutional factors can shape organisational structure. In other words, “institutional factors” mean formal and informal schemes of the organisation, norms, schedules and routines which are sort of authoritative guides for social behaviour. Additionally, institutionalisation is a process that fosters a common understanding of what is fundamentally meaningful behaviour (Bhasin, 2017). Institutionalisation requires accepting the “way things are” and the “ways things are to be done” and as soon as a practice is institutionalised, it becomes a routinized practice, hence a commonly repeated action (Abeygunasekera et al., 2021, p.3). A similar approach is found in Burns and Carson (2000) who argue that social rules define patterns of actions and generate opportunities for social actors to behave in specific ways (Burns & Carson, 2000). On the micro-level of culture and institutional settings, the rules of the system include language, cultural codes, institutional arrangements, paradigms and norms, “rules of the game,” social grammars (e.g., procedures of order or voting in committees) (Burns & Carson, 2000). Social grammars of action indicate specific ways of thinking and acting and social rules are significant for action and interaction. Burns and Carson (2000) believe also that formal and informal rules have equal significance. Specifically, formal rules like legal codes, handbooks of rules or regulations reflect the desire of dominant groups (political groups or elites) to fix social settings in a certain way. At the same time, informal rules appear less “legislated” than formal rules because they are reproduced in ongoing interactions. Sometimes, formal rules are not always the rules that operate in practice perfectly, but these are the informal rules which are more “natural” beliefs and driven by institutions naturally. Finally, Burns and Carson (2000) emphasise the importance of institutions and the way in which institutions might change social rules through institutional work. Firstly, they argue that an institution constitutes a particular social order, positions and relationships, access to and control over resources. Then, it coordinates and regulates specific settings to constitute the institutional domain. Third, it provides a normative behaviour including roles of the participants within the domain. Next, it is important to build up a cognitive domain to help participants understand what goes on in the institutional domain. Moreover, institutions provide core values, norms and beliefs about normative discourses and make clarity on goals related to institutional domain. Lastly, institutions have to define a complex approach on how to coordinate with “focal points” for example (Burns & Carson, pp. 7-8).

It has been argued that institutionalism should be historical, sociological and political (Bhasin, 2017). As Farrell (2018) argues, historical institutionalisation is all about understanding institutions and structures which are stable over the long run and shape particular forms of political and social behaviour. On the other hand, such institutions play a crucial role in making rules and procedures, policies, and actions over time. Historical institutionalism believes that it is essential to understand the political outcomes of institutions because institutions solve collective action problems (Thelen, 1999). Historical institutionalism began with a different mission; it aimed to describe an approach that focused on institutions and their grounds related to change processes. However, scholars found other tendencies. For example, scholars found that the relationship between political strategies and institutional constraints was flexible but more dynamic. Historical institutionalists started thinking about institutions regarding the change process (Farrell, 2018). Followers of historical institutionalisation tend to focus on the persistence of political processes and outcomes (Bhasin, 2017).

According to Hall (2010), institutions are not simply rules, but are connected to rituals and symbol systems. Institutions highlight the significance of informal and formal rituals and cultural shifts that build up new sets of symbols and acquire authority. Therefore, sociological institutionalisation is more than learning outcomes or the nature of institutions; it is the learning behaviours of people within institutions. Sociological institutionalisation is more interested in finding a distinct line between institutions and actual behaviour because how people act differs (Farrell, 2018). As Farrell (2018) notes, sociological institutionalism is more interested in explaining continuity than change. Sociological institutionalism works around the resource dependence model, considers world systems analysis and focuses on quests for legitimation in political organisations.

The last approach of political institutionalisation, namely, political institutionalism, is the main focus of the thesis. Political institutionalism emphasises the causal role of political institutions on political outcomes and processes. This theoretical approach, previously known as “state-centred” theory, focuses on more systemic and structural aspects of states because there is a belief that these organisations shape political identities, interests, and strategies (Bhasin, 2017). Political institutionalisation, and what is called as “rational choice institutionalisation,” also emphasises the importance of rights, transaction costs and the development of institutions (Hall and Taylor 1996)). Additionally, Bhasin (2017) highlights

the importance of technological change, legislation, and market forces when institutionalisation is in the process.

Moseley and Charnley (2013) expand the analysis of institutionalisation and investigate how much micro-process of institutionalisation matters. In particular, they argue that large-scale institutional dynamics and interpretation of those dynamics by decision-makers have to be learned. Scholars believe that a new policy may become institutionalised when it is understood to solve problems that old institutions simultaneously create and demand to be solved. For understanding the micro-processes of institutionalisation, Moseley and Charnley (2013) bring up a conceptual model, namely the micro-process of institutionalisation of the system dynamics which influences decision-makers and apply it to the United States (US) political system. This micro-process includes three dimensions: 1) Pressure from “above,” 2) External pressure, coming from social, political, economic conditions and 3) “Internal” leadership which includes values, culture and skills.

As Moseley and Charnley (2013) picture, when pressure comes from “above” it means that pressure is done by the US Congress, the President, and any senior executives within an agency or an institution. Such a process includes legal requirements, budget allocations and policy directions by authorities which are the main drivers of the pressure itself. Mostly, all those elements exert powerful pressure from above to take actions down lines of hierarchy and persuade influence on national staff to implement or institutionalise things. Moreover, pressure might be external coming from conditions such as economic e.g., presence of market, cost of treatment, business capacity to participate in policy, biophysical e.g., biodiversity, social and political e.g., local support to policies, leadership, community dynamics (Moseley & Charnley, 2013). In addition to such conditions, external pressures may derive from active communication of local policy entrepreneurs or leaders. Moseley and Charnley (2013) believe that internal pressure should be a driver force as well, since the leaders in institutions have personal beliefs and values, ideologies and personal approaches regarding policy interpretation or decision-making. Moseley and Charnley (2013) believe that in any case it is important to know the dynamics of inter-institution and internal capacity before institutionalisation.

Institutionalisation itself can only be managed by considering some elements. Scartascini and Tommasi (2012) highlight that capacities are different in different states and within political institutions. According to Scartascini and Tommasi (2012) institutions have

capacities to function within a formal institution and capacities to provide changes. Scholars believe that learning actors and their power within institutions has a significant meaning before institutionalisation. Different countries might have different degrees of institutionalisation, including differences between formal institutions which participate in policy-making (Scartascini & Tommasi, 2012). Actors and institutions are presented with political investments and beliefs based on which their decisions are made. Therefore, learning beliefs of such institutions, as well as their expectations and self-reinforcement effects have to be reviewed while learning institutionalisation processes (Scartascini & Tommasi, 2012). Institutionalisation promotes the reflection of social dynamics within institutions (Scartascini & Tommasi, 2012).

Lastly, as Wiseman (2007) believes, institutionalisation improves knowledge at organisational level. Organisational learning is a cycling process and provides learning on individual and group level that is objectified on the organisational level, institutionalised and embedded in the organisational memory (Wiseman, 2007, p.1113). Institutionalisation strengthens allocation of information regarding to individuals or groups within institutions which should be available for future re-use. Institutionalisation processes promote better performance of organisations through collecting information, which comes from individuals or groups within the organisation (Wiseman, 2007).

1.2 The concept of good governance and its principles

The term “governance” is generally associated with a system of national administration, acts, manners and power of governing, and generally to the way in which “state is governed” or to the “method of government or regulation” (Weiss, 2000, p.205). Conversely, the concept of “governance” is more complex. As Mayntz (2003) explains, the concept of “governance” relates to the act of “governing” but its meaning has changed over time. As Treib, Bähr and Falkner (2007) notes, the concept of “governance” is a process of governing which departs from traditional understanding of governance, in which collective decisions are only taken by elected representatives. Bartolini (2011) reinforced the term by explaining differences between “governance” and “government.” According to Bartolini (2011), governance is more than the role of central institutions and hierarchical relationships, electoral responsibilities. The term

governance is more related to non-hierarchical governance where civil society and actors are equally involved in policy-making and decision-making. The concept of “governance” denotes a mode of “co-production” of decisions, policies, and rules. Another scholar, Rhodes (1996) also frames the term of “governance” as a self-organising network, a broader term than “government,” which is in charge of providing services for different sectors. Additionally, scholars such as Kohler-Koch and Larat (2009) highlight the multi-level nature of “governance” by bringing up the case of EU governance. As scholars believe, in the EU, decision-making is not monopolised and the process of policy-making involves cooperations between levels of state and non-state officials.

The current definition of governance is mostly related to a new mode of governing, which is non-hierarchical, and in which non-state, civil and private actors participate equally to formulate and implement public policies. Mayntz (2003) frames the term “governance” which includes a cooperation between state and civil society, a direct collaboration of public agencies and private actors in policy development. According to Mayntz (2003), there are some mixed networks of civil society and private actors found in defined policy sectors as well like public health or scientific research. Such cooperations between actors and networks is part of the modern governance mode of policy-making, Mayntz (2003) notes. This mode of governance should be powerful, but not dominant, which means that political and societal actors have to cooperate. Governance has to be open to different actors operating in decision-making and give them the possibility to intervene in this. In other words, different actors have to be able to take part in decision-making and in collaborations, although the state keeps the right of legal ratification of the legislation. Based on mode of governance, civic self-determination and hierarchical control should be combined rather than opposed to each other (Mayntz, 2003).

The term “good governance,” refers to all processes related to governing the institutions. Moreover, it is related to governing the institutions. Moreover, it is linked to processes and practices in how common issues are solved through effective measures and regulations (Weiss, 2000). Good governance contains an evaluative attribute of the process of governing. Besançon (2003) discusses that governance is the delivery process of political goods and good governance might be seen as a result when “nation-states provide a high order of certain political goods - when the nation-states perform effectively and well on behalf of their inhabitants” (Besançon, 2003, p.1). As Simonis (2004) briefs, the importance of the concept of

good governance is not new, but arose after the end of the Cold War. As Simonis (2004) highlights, “good governance” was not accorded much attention during the Cold War. Later on, a conjunction of several factors, like the end of the Cold War, a common feeling that market-based policies of structural adjustment failed to solve ongoing economic problems for countries, as well as ineffective aids for countries to achieve their objectives, made good governance a conditionality for the development of an assistance coming from donor agencies. According to Simonis (2004) the lack of specificity of the term “governance” fostered international organisations and donors to fulfil the concept of good governance and expanded its meaning in the late 1990s. Specifically, notions like transparency, accountability and participation (which are components of the current term “good governance”) were added by international donors and a re-thinking of the concept started in the mid-1990s. The reason why a re-thinking of the concept “governance” has become crucial is linked to the vague nature of the term itself. As Simonis (2004) highlights, despite the fact that the term “governance” existed, there was no clear understanding related to its components.

Taking a look back to the early 1990s, we find the historical roots of expanding the term “governance” and further discussions on “good governance”. At this time, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (WB) upgraded structural adjustment programs and developed specific criteria for countries seeking economic help from those organisations. For example, countries who suffered from economic challenges, like high inflation, sluggish Gross Domestic Production (GDP) were asked by international organisations to ensure long-term measures including restructuring the role of the state and a better allocation of resources. Moreover, they were asked to show an effective performance through conducting domestic reforms related to nepotism, bureaucracy and mismanagement. Furthermore, ensuring principles such as transparency connected to the process of development, accountability i.e., the responsibility of a government towards its citizens, and proper procedures, as well as better performance of distributing resources and reducing poverty took a significant role in the process (Nanda, 2006). As it is shown, organisations did not only include fixing economic conditions but also political requirements. As Nanda (2006) concludes, good governance became important starting from the year 1991, when the topic of good governance was addressed by the WB at its annual development economic conference. It was seen as a concept that could play a crucial role for states to exercise their power in a better way and conduct better management of economic and social resources, in order to be eligible to take financial support from international organisations, such as the World Bank, for example.

The WB significantly fostered states to ensure better governance through governance-related projects and programs and for this aim it stimulated the promotion of governance reforms in the public sector in fifty countries from the 1990s to 2000 (Nanda 2006). The WB continued to support states to help them allocate aid by focusing on efficiency and respecting the role of law, transparency and accountability in order to ensure better economic growth. In a while, the WB shifted the approach regarding good governance. Instead of promoting good governance to aid recipient countries, the WB integrated good governance and political conditions as its prerequisites for recipient governments (Nanda, 2006). The World Bank played a significant role in introducing and then boosting the use of good governance principles and promoting them as much as possible. Additionally, it boosted the promotion of democracy at the government level for recipient states.

Later on, the concept of good governance was integrated in the work approaches of other international organisations. To give an example, the United Nations defines good governance as a term that “promotes equity, participation, pluralism, transparency, accountability and the rule of law, in a manner that is effective, efficient and enduring. In translating these principles into practice, we see the holding of free, fair and frequent elections, representative legislatures that make laws and provide oversight, and an independent judiciary to interpret those laws” (Gisselquist, 2012, pp.6). Another definition is developed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) as follows: “Good governance refers to governing systems which are capable, responsive, inclusive, and transparent. All countries, developed and developing, need to work continuously towards better governance” (Gisselquist, 2012).

The concept of good governance is characterised by few conceptual dimensions, such as cooperative relationships between actors, combinations of principles of good governance and lastly, values performed by actors or institutions. The UNDP (1997) names some features of good governance such as political legitimacy and accountability, a free and fair judiciary, accountability of bureaucracy, freedom of information and expression, efficient public sector management and cooperation with civil society organisations. Strong cooperation between actors is a significant part of the discussion developed by Simonis (2004).

First of all, Simonis (2004) believes that good governance has to focus on supporting cooperative relationships between actors, put governments, civil society and private sector on the same field to strengthen facilitation, interactions and promote relationships between each

other in general. Secondly, good governance relates to combinations of principles of good governance, namely: participation, transparency of decision-making, accountability, rule of law and predictability (Simonis, 2004). Thirdly, the concept of “good governance” is linked to values performed by actors and institutions (Simonis, 2004).

There are nine core principles which characterise good governance as it is noted by Simonis (2004). Muhammad (2015) and Rahim (2019) expand the list of principles required for good governance given by Simonis (2004). For Muhammad (2015) good governance has to meet five core variables in order to perform good governance. These variables are: political freedom, constitutional and judicial protection of individual rights, a stable currency, provision of education and health care for all, and elected legislature. Rahim (2019) suggests six indicators of good governance which are crucial for the concept, such as transparency and accountability, non-violence and constancy in the political system, effectiveness of government long and short policy, eradication of corruption and quality of governance.

United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific, UNESCAP (2009) suggests a more detailed list of principles. The very first principle is connected to **participation**. The UNESCAP (2009) notes that good governance is participatory. Anyone who might be interested in decision-making or might be affected by it has to have an opportunity to participate in the decision-making process. Ensuring equal participation of genders is a crucial part of good governance.

The second principle relates to the rule of law. In fact, there should be not only equal participation in decision-making but also the provision of an adequate protection of human rights, as well as of minority groups. The principle of **rule of law** promotes decision-making in a consistent manner with the relevant legislation and common law approach. The third principle is **transparency**, which as Muhammad (2015) highlights, is one of the significant elements of the good governance concept. As he argues, transparency is connected to the process of development and ensuring the principle of transparency promotes better performance of domestic policies, laws and regulations (Muhammad, 2015). This exact principle means that information is freely available and easily accessible for those who are affected by the decision or policy initiative. Rahim (2019) believes that the role of different people can be productive in order to foster better reflection of voices of people in governance, participation of different social groups might increase the values of different races, religions,

cultures or languages. Good governance not only requires engaging citizens in decision-making processes, but also promoting the engagement of stakeholders in decision-making processes, promotes the idea of “ruling together” (Muhammad, 2015). This is related to the (fourth) principle of **responsiveness**. The principle of responsiveness means that the democratic governance respects people's rights, freedom and needs, takes them into account in decision-making, and holds decision makers accountable. Making economic and social policies more responsive to the citizen’s needs, make governance responsive (Muhammad, 2015).

Good governance also provides mediation between different interests in society and stays focused on consensus in order to fulfil the best interests of the whole community as it is possible. Good governance not only tries to respond to the interests coming from the community, but also develops a long-term perspective on what is needed for sustainable development. This fifth principle is defined as “**consensus-oriented**” (UNESCAP (2009)).

The sixth principle of good governance relates to **equity and inclusiveness**, which should provide better participation of all groups of society in decision-making, especially the most vulnerable groups. Good governance sees an adequate participation of social groups as a part of a better decision-making process, due to the fact that social groups have to vote and be given space to speak up on their needs, in order to maintain or improve their well-being (UNESCAP (2009)). In this way, the concept of good governance promotes better production of results by institutions to adequately respond to the needs of society. On the other hand, good governance has to reflect the needs of social groups equally in all policies. Inclusiveness is crucial because it promotes empowering of particular groups of society, vulnerable groups especially (OHCHR, 2023).

The seventh principle concerns **effectiveness and efficiency** which require high respect to sustainable use of resources and protection of the environment. According to this principle, decision makers have to develop a broad vision of how it is possible to ensure better performance of economic and social development and re-think how it is possible to reach the best outcome from available resources (Muhammad, 2015). Additionally, it is crucial that institutions promote meeting the needs of society and distributing resources in an effective manner. Distributing resources itself is linked to sustainable consumption of resources as well, protection of the environment and maximisation of outcomes, however, the core idea of

effectiveness should be considered as meeting needs of citizens while planning policies (OHCHR, 2023).

The eight principle refers to **accountability**. As Muhammad (2015) notes, accountability is linked to responsibility of the government toward the governed (i.e., the people). Accountability promotes better information and understanding of how powers and functions are exercised by government or governmental institutions in general. Moreover, accountability is not only connected to the government but also to civil society and the private sector. These actors are accountable to those who will be affected by their actions. Muhammad (2015) suggests two categories of accountability: vertical and horizontal. Horizontal accountability is a method toward structure accountability that relies on other institutions. On such occasions, performers of the assigned responsibility should be punished (public officer who does not perform the assignment properly). In vertical forms of accountability, civil society, citizens, media play roles in holding the powerful to account (Muhammad, 2015). The principle of accountability is tightly linked to the principles of transparency and rule of law (UNESCAP (2009)).

Some scholars consider **absence of corruption** as the ninth principle of good governance. For example, Muhammad (2015) underlines that corruption “almost became a norm today” (Muhammad, 2015, p.72). Therefore, corruption creates an obstacle for good governance. According to Muhammad (2015) governments have to provide appointment of governmental officials based on merit, fight against frauds and falsification of accounts in the public service.

All nine principles of good governance are considered by definitions given by the European Commission and OECD. The European Commission (2001) understands good governance as “rules, processes and behaviour that affect the way in which powers are exercised at European level, particularly as regards openness, participation, accountability, effectiveness and coherence” (European Commission, 2001, p.6). As the Commission highlights, all principles are equally important to reach democracy in all member states and apply them to all levels of government (European Commission, 2001). Conversely, the OECD considers principal elements of good governance as accountability, transparency, efficiency and effectiveness, responsiveness, forward vision and rule of law (Gisselquist, 2012).

According to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), when it comes to the human rights perspective, good governance primarily focuses on conducting human rights adequately through public institutions in charge of public affairs, of managing public resources and of guaranteeing that human rights are adequately put in practice. We can label governance as a “good” one, in case the governance delivers high responsibility and implementation of human rights, especially when it recognises civil, cultural, economic, political or social rights (OHCHR, 2023).

Implementing good governance should have many benefits for states regarding economic and social life as well. Rahim (2019) believes that good governance can provide better education, health and job opportunities, ensure equal rights in all fields mentioned with respect to laws. Besides, good governance can produce maximisation of outcomes by using available resources and supporting better welfare. Good governance promotes better mobilisation of civil society which performs better accumulation of human resources (Rahim, 2019). The positive linkage between good governance and national well-being rate was highlighted also by some other scholars. For example, Helliwell, Huang, Grover and Wang (2018) collect and analyse the data from 157 countries over the years 2005-2012 and illustrate that people are more satisfied with their lives when countries perform better governance quality. These scholars name several ways in which good governance can play a crucial role in conducting national well-being. For example, controlling corruption potentially promotes economic growth and increases national well-being rate, supporting better quality of democracy supports better lives and better public service delivery. The same findings are seen in the research done by Cárcaba, González, Ventura and Andoro (2017). These scholars investigated the correlation between good governance principles such as transparency, participation and accountability and quality of life. Cárcaba, González, Ventura and Andoro (2017) investigated 400 Spanish municipalities and they found out that there is a positive correlation between good governance (especially its principles such as transparency and participation) and the quality of life. Significant evidence found by Cárcaba, González, Ventura and Andoro (2017) highlights the importance of deepening the degree of citizen participation in decision-making processes which may lead municipalities to conduct better governance and excel better services for locals. Additionally, Simonis (2004) highlights the benefits of carrying out good governance if the rule of law, transparency and accountability is well-implemented. In that case, transaction costs are reduced, and better performance is achieved. Besides, performing good governance should have a good impact on strengthening democracy due to

the fact that participation of citizens is an important element of the concept of “good governance.” Applying good governance into practice is linked to conducting evaluation and promoting the enhancement of democracy through the evaluation process. As Stame (2004) argues, evaluation approaches promote transparency and public welfare, as well as provide information on results of actions, making it also easier for policy-makers to decide actions.

Some scholars go further and find economic benefits in using good governance. For example, Mauro (1995) notes that weak institutional efficiency, as well as high rates of political corruption interrupt economic growth. Hence, corruption and bureaucratic inefficiency are negatively associated with the investment rate.

Good governance can boost better governance, promote better participation of citizens in governing, provide better public policy, and promote values such as democracy. To do so, the good governance approach has to be incorporated into practice and become a coherent part of governance. However, it is challenging for states to adopt codes of good governance into practice and make them institutionalised. In the sense of good governance, with the term institutionalisation, we mean adopting all characteristics of good governance and its principles into practice to boost better governance for the governments or states. Enrione, Zerboni, and Mazza (2006) consider institutionalisation as a process linked to changes in rules, mental models, and practices through networks of actors and frame a map of actors who have to deal with the institutionalisation of good governance codes. In particular, they refer to "Lawmakers," as the actors who provide the law, regulations, or any other rules that have legit status to be operated. According to Enrione, Zerboni, and Mazza (2006), lawmakers are international regulatory organisations, national governments, or national public agencies with the right to produce laws, regulations, and listing rules. Institutionalisation as a result should be achieved when the code's prescriptions are considered within state organisations. However, institutionalisation does not necessarily mean providing a legal background to conduct good governance codes in practice but understanding its significance. Most corporations follow prescriptions and respect them even if codes of governance are not mandatory (Enrione et al., 2006). Besides, support by organisations or corporations is needed, and public satisfaction level is essential to achieving successful institutionalisation of good governance in reality (Enrione et al., 2006).

Nowadays, incorporating gender takes more attention day by day by states. It happens not only because they have to meet international agreements and obligations they take, but also because the understanding of inclusivity in policy-making takes much attention. Inclusivity of policy programs or actions is only possible if the voices of vulnerable groups are heard. If states aim to close inequalities in different fields of life, they can implement some actions. Firstly, they can promote domestic laws, regulations, and policies to fix existing inequalities or promote and allocate more financial funds to fight against gender inequality (Gupta, Hieronimus, Krishnan & Madgavkar, 2019). They can promote the participation of vulnerable groups, including women in different sectors, like education, public administration, and the health sector, to achieve better representation of social groups. Additionally, they can build better cooperation between civil society, stakeholders, and public agencies to allocate resources to reduce inequalities (Gupta et.al, 2019).

From a theoretical perspective, it is interesting to point out how the concept of good governance is linked to gender or gender equality in general. Black (2005) acknowledges that gender equality has not been a fundamental concern of “good governance.” Despite that, a state must promote women’s rights and gender equality through a domestic legislative framework. The lack of reflection on the needs of women in domestic legislation causes gender-related capacity and accountability issues, which causes insufficient actions and reforms by the government (Black, 2005). The author argues that a robust legal framework with a focus on ensuring equal human rights for all genders, as well as promoting gender equality, helps not only conduct better public reforms but also fosters better accountability systems. Precisely, such legal acts set the responsibility for accountable institutions to act impartially and gender-neutrally. Moreover, institutions with oversight functions (audit institutions, anti-corruption commissions, human rights departments or agencies, etc.) have a legal responsibility to foster gender equality (Black, 2005).

Taking a focus on gender components guides states to promote democratic governance. The system of gender has structural roots i.e., social roles and institutional roots i.e., rules and regulations, which influence how institutional resources are distributed. The gender system allows men a richer range of resources, including authority. Better governance is provided if men's and women's social norms and behaviours are seen adequately and organisational improvements regarding better rules and regulations are granted.

Gender equality is integrated into core principles of good governance. Good governance is all about ensuring that policies respond to the needs of all citizens. In that case, we have to think about the specific dimensions of the term itself, which are the political voice dimension, the public sector institution dimension, and the legal and anti-corruption dimension. It means that the voices of women have to be heard, and women have to be promoted in politics and the decision-making process. Moreover, women have to be promoted in the public sector as well. The needs of vulnerable groups, including women, must be reflected in public policies. For example, in Brazil the needs of women have been integrated into the state budget thanks to the assistance of women's organisations, non-profit organisations, and research centres, gender equality while the relevant staff started using gender perspectives in their work and improved approaches to gender mainstreaming in planning and budget design were also introduced (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, 2008). The scope should be expanded, and other gender mainstreaming tools besides gender budgeting should be developed more effectively. Good governance establishes the existence of groups or institutions that represent women's interests and needs. It is not unusual that gender-equity policies or reforms, initiatives, or policies are mostly asked for or lobbied by women's units and organisations (Black, 2005).

Gender-responsive governance programs should also include strengthening governments' capacity to provide efficient, effective, and equitable services to all citizens. Capacity building is one of the aspects that always has to be done by states to improve a good governance system (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, 2008).

If the aim of the state is to apply good governance in practice, some issues have to be tackled first. Firstly, it is crucial to address discriminatory, gender-blind approaches and legal frameworks. For this reason, some steps have to be taken. The transformation of the state from gender-blind into gender-responsive should be done through conducting sex-disaggregated data, which vividly shows inequalities between sexes at different sectors, as we see, for example, it in the case of the EU. Moreover, states have to ensure that women's needs and voices are heard and understood, addressed properly as well. For this reason, gender-sensitive, participatory decision-making mechanisms have to be developed or supported in a better way. The other way to do so by adopting tools of mainstream gender in the governance process (International Labour Organization, n.d).

When the governance system is gender-sensitive, it means that values such as efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability are respected (OECD, 2020). Relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability are named as evaluation criteria of gender-sensitive evaluation defined by EIGE (2022). Moreover, EIGE calls for evaluators to use gender expertise and integrate gender equality considerations while preparing evaluation reports. Ideally, gender equality issues should be mainstreamed in all sections of the evaluation report, not as a separate section dedicated to gender (EIGE, 2022). We should assume that if the gender component is incorporated in evaluation approaches, the gender lens is adopted in evaluation tools, and the evaluation system is better performed, promoting better performance of good governance. Logically, if the high performance of the evaluation system has a significant role in ensuring good governance as a whole, taking a focus on gender aspects in the evaluation system might be considered as a part of the process of good governance. OECD (2020), in its report published in 2020, highlights the importance of evaluation during the policy planning stage. OECD research (2020) revealed that GIA is the most commonly applied ex-ante evaluation tool with many benefits.

In particular, understanding the precise outcomes of the policy and understanding the accessibility of the policy for men and women promotes equal benefits for both genders. OECD (2020) also argues in favour of using GIA for a post-implementation review, which some states use and might be good practice for others too. Based on the analysis, we should consider the GIA as a core part and standard instrument of ex-ante, even for ex-post evaluation tools, which significantly help states conduct gender-sensitive evaluations and provide gender-sensitive governance in the long term.

As a final point, the strong background of making gender-disaggregated data is crucial and promotes better governance in the-long term. The case of the European Union vividly shows the work of Eurostat and EIGE at EU level makes a clear understanding of inequalities in different sectors and areas of life, such as education, labour market, earnings, participation in decision-making, politics, gender-based violence, gender mainstreaming, etc. The diversified and well-managed statistical data allows the EU to develop specific actions and initiatives toward different inequalities reflected in European society and promote better governance. As it is argued, statistical data is the one of the first stimulative factors for the EU to intervene and fix inequalities at different levels. All those current challenges shown in statistical data and existing inequalities are reflected in the gender equality strategy 2020-2025.

Particularly, such a strategy which is the highest valued document at the EU level when it comes to ensuring gender equality for member states, takes focus on gender-based violence, closing gender stereotypes, closing gaps in the labour market and gender pay gaps, promoting better participation of females in the economy sector, fixing pension gaps and promotes female participation in politics (European Commission, 2020).

1.3 Policy evaluation and its significance for good governance

Policy evaluation as a process is linked to “structured and objective assessment of an ongoing or completed policy or reform initiative, its design, implementation and results. Its aim is to determine the relevance and fulfilment of objectives, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability as well as the worth or significance of a policy” (OECD, 2020, p.15). Because of its nature, some correlations between policy evaluation and good governance can be found. For the implementation of the good governance concept in practice, putting an accent on evaluation is significant.

Stame (2004) sees evaluation approaches as a way to reinforce participation and achieve democracy. She also argues that improving evaluation approaches empower better transparency which leads to better public welfare at the end. Focusing on evaluation tools means that evaluation has to be seen as part of the work of public agencies and especially of national governments or parliaments. By doing so, states can provide better information and knowledge related to the results of their actions for the citizens. Besides, evaluation assists governments and parliaments to manage better public administration and provide more effective and efficient decisions (Stame, 2004). Similarly, Dahler-Larsen and Boodhoo (2019) argue that the core purpose of ensuring evaluation is enhancing accountability, transparency and learning which ensures a better agenda-setting, and an upgrading and modernisation of the agenda in the long term. The good governance concept itself is also focusing on improving accountability and transparency. As we see, putting an evaluation approach through good governance should significantly help to achieve key goals related to transparency and accountability. Since the function of evaluation is seen as a tool of learning and promotes better functioning, the government can boost its efficiency and service delivery over time. As Dahler-Larsen and Boodhoo (2019) illustrate, if evaluators take into account inclusion and dialogue

with citizens, this should be reflected in governmental decisions or agendas. Therefore, Dahler-Larsen and Boodhoo (2019) believe that if evaluation is implemented as planned, transparency and accountability are well-promoted. Carrying out evaluation in a good governance system assists in the process of learning, which strengthens the quality and delivery of public services (Dahler-Larsen & Boodhoo, 2019). In other words, if transparency is adequately enhanced, accountability is promoted as well and the rate of corruption can be reduced, which delivers better performance of governments. “Evaluation begets good governance, but good governance also paves the way for evaluation” ((Dahler-Larsen & Boodhoo, 2019, p.7).

Dahler-Larsen and Boodhoo (2019) suggest that the CPI index might be useful to measure good governance because erasing corruption and promoting transparency, accountability, and openness is the basis for good governance concepts. They also found a causal relationship between evaluation and the CPI index. Precisely, after analysing data of the CPI index for several twenty states, they found a reciprocal relationship between the two: evaluation promotes better performance of good governance, and good governance also leads to some ways to conduct a better evaluation culture. Scholars bring up particular cases. For example, Dahler-Larsen and Boodhoo (2019) found out that Denmark has a moderate score in evaluation culture (14.3) but very high CPI score (9.4). Denmark had a corruption-free and well-functioning public sector regarding transparency, good governance and public trust, before evaluation was introduced at state level. Such historical background fostered Danish evaluators to build up evaluation models with a focus on learning and dialogue. Since the scholars found a positive link between evaluation and transparency, promoting transparency is valid for promoting evaluation culture.

The same narrative is shared by an OECD study on developing countries in 2020. This study “Improving Governance with Policy Evaluation” reveals that by using policy evaluation tools, citizens and stakeholders are better informed and resources, including financial resources, are better allocated by the government (OECD, 2020). Moreover, the study shows that developing a better evaluation culture at state levels promotes accountability and transparency, and improves learning, (OECD, 2020). In the guideline published by the OECD some extra positive aspects are given. Since governments face complex challenges and high demands by citizens, as well as high expectations, corruption remains a challenge. Furthermore, challenges linked to the efficiency of public institutions still exist in the governments’ planning of decisions and policies. Policy planning must be evidence-based,

which should be achieved using policy evaluation tools that facilitate learning (OECD, 2020). Ensuring policy evaluation promotes better governance in the sense that governments are better informed about expectations coming from citizens and have a better understanding of the potential success or failures of planned policies and side effects.

As we have seen, to achieve good governance principles such as accountability and transparency, we can use policy evaluation as a tool for learning. Both ex-ante and ex-post evaluation tools should be used. Regarding the understanding of ex-ante and ex-post evaluation, we overview the narrative developed by Smismans (2015), who uses the example of the European Union and illustrates a clear division between these two approaches. Firstly, ex-post evaluation, also called retrospective evaluation, is an evaluation at the midterm phase while the initiative is planned. Ex-post evaluation is a form of evaluation done several years later or at the end of the implementation of the policy. As Smismans (2015) illustrates, the European Commission clarified the roles of ex-ante and ex-post evaluation units. While the first is mainly focused on the learning impacts of regulatory actions and main initiatives, the second stays focused on the expenditures of programmes. The ex-ante evaluation approach, mainly with the focus of learning regulations and laws, effects and gaps regarding them is commonly used at EU level as well as at national level of EU member states. Ex-ante evaluation tools we mean are named as Impact Assessment (IA), Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and Gender Impact Assessment (GIA), which is the core focus of the paper. Further discussions regarding GIA are explained in depth in the following chapters.

Both tools are commonly used at EU level which promotes evidenced-based policy process. According to Smismans (2015), both evaluation approaches have a positive influence on building up evidence and improve learning, promote accountability, transparency, participation and coherence, as well as help in the assessment of policy priorities and reduce the regulatory burden. Furthermore, ex-ante evaluation tools help EU institutions to design better policy initiatives or laws and provide better decision-making processes. Ex-ante evaluation also helps to improve quality of policy proposals and provide transparency by taking into account inputs done by external actors like stakeholders. In this way, the process itself promotes openness and accountability. Transparency and accountability might be boosted by ex-post evaluation as well. In fact, ex-post evaluation tools help to conduct timely and relevant decision-making input in the agenda-setting and provide feedback observation of implemented

actions which lead to better policy implementation in the future. In this way, citizens and stakeholders are capable of learning how planned activities were ensured (Smismans, 2015).

Furthermore, both evaluations (ex-ante and ex-post) can boost coherence and choice of policy priorities (Smismans 2015). Particularly, by using ex-ante evaluation early coordination with the Commission should be ensured. By using ex-post evaluation, efficient allocation of resources should be done. Additionally, by efficient allocation of resources by using ex-post evaluation, regulatory burdens should be reduced. Meanwhile, regulatory burdens should be also reduced by improving the quality of policy initiatives which is ensured by using an ex-ante evaluation approach (Smismans, 2015).

1.4 Institutionalisation of policy evaluation in practice

Based on empirical findings, process adoption and institutionalisation of policy evaluation instruments requires some primary ground and institutional underpinnings to make it happen. The process of institutionalisation itself is complex and takes sound institutional set-ups and excellent preparation work. OECD argues that institutionalisation has a positive impact on implementation and evaluation phases. If the policy evaluation system is institutionalised, we should assume that applicable incentives to ensure evaluation should be improved, as well as the quality of implementation of policies themselves (OECD, 2020). Legal and policy frameworks are linked to institutionalising policy evaluation systems (OECD, 2020). OECD defined a couple of criteria that significantly help the institutionalisation process if states share them. Namely, it is argued that an adequate legal and policy framework provides a solid basis for conducting relevant policy evaluation in a well-managed way (OECD, 2020). As noted by the OECD, providing a legal framework for creating legal bases might be incorporated into domestic constitutions. This might be a massive reflection of the commitment to provide policy evaluation and sharing responsibility. Likewise, it can be part of primary or secondary legislation on policy evaluation (OECD, 2020). Developing a supportive strategy framework is crucial alongside the legal basis to provide an evaluation system. The supportive strategy framework has to define a strategic direction and core principles, as well as state courses and goals on how evaluation systems should be used, by whom and in which way (OECD, 2020).

Jacob, Speer, and Furubo (2015) argue that institutionalisation encourages and promotes an efficient implementation of evaluation activities. It also promotes systematic data collection. Based on it, national governments have to sustain the process of evaluation and encourage professionals, and qualified evaluators to take part in the process. The institutionalisation process has to be supported by law or regulations, because it helps actors to show better openness, transparency and accountability. To do so, every public programme supported by a government or ministries would be regularly evaluated. An approach to how the state institutionalised evaluation might be different. In some cases, the process is managed by evaluation units, separate agencies, while in some countries evaluation units are integrated with ministries or exist within ministries (Jacob et al., 2015). Scholars Stockmann, Meyer, and Taube (2020) also highlight the necessity to provide a relevant legislative framework for adopting evaluation tools. Stockmann, Meyer, and Taube (2020) argue that countries and practices differ in how they advance institutionalisation of evaluation in practice and particularly emphasise the institutionalisation of evaluation in the political system. Stockmann, Meyer, and Taube (2020) bring up an analysis of different European countries and summarise how evaluation is embodied in the national legislation of several European countries and by overviewing country-wide policies and strategies related to policy evaluation. For example, the Swiss Federal Constitution guarantees the provision of evaluation, while France introduced the provision of evaluation into the Constitution in 2008. In some other countries, like Finland there are no specific acts or laws on evaluation, but evaluation is part of the whole governmental work (Stockmann, Meyer & Taube, 2020). Moreover, Ahonen (2015) notes that policy institutionalisation of policy evaluation in Finland is incorporated in several legal acts by using different vocabulary. For instance, words like “assessment,” “inspection,” “evaluation,” “ascertainment,” or “checking” of legal compliance are often mentioned in Finnish legislation (Ahonen, 2015, p.312). However, European countries like Latvia have a range of legislative acts that create a formal norm for conducting policy evaluation.

The World Bank (2009) maps different pathways for the policy evaluation of institutionalised impact evaluation (IE) systems. Firstly, it might be started through ad-hoc studies and increase the interest of governments to increase the rate of involvement in it, or it might promote systematisation of evaluation selection and design procedures. Secondly, it is connected to the moment when impact evaluations start in particular sectors and requires more systematic, large-scale sector evaluations. It also promotes better involvement of academic and civil society in the process of impact evaluation. Lastly, it happens when impact evaluation

starts at the whole-government level and includes standardised procedures for selection and implementation of IE studies. Furthermore, the World Bank (2009) collects practical advice for states for better performance of IEs. Namely, by defining an appropriate option for planning, conducting and managing IE as well as transparent criteria for the selection of the IE, the framing of guidelines related to IE, and the allocation of adequate funds for the management purposes of IEs. It is also essential to define which actors are in charge of coordination and management of the process, and how cooperation agreements with external funding agencies are managed. Thinking about stakeholders and conducting a stakeholder analysis also plays a vital role in the process since understanding their interest in the evaluation and how they might become involved is needed.

Scholars Papazian and Baud-Lavigne (2019) share the same approach as it is given by the WB. Particularly, scholars overview the case of institutionalisation of policy evaluation at national level in Switzerland. Authors highlight the significance of allocating financial resources for policy evaluation performance. Allocating resources for evaluation boosted the performance of evaluation, which developed a better institutionalisation process. Allocation of proper financial resources helped Switzerland to promote better evaluation at national level (Papazian & Baud-Lavigne, 2019).

Institutionalisation of policy evaluation also requires a political willingness which plays a vital role in institutionalising policy evaluation. For example, the Swiss Parliament advocated adoption of policy evaluation at national level. For successful institutionalisation of policy evaluation, an openness to adopt such instruments is highly valued (Papazian & Baud-Lavigne, 2019).

Another question is related to learning actors of institutionalisation of policy evaluation, scholars note. Stockmann, Meyer, and Taube (202) find that in most European countries, individual ministries decide what to evaluate and how. Moreover, they find that evaluation tools like RIA can be considered part of legislative institutionalisation as it assists in determining the probable consequences and side effects of legislation. In some European countries such as Belgium, Denmark and Finland, other elements like administrative simplification, gender, and sustainable development are examined too. In Belgium and Germany internal evaluation units, like RIA, were built up to provide self-evaluations. However, in some other European countries like Italy and Denmark, there are independent,

stand-alone bodies for evaluation. In some other cases, political institutionalisation of evaluation is the role of audit courts. For example, in the Czech Republic, The National Audit Office not only carries out audits but also provides evaluations (Stockmann et al., 2020).

Evidence and empirical findings show that the institutionalisation of evaluation could be stronger at the parliamentary level across all countries. Jacob, Speer, and Furubo (2015) argue that sometimes parliaments are evaluation producers. Some of them even devoted evaluations to specific internal units in different countries. Members of parliament can do evaluations by adopting provisions, laws, or constitutional amendments. Parliaments need to pay more attention to the quality of evaluation by the national or federal commissions (in the USA). Deputies need to gain knowledge regarding evaluation, even if parliamentary research centres support them. To sum up, parliaments have the authority to establish and modify the institutional framework for evaluation, incorporate clauses on evaluations into laws, and incorporate the findings of evaluations into the budgetary process. The primary goal of these initiatives is to make the government answerable (Jacob et al., 2015).

Stockmann, Meyer, and Taube (2020) also overview the importance of the parliament's role in carrying out evaluations. These authors argue that parliaments have to be engaged in evaluating clauses in other legislations, not only engage in law-making power. Parliaments must use results founded on evaluations for future work (Stockmann et al., 2020). Lastly, Stockmann, Meyer, and Taube (2020) analyse policy sectors in which evaluations are mainly carried out in European countries, such as in education, development cooperation, health, labour market, social affairs policies, environment and urban planning. Moreover, some sectors like defence are only evaluated in some countries such as in France and Finland. Papazian and Baud-Lavigne (2019) also underline the importance of actors in evaluation. In the case of Switzerland, these authors highlight the importance of improving or expanding the responsibilities of state bodies or agencies to make evaluation a coherent process.

According to Ahonen (2015), it is crucial to examine "evaluation" agencies for the institutionalisation of evaluation. There should be three different types of agencies in which evaluation actors may succeed or fail. Ahonen (2015) names these types as: "agency of itself," mainly self-evaluation actors who evaluate their initiative; "agency for others," which mainly includes actors who carry out evaluations with their mandate and "agency for standards and principles," that includes approaches, practices, and principles itself (Ahonen, 2015, p.310).

The last type of evaluation agencies includes policy evaluation experts and individuals as well. According to Papazian and Baud-Lavigne (2019) it is crucial for other two types of agencies to promote better cooperation with academics and experts. For example, such practice is found in the case of Switzerland which is one of the best examples in policy evaluation practices across Europe. In Switzerland, the institutionalisation of evaluation is considered successful since politicians are continuously trained by academics who teach and do evaluations (Papazian and Baud-Lavigne, 2019).

Ahonen (2015) particularly looks at the three types of agency in the case of Finland and highlights that Finland needs an overarching evaluation institution. There is no any agency under the type “agency of itself.” However, other institutions like the National Audit Office, Ministries of the state (Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Defence, etc.), Prime Minister's Office, and Parliament of Finland play a crucial role in the policy evaluation process. These institutions are considered as “agencies for others”. Even though there is no executive agency for policy evaluation, other actors involved in the process succeed in conducting policy evaluation. As Ahonen (2015) notes, Finland's evaluators often apply international standards and principles regarding policy evaluation.

For Lázaro (2015), the “institutionalisation of evaluation is understood as a process aimed at establishing an evaluation system in governmental settings through specific policies or strategies” (Lázaro, 2015, p.15). Moreover, democratic quality, public sector management traditions, driving forces (e.g., the influence of international donors), institutional context, and characteristics of the political system and administration reform process play a key role in the adoption of policy evaluation (Lázaro 2015). Moorghen (2014) highlights that a strong political will is crucial for the institutionalisation of evaluation. This may reflect different political and administrative cultures, which are also different by country and context. Furthermore, states are different by their developments in research and democracy. However, the sole political commitment is not enough to institutionalise policy evaluation, as the state has to foster policy forums, ensure the participation of analysts and officials regularly to create better participation of actors, and focus on building up better knowledge and evidence (Moorghen 2014). Another crucial element is the commitment of governments to allocate adequate resources to conduct policy evaluation efficiently. Moorghen (2014) believes that for better institutionalisation of evaluation, two core aspects are equally important: demand and supply of evaluation. Simply said, with the term “demand,” we mean that states have to declare their intentions to provide,

adopt, and then institutionalise policy evaluation. All those actions should be done through “supply,” which means the existence of a strategic framework for evaluating and promoting its activities, managing knowledge, building capacity, improving systems and procedures, and promoting funding, research, evaluation, and training.

To conclude, the theory of institutionalisation is a complex process. For better understanding of the process of institutionalisation, it is necessary to understand how institutions work and what are informal or formal procedures that characterise specific institutions. Moreover, institutions hold the power to change rules and conduct specific actions, provide institutional changes and lead institutionalisation. Based on accessibility to the power by institutions, it is crucial to overview institutional factors, social behaviours within institutions. Institutionalisation itself is rightly linked to the adoption or routinisation process in practice. Focusing on the thesis's objectives, we delved into the theory of "good governance," which delineates the "how to govern" process while including evaluation and upholding principles such as transparency, inclusiveness, openness, participation, rule of law, absence of corruption, accountability, responsiveness, and an effective consensus-driven focus. The term “good governance” delivers a deeper understanding of the relationship between private and public actors, corporations with the state. Based on literature review, we found differences between the concepts of “government” and “governance.” The term good governance is much more than a simple hierarchical relationship between elective officials and citizens, and takes more focus on equal participation of different actors in policy planning and decision-making processes. A vital aspect of good governance involves policy evaluation, significantly contributing to transparency and accountability by enabling the state to scrutinise the outcomes of implemented policies. Our exploration revealed a symbiotic relationship between good governance and policy evaluation, incorporating both ex-ante and post-evaluation approaches. After overviewing several scholars, we collected some characteristics of institutionalisation of policy evaluation in practice, which significantly promotes better governance in the long-term. For a successful institutionalisation of policy evaluation the legal framework and political willingness by the state actors are much needed. Moreover, financial funds as well as cooperation between evaluation agencies have much significance. Lastly, studies show that integrating gender considerations into policy evaluation enhances policy-making and fosters a result-oriented approach. Taking into account gender aspects in public policies promotes better governance, particularly beneficial for citizens, notably women, amplifying their voices in the policy-making process.

Chapter 2: Gender Impact Assessment (GIA)

In this chapter, we delve into the comprehensive exploration of the evaluation tool of GIA. As societies recognise the need to foster gender equality and inclusivity, the GIA emerges as a vital resource for evaluating the impacts of public policies and practices in order to strengthen the work of public agencies or institutions to reduce inequalities between social groups, especially between gender and vulnerable groups. This chapter offers an in-depth examination of the instrument and an overview of its process and characteristics. We map out the best examples coming from EU member states and beyond. Additionally, the chapter aims to map the complex steps involved in performing a GIA offering a structured framework for comprehension.

2.1 Introduction to the instrument of GIA

Using gender-based approaches in evaluation promotes better implementation of future public policies and guides states to understand existing challenges regarding gender inequality in general. GIA, as an *ex-ante* evaluation tool, is one of the tools under the gender mainstreaming approach. If the aim is to achieve gender equality, in this occasion, in the policy-making process, a straightforward guide on how to do this is highly needed. That is the main reason we have a gender mainstreaming approach, which clearly explains how it might be achieved and what types of instruments should be used. There are following instruments under the gender mainstreaming approach, among which are specific tools of policy evaluation: Gender analysis, Gender Audit, Gender awareness-raising, Gender Budgeting, Gender equality training, Gender-responsive evaluation, Gender statistics and indicators, Gender monitoring, Gender planning, Gender-responsive public procurement, Gender stakeholder consultation, sex-disaggregated data, institutional transformation (EIGE, 2023) and, GIA, which is the main focus of the thesis research.

The European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) defines the GIA as a tool used in the early stage of policy-making, especially when the policy is in design. The core idea of using the GIA tool is to ensure a tangible impact on the policy design and potential results to accomplish adequate outcomes (EIGE, 2016). The tool helps decision-makers understand the

gender impacts of the policy and how it might affect gender equality and, additionally, guides them to achieve gender equality in a better way. The GIA can include concrete actions and measures to adapt a better policy proposal and improve gender equality as much as possible. Concrete and specific, result-oriented actions may include amending the policy design, including targets and implementation, and making commitments to supporting gender equality (Australian Government, 2023). Furthermore, The European Commission suggests the understanding of the term as follows:

“Gender impact assessment is the process of comparing and assessing, according to gender relevant criteria, the current situation and trend with the expected development resulting from the introduction of the proposed policy” (European Commission, 1997).

Mainly, the GIA instrument helps to analyse the policy initiative in depth from a gender equality point of view and measures if there are any gaps revealed or might be revealed in the process of implementation of the exact policy initiative. Learning about potential gaps or possible side effects significantly assists in correcting any mistakes or possibilities to deepen gender inequality. It must be noted that the GIA instrument itself is focused on overviewing potential success or challenges and learning neutral effects. Learning about different effects, positive and negative, as well as neutral, is a crucial aspect of the tool (EIGE, 2016). Policymakers have to be sure that planned policies do not have discriminatory effects. If there are any, they have to be removed or mitigated before the implementation phase of the policy (OECD, 2015).

The central question of the GIA is: Does Gender Matter? The GIA shows that this gender neutrality frequently covers up unintended gender inequalities. As a result, it is always prudent to inquire whether gender matters in a policy initiative. The policy change's desired impact (goal) serves as the starting point. As a result, how impact is expressed is critical. A GIA will reveal whether gender matters in the policy initiative. If yes, taking the gender dimension into account will improve the initiative and its outcomes and meet both men's and women's needs (Council of Europe, 2018).

In an ideal scenario, all public policies are equally accessible to social groups and impact society equally. In practice, political, social, and economic differences and gaps between genders, as well as patriarchy as a whole system, cultural differences, social norms,

and gender stereotypes deepen inequalities between genders. While the new policy development or adoption is considered, all these aspects must be considered. Based on it, we cannot be called 'neutral' to any policy while social gaps are always in place. If there is no gender approach while drafting the policy, it is impossible to consider that gender equality should be accomplished naturally.

The EIGE (2016) provides some arguments to justify using the GIA. The very first argument goes to improving gender equality as a social goal by using law tools, such as domestic laws. Pushing states to apply GIA has positive effects in the long term. Obligatory law mechanisms promote gender equality and women empowerment positively based on European experience (EIGE, 2016). The GIA instrument provides better policy-making, mainly focusing on analysing and identifying all possible challenges that might affect men's and women's lives. Integrating gender components in the analysis is a positive in itself, ensuring that the state considers the sexes and their needs, which shows high responsibility. On the other hand, policy evaluation tools, such as GIA, should be considered as a tool of learning or one providing better governance in a broad picture, which helps governance reflect the needs of people adequately and promote good governance principles. On the first occasion, we should debate that understanding challenges helps to design policies more carefully and implement better policies in general. For the second occasion, having groups of men and women in mind while planning policies is meaningful. It assists in addressing more relevant issues for specific target groups, meeting the needs of those groups, and providing adequate measures within the policy (EIGE, 2016).

Conducting GIA not only helps to promote better policy-making and democracy or achieve gender equality but also helps to foster better public service delivery. According to the Australian Government (2022), the GIA strengthens more responsive policies and promotes better public awareness and access to policies, programs, and services (The Equality Institute, 2022). Having GIA as a coherent part of policy-making also promotes better use of resources. It promotes research, learns insights from the community, and develops better-shaped policies afterward (The Equality Institute, 2022). To conclude, using the GIA promotes significant aid in promoting gender equality, provides a better policy-making process, helps better governance, and is an excellent tool for learning (EIGE, 2016). Using the instrument allows policymakers to foresee the impacts of a policy initiative or a change.

EIGE suggests the scope of policy documents in which GIA instruments should be used. It might be legislation, policies, programmes and projects (EIGE, 2016). The list of policy documents might be more detailed on some occasions and work practices, like it is typical for Austria for example. The Austrian approach includes not only assessing legislative changes or programs but also budget proposals and public services, such as aged care, childcare, health care, safety, environment, emergency and waste management, open space planning, student services, libraries, recreation and other public facilities (Commission for Gender Equality in the Public Sector, 2020). The scope of GIA can be very large and comprehensive. It is not only the instrument that should be done for evaluating and assessing legal policies or documents generally. The EIGE notes that because the GIA is an ex-ante evaluation instrument, it is absolutely necessary to broaden the scope of it and evaluate other policies, like programs or strategies as well (EIGE, 2016). Based on the fact that GIA is mainly focusing on addressing sex and gender groups more effectively and correcting foreseen gaps, the use of the instrument should be extended in the public policy area. Furthermore, the gender-sensitive approach in the ex-ante evaluation system has to be consolidated. So, GIA, as a relevant instrument, has to be broadly used by civil servants and decision makers.

Technically, the scope of actors depends on institutional settings and capacities. EIGE suggests three approaches regarding the question: Which actor must conduct GIA? Mainly, the first approach, identified as the “Civil Servant Approach,” is complex. In this case, the main characters are gender equality units. They not only provide institutions with knowledge about methods or tools, give them recommendations related to the GIA process, but also implement monitoring if GIA was adequately carried out for relevant regulations (EIGE, 2016). The occasion when the gender equality units are directly involved in GIA is considered the “Gender Equality Unit Approach.” The last approach, the broader impact assessment approach, means that GIA is considered part of broader impact assessment, like regular impact assessment (RIA).

2.2 Institutionalisation of the GIA and its characteristics

Before we discuss how GIA should be institutionalised, it is principally important to have an understanding of gender mainstreaming, since GIA is a significant tool of gender mainstreaming approach. Gender mainstreaming is an approach that includes a couple of instruments under the term. In case states declare their interest to promote gender-sensitive policy-making and take an accent on gender equality in general, they have to adopt gender mainstreaming in work practice.

Gender mainstreaming is a process that aims to assess the implications for women and men of any planned actions (legislation, policies, programs, etc.). As UN Women underlines, gender mainstreaming is not an end of the process but a means of achieving gender equality. The process aims to ensure women can participate on an equal basis with men, have equal rights and access to public services, and have an equal opportunity to influence public decisions that affect their lives (UN Women 2022). As already mentioned, gender mainstreaming, as a plan that aims to ensure gender equality, is not an easy task to conduct because it has several sub-dimensions that have to be fulfilled first. To set a clear picture of the process, when the state decides to respect the idea of gender mainstreaming, some actions have to be taken. As OECD (2015) states, first of all, the rationale must be set, and action plans, priorities, timelines, objectives, expected outcomes, and targets must be identified. States have to promote effective policy planning to promote gender equality. All mentioned actions are more complex to do if the support of governmental and non-governmental stakeholders is not ensured. For this purpose, the state must effectively foster stakeholders' engagement in the process.

On the other hand, the OECD (2015) highlights the meaning of adopting a dual approach to narrowing equality gaps through gender mainstreaming to promote gender equality. To do so, governments must declare their interest in ensuring gender equality and develop a clear vision of how they aim to achieve it and in which way. This has to be mentioned in governmental documents first. On the other hand, we expect what type of interventions need to be done in order to achieve the goals they set out. It is also crucial to have a result-oriented strategy in which cooperation between governmental and non-governmental organisations and other relevant stakeholders is much needed (OECD, 2015).

OECD (2015) collected a list of recommendations in 2015 for states to make it easier to implement gender mainstreaming in work practice. Based on the list of recommendations,

there are some key provisions named that have to be respected first. It is highly important to establish an institutional framework first. The framework has to define the way of implementation, cooperation and sustainability of the goal through a gender mainstreaming strategy. To achieve this, the responsibilities and mandates of governmental bodies or structures have to be defined clearly; boosting the capacities and resources have to be done in order to facilitate a consistent approach of the government to work on gender equality, implement and monitor gender-sensitive programs adequately. Moreover, the knowledge, concerns, priorities, experiences, capacities, and equal contributions of women and men and gender-diverse people have to be an integral part of the policy planning process in order to boost outcomes of gender mainstreaming (UN Women, 2022). Additionally, an active cooperation between stakeholders and focal points is important, and lastly, improving vertical and horizontal coordination mechanisms across governmental bodies has to be ensured (United Nations, 1997).

There are a couple of strong mandates for states to achieve gender equality through using gender mainstreaming tools, among which a couple of them have to be named:

ECOSOC Agreed Conclusions 1997/2 defines gender mainstreaming as follows: "Mainstreaming a gender perspective is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality" (United Nations, 1997, p.2). Moreover, it is also mentioned in the agreement that promoting women's participation in decision-making processes has to be respected. Related to gender mainstreaming institutionalisation, it is declared that concrete steps, mechanisms and processes have to be developed for a successful implementation.

Beijing Platform for Action 1995 provides a mandate as well with the specific formulations mentioned in the document. Here we have a particular note as follows: "Governments and other actors should promote an active and visible policy of mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes, so that, before decisions are taken, an analysis is made of the effects on women and men, respectively" (United Nations, 1995, p.27).

CEB Decision 2006/2 highlights the necessity of conducting gender audit, internal and external program evaluations in order to provide relevant outcomes of gender mainstreaming (United Nations, 2006).

ECOSOC Resolution 2021/7 resolution calls states to accelerate gender mainstreaming in policies and programmes, and support gender responsive implementation of 2030 Agenda for sustainable development (United Women, 2022)

As mentioned, conducting gender-sensitive programs and gender-based analysis or evaluation are core parts of the gender mainstreaming process. Conducting programs with gender lenses is too ambitious a goal if impact assessment or gender analysis tools are not in use. UN Women pictures key aspects of the motivations why gender analysis in the mainstreaming process is important. To be more specific, a gender analysis helps to understand the roles and positions of men and women in society. Understanding the power dynamics within society is a crucial part of knowing the broad picture of the situation. Re-thinking roles and dynamics, as well as the distribution of powers, helps to identify the most vulnerable groups within society. So, gender analysis helps to identify inequalities between social groups, discrimination and exclusion cases, and certain challenges in the community. Due to the gender analysis approach, all those groups should be successfully identified. Later on, when a clear mapping is prepared on vulnerable groups, the policies should specifically address issues for specific groups, and it is more possible to avoid making wrong assumptions due to the given knowledge previously. Based on this, better programming is promoted, and equal participation of the genders in programming is better ensured. Not only better policy programming but also building new knowledge are valuable outcomes of conducting gender analysis (UN Women, 2022).

OECD (2015) calls states to conduct evidence-based assessments on policies with the focus on gender impacts. To accomplish gender sensitive policies, gender impact analysis has to be integrated at early stages of all phases of the policy cycle (OECD, 2015). In order to adopt evidence-based gender evaluations, OECD advises states to conduct gender-disaggregated data, develop normative frameworks for gender analysis which includes GIAs and improve gender expertise (OECD, 2015).

Gender analysis should be adopted at national as well as sub-national or regional levels. The paper focuses on an overview of institutionalisation practices regarding GIA at states at

the national level. For this reason, mentioning essential aspects for an adequate conceptualisation of the approach is needed. In this section, we use the guidance developed by UN Women (2022), which defines five dimensions: national policies, strategies, and defined priorities regarding equality, national commitments and legal obligations related to gender equality, the drivers of change for gender equality, the impacts of both national and global policies and legislation in the specific development intervention context and analysing potential opportunities within the country linked to challenges on gender equality.

Institutionalisation of the GIA, as an evaluation tool with a focus on a gender-sensitive approach, should be considered as a process while state agencies and institutions are asked to make the instrument a coherent part of their work in order to develop gender-sensitive policy evaluation system and promote gender equality from a long-term perspective. For a better understanding, we will overview the case of Germany in this chapter. Germany adopted GIA through the institutionalisation process of gender mainstreaming approach.

In the German case, a couple of steps were defined. Specifically, for the very first phase, the tools of gender mainstreaming that were needed to achieve gender equality were defined. Since gender mainstreaming is a broad term under which we have a bunch of options to choose from, we have to think carefully about which specific tools might be relevant for our cultural, organisational, and state levels. For the second phase of the process, the type of tools needed to implement gender mainstreaming was reviewed. As Frey (2008) highlights, Germany chose four main dimensions in order to provide a strong basis for the implementation. These tools are analytical and educational. Consultation and participation, Legal tools (Frey, 2008). Analytical tools helped German officials to expose a key problem. For example, statistical data in terms of gender. Educational tools, like courses, manuals, booklets, or files, mainly help to raise awareness and exchange information. Additionally, consultation and participation tools, like round table discussions, for example, were used by Germany. The main aim of such an instrument is to improve the quality of policies and democracy in the long term. Lastly, legal tools play a crucial role. Such tools, like basic law and resolutions, were also used by Germany (Frey, 2008).

After naming and choosing specific tools, Germany started applying tools in work practice and developed laws and rules, several analytical tools. Training workshops and education-related training, especially for public servants and inter-ministerial commission

groups in Berlin became in charge of the gender budgeting process as a part of the gender mainstreaming process (Frey, 2008).

Germany chose to focus on the GIA while developing analytical tools. The GIA was mainly used for assessing draft bills, which were mainly drafted by the government. Certain ministries, like the Federal Ministry of the Interior, the Chancellery, the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth and the Ministry of Environmental Protection were fully engaged in the process (Frey, 2008). Germany developed a systematic approach while analysing laws in depth. Frey (2008) represents the guide of questions that are basically followed by ministries while implementing GIA. A detailed description of the draft law is required first, in order to have a clear picture of the purpose of the law, database, what is used as evidence, a list of measures, what should be done and lastly, thinking what possible alternatives to the law exist. All those questions have to be answered successfully by German authorities. The statement must state whether the measures taken directly or indirectly affect women and men. How they will affect lives on women's and men's lives in general, or we might have a positive or a negative impact on their lives, maybe on gender equality in general. If there are some potential gaps or effects, maybe side effects as well, they have to be drafted and reflected in law, including the viewpoint of the authority institution regarding the subject. Lastly, an explanation of the regulatory impacts (direct and indirect) on men and women in light of gender equality policy objectives must be provided (Frey, 2008).

The adoption process of GIA requires some actions in general. When GA or GIA is in the process of adoption, the very first thing should be done: creating a framework (guides, approaches, methodology), defining the scope of the action (the range of documents), and dividing roles or responsibilities, who does what, and how. Additionally, institutional responsibility mechanisms have to be indicated as well. Later on, it should be discussed if GIA is used as an ex-ante evaluation tool or ex-post, maybe both, depending on the cases. In any case, the decision regarding incorporating GIA into evaluation forms has to be made. It is also decisive to ensure that all draft laws and regulations contain statements on gender impacts; otherwise, adopting GIA should be fictitious (OECD, 2015).

While discussing how GIA should be adopted, a couple of components have to be considered. Gender inequalities have to be understood perfectly and prioritised. States have to set an aim to solve gender inequalities first. There has to be the will in its place to put a gender mainstreaming approach in the long term, the motivation to create a culture of gender

awareness within institutions and contribute to gender equality. Obviously, just motivation is not an adequate source to start implementing any evaluation tools. It has political commitment in its back-up. EIGE demonstrates that investments in gender experts, gender training and capacity-building, data collection, and monitoring mechanisms are impossible otherwise (EIGE, 2016). GIA is an evidence-based instrument. Based on this, having adequate sex-disaggregated data, statistics, and information are highly valued. Before adopting the instrument, it is necessary to be sure that data exists. Otherwise, data gaps may cause several limits in the process of preparing gender assessments. On the other hand, having data is not enough. OECD remarks that the staff in charge of performing the GIA need to have appropriate expertise in relation to qualitative and quantitative data (OECD, 2015). Consultation with stakeholders about their needs and analysis should be considered as an important aspect as well. Involving stakeholders, especially feminist and women's rights organisations, should be a priority. Good cooperation with civil organisations helps to provide better gender expertise (EIGE, 2016).

Some key actions have to be considered before implementing the tool. For instance, a requirement to implement GIA as a part of the policy document is needed. The GIA instrument is not a task or an exercise that might be done once or fragmented. It has to be linked to law, strategy, or an action plan, depending on the policy type (OECD, 2015). For this purpose, a guiding framework is needed. Guidelines, approaches, and methodologies should be carried out in order to create a systematic approach to how the process of conducting GIA is managed. Additionally, the approach has to manage to require conducting GIA on all draft laws and regulations, which might have any impacts on gender equality. Lastly, roles between stakeholders and state actors should be diversified, and an accountability system has to be built (OECD, 2015).

For applying GIA into practice, some background elements have to be respected. The European Commission remarked on two basic criteria based on which the GIA process should be built. The very first dimension goes to noticing the differences between men and women in exact policy fields (depending on the area regarding which the policy changes are developed). Here, understanding the participation level of males and females, representation rates of groups, sources, and the rate of distribution, as well as human rights, are important. Social norms, stereotypes, values, and social attitudes do not have to be left behind. Secondly, it has to be vividly shown in the process of GIA how European policies contribute to eliminating

existing inequalities and promoting equality between the sexes in the long term (European Commission, 1997).

The process of GIA itself includes a few steps that have to be respected while being adopted. First of all, the problem of the policy or the policy change itself has to be explained properly. The next step is to overview the context of the policy and define target groups. For the next step, the influence of the policy change has to be learned, all possible gender gaps have to be identified at this level, and recommendations on policy updates have to be developed.

2.3 Overviewing the GIA frameworks

As we argued, GIA is performed to avoid unintended negative consequences and to improve policy quality and efficiency. Before the process of GIA starts, there is a strong need to check gender relevance in order to measure if the specific policy requires further research with gender aspects. The European Council (1999) believes that gender differences affect the entire population. Gender also affects and often reinforces differences and vulnerabilities between genders, promoting structural differences. Based on this reason, it is really important to find substantial differences in policy fields and have a clear idea of the differences shown in the lives of different genders. So, further investigation into how neutral policies impact differently on women and men have to be done.

For checking gender relevance, which should be seen as preparatory work before GIA, it is important to obtain gender-segregated data and ask the following questions: 1) Does the proposal concern one or more target groups? Will it affect the daily life of part(s) of the population? and 2) Are there differences between women and men in this policy field (with regard to rights, resources, participation, values, and norms related to gender)? (European Commission, 1999, p.4).

Hill, Madden, and Collins (2017) collect some principles that might underpin company approaches to GIA. Due to the fact that participation is a process that helps learning, action, and collective analysis, companies have to promote better participation of genders. As the

authors argue, equal participation of genders in work meetings, as well as in focus groups and interviews, is important. Additionally, companies have to be sure they ensure language and information materials for all, especially for women, that women are well represented in facilitation and project teams, and that their voices are heard equally. Companies have to promote marginalised groups, especially in decision-making processes. The process itself of conducting GIA and the outcomes have to be compatible with human rights and international standards. It is crucial for the company to support the GIA process as a continuous process, not as a tick-box exercise done only once. Lastly, companies have to ensure trust in GIA. It means that all people in the organisation have to trust that the outcomes of GIA are fair.

For conducting better GIA, sex-disaggregated data for analysis is strongly needed. Additionally, a certain expertise on the dynamics of gender relations is needed (European Commission, 1999). Inadequate resources are related to data courses and an incomplete process of GIA at the next level. Mostly, even if states have a really detailed framework on GIA, inadequate data regarding sex and gender should cause side effects and make the process more complicated. Due to the fact that GIA is a complex process and takes a comprehensive approach, sometimes it is hard to provide an adequate assessment if some data, statistics, and numbers do not exist. The statistical background is crucial for conducting the GIA. So, if there is a motivation to adopt the instrument, we have to be sure that the gender-based data adequately explains gaps and challenges for specific fields. On the other hand, a lack of knowledge on gender issues may lead to some restrictions in using the tool (NCPE, 2012). However, using the GIA promotes using a gender “lens” in the policy planning phase and promotes identifying and addressing the needs of social groups more adequately (NCPE, 2012).

After gender relevance is checked and gender expertise is allocated, as well as gender-disaggregated data, it is possible to start the process of GIA, for which a specific guide, framework, or approach is needed. There are some differences between frameworks and strategies related to managing GIA, but the mentioned steps are always reflected in the guides. In this section, we overview the guidelines developed by EIGE, which should be named a core document. The specific manuals and frameworks prepared by European member states and not only, usually follow the approach developed by EIGE.

EIGE identifies five core steps for making a document of GIA. Particularly, 5 core steps are seen. Sometimes all those steps are seen as five different chapters in GIA documents as well. To have a better understanding, those steps are:

Step 1: Definition of the policy purpose: For the first stage the relevance between the policy change or initiative and gender equality has to be identified. It has to be shown if the policy addresses gender equality or may it contribute to gender equality in the long term.

Step 2: Checking gender relevance: At this stage all possible impacts on gender equality have to be learned. It has to be investigated if the initiative affects target groups in a direct¹ or indirect² way.

Step 3: Gender-sensitive analysis: In this phase comprehensive analysis has to be implemented. As EIGE explains, such analysis should be focused on the present situation for social groups on which the policy initiative might have any influence. Analysis has to measure how planned intervention expects to change gender inequalities within groups and how it aims to fix the existing situation. For this purpose, some tasks are defined as to what should be done. It is essential to analyse the current situation of women and men in the specific field first. In this stage all quantitative and statistical data are highly valued. All that evidence significantly guides us to have an exact picture related to gender gaps in the field. All gaps should be reviewed for the second phase, while analysing inequalities in depth. While working on identifying gender inequalities in the field, it is crucial to keep gender stereotypes and social norms always in mind (EIGE, 2016).

Step 4: Weighing the gender impact: In this phase the influence of legislative measure and its contribution to gender equality is assessed in depth. Precisely, core criterias which help to do so is measuring participation level of men and women in the specific area. With this, we mean that the potential trends have to be pictured. If there is a possibility to promote underrepresented groups. For example, if the legislative change promotes better

¹ Direct impact: “When regulating or affecting people’s access to resources (grants, jobs, composition of committees, etc.). As a result, it has a direct and immediate effect on the status and position of women and men.” (EIGE, 2016, p.16).

² Indirect impact: “When regulating or planning measures affect the means of provision of certain resources or services behind which there are people (managers, workers, users, etc.) as ultimate beneficiaries. Even though the policy is not directly targeted at them, they can be affected by it.” (EIGE, 2016, p.16)

representation of women in economy, employment, politics, etc. Additionally, the aim is to analyse the access of women and men to essential resources (EIGE, 2016).

Step 5: Findings and proposals: Based on challenges identified, imbalances and inequalities pictured, some measures have to be taken. Actions to reduce imbalances and promote equality related to promoting women in decision-making, promoting the use of gender statistics and studies, preventing gender-based violence, eliminating gender stereotypes (EIGE, 2016).

As has already been said, the GIA framework developed by EIGE is shared and respected by European states as well as some other non-European states. Despite that, some countries and organisations developed alternative frameworks related to the process of GIA. Even if other approaches are developed, the core line of the process and the logic are fully respected or repeated. For example, there is another GIA process framework developed by Gender Equality Institute (EQI). The EQI framework defines four core steps typical for the process. Namely, the very first step is to define the issues and challenge assumptions. At this moment, policy planners have to be sure the definition considers how gender shapes the issue. The second step is collecting evidence and understanding how gender shapes the context, as well as analysing impacts on target groups. The third step is linked to developing options for the policy, program, or service and weighing up the gendered impact. In this section, analysing how the policy, program, or service potentially influences certain groups of people has to be learned. The last step is related to drafting recommendations based on evidence pictured in previous steps (EQI, 2022).

The other example is the Maltese framework, which basically follows the core components of the guide defined by EIGE. The Maltese framework focuses on three core dimensions, which are conducting gender relevance assessment, conducting general impact assessment, and monitoring and evaluation (NCPE, 2012). The core criteria also fully respond to ones defined by EIGE, which are identified as follows: reviewing background information, defining proposed policy objectives and target groups of the policy, define groups who might be influenced by the policy initiative (NCPE, 2012). The good aspect of the framework is the consideration of not only groups who have a direct impact but also ones who might be indirectly affected by the change. The Maltese approach interprets five steps of the process: assessing the current situation, analysis of the proposed policy, determining the priority and significance of

gender impact, assessing and describing the potential impacts on women and men, directly and indirectly, identifying potential changes to the proposed policy (NCPE, 2012, pp.30).

We should argue that the framework developed by EIGE is a baseline for EU states to follow the core components defined by the organisation. As we see, we have the same approach developed by the Republic of Kosovo. Checking gender relevance, conducting GIA and gender equality assessments, and setting proposals at the end are the main parts of the approach. Here, we see the guide with five steps included. These steps are the Definition of the policy, gender relevance assessment, gender-sensitive analysis, weighing the gender impact, and developing findings and proposals (AGE, 2019).

Hill, Madden and Collins (2017) build up an approach on how companies can adopt GIA. They identify four main steps:

Step 1: collect baseline information about the community impacted by the extractive industry project. Baseline studies are the first step which promotes better socio-economic conditions of sexes and genders, exploring further how the decision or initiative might be linked to social gaps and genders.

Step 2: discuss and analyse the information collected with women and other members of the community. In this part, companies try to understand structural and institutional inequalities and causes of women's marginalisation, barriers which make troubles for better participation in decision-making process, promote better understanding of women's needs and learning project or initiative impacts to minimise negative impacts.

Step 3: plan and agree to actions to avoid risk and have a positive impact, which simply means better planning and **Step 4:** review and undertake ongoing consultation with women and other members of the community (2017, p.8).

To make a short summary of the approaches for governmental officials to do gender analysis on policies and for private companies who should conduct projects by using gender approach as well, we find out that approaches for both cases are pretty similar. Both public agencies and private organisations have to analyse the content of change first (it should be either policy change or a new project), review the gender relevance and measure potential risks

or gaps. The only different aspect is seen in the approach characterised for the private sector. Based on the approach of Hill, Madden and Collins (2017), private companies or organisations have to take much focus on consultation, which is not a core element for public agencies.

2.4 GIA in the EU member states and Canada

As noted in previous chapters, for the institutionalisation process, some elements have to be taken into account, like the capacity of states and institutions, political actors, resources, and approaches by governments. In this section, we focus mainly on European Member State countries since the EU has one of the best approaches toward implementing gender mainstreaming. Particularly, it has to be underlined that, within the EU, there is a constitutional commitment toward implementing gender mainstreaming across all the policies and activities done by the EU (Article 8 TFEU) (Mergaert, Minto, 2021). The empirical findings found by EIGE show European Member states achieved much success in adopting gender mainstreaming at national levels and developed systematic approaches toward using GIA in their work practices (EIGE, 2016).

The process of adoption of GIA is different within states and even within the EU. Considering the fact that the European Union is not a homogenous group due to the fact that it includes 27 member states, there is no common guide to adopting the GIA in the same way. As EIGE (2016) remarks, the instrument is not an institutionalised method. Obviously, it would be complex work for states having the same approach to conduct the GIA. When it comes to adopting the same instrument, factors such as cultural and social environment, political will, domestic law, and policy norms, as well as governance models and territorial governance, play a huge role. Member states of the EU use the instrument at different levels. Additionally, setting out the scope of the instrument, as well as the actors involved in the process, guidelines, and approaches, are equally important to learn.

In this section firstly we discuss approaches seen in different states regarding GIA and then we overview the process of institutionalisation of GIA in Finland, as one of the best examples across the world.

First, we have to mention that the GIA process might be incorporated with regulatory impact assessment as it happened in Austria and Belgium, or it might have an independent nature as a core dimension of the gender mainstreaming approach. Finland and Canada might be good examples of this approach. The first group of countries where GIA is a part of the RIA process adopted the instrument in 2013. **In Austria**, the approach includes gender equality as its dimension with respect to benefits, employment, income, education, unpaid work, decision-making, and health (EIGE, 2016). The Austrian approach focuses on assessing budgetary management with a particular focus on achieving equality between women and men. Based on the specific approach, the actions of public administration are no longer exclusively based on the available resources, what we call input. Instead, it focuses on outcomes and outputs in order to achieve public administration goals, including gender equality (Federal Minister for Women and Civil Service at the Federal Chancellery, 2012).

In general, the OECD considers the best practice of Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) methodology if it has a wide range of regulatory impacts on sectors or groups. These impacts should be the environment, the public sector, small businesses, sustainable developments, social goals, equality and social groups, trades, etc. Unfortunately, such comprehensive ex-ante evaluations are not systematically done in Austria. However, it has to be highlighted that even if the Austrian RIA framework covers a range of regulatory impacts and has a strong focus on budgetary impacts, some other dimensions, such as environment, society, and gender equality, still have high value in the process (OECD, 2020). The dimension of gender equality itself includes several areas. Namely, Payments to natural or legal persons, employment, income and education, unpaid work, public revenue, decision-making process, and health (Federal Minister for Women and Civil Service at the Federal Chancellery, 2012).

The approach of conducting the GIA includes full involvement of civil servants. The GIA refers to all laws, ordinances, other legal frameworks, and major projects as well (EIGE, 2016). This aspect should be considered as a most important positive side of carrying out GIA in Austria. The constitutional obligation to conduct RIA and GIA as its components significantly assists public agencies in integrating assessment of gender issues into the policy-making process. Apart from that, implementing gender mainstreaming in Austria is taking into account the legal basis.

The strong legal framework is not the only reason why the GIA is adequately and successfully managed in Austria. Besides, there is a strong approach to conducting sex-segregated data, which is obviously an outstanding reason for having data/or evidence-based analysis. It is interesting to see how the data is provided for almost all dimensions of gender equality in the RIA approach. Specifically, data is available for pay, labour market, population and social affairs, education, culture, health, and residence (Bunderskanzleramt, 2023). Having clear data for the fields that are the main focus of the GIA while conducting regulatory impact assessment is a significant step. The comprehensive data would definitely help Austrian civil servants do realistic assessments and develop all potential initiatives to correct the potential gaps that are revealed.

The other component that improves the success level of the state is the development of specific guidelines. Here, there are two core guides in work practice: first is the guide for RIA, which contains a detailed process of how gender equality must be taken into account while carrying out a regulatory impact assessment, and the second a guideline for assessing regulatory impact, which provide an overview of the regulatory impact assessment, which in turn outlines in detail the range of impacts of regulation, including from the perspective of gender equality (EIGE, 2016). Those guidelines identified core questions that have to be adequately addressed. Specifically: Does the new law have any impact on education, the labour force, employment status, or income for the genders? How does the new law affect employment status, and what are the expectations after adopting the law? Are any impacts on the gender pay gap expected? Do the new policy changes have any impact on gender equality, and in which way? (EIGE, 2016).

There is a familiar experience in **Belgium**. The regulatory impact assessment aims to measure the impacts mainly on social, economic, and environmental fields and public authority, which includes a component of gender. At the end of 2013, Belgium adopted the Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA), which is a preliminary assessment of the potential consequences of regulatory projects in the social, economic and environment fields as well as on public authority. It includes a section on gender. The GIA is not specifically embedded with the instrument of RIA, however it is integrated within the approach in a more general way. However, some positive aspects were found in the Belgian case. Especially adopting the Kafka

test³ and SDIA (Sustainable Development Impact Assessment) fostered the assessment processes to put gender in it (EIGE, 2016). New regulations are checked by 21 themes, with 4 of them linked to the gender section. It aims to foster policymakers to have a clear idea on possible effects of the regulation on different social groups (Saskia & Ravesloot, 2014). Beyond that, it has to be noted that the Belgian Constitution guarantees gender equality. Furthermore, a domestic law, adopted in 2007 provides legal basis for the state to fight against discrimination, especially regarding employment, social security, provision of goods and services, and access to economic, social and cultural activities in particular (Cornet, Dieu & Tshiamalenge, 2007). We have to conclude that the legal framework for conducting GIA while planning policies is adequately developed in Belgium but still, it is not strong as it is for Austria which has a specific constitutional note asking to provide GIA.

The scope for implementing gender assessment is narrow, due to the fact that GIA is done only for new bills. The Belgium case repeats the Austrian experience in a field of participating actors in the process. Civil servants who work for ministries in Belgium are in charge of doing assessment of new drafted laws (EIGE, 2016).

The section of gender of the RIA instrument has to identify questions for five core dimensions such as: defining target groups and sex-differentiation, possible differences between sexes, differences between sexes how is the accessibility on resources or rights, how the law changes might influence negatively or positively on social groups and the eventual compensation measures (Saskia & Ravesloot, 2014).

With the following legal basis and a guideline, there is a strong approach of conducting sex-segregated data in Belgium. Cornet, Dieu, and Tshiamalenge (2007) remark that collecting the data is guaranteed by the law on gender mainstreaming. “the statistics that the federal public services, the Ministry of Defence, the programmatic public services, the public institutions of social security, the federal scientific institutions and the institutions of public interest produce, collect and order in their domains of action, are disaggregated by sex and that gender indicators are established when this is relevant” (Cornet et al., 2007, p.40).

³ Kafka test “aims to capture whether draft regulations will increase or reduce administrative burdens on citizens, businesses and non-profit organisations”, EIGE, 2016. pp.27

In some cases, the institutionalisation of GIA is not a separate process or even part of the regulatory impact assessment process. However, in some states, like **Canada**, GIA is integrated with gender-based analysis. The term gender-based analysis (GBA Plus) is an analytical process that can guide policymakers in identifying who might be impacted most by the project and what the different impacts or experiences for different social groups might be. By adding an impact assessment to this tool, decision-makers are able to have a broader scope, which allows them to measure the positive or negative effects of the policy or project. The application of GBA must be integral to all project activities, and it has to be done for all steps of the process, including planning, design, implementation, and monitoring afterward (Agence d'évaluation d'impact du Canada, 2021).

GBA Plus with assistance of impact assessment components provide a more intersectional approach. The framework with analytical questions significantly helps to identify specific outcomes of projects. The tool takes into account identity factors, differential impacts and the fact that projects should be felt differently by different social groups (Agence d'évaluation d'impact du Canada, 2021).

It is noteworthy that the GBA plus integrated approach of impact assessment is similar to European standards. The process guide is pretty similar to European cases. Particularly, the instrument includes five core steps: understanding the GBA Plus, knowing the impacted community, engaging and consulting communities, and establishing a baseline assessment of effects (Agence d'évaluation d'impact du Canada, 2021). The interesting point in this approach is that at the very first stage, not only are perspectives of sexes taken into account, but the scope of thinking and analysing is expanded well. Particularly, the issues of identity, sex, and gender are equally important. Apart from that, issues like structural forms of exclusions like poverty, racism, colonialism, or sexism are taken into account. On the other hand, contrary to the tool of GIA, the integrated approach of GBA plus has a specific step in the guide when the participation of social groups is needed to conduct a comprehensive analysis. Specifically, after learning the social and historical background of social groups, sexes, and genders, groups are asked what type of engagement or consultation support they need. Moreover, ensuring broad participation helps policy planners ask groups, "Who is at the table and who is missing?" (Agence d'évaluation d'impact du Canada, 2021)."

The scope of the instrument is different from that of GIA. If the GIA has a broad scope in Europe, GBA Plus is mainly done for projects in Canada. The other difference with the specific methodology of GIA is that GBA Plus is focused not only on descriptive statistics and data but also provides interviews and community forums when needed. Accordingly, we should argue that GBA Plus has a more comprehensive approach and might fill some gaps that might be foreseen in the process of GIA. For example, it should be the voices of group members on which our policy is addressed. Based on all. We should argue that combining gender analysis with GIA gave an excellent, result-oriented approach to Canadians.

In some cases, like Finland, states do not institutionalise GIA without having any type of declaration or legal framework to do so. The Finnish experience is considered one of the best among European countries. The process of doing gender impact analysis is a part of daily work for government officials, and this is not something different or specific that should be done separately from the ongoing public process. In other words, the Finnish approach does not encourage civil servants to produce separate GIA reports in depth but encourages them to do gender-based analysis throughout the process of drafting a new law or preparing the policy (EIGE, 2016). The GIA instrument is one of the most long-standing mainstreaming methods and a significant part of the gender mainstreaming approach in Finland. Furthermore, it is remarkable that the GIA in Finland is not only an ex-ante evaluation instrument but also used for ex-post evaluation (Elomäki, 2014).

Despite all this, it does not mean that there is no legal framework that supports Finland to do so. There is “the act on Equality between Women and Men” which provides legal obligations for conducting gender mainstreaming for public authorities. Additionally, there are instructions for drafting laws and impact assessment guidelines which are issued by the Ministry of Justice, which should be considered as a legal basis for conducting GIA as well (EIGE, 2016).

In Finland, the instrument of the GIA is mainly used for drafting laws or policies. The whole process of assessment is basically done by gender equality working groups, which were developed in 2010. Those working groups are responsible for coordinating gender mainstreaming efforts in ministries. In some of them, working groups are in charge of deciding if GIA should be conducted or if any internal expertise or support is needed for the process (Elomäki, 2014).

The Finnish guideline is well-developed to focus on several areas of life. Gender impacts have to be learned on eleven spheres of life in total, including employment, parenthood/care, education, well-being, health, public services, leisure, and decision-making. Different needs and perspectives of men and women have to be considered equally while working on the assessment. This procedure described in GIA guidelines is non-binding. The guideline is not obligatory for civil servants, but all aspects should be considered in practice in each step of the law drafting process (Elomäki, 2014). The guide itself includes several tasks to be conducted. The very first step is to assess the need for GIA at the beginning of preparatory work. Later on, a plan for doing GIA has to be developed. Based on the guideline, the third step goes to assessing the gender impact and based on findings. The findings of GIA have to be taken into account when the final proposal of policy or law is drafted. Reporting on methods and results of the documents and reflecting on their rationale in the law proposal is considered an important aspect as well. In the end, monitoring gender impacts and how the law works after implementation is important as well (EIGE, 2016). The most remarkable point in the Finnish guideline is the practice of learning all progress after the implementation of the policy. Conducting the GIA is not only an exercise that is done once. Learning how the gender impacts, highlighted in the GIA process, had changed in the policy draft and what the policy outcomes were after those changes significantly helped civil servants build up better practices in the future.

The Finnish experience is interesting from a scientific point of view because the implementation process of GIA is comprehensive and includes more steps than it was mentioned in other cases previously. Training for civil servants is important for the approach. Civil servants receive educational support. They are offered to attend specific training dedicated to GIA and gender mainstreaming (Elomäki, 2014).

For further understanding of the process, there are a few core agencies involved in adopting gender-sensitive analysis in Finland. Namely, two governmental bodies: The Gender Equality Unit and the Centre of Gender Equality Information. Both institutions ensure gender-sensitive analysis of policies, legislation, implement decisions endorsed by the state, coordinate gender mainstreaming gender budgeting, and monitor the process of gender equality, conduct research on gender equality, provide training regarding gender equality, and draft policy documents for the government regarding gender equality. Two other independent bodies are

also involved in the process: The Council for Gender Equality, which operates within the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health and promotes gender equality in general, and the other body, which is the Ombudsperson for gender equality and the Council for gender equality functions. Additionally, there is the Employment and Equality Committee at the Parliamentary level, which manages hearings in connection to the process of drafting laws and budgeting once a year (EIGE, 2023). Civil society engagement rate in decision-making is so high, which makes the Finnish example more interesting for us. Better public participation, as a principle of good governance, reinforces civil society to take part in drafting all legislation and gives them the opportunity to participate regularly in government meetings regarding gender equality (EIGE, 2023). All those factors foster Finland's better representation of public voices. Based on the progress, Finland marks first place for voice and accountability (European Commission, 2020).

In order to increase the level of gender sensitivity among professionals and public servants in public agencies, the Finnish government provides some training and awareness-raising training programs, one of which is particularly dedicated to GIA. Moreover, the institutionalisation of the GIA is defined as one of the important goals of the Finnish government. Government Action Plan for Gender Equality 2020–2023 sets out the goal as follows: “Gender impact assessment shall be a compulsory part of public administration functions of all public bodies subordinate to ministries (The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, 2021, p.49).”

Finland ranks first in the EU-27 for the use of evidence-based instruments, with a score of 8.8 out of 10 (European Commission, 2023). Conducting RIAs and GIAs plays a key role in better policy-making, coordination, and implementation of domestic policies.

Empirical findings identified by OECD (2023) shows that knowledge-based policy-making is one of the crucial aspects that transforms Finland as a state with a good governance system. OECD (2023) believes that systematic impact assessment in all legislative preparation significantly helps the state to conduct legislation with a high quality.

To sum up, briefly, we should argue that developed countries have a long and comprehensive experience in conducting GIA; some of them have already managed to apply the instrument in daily administrative work and continue supporting gender equality step by step. The process of GIA is not a simple one, but it might be tailored and incorporated into

work practice based on the technical and human capacities available. The experiences of countries show that the very first element for processing GIA is a desire to quit inequalities, which leads states to take further steps, including institutionalising the instrument.

Lastly, GIA serves as a potent tool for gender mainstreaming, contributing to enhanced planning and policy outcomes. This instrument plays a crucial role in identifying potential gender gaps during the policy planning stage, providing the opportunity for timely interventions. Our examination extends beyond public policies to encompass private companies, revealing a similarity in the GIA process, specifically tailored for policies and businesses. The objective of this assessment process is to create a comprehensive understanding of policy issues, evaluating their gender relevance through a gender lens. Our findings highlight two predominant approaches for adopting GIA: integration within regulatory impact assessments (RIA), as seen in Austria and Belgium, or incorporation as a standalone process within work practices, exemplified by Canada and Finland. These diverse methods underscore the adaptability and significance of GIA in fostering gender-inclusive policies and practices.

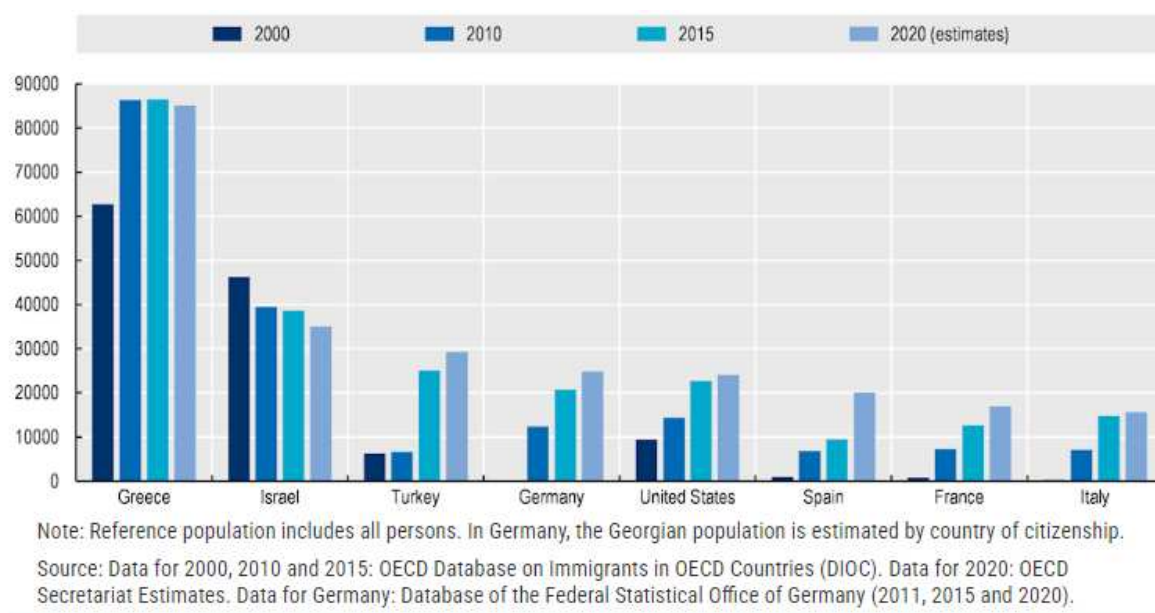
Chapter 3: The Case of Georgia

This chapter presents the case of Georgia. In particular, in this chapter, we discuss the principles of good governance in Georgia, the main challenges related to it, and the position of Georgia related to implementing good governance over time. This chapter also presents a general overview of gender equality in Georgia and identifies core issues regarding it. Moreover, it frames how gender policy and gender mainstreaming are implemented in Georgia by bringing the gender-sensitive policy approach for evaluation - GIA and its development in the state. For the analysis of the institutionalisation of GIA in Georgia, several dimensions are reviewed: a) the stance of the state regarding collecting gender-segregated data, which is the core element of evidence-based policy-making, political willingness; b) core actors and stakeholders, and c) capacity-related issues. This chapter attempts to analyse the ongoing process of adopting GIA in Georgian public policy and overviews the local manual, as well as the legislative basis and responsibilities of the governmental bodies to do so.

3.1 Good governance in Georgia: historical background and current aspects

The post-Soviet period was one of the most turbulent times in Georgia's history. After gaining independence from the Soviet Union on 9 April 1991, a couple of events occurred that fostered the full devastation of the state. Two separatist wars in Abkhazia (1992-1993) and South Ossetia (1991-1992), as well as a civil war in Tbilisi (1991-1992) put the state in a really difficult position. From 1990 to 1995, Georgia's gross domestic product (GDP) shrunk by 78% (Steenland & Gigitashvili, 2018). The government of Georgia was not able to take full control over its territories or provide basic services for Georgian citizens. People started leaving the state, and mass migration started, mostly to Russia and European countries (see Figure 1).

Figure 4.1: Evolution of the number of Georgian emigrants in main OECD destination countries, 2000-20, OECD (2020)



The question of economic and political stability was extremely crucial but still vague till the Rose Revolution (2003), when the former president of Georgia, Mikheil Saakashvili, got power and started leading the state. In the early 2000s, Mr. Saakashvili, a young politician, came back from his European academic journey and established his own party, the United National Movement, in 2001. Two years later, when the Parliamentary elections were rigged by former president Mr. Shevardnadze, Mr. Saakashvili led thousands of Georgians in protest, which ended up in the Rose Revolution. Mr. Saakashvili defeated Mr. Shevardnadze in the historical presidential elections in January 2004 (Steenland & Gigitashvili, 2018). This is the exact time when the transformation of the state from Soviet mentality to democracy began. Mr. Saakashvili undertook several reforms and new initiatives, which fostered economic growth and political stability, promoted a new public management approach, strengthened public institutions, and started putting good governance principles into practice.

The reforms implemented mostly from 2004 to 2007 by Mr. Saakashvili can be grouped into different sections: a) state-building reforms, b) democratisation and state transformation, and c) economic reforms, which led to strong economic growth and development for Georgia. Regarding state-building reforms, Mr. Saakashvili managed to restore governmental control over the autonomous region of Adjara in Georgia, make Russian troops leave Georgia, and

establish control over territories inhabited by Azerbaijani and Armenian populations. He increased funds for the military (Steenland & Gigitashvili, 2018). Saakashvili also started focusing on the absence of corruption, which is one of the core principles of Good Governance. Particularly, it reformed the traffic police and established a new education reform as well as a reform to track bribery. All these reforms helped Georgia to become one of the least corrupt countries in the region (Steenland & Gigitashvili, 2018). In 2012, the state of Georgia was ranked 51st among 174 countries, and by keeping the progress in fighting against corruption, in 2022, Georgia improved the score by 41st among 190 countries (Transparency International, 2022).

The economic reforms and initiatives developed by Mr Saakashvili were mainly based on a neoliberal approach aimed at attracting investments and achieving fast economic growth. In fact, this goal was successfully achieved since Saakashvili chose the most deregulated and liberal approach, providing reforms of mass deregulation, privatisation, and liberalisation of the economy. The achievements of nations in enhancing their regulatory landscapes were acknowledged in the 2007 Doing Business report. Georgia emerged as the standout performer in 2006, implementing reforms in six out of the ten areas examined by Doing Business. Within just one year, it substantially elevated its global ranking in the ease of doing Business, jumping from 112th to 37th. This underscores the capability of countries to make rapid and substantial advancements (World Bank, 2007). Reforms included reducing the minimum capital required to start a new business from 2,000 lari to 200 (\$85). Customs and border police underwent reforms, streamlining border procedures. In 2004, it took 54 days to fulfil all administrative requirements for exports, but in 2006, the process was completed in just 13 days. Georgia also modified its procedural code for the judiciary, incorporating specialised commercial sections and overhauling the appeals process. The time required to resolve straightforward commercial disputes decreased from 375 days to 285. Additionally, improvements were made to Georgia's Labour Code (World Bank, 2007). In the end, the business environment became pretty convenient for those who wished to manage any type of Business. All mentioned actions made a significant change for Georgia, which changed its position from 112 to 17 in the ease of doing Business in 2006, while the rank promoted from 78th to 21st in the economic freedom index (Steenland & Gigitashvili, 2018).

Mr. Saakashvili promoted more freedom for civil society, which was already strong at that time. Namely, the former president provided deregulation, easier tax codes, and established

platforms for NGOs. At the same time, the government started better cooperation with non-governmental organisations; some representatives from NGOs even moved to state agencies for work. However, civil society actors lost coverage in the media after Mr. Saakashvili's second presidency. It has to be underlined that even if Mr. Saakashvili promised citizens to build up a democratic state during his inauguration in 2004, he started controlling the media and blocked all unfavoured broadcasters or started controlling them (Steenland & Gigitashvili, 2018).

Moreover, Mr. Saakashvili significantly reshaped Georgia's institutional architecture. Before the Rose Revolution, Georgia's Government was based de jure and de facto (separation of powers between executive, legislative, and judicial branches). Mr. Saakashvili promoted a new model of government using experiences from the United States Constitution, as well as German and French political systems. Georgia distanced itself from its authoritarian heritage and started improving its political institutions to Western European standards. The position of prime minister was created, the power of the parliament strengthened, and some new institutions were created, for example, a public prosecutor's office. Political changes promoted better autonomy, freedom, and efficiency for public institutions (Dobbins, 2014).

After the Georgian elections in 2012, Mr. Saakashvili lost his power, and a new government ruled by the political party “Georgian Dream” took its power. The core achievements of Mr. Saakashvili have been kept in progress by a new government. As stated in the handbook published by the Council of Europe (2017), Georgia has made significant progress in the area of good governance over the past 13 years. Modernising public institutions, improving public service delivery on the central and local levels, and combating corruption at all branches of the government significantly promoted better measurement of the approach.

The progress of Georgia regarding good governance is shown by some indexes. According to the Transparency International Corruption Perception index, Georgia ranked 130 out of 158 states in 2005. The position has improved from 130 to 44th by 2016 (Council of Europe, 2017). We overview the current state of Georgia regarding principles of good governance below, mostly linked to absence of corruption, transparency and accountability, participation and inclusiveness. The latest publications by the OECD highlights the achievements of Georgia in keeping a good position in the anti-corruption and good governance rankings (OECD 2022). According to this report, the position of Georgia looks as follows:

Corruption Perception Index (CPI) - 45th place worldwide, World Justice Project Rule of Law Index-49th place among 139. The rule of law index has the strongest result which makes Georgia as the best performer in Eastern Europe and Central Asia. In the absence of Corruption, Georgia occupies 1st place in the region and 31st globally. In the dimension of Open Government - Georgia holds first place again in the region and 45th globally (OECD, 2022). The indexes show Georgia's progress in improving the principles of good governance that have been advanced over the years. Reforms that Saakashvili implemented after the Rose Revolution and initiatives that arose after the 2012 parliamentary elections, when the current ruling party - "Georgian Dream" took its power, kept a positive position in rankings. The Good Governance Initiative (GGI) was designed to support democratic governance reforms in Georgia, after 2012. As the report published by USAID (2023) shows, Georgia enacted at least 26 legal and public reforms between 2015-2022. Moreover, many activities were done regarding donor coordination and capacity-building activities. The Good Governance Initiative and continuous political interest in political institutions on implementing good governance keep ensuring valuable achievements for the state.

The Georgian Government views openness, transparency, accountability, and involvement of citizens in decision-making as fundamental values for democratic society and continues to adhere to the principles of Open Government Partnership (OGP) in public governance. Moreover, providing good governance principles is guaranteed by the Constitution of Georgia mainly by putting principles of good governance (like openness and transparency, for example) in different articles under the document (Tskhadadze, 2017). Additionally, the Council of Europe published "Recommendation CM/Rec (2007)7 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on good administration" in 2007, where core principles of good governance were defined for public institutions and agencies. Later on, the EU and Georgia signed an Association Agreement in 2014, which introduced a preferential trade regime - the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA). Georgia also shared the values drafted by the EU on good governance principles in 2007.

The latest rankings related to transparency in the Time of War Index 2023 show that Georgia was promoted from 45th to 17th. The head of the Government Administration of Georgia, Revaz Javelidze, notes that Georgia is "ahead of 15 EU member states and four G7 member states, along with such advanced countries as Finland, Sweden, and Great Britain" (AGENDA.GE, 2023, p.2) The core dimensions of reforms, which led Georgia to implement

better governance, were patrol police reform, tax collection system reform, customs system reform, business deregulation, and civil registry reform. Those reforms promoted the eradication of corruption. The Georgia government's approach has gradually changed regarding ensuring transparency and accountability after the Rose Revolution in 2003. After the revolution, more attention was given to the enforcement of penal legislation related to public accountability (Council of Europe, 2017). The Georgian government implemented patrol police reform, tax collection system reform, customs system reform, business deregulation, and public and civil registry reform. Modernization of those areas led the state to great success and an immediate decrease in corruption, as the Council of Europe notes (2017). However, current efforts are basically linked to focusing on the prevention of corruption, increasing the level of transparency, and providing reforms for civil services. In this regard, the Georgian National Anti-Corruption Strategy and Action Plan plays a crucial role in improving the ethics, transparency, and accountability of state institutions (Council of Europe, 2017).

Some positive findings regarding transparency in Georgia are revealed in the report published by the Council of Europe in 2017. According to the report by the Council of Europe (2017), access to information is the legal right for citizens to request and receive information from public agencies and authorities. It should be considered a universal right that supports accountability along with informed public participation in decisions and is, therefore, fundamental for the effective functioning of democracies. The right to access public information is provided by Article 42 of the Constitution of Georgia (1995) and by the General Administrative Code of Georgia (1999). Access to information is one of the most important tools for transparency that currently exists in Georgia (Council of Europe, 2017). Currently, there are no official guidelines on accessing information in Georgia. However, individual public agencies and civil society organisations provide citizens with adequate information through websites and handbooks (Council of Europe, 2017).

Another aspect crucial for ensuring transparency is open data, which is generated by both public institutions and civil society organisations. Currently, there is no legal framework or obligation for organisations to do so in Georgia, but the implementation of open data is strongly encouraged. The Government of Georgia promotes open data through an open data portal. The portal includes information on several public authorities and institutions in an open-data format. The portal includes information on procurement, public spending, and public policy. The main aim of the portal is to create an open data space for civil society and citizens

(Council of Europe, 2017). In fact, there are no guidelines for Georgian public institutions on how to provide open data publication, which makes Georgian public institutions less involved in building up an open data portal in a synchronised way (Council of Europe, 2017). However, Open data has started to enable civil society and citizens to have information for analytical purposes and create innovative tools for broader public use. Due to the fact that an open data portal is not utilised efficiently, available information on the portal is also low among Georgian citizens, as the Council of Europe (2017) notes.

Citizen participation in Georgia is provided by a complaint mechanism, open policy-making, participatory budgeting, public consultations, and public petitions (Council of Europe, 2017). There is no national regulation on complaints mechanisms for services in Georgia. Therefore, there are no established complaint mechanisms that allow citizens to provide feedback on public service and its quality. Despite the fact that service delivery is one of the integral parts of public administration reform in Georgia, the complaints mechanism is not institutionalised yet. There are no established complaint mechanisms that allow citizens to complain, provide feedback, and, therefore, help relevant authorities to improve public service quality. Even if all citizens have the possibility to discuss with public agencies and provide complaints, the instrument is not institutionalised, as we mentioned. Due to the fact that an established channel would significantly help public institutions provide better accountability and service delivery, it is important to promote complaints mechanisms. Currently, there are no national or internal regulations on complaint mechanisms or guidelines on how to voice complaints to citizens (Council of Europe, 2017).

For conducting successful implementation of Public Administration Reforms, it is crucial to promote policy-making through citizen openness (Council of Europe, 2017). Open policy-making has shown tremendous success in recent years. The main reason for the process is linked to the understanding of the need for collaboration between citizens and public institutions in order to create better policies. Regarding central and local policy-making approaches, the Open Government Partnership (OGP) had a transformative effect in Georgia, following the effective collaboration between civil society and government institutions to create the OGP National Action Plans (Council of Europe, 2017). Another element for better performance of the pillar of transparency is the active participation of citizens in policy-making and through public consultations. However, public consultations on policy documents are not really frequent in Georgia. Draft laws and policy papers are frequently given to various

stakeholders and members of civil society. Public consultations are an essential tool for enhancing civic oversight of public policy and public institution accountability and transparency (Council of Europe, 2017). Public consultations occur more frequently in municipalities than at the federal level, but they lack an institutionalised structure and are not specifically supported by law. It is common practice to have consultations when developing the local budget, carrying out infrastructure projects, etc (Council of Europe, 2017). Moreover, there is no national or local legislation that promotes procedural requirements and principles for public consultations. However, there is a specific case, the case of Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA), which requires public consultations as a core element. According to Article 32 of the Georgian Law on the Environmental Impact Code, public consultations are a mandatory component for conducting EIA, and its findings should be annexed to the report (Council of Europe, 2017). The Council of Europe (2017) believes that public consultations encourage citizens and stakeholders to give their opinions regarding the policy process. The process of consultations is mostly flexible, done online or in person, which improves efficiency, transparency, and public involvement. When public consultation is carried out efficiently and promptly, it will boost decision-making quality, enhance compliance, lower the cost of enforcement, and foster greater public confidence in decision-making (Council of Europe, 2017).

3.2 Evaluation practices in Georgia

The Government of Georgia carries out impact assessment at national level. Namely, an ex-ante evaluation instrument such as RIA is already adopted at the national level. Georgia started the process of institutionalisation of RIA a decade ago. However, the process of proper implementation was delayed, as it is highlighted by the OECD report published in 2018. Later on, the Government of Georgia adopted Ordinance No. 35 in January 2020. Georgia formally institutionalised RIA by providing a new amendment No.4607 to the Law on Normative Acts. Therefore, RIA became a mandatory instrument when a draft law on amendments to the legislative acts are prepared, as well as decrees of the Government of Georgia, if the initiator of the draft law is the Government of Georgia. Moreover, RIAs are prepared in certain cases, by the decision of the Government of Georgia, during the preparation of a draft law by the executive body (Pignatti, 2022).

On 17 January 2020, the Government of Georgia approved the official RIA methodology and started institutionalising the RIA process at the national level. The core objective of the RIA is to promote evidence-based policies at the national level and improve the quality of regulatory and non-regulatory actions elaborated with the full involvement of stakeholders and citizens. RIA aims to answer questions like the following: What is the problem? Is it really necessary to regulate the problem? Which groups are affected by the problem, and what might be relevant solutions? How does the problem affect certain fields of life? How will the performance, monitoring, and assessment of the selected option be planned? (Powell, Chitanava, Tsikvadze, Gaprindashvili, Keshelava, Lobjanidze, 2021).

Meanwhile, the Government of Georgia provided training sessions on RIA through proactive communication with experts from the International School of Economics at Tbilisi State University Policy Institute (ISET). These trainings aimed to raise awareness on RIA and its implications in practice for civil servants, bureaucrats, and hired professionals. The training series took place from 2021 to 2022. As Pignatti (2022) underlines, capacity-building activities slowed down because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Currently, capacity-building activities are being re-started in Georgia. In parallel, the Government of Georgia continues tight coordination with donor organisations, the private sector, and civil society to ensure a long-term program for capacity-building activities and finalise a proper institutionalisation of RIA (Pignatti, 2022).

In parallel, Georgia continues work on adopting EIA in work practice. The EIA system was first introduced in Georgia in 1997 and some changes occurred over the years. For example, the Law on Ecological Expertise was adopted in 2007. According to the Association Agreement with the European Union, ratified in 2014, Georgia is obliged to harmonise its legislation to European legislation, Georgia has to adopt international instruments, including EIA (Gugushvili & Jendroška, 2022). Georgia has made some changes within the legal framework for EIA, however the current legal framework was not still compatible with the international and EU standards. In 2016, Georgia adopted the Environmental Assessment Code (which is similar to EIA directive by the EU) and conducted harmonisation of EIA with international and European standards. Currently, the Ministry of Environment Protection of Georgia continues collaboration with the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Secretariat and the European Union in order to apply EIA at national level (Gugushvili & Jendroška, 2022).

3.3 Gender equality in Georgia

3.3.1 Gender equality in Georgia

In order to provide better governance in Georgia, it is significant to promote better cooperation between state and civil society, consolidate interests and provide actions together. For example, due to the fact that providing good governance through an open governance approach is a gradual process and there are some institutional challenges seen in the process, cooperation between civil society and public agencies and authorities is getting more important. Focusing on providing openness, transparency, and participation requires better normative support by Georgia. As Council of Europe (2017) notes, Georgia has developed a Guideline to Ethics and Rules of Conduct of Public Employees, which includes practical information on cases and regulations regarding ethics, organisational culture, revolving door, nepotism, Etc. However, the document has not been adopted by an official legal act. Regarding citizen participation, Council of Europe (2017) concludes that there is no national regulation on complaints mechanisms for services given by public authorities (it has voluntary nature only). Conducting openness tools enhances the trust between the state and society, provides effective feedback and promotes transparency, as well as a better policy-making (Iashvili, Phartenadze & Manvelidze, 2019).

Since the 1990s, Georgia actively started joining international agreements regarding promoting gender equality and women's rights. Joining the CEDAW convention in 1994 was the very first step taken by Georgia. Later on, more agreements were shared by the state, and a lot of measures were implemented in order to meet all tasks defined by international agreements and conventions from 1994 to 2021. Crucial to this development have been the efforts taken after 2015, which saw Georgia take significant steps to promote gender equality, eliminate violence against women through changes in legislation, promote better policies, and implement specific measures for tackling inequalities. Nevertheless, there are still significant challenges, especially in the legislation and policies, which require in-depth analyses and continuous work (the Gender Equality Council of the Parliament of Georgia, 2022).

As the European Union (2021) underlines, Georgia achieved significant progress in different thematic areas. Georgia has made progress in this area by improving legislation and strengthening relevant mechanisms regarding gender-based violence. Georgia ratified international agreements and reinforced national policies and legislation on it. The reporting

system on violence against women improved, and in 2019, the Parliament approved a new Bill on Sexual Harassment. Some state policies were developed regarding universal access to sexual and reproductive rights for women and girls. For example, strategies “National Maternal and Newborn Health Strategy 2017–2030,” “National Youth Policy Concept 2020–2030,” “Demographic Security Policy 2017–2030” set out objectives of ensuring reproductive health care services, information and education, and protecting mothers and newborns (European Union, 2021). Georgia improved the legal framework on sexual and reproductive health and rights, and reduced the maternal mortality rate. Furthermore, Georgia improved education on sexual and reproductive health and rights with the assistance of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). In particular, sexual education is integrated in learning materials for elementary, basic and secondary education. Women’s participation and leadership in politics improved, in particular Georgia adopted gender quotas for parliamentary and local elections in 2020. Some positive changes were implemented for the area of “Women, Peace and Security.” In particular, Georgia became the first country in the region to adopt a National Action Plan (NAP) for implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution on Women, Peace and security in 2011 for 2012-2015, followed by adoption of action plans for 2016-2017, 2018-2020 years. Georgia conducted free legal aid services for internally displaced girls and women affected by conflicts in Georgia, conducted awareness raising and capacity building on gender issues for professionals and employees for the security sector (European Union, 2021). However, the report by the Gender Equality Council of the Parliament of Georgia (2021) highlights that there are some gaps for some sectors.

As it is stated by the study “Gender Equality in Georgia: Barriers and Recommendations” (Gender Equality Council of the Parliament of Georgia, 2021), specific areas still need to be prioritised and improved through policies, such as Women’s Economic Empowerment, Gender Equality in Healthcare, Harmful Practices, Gender Equality in Education, Gender Equality in Sports and Culture, and Women, Peace, and Security.

According to this study, women’s economic participation rate is still low in Georgia. According to the Global Economy (n.d), female labour force participation rate in Georgia was 55.65% for 2022. Housework and lack of relevant jobs create barriers to women having full-time jobs. Based on this, women have to be self-employed, mostly in the informal economy (for example, babysitters and house cleaning services). As the report by the Gender Equality Council of the Parliament of Georgia (2022) notes, Georgia significantly amended the

Georgian Labour Code in 2020 to bring the Georgian legislative framework into compliance with EU directives on the subject. Still, several obstacles need to be overcome, such as maternity leave. Additionally, there is also a sizable gender pay gap disparity. An adjusted hourly gender pay gap was 24.8 percent in 2017, meaning that women in paid work are better suited for the workforce than men in employment but are paid less (Gender Equality Council of the Parliament of Georgia, 2022). On top of this, the COVID-19 pandemic worsened the economic position of women, especially making single moms and large families vulnerable. As stated by research by the Gender Equality Council of the Parliament of Georgia (2022), due to the pandemic, domestic labour has increased enormously for women. Just 35% of men and 42% of women, respectively, reported that they perform at least one more household chore now than they did prior to the pandemic. Due to the closure of kindergartens and schools, families with children now bear a disproportionately heavy burden of domestic labour (Gender Equality Council of the Parliament of Georgia, 2022).

Some other systematic problems related to gender equality in healthcare remain unsolved. Regulating the surrogacy industry, ensuring access to family planning services and modern contraceptives in primary care within universal health care, enforcing age-appropriate, mandatory, comprehensive education on reproductive health and rights in secondary and high schools especially, strengthening the protection of patient privacy and personal information in the healthcare industry, removing social, political, and cultural barriers to abortion services, and increasing access to assisted reproductive technology are all challenges that need to be addressed in order to achieve compliance with internationally recognized standards in this area (Gender Equality Council of the Parliament of Georgia, 2022). Moreover, it is still problematic to collect relevant data on these issues. Existing policy documents and laws do not follow the approach of intersectionality (the term is used to characterise the ways in which discriminatory systems based on gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, class, and other factors "intersect" to produce distinctive dynamics and effects). State policy documents and programs, as well as the current legislative framework, do not acknowledge the unique needs of women and girls with disabilities (Gender Equality Council of the Parliament of Georgia, 2022).

There are challenges seen in fields such as education, sport, and culture. Precisely, there is a lack of general legislation to ensure gender equality in education. Furthermore, comprehensive education regarding reproductive health and rights is not integrated into the

education system in Georgia. Moreover, early and child marriage practices are still a challenge in terms of problem prevention and management. Normative frameworks do not promote women's participation in sports adequately, nor are gender equality issues integrated into cultural legislation and policies. Equal participation in the creative industries and access to culture are not guaranteed by the legal framework. The mechanisms and assurances for guaranteeing gender equality in culture are not covered by any of the provisions of the Law on Culture of 1997) (Gender Equality Council of the Parliament of Georgia, 2022).

3.3.2 Gender equality in Georgian public policy

As the report by UN Women (2021) notes, Georgia has made great progress throughout the past decades towards gender equality and empowerment of women. A significant step was taken by the government in the last ten years (2011-2021) to improve gender equality. Institutional mechanisms were significantly improved, the domestic legal framework was upgraded, more awareness-related campaigns were held, and cooperation with civil society organisations related to gender equality was improved. In particular, the Gender Equality Council of the Parliament (GEC), which was established in 2004, was transformed into a standing body in 2010. The GE aims to check up on state progress on gender equality, assist the Parliament of Georgia in drafting state policies on gender issues, and ensure gender mainstreaming. Therefore, strengthening a key actor like GEC is crucial for providing better gender-sensitive policies. Furthermore, the Gender Equality Department was established within the Public Defender's Office on 15 May 2013. At the municipal level, some changes were implemented in the law "On Gender Equality," and the process of establishing gender equality councils at the municipal level has started. Local self-government started ensuring systematic work on gender issues in their municipalities and implementing relevant policies and services (UN Women, 2021). Moreover, Georgia upgraded the State concept of Gender Equality in 2021, which was prepared in 2006. In 2010, the Parliament of Georgia adopted the Law on Gender Equality and, in 2011, the first National Action Plan on UN Security Council resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. Later on, domestic violence was criminalised as the Criminal Code of Georgia was amended. In 2014, the law on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination was approved by the Parliament of Georgia. In the meantime, Georgia continued to join international agreements and conventions. For example, Georgia ratified the

Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence in 2017, regulations on sexual harassment were adopted by the Parliament of Georgia in 2019, and some changes were introduced to the Labour Code of Georgia in 2020. Some changes were made in the Election Code of Georgia in 2020, and political parties became obliged to include one member of the opposite sex for every four members in the election lists that are submitted to the Central Election Commission for national elections.

Besides, further international agreements were taken by the state in the field of gender equality, and more detailed state programs and action plans were developed at the national level, like the Human Rights Strategy and its Action plan by the Government of Georgia or Annual action plans by the Permanent Gender Equality Council of the Parliament of Georgia. Georgia declared gender equality as its priority and agreed to take some steps and improve measures to strengthen gender equality in the state after joining international agreements, which are explained in detail below.

However, Georgia remains a patriarchal country, where the main figure in political life as well as in the decision-making process are men. For example, women's participation in the Georgian parliament is only 17% after the 2020 elections. Even if the president of Georgia is a female, the prime minister is male, the vice prime ministers are also male and the majority members of the prime minister cabinet are also males (UN Women, 2021).

Women have to put in more effort than men to achieve self-accomplishment in public or political life. Still, the family is all that matters for a woman in Georgia - she should be only involved in housework and care work, rather than stay focused on professional development, researches say (Letodiani, 2021).

Gender equality means equal representation of genders in all processes of social, political, economic, and cultural development that promotes democratic values and social justice (Letodiani, 2021). The state of Georgia has given attention to providing different needs of men and women through public life and political life by improving the domestic legal framework, joining different international agreements, and ensuing gender quota to boost female participation at Parliament as well as at the municipal level and take a focus on strengthening public agencies, provide capacity building activities and closing gender inequality by providing awareness raising campaigns.

3.3.2.1 International and regional commitments

In 1994, Georgia ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) with no reservations. For doing so, Georgia took its responsibility to ensure full development and advancement of women and to provide policies to promote the elimination of discrimination against women. Later on, in 1995, Georgia signed the Beijing Platform for Action and took action, for example, by conducting gender-sensitive policy-making and closing gender gaps in critical areas such as education, violence against women, and decision-making.

After the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015, Georgia has begun to integrate them into its national development plans and strategies. At the July 2016 meeting of the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, Georgia was one of the initial twenty-two nations to present the Voluntary National Review (VNR) aimed at accomplishing the Sustainable Development Goals. Later on, Georgia declared all 17 SDGs as national priorities in 2017 (UN Women, 2024). To be more precise, the fifth goal of SDGs, titled “Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls,” encourages closing gender inequality and end all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere, promote women’s effective participation and equal opportunities at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life and adopt, strengthen and ensure sound policies, adequate legislation for promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls (UN Women, 2023).

At the regional level, Georgia is a member of the Council of Europe. It ratified the European Convention on Human Rights in 1999 and is subject to the jurisdiction of the European Court of Human Rights. Moreover, Georgia has declared joining the European Union’s legal and regulatory space as its top policy priority (European Union, 2021, p.5). Table 1 summarises the actions taken by Georgia regarding the ratification of international agreements on gender issues.

Figure 4.2: Timeline of Georgia’s commitments to gender equality and the empowerment of women, UN Women (2021)

1994	Georgia ratified the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)
1995	Georgia participated in the UN Fourth World Conference in Beijing
2000	UN Security Council resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, binding on all UN Members States, including Georgia
2004	Parliamentary Gender Equality Advisory Council was established
2006	→ Georgia adopted the Law on Combating Human Trafficking and the Law on the Elimination of Violence against Women and/or Domestic Violence, and the Protection and Support of Victims of Such Violence → Georgia adopted State Concept on Gender Equality
2007	Georgia started adopting and implementing periodic National Action Plans on Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence
2009	State Fund for Protection and Assistance of (Statutory) Victims of Human Trafficking was established
2010	→ First shelter for domestic violence survivors and hotline established → Georgia adopted Law on Gender Equality
2011	Georgia adopted National Action Plan on UN Security Council resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security
2012	Domestic violence criminalised in the Criminal Code of Georgia
2013	Public Defender’s Office established the standing Gender Equality Department within its structure
2014	Government of Georgia adopted the 2014–2020 Human Rights Strategy and Action Plan (HR NAP)
2015	Georgia joined the global 2030 Agenda
2016	Public Defender’s Office established the Femicide Watch
2017	→ Inter-Agency Commission on Gender Equality, Violence against Women and Domestic Violence Issues established → Government of Georgia ratified the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (the Istanbul Convention)

2018	Constitution of Georgia amended with new equality article (Article 11) providing grounds for substantive gender equality and special measures
2019	→ Bill on sexual harassment was adopted by the Parliament of Georgia and respective amendments made to the Labour Code of Georgia and the Code of Administrative Offences of Georgia → Leading up to the twentieth anniversary of UN Security Council resolution 1325, the Government of Georgia undertook 10 commitments to advance the WPS agenda
2020	Parliament approved amendment to the Election Code of Georgia incorporating gender quotas
2021	→ Georgia undertook commitments under the Generation Equality movement → Georgia became a member of the Equal Pay International Coalition (EPIC)

3.3.2.2 National legal framework

Georgia ratified all basic international declarations, conventions, treaties, and agreements in order to protect gender equality. Georgia also adopted special laws to eliminate discrimination and to respond adequately to requirements of international agreements (Letodiani, 2021). For example, such laws are the Law of Georgia on Gender Equality and the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination.

All those laws' updates and initiatives are positively reflected in the report prepared by the European Union in 2021 where it is written that "Georgia has made significant progress in adopting a legislative and policy framework and strengthening national institutions on gender equality and women's rights" (European Union, 2021, p.6).

In this section we focus on three main legislative bases. The very first one is the *Constitution of Georgia, article 11*, which provides gender equality and prohibits gender-based discrimination. Providing equal rights and opportunities for sexes are guaranteed by this article. It also requires "special measures" (as it is defined by the law) by the state to close gender inequalities, structural inequalities and implement specific policies, laws, programmes for achieving equality (European Union, 2021).

Another important legal basis is *the Law of Georgia on Gender Equality*, which was adopted in 2010 and defines Georgia's obligations to support and ensure equal rights for women and men in all aspects of life, including political, economic, social, and cultural. This law requires the provision of specific measures by the state to avoid discrimination in all fields of life and guarantees equality in all spheres of public life, including labour relationships, science, health care, education, participation in politics, Etc (European Union, 2021). Additionally, Georgia adopted the law on *the Elimination of All forms of discrimination* in 2014. The law prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity, defines discrimination, and ensures the obligation for entities to provide rapid response to cases of discrimination (European Union, 2021).

Policies for gender equality in Georgia have been implemented through three core strategic documents: 1. The Human Rights Strategy and its Action Plan (2018-2020), which has a specific chapter dedicated to gender equality and includes topics of gender equality in policy-making and female participation in politics, women economic empowerment, gender equality in the healthcare sector. 2. The National Action Plan (2018–2020) on Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence and Measures to be Implemented for the Protection of Victims (Survivors). 3. The National Action Plan (2018–2020) for the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolutions (UNSCRs) on Women, Peace and Security (European Union, 2021). Additionally, The Gender Equality Council of Georgia publishes an action plan every two years, where the core priorities of the state are defined in relation to gender and gender-sensitive policy-making.

In fact, strategic documents named “The National Action Plan (2018–2020)” by the Government of Georgia have expired, but new documents are being drafted. However, the European Union (2021) criticises Georgia for not having a specific Gender Equality Strategy, including sectoral strategies with a gender perspective. The other concern identified by the European Union (2021) is linked to gender gaps in legislation. There are some issues that have to be addressed in domestic laws, including regulations related to equal pay, the minimum wage, adequate payment for parental leave, legislation on violence against women, definition of rape. According to the European Union (2021), the Law on Gender Equality does not include effective implementation mechanisms and measures that have to be used by the state for better implementation of gender equality legislation. At the same time, obligations to mainstream

gender in policy-making, gender-responsive budgeting, and gender audit are strongly needed (European Union, 2021).

3.3.2.3 Gender mainstreaming policy in Georgia

There are still significant obstacles to implementing gender mainstreaming, even with significant advancements, particularly in the areas of legislation guaranteeing gender equality and the introduction and development of action plans. The planning, implementation, monitoring, and assessment of sectoral policies, including those pertaining to the economy, employment, agriculture, and budgeting, do not incorporate a gender perspective. Implementing mechanisms for women's strengthening in the nation requires institutionalising gender mainstreaming and expanding opportunities for it in national activities (Jalaghania, 2021). As Jalaghania (2021) notes, the lack of inter-sectoral collaborations and an effort of the government to put gender expertise into planning gender mainstreaming actions remain challenging. At the same time, there is no clear outline of which instruments or techniques have to be used for better implementation of gender mainstreaming. It is vital for the process of gender mainstreaming to adopt new instruments in work practice and promote the inclusivity of public policies.

The scope of the Beijing Action Plan (1995) obliges states to integrate gender issues in all areas and provide better policies and programs, promote monitoring and assessment, and provide strategies, plans, and programs in order to end gender inequality at the local level. Gender analysis, which provides the necessary data and information in order to integrate a gender component into policies, programs, or projects, is one of the approaches to policy evaluation that promotes ensuring gender mainstreaming, as we said. However, gender analysis and precisely GIA as its concrete tool to promote better measurement and performance of policies with a gender focus, there is no legal obligation to conduct GIA in Georgia as it is provided by some European countries, such as Austria and Belgium for example. It is not included in the Resolution of the Government of Georgia on “the Approval of the Rules for the Evaluation of Policy Papers, Development, and Monitoring” (2021), nor in the Public Administration Reform Guide (2020), which is developed as a practical guide for ensuring good governance in practice (Jalaghania, 2021).

3.4 Institutional framework regarding to gender equality

Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women have been identified as one of the crucial dimensions of the Beijing Declaration and Platform of Actions. Institutional mechanisms play a key role in supporting gender mainstreaming. Such institutions must be located at the highest possible level in government and invested with the authority. Institutional mechanisms have to be supported by financial resources in order to provide better fulfilment of their mandates (United Nations, n.d). Institutional mechanisms are covered by different branches of power and at different levels in Georgia. It includes councils, agencies, and institutions at the parliamentary, governmental, and local self-government levels. In particular, the Permanent Parliamentary Gender Equality Council in the legislative branch, the Inter-Agency Human Rights Council in the executive branch, the Public Defender's Office at the national level, the municipal gender equality councils at local governments, and the Gender Equality Council of the Supreme Council of Autonomous Republics. We overview each of them and their main functions below.

The permanent parliamentary gender equality council (GEC) was established in 2004 but was transformed into a permanent body only in 2010. The GEC was the very first special institution to ensure gender equality in Georgia. However, this institution did not have sufficient legal guarantees. It had only an advisory function until 2010. The transformation of the GEC as a permanent body happened later, under the law on Gender Equality, and its responsibilities expanded (Letodiani, 2021).

The main aim of the GEC is to support the parliament of Georgia in defining state policy regarding gender issues, provide gender mainstreaming, and ensure monitoring and oversight mechanisms for the executive government (UN Women, 2021). Moreover, the GEC has a crucial role in ensuring gender mainstreaming by including main functions such as defining the main directions of the state regarding gender equality by the parliament, ensuring analysis of legislation of Georgia and drafting out proposals to eliminate gender inequality in Georgia; ensuring the expertise of draft legislative acts and provide gender equality assessment, develop and implement a system for monitoring and evaluation when it comes to ensuring gender equality, develop relevant recommendations, oversight function for executive government (Jalagania, 2021).

According to the report by UN Women (2021), gender mainstreaming efforts by the GEC lack a systematic approach as the GEC lacks financial support from the parliament and activities are largely donor-driven (UN Women, 2021). The lack of financial support from the parliament does not give the GEC many opportunities to plan activities regarding imposing gender mainstreaming tools or even improving the existing ones. Based on this reason, the GEC tries to build up better cooperation between international donor organisations and local organisations.

The Inter-Agency Human Rights Council was created in (2016) in order to elaborate and implement state policy regarding human rights. The council is chaired by the prime minister of Georgia and aims to ensure several tasks, like discussing, approving, and presenting the statements and recommendations by the government of Georgia in the Human Rights Action Plan, create thematic working groups, and provide better coordination and monitoring of the plan, manage meetings of the council every six months, provide annual reports regarding the Human Rights Action Plan and submit them to the Parliament of Georgia (Human rights secretariat, 2023). Additionally, The Inter-Agency Commission represents an important mechanism for the advancement of gender equality and women's empowerment at the national level (UN Women, 2021, p.21) and promotes gender mainstreaming in as many policies and programs as possible.

The other key institution is the **Public Defender's Office (PDO)**, created in (1996). This institution has a Gender Equality Department, which was established in 2013. The Department oversees the protection of human rights and freedoms in the field of gender equality and promotes gender mainstreaming. Additionally, the Department ensures awareness-raising activities regarding gender equality in Georgia. Another task is to monitor the implementation of national and international gender-equality-related legislation and publish annual or specific reports regarding women's rights in Georgia. The Department also examines and responds to reports related to gender-based violence and discrimination cases by gender or sexual orientation in Georgia (UN Women, 2021).

The European Union report (2021) states that gender equality machinery in Georgia is well-established at different levels of government. The overall institutional framework on gender equality is well developed. There are institutions in charge of providing gender equality at the national level, such as the Inter-Agency Human Rights Council and the Gender Equality

Council in parliament. Furthermore, each municipality has its own Gender Equality Council at the local self-government level. However, the development of those agencies or institutions is different when specific activities or measures are provided. For example, ministries are less engaged in providing gender mainstreaming (European Union, 2021). Lastly, the GEC maintains a leading position at the national level, which provides coordination between institutions.

Finally, no institutional fragmentation has occurred in the Georgian context. Institutional fragmentation means the growing diversity and challenges of coordinating among institutions (Zelli & Asselt, 2013). The institutional framework for working on gender equality is well framed, as the EU report (2021) highlights. Each institution carries out its tasks and responsibilities under its mandates at different levels of government. The GEC provides coordination between institutions and agencies by providing periodic meetings and discussions, public hearings, and working groups on specific issues, as reported by the official website of the Parliament of Georgia (Parliament. ge, n.d).

3.5 Evolution of GIA in Georgia

In 2017, the Gender Equality Council of the Parliament of Georgia declared its interest in conducting GIAs, and there was also a desire to implement pilot versions (Jalaghania, 2021). These aspects are systematically reported in the action strategies of the Gender Equality Council, covering the years 2018-2020, 2021, and 2022-2024.

Since 2018, the Gender Equality Council has been reporting in the action plan about the need to prepare a GIA document. It should be noted that the Council mainly encourages parliamentary committees to carry out GIAs. Despite this, not all the parliamentary committees managed to prepare GIAs.

The original pilot documents were prepared in 2017-2018. In particular: a) Assessment of the gender impact of the reform of the labour legislation (Gender Equality Council, Analysis of the gender impact of the reform of the labour legislation of Georgia, 2017) and b) Gender Impact Assessment of Georgia's Drug Policy Reform (2017) (Gender Equality Council, Gender Impact Analysis of Georgia's Drug Policy Legislation, 2017).

The mention of the implementation of the GIA first appeared in the 2018-20 Action Strategy of the Gender Equality Council, which had the obligation to implement it by 2020. This document states that each parliamentary committee must conduct a gender impact analysis on at least one draft law. The number of pilot programs implemented in practice is significantly lower than the target indicated in the Gender Equality Council's 2018-20 Action Strategy. The plan says that each parliamentary committee is supposed to analyse the gender impact minimum on one draft law (indicator 1.3.1), though only six of the parliamentary committees managed to prepare GIA documents in the period (2018-2020). Precisely: "Assessing the Gender Impact on Some Aspects of Small Business Taxation and Income Tax" (prepared by the Committee on Sectoral Economics and Economic Policy), "Assessing the Gender Impact of Legislative Changes in Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence" (prepared by the Committee on Human Rights and Civil Integration), "Gender Impact Analysis - Draft Law on Domestic Violence and Gender-Based Crimes" (prepared by the Committee on Legal issues), "Gender Impact Analysis of the Draft Law on Labor Security" (prepared by the Committee on Health and Social issues), "Analysis of Gender Impact of the Draft Law of Georgia on Physical Education and Sports" (prepared by the Committee on Sports and Youth issues), The Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, with the support of the National Democratic Institute (NDI) and the Permanent Parliamentary Council for Gender Equality, prepared a Gender Impact Assessment of the Draft Law on Water Resources Management in 2020 (Jalaghania, 2021, p.27).

Conducting Gender Analysis (GA) and GIA remain a core element of the action plan 2022-2034 issued by the Gender Equality Council of Georgia. Specifically, the Gender Equality Council of Georgia (2022) collects key activities with the aim of providing "Support for determining the main directions of the state policy and adapting new concepts regarding the field of gender equality by the Parliament of Georgia." This is done by conducting gender analysis for parliamentary committees (listed as activity 1.2), the institutionalisation of GIA methodology of legislation (activity 1.4), and increasing the capacities of the representatives of the committees' awareness for gender mainstreaming, economic and political empowerment of women, violence against women and domestic violence, as well as by work regarding gender issues in relationships (activity 1.6).

Here, we focus on activity 1.4, which specifically refers to GIA. Under this activity, the GEC sets out a couple of indicators. The GEC aims to adopt the methodology of GIA at the parliamentary level and ensure coordination between the GEC and parliamentary committees on this issue. A Sector Economy and Economic Policy Committee, which mainly participates in the

development and determination of the country's economic policy, including economic sectors and improving Georgia's legislation regarding economic policy, has a significant role in conducting GIAs, as the GEC highlights. Additionally, the GEC recognizes its role to ensure monitoring of the GIA, check out how the recommendations issued by GIA documents are implemented in practice, and conduct monitoring. Lastly, the GEC aims to adopt and integrate gender impact components in explanatory reports while adopting new initiatives at the parliamentary level and promoting awareness-raising activities regarding GIA for staff members of parliamentary committees. As noted in the action plan for 2022-2024, a few key partner organisations, which are mainly international donor organisations, assist the GEC in implementing all activities mentioned in the document. These organisations are UN Women, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the National Democratic Institute (NDI), the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) (The Gender Equality Council of the Parliament of Georgia, 2022).

In the study issued by the Public Defender's Office of Georgia in 2021, we note some crucial points regarding the challenges that GEC faces in implementing GIA in practice. Firstly, as Jalaghania (2021) highlights, providing gender analysis is not an integral part of the explanatory report of the policy initiative when it comes to registering the initiative at the parliamentary level. In spite of the role and significance of the GEC in providing gender mainstreaming tools such as GIA, more steps and concrete actions are needed. Adopting GIA needs more consistent practice and a solid institutional framework. Gender Assessment tools became more visible by the parliament, but the implementation of such activities is not foreseen in the law on gender equality. Related to this issue, it is essential to improve the work of the GEC and facilitate better implementation of gender mainstreaming tools, including GIA practices (Jalaghania, 2021). Improving supervision functions and promoting better collaboration with committees as well as with other public authorities are strongly needed (Jalaghania, 2021).

While the GEC implemented its national action plan for the years 2022-2024, some significant changes happened for Georgia. After the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022, a new window of opportunity was opened for Ukraine, Georgia, and Moldova, and the process of applying to the EU has hastened. Following Georgia's membership application, the European Union declared that Georgia would receive a candidate country status once the twelve priorities outlined in the Commission's opinion on Georgia's membership application were met. In this opinion, the European Commission recommended that Georgia ensure the stability of institutions, guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights, and respect for the rights of minorities.

The European Commission called on Georgia to promote gender equality and drafted one of the twelve recommendations regarding it. In response to the implementation of the ninth recommendation of the European Union ("Strengthen efforts to achieve gender equality"), Georgia planned and implemented some tasks like mobilise experts and working on initiatives regarding gender equality, adopting a new state concept on gender equality, institutionalise GIA, promote better protection of females through some legislative gaps, introducing the concept of women's economic empowerment, etc. As the European Commission (2023) highlights, Georgia adopted a series of strategic documents and legislation on gender equality and took a focus on gender-based violence against women and domestic violence. Furthermore, the package of adopted laws introduced GIA for all legislative acts and aimed to ensure compliance with the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence. The instrument of GIA for all legislative acts and several amendments became mandatory instruments. The State Concept on Economic Empowerment of Women was also approved by the Parliament of Georgia in 2023.

On 5 October 2022, the Gender Equality Council and the Committee on Human Rights Protection and Civil Integration initiated and implemented several initiatives. At the briefing held by the GEC and the Committee on Human Rights Protection and Civil Integration, the institutionalisation of GIA was named as one of the important goals to be achieved in order to fulfil recommendations issued by the EU. Nino Tsilosani, the chair of the GEC, stated:

“These are the initiatives, envisaging: first – introduction of the changes to the Organic Law on Normative Acts imposing the obligation on the authors of the legal initiatives to submit the pre-estimation of the initiatives along with the drafts in terms of the possible impact on gender equality; second – some legal acts will be amended to, at the legal level, determine the gender equality not only as an equal legal capacity but to aim as an incentive for the achievement of actual equality; third – the changes are to be introduced to some legal acts on countering the violence against women, envisaging the fulfilment of the international commitments of the country and harmonisation of the best international standards with the national legislation” (Parliament.ge, 2022).

Later on, the GEC managed to organise a meeting to ensure better coordination between state agencies regarding GIA. However, according to the official sources published on the parliamentary website in the words of Nino Tsilosani, chair of the GEC, the explanatory report of the policy initiative should provide impact assessments of certain initiatives on women and men,

have to be embodied in the process of initiating an initiative, include improvements of policy directions if needed (Parliament.ge, 2023).

After almost a year, the European Commission published a report on Georgia and assessed initiatives and reforms conducted by the country. Some key positive aspects are foreseen in the document regarding Georgia's attempts to adopt GIA continuously. The European Commission (2023) notes that Georgia adopted a series of strategic documents and legislation regarding gender equality and improved measures on gender-based violence against women and domestic violence. Moreover, positive feedback is given to the package of adopted laws that introduce GIA for all legislative acts. The measure also promotes better compliance with the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (European Commission, 2023). Moreover, conducting GIA supports better development, monitoring, and evaluation of policy documents and ensures better evidence-based policy-making. The Commission recommended that Georgia incorporate GIA and RIA in governmental policies and promote evidence-based policies through such tools.

The very last positive point highlighted by the Commission in its 2023 report concerned the adoption of changes to the Normative Acts law in December 2022 by the Georgian Parliament, which mandated GIAs for all proposed laws. A roadmap for mainstreaming gender-responsive budgeting and gender-sensitive reporting was created in 2022 by the Ministry of Finance with the introduction of the Gender-Responsive Public Financial Management (GRPFM) Assessment. It focuses on gender-responsive public financial management (GRPFM) and has been developed in line with the Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability (PEFA) supplementary framework for assessing gender-responsive public financial management. The core purpose of the assessment is to collect information regarding Georgia's public financial management system and assess if it is gender-responsive (PEFA, 2022).

Based on the fulfilment of recommendations by the country, Georgia was granted the candidate country status on 14th December 2023 by the European Union. Currently, adopting GIA at the national level is not only a process of improving gender mainstreaming in Georgia but also an activity that helps Georgia better implement EU recommendations. It is crucial, especially because the EU continues proactive observation and monitoring of Georgia regarding reforms and reforms set out by the state.

3.6 Institutionalisation of GIA in Georgia

According to the report published by the European Commission (2023), it is highlighted that Georgia adopted a package of adopted laws introducing GIAs for all legislative acts. Georgia has started using GIA for providing better analysis of initiated law initiatives at Parliamentary level.

The process of institutionalisation of GIA was started in 2021 when the Parliament of Georgia actively moved from the pilot mode of the instrument into the implementation stage. For this purpose, some activities were implemented. Firstly, the Gender Equality Council of the Parliament of Georgia (GEC) created a working group which was included by representatives coming from stakeholder organisations, governmental agencies and members of the GEC. Later on, after a comprehensive work done by the working group, some legal changes were established. Namely, as a result of the process, amendments were made to the Organic Law of Georgia "On Normative Acts", which contributed to the establishment of the institutional framework and mechanism of GIA. The change mainly affected the process of preparation of legislative and normative acts, as a result of which it became necessary for the initiator of the initiative to present their views and positions regarding the impact the initiative can have in the direction of gender equality. In particular, the explanatory note should include an assessment of the impact of the draft law on the state of gender equality. The amendment stipulates that the implementation of GIA is mandatory in the preparation of drafts of all new legislative acts and in the preparation of drafts of amendments to all legislative acts (Interview №3).

Furthermore, the lead of the process is taken by the GEC, due notes given by the "Rules of Procedure of the Parliament" document. The article 76 ensures responsibility of the GEC to manage examination of legislative acts and initiatives in order to assess gender equality (Parliament of Georgia, 2024).

We discuss the main components of the institutionalisation of GIA in Georgia for following chapters and analyse how gender statistics and manuals of the GIA is ensured, how the process of institutionalisation works and which key actors are involved in the process.

3.6.1 Gender statistics for better evidences

Gender-segregated data as well as sex-segregated data play a vital role in improving the evidence-based policies as we mentioned in previous chapters. Gender statistics increase awareness on gender inequalities and gaps among public bureaucrats, decision makers and experts. Statistical data promotes better understanding of inequalities and current issues that have to be solved on time.

The National Statistics Office of Georgia (GEOSTAT) is a core actor in gathering sex-segregated data and ensuring gender statistics in general. Geostat has a direct responsibility to ensure the collection of gender statistics as defined by some international agreements, like the Beijing Platform for Action, CEDAW, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). As a Geostat report (2021) notes, national statistical offices and international organisations must follow certain measures outlined in the Beijing Platform for Action to produce sex-disaggregated data for planning and evaluation. These are statistics about men's and women's roles and responsibilities in society. Moreover, CEDAW also calls for states to provide disaggregated data according to gender. Furthermore, Goal 5 of the SDGs, which is linked to providing gender equality, presents gender equality and women's empowerment as a stand-alone objective, but it is also a component of other objectives. For example, Goal 4: Quality Education includes several targets (targets 4.1 and 4.2, for example), which aim to promote equal and free accessibility to all boys and girls. For the purpose of tracking and assessing the development, having access to high-quality gender statistics and being able to analyse them is vital. It has created National Action Plans as well as the framework documents needed for their effective execution. Of the 231 distinct global indicators of SDG goals, 199 of them are nationalised in Georgia's National Sustainable Development Goals document; 32 of these are related to women or call for gender disaggregation. The Law of Georgia on Gender Equality of 2010 lays out the legal framework and the prerequisites required to achieve equal rights and opportunities for men and women; official statistical reports must include gender-specific data on gender issues (Geostat, 2021).

Geostat significantly improved its work and progress since 1999, when gender statistics was started in Georgia. Providing a better collection of data by sex and gender helped the state to enlarge its vision regarding gender equality policies. The Geostat publishes an annual

publication, "Women and Men in Georgia," and collects all current statistics that vividly show inequalities and existing gaps in different domains of life (Geostat, 2021).

Some great achievements are seen in actions provided by Geostat, for example, building up a portal for gender statistics and implementing various surveys in order to learn different areas, like violence against women, for instance. The Geostat provides tight collaboration with other agencies and ministries for better performance. The Ministry of Education, Science, Culture, and Sport; the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Labour, Health, and Social Affairs; the Ministry of Internal Affairs; the Ministry of Defense and other agencies that regularly generate sex-disaggregated data are among the administrative sources of gender data that are included in the National Statistics System in addition to Geostat. The production and use of gender statistics in Georgia still face numerous obstacles, particularly when it comes to establishing strategic directions and priorities, growing the amount of sex-disaggregated data, which necessitates the involvement of administrative data producers and requires disaggregation beyond national average indicators, and building institutional and individual capacity for the development of mechanisms for coordination amongst gender data producers (Geostat, 2021).

3.6.2 The guideline and the process of GIA

On 17 January 2020, the Government of Georgia approved the official RIA methodology and started institutionalising the RIA process at the national level. While RIA aims to improve the quality of policymaking in general, GIA has a specific aim - improving gender equality and closing gender gaps in certain fields and promoting gender-sensitive policymaking (Powell et al., 2021).

As we already overviewed in Chapter 3, sometimes GIA is integrated into RIA, like in Austria and Belgium for example. However, GIA and RIA are managed as different processes in Georgia. After full institutionalisation of RIA, Georgia started taking a focus on GIA. Institutionalisation of GIA exists as a separate process in Georgia.

The piloting of GIA started in 2017, when the interest of the state toward GIA became an integral part of action plans managed by the GEC. The institutionalisation of GIAs still

remains a core part of the annual plans of the GEC. As we mentioned above, the very first phase of piloting GIAs includes the preparation of the very first GIAs in Georgia. The very first stage of the process was fully assisted by stakeholder organisations, like National Democratic Institute, for example. NDI put a significant amount of resources and expertise into the process, namely, NDI provided Georgian civil society and bureaucrats with the very first manual on GIA and conducted awareness-raising activities (Interview 2).

Later on, a few other manuals and approaches were developed with the assistance of other stakeholder organisations, like the UN Women, for example. Meantime, the Parliament of Georgia introduced learning materials on GIA in 2020. The document had to be followed by parliamentary committees while GIAs were being prepared. The Georgian approach regarding the process of GIA fully meets the standards defined by the EIGE (EIGE, 2016). All those documents repeat the aspects defined by the EIGE and include five core dimensions as developed by the European organisation, which is also included in the manual published by the Parliament of Georgia (2020). These stages are:

1. Identify the goals and objectives of the policy. It also requires an overview of the nature and characteristics of policy initiatives or relevant legislative updates. At this stage, some questions have to be answered adequately: Why is government intervention being considered to address the proposed issue or problem? Does this state intervention contribute to gender equality, and how? What are the goals for gender equality in the relevant field?

2. Check gender relevance; for the second stage, it is crucial to assess whether a proposed initiative or a policy is gender-sensitive. Its impact on gender equality should be analysed. In particular, the following conditions must be met: a) Target group: The final target group of the initiative is people, physical and legal entities; b) Impact on the target group: The initiative affects women and men in a negative or positive direction. Here, it is vital to remember that influences might be negative or positive, direct or indirect.

3. Gender-sensitive analysis with the focus on overviewing the current situation and upcoming scenario in case of state intervention; As it is mentioned in a manual, all regulations, policies and programs that are gender-sensitive affect women's and men's living conditions and access to resources. The following important recommendations should be considered for the proper conduct of the gender-sensitive analysis stage: a) Analysis of the field according to the

situation of women and men, according to the current situation - in this process, all the necessary quantitative data are collected, the use of gender-disaggregated statistics and all appropriate qualitative data (studies, consultations, academic papers, policy reports) enrichment of quantitative information. b) Determining the existing gender inequalities - this involves taking into account the opinions of the target groups (mostly the groups on which the policy has a direct impact): what are their expectations? Do they differ by gender? Does the policy take gender-specific needs and interests into account? At this stage, inequalities between women and men are also discussed in terms of access to resources (money, power, health, well-being, security, knowledge, education, mobility, time, etc.) and fundamental rights (civil, social, and political), as well as norms and an analysis of the values that govern access to and control over resources (Gaprindashvili, 2020, pp.9-10).

4. Measure the impacts of the planned policy. In other words, how the planned policy results might affect gender equality, in which way and if it is possible to promote gender equality through the policy. If yes, in which way?

5. Draft recommendations, providing negative or positive impacts of the policies from gender lenses.

As Gaprindashvili (2020) believes, the number of these stages may vary depending on the approach chosen for the assessment. For example, these steps may be combined at the level of three assessment steps: gender relevance assessment (steps 1 and 2), gender impact assessment (steps 3 and 4) and gender equality check (step 5).

GIA in Georgia is mostly used as an ex-ante evaluation tool, and the process has to be done at the start of the project, program, or initiative. This helps policymakers understand potential gender impacts and guides them in improving the policy or developing better plans or budgets for the program. However, there is a lack of gender sensitivity among policymakers, which creates barriers to the effective implementation of the evaluation. It is also crucial to allocate adequate time and resources to implement GIA in the composition of the team. Ideally, the GIA team should include members with diverse backgrounds and characteristics (for example, age, gender, and cultural identity) with a wide range of professional experience (Paouel et al., 2021). Furthermore, the methodology established by UN Women highlights the importance of consultation with stakeholders and interested groups while preparing GIA.

The process of stakeholder consultation involves four steps: planning, stakeholder consultation, feedback consideration, and documentation (Paouel et al., 2021). In order to manage consultations and take feedbacks which have to be reflected in the GIA document, it is necessary to identify key stakeholders, ensure the balance of gender as well as other features while inviting participants from civil society organisations, ensure and support the involvement of traditionally marginalised groups in the decision-making process, as they may have completely different needs and priorities and based on all, allocate necessary funds and resources (Paouel et al., 2021).

3.6.3 Capacity building, actor mapping and stakeholder engagement in GIA

Another important aspect for institutionalising an instrument is to equip civil servants, bureaucrats and other hired professionals with relevant knowledge and improve their skills as well as raise gender sensitivity and awareness on gender equality issues.

According to the action plan for 2022-2024 prepared by the GEC, training for parliamentary committee staff is set out as one of the indicators for the institutionalisation of GIA. Indicator 1.4.5 aims to promote the participation of parliamentary staff in a training module established by the parliament, which also includes specific chapters related to gender mainstreaming and impact assessment. The current status of the indicator and the process of training parliamentary staff regarding GIA has not been upgraded and published on the official channels of the GEC or on the Georgian Parliament's website.

However, local and international organisations play an important role in capacity building and promoting awareness through the Georgian public sector. For example, the UN Women's office in Georgia organised a stock-taking meeting in April 2022 on the institutionalisation of the GIA in Georgia, where political commitments and systematic introduction of the instrument were explained. As stated on the official website, the meeting aimed to raise decision-makers' awareness of GIA as a methodology and promote rethinking how the instrument helps to ensure gender-responsive policy-making and good governance. The meeting gathered up to 22 participants of women's national machinery from the legislative and executive branches, as well as representatives of the Administration of the Government of

Georgia, selected development partners, and academia. Moreover, another meeting was held by UN Women in Georgia, mostly for representatives of civil society, including public policy specialists, gender experts, and researchers. The meeting aimed to strengthen capacities related to GIA methodology and learn best practices on the instrument coming from other states (UN Women Georgia, 2022).

As we mentioned before, the key actor in charge of promoting the adoption of GIA in Georgia is the Permanent Gender Equality Council of the Parliament of Georgia (GEC). The GEC continuously reflects the necessity of ensuring the GIA into practice through its annual action plans, provides monitoring and evaluation of the GIA process for parliamentary committees, guides local self-government about the process of GIA, improves awareness about the instrument in parliament as well as promotes trainings and informative sessions for local self-government actors to provide better performance of GIA. The GEC also actively collaborates with civil society and builds partnerships with international donor organisations. This very last aspect is vividly illustrated through the action plans, where partner organisations are mentioned in each task under the aim of institutionalisation of GIA (Gender Equality Council of the Parliament of Georgia, 2022).

Involving international organisations in the process provides better performance due to the fact that such key organisations, like UN Women, for example, are characterised by high-quality gender expertise and better understanding and knowledge regarding the process. Stakeholders' engagement ensures the identification of the different views, values, and opinions on gender-specific issues. Consultations with stakeholders provide the allocation of better, detailed information regarding the issue. Sharing experiences and visions allows the GEC to provide better strategies in order to overcome obstacles related to gender equality and promote a systematic approach regarding GIA as well.

After reviewing several components and backgrounds of Georgia regarding good governance and GIA, we conclude that the state is continuously progressing regarding good governance and gender equality, proven international indexes, and progressive statistics. However, there are some gaps in the institutionalisation process of GIA, especially related to resource allocation and technical support by public agencies. The GEC is the main actor in the process, and most of the support is implemented by international organisations, including financial support and capacity-building activities. Georgia has not yet achieved its plans related

to GIA adequately, as defined by an annual action plan by the GEC. However, some key aspects deserve attention. Precisely, the technical process of GIA and manuals developed by the Parliament of Georgia and others by international organisations repeat the exact structure as it is given by the EIGE as the best practice. Due to the fact that Georgia aimed to institutionalise GIA under the reform package dedicated to joining the EU and its responsibilities as a candidate country, we assume that more precise steps must be taken as a part of the process that started in October 2022 by making official statements and introducing initiatives by the Parliament of Georgia.

Chapter 4: Unveiling challenges, achievements and mapping of needs for improving landscape in GIA

In this chapter of the thesis, we embark on a comprehensive exploration of the key points seen by the case study itself after reviewing theoretical and empirical documents. The inclusion of interviews enhances our research by obtaining the complex viewpoints and individual work experiences of people who have a close relationship with GIA in Georgia. A sophisticated understanding develops as a result of our synthesis of the data from these various but complementary sources, providing the framework for a thorough investigation of our research questions and advancing our understanding of the subject.

4.1 Introduction

A qualitative research approach has been chosen for the thesis work. A qualitative research approach gives us a deeper understanding of the complex relationship between the concepts of good governance and GIA. Through an examination of extensive theoretical frameworks concerning institutionalisation and good governance, as well as an investigation of empirical research studies concerning gender mainstreaming and GIA, our goal is to identify and evaluate any possible relationships between good governance and GIA. Moreover, after reviewing theoretical frameworks and empirical data, we highlight the necessity of learning more about the case of Georgia. Not many studies have been done to learn about the process of GIA in Georgia and existing resources are mainly empirical sources. Due to this fact, our purpose is to go through the case and analyse the case from not practical but also theoretical perspectives with the assistance of a qualitative research approach.

The qualitative research methods employed in this thesis consist of interviews and desk analysis, and these are used to better understand the ongoing processes, capturing core findings, challenges, and gaps, as well as achievements and necessities in the case of Georgia. The qualitative research method assists in deepening the knowledge of the issue (GIA), evaluating the facts from different perspectives, analysing the causes and possible

consequences of the processes in regard to national development and contexts, and its meaning for promoting good governance as well.

The thesis is mainly based on a case study approach. This allows us to analyse the case of Georgia in depth. For this purpose, we review existing literature coming from the Georgian case, including secondary literature sources, state publications, reports, and national action plans, as well as reports and evaluation papers imposed by civil society organisations. By using the case study, we learn how a post-soviet developing country like Georgia adopts the main characteristics of the instrument of GIA in practice, how the process of institutionalisation is leading, who are core actors involved in the process, what challenges and achievements might be seen in the process, how the institutionalisation of GIA should affect on Georgian governance and promote gender-sensitive approaches at the national level.

The data collection is done through **semi-structured interviews**. The study uses a pre-designed questionnaire for all interviews conducted with each participant. The semi-structured interview format significantly assists the collection of precise ideas regarding an exact topic, such as summarising the ongoing process of GIA in Georgia or Good Governance. Semi-structured interviews also leave some flexibility to respondents to give feedback regarding the key questions and to the interviewer to develop further discussion or even raise a question that is not mentioned by the questionnaire but has a meaningful nature for the research topic. The flexibility given to respondents should be fostered to fulfil the research with new knowledge as well. A purposive sampling model is chosen based on the purposes of the thesis. As noted by Morse and Niehaus (2009), sampling techniques aim to maximise validity and efficiency regardless of the methodology used - qualitative or quantitative. We believe that choosing respondents from specific institutions or organisations that play crucial roles in adopting GIA, as well as independent experts in gender issues in Georgia, would be efficient. Accordingly, four respondents are chosen for the interviews in total. Precisely, one respondent from the Parliament of Georgia, and three respondents from civil society organisations and international donor organisations operating in Georgia. Although the sample is pretty small, including only four interviews, the respondents and the information they provide is meaningful and valuable, especially because all respondents are involved in the process of adopting GIA in Georgia in their daily work and have much influence on the process as independent experts or representatives of their institutions.

Since semi-structured interviews have been chosen for data collection, the ethics of conducting interviews are highly respected. The research is conducted in compliance with all ethical norms. All important notes, as well as the goals and objectives of the research, are explained to each participant before the interview. The research protects the confidentiality of the participants, as well as the principle of anonymity based on their preferences. The involvement of each participant in the research is ensured only after informed acceptance. Each of the participants is able to stop participating in the interview at any time if it is uncomfortable for the person. The involvement of each participant in the interview process is ensured by using the ZOOM platform, and each interviewee joins the interview separately. Recordings are done only with informed acceptance by the researcher, and they are safely kept and secured until the end of the research process, only for research purposes. As soon as the data is gathered from recordings and transcripts are prepared, recordings are deleted. No one, except the researcher, has any access to the recordings during the whole process of actual research. Interviews have been held between January 29th and February 7th, 2024.

At the end of this chapter, we aim to discuss the main results revealed through the investigation of the case study and interviews prepared through the research. Firstly, we will overview the process of institutionalisation of GIA in Georgia and analyse the process of adopting a new instrument into practice. Secondly, the discussion will include an analysis of three main elements, namely a) main challenges, gaps, achievements, and needs to be seen in the process of GIA in Georgia; b) overview of the process of GIA in Georgia and its compliance with elements of institutionalisation of GIA defined by either EIGE or the OECD; and c) analysis of the adoption of GIA in Georgia and on how can this contribute to boosting Good Governance or its specific principles in this country.

4.2 The question of institutionalisation of GIA in Georgia

Based on the theories overviewed in Chapter 1, we found that the concept of "institutionalisation" is related to a process, which aims to regulate societal behaviour in organisations or societies (Britannica, 2023), as well as to make an instrument accepted and permanent, stable, and normative (Abeygunasekera et al., 2021). In the case of institutionalisation of policy instruments, we believe that institutionalisation means making the

exact instrument part of the process of policy-making, which has a stable nature. Due to the fact that institutionalisation of any type of instrument (in this case GIA) is not really a simple task to conduct, it takes much effort by the state to put it into practice. Especially, as Eisenstadt (1964) frames, the process includes providing efficient rules and procedures by organisations in order to achieve the institutionalisation of an instrument. On such occasions, as Eisenstadt (1964) believes, organisations have a significant role in creating and defining roles that assist major units and other agencies in following the norms created. Institutionalisation, as a process, is characterised by formal and informal rules or schemes that, in organisations, make a common understanding of what fundamentally important behaviour is to be done (Bhasin, 2017). Institutionalisation is a process that makes a clear understanding of how the specific instrument has to be implemented, in which way, and how it can be routinized (Abeygunasekera et al., 2021), which are common patterns of action and common ground of the process (Burns & Carson, 2000). In the case of the government's interest in institutionalising a policy instrument, it is crucial to provide legal changes, budget allocations, and definition of policy directions, as Mosley and Charnley (2013) note. Furthermore, evaluating capacities before the institutionalisation of an instrument is vital (Scartascini & Tommasi, 2012).

Before starting the presentation of how the process of institutionalisation of GIA is implemented in practice in Georgia, we have to highlight the necessity of institutionalisation of GIA itself. As Bhasin (2017) reminds us, creating norms and building up new norms within organisations have much significance because institutions have a high responsibility to respond to the needs of society and to work for citizens. Therefore, the Georgian government has much responsibility to conduct a proper institutionalisation of the instrument in order to provide public policies based on the needs and necessities of its citizens. It is crucial, especially because of the existing challenges regarding gender equality in Georgia, which are overviewed in Chapter 3. As we figure out, Georgia still has much work ahead to achieve gender equality, for example, in the fields of economy, healthcare, sport, culture, and education (Parliament of Georgia, 2022). Institutionalisation of GIA would significantly help the state to conduct better regulation of above-mentioned fields and promote gender-sensitive analyses while drafting new policies.

In the Georgian case, we see some steps taken to provide the process of institutionalisation. Concretely, there is a political willingness to institutionalise GIA at the

national level. The political willingness to do so has been officially declared since 2017 within the annual action plans of the Gender Equality Council of the Parliament of Georgia (GEC). Additionally, some further steps were taken in 2021 when the Parliament of Georgia actively moved from the piloting mode of GIA into the implementation phase. In particular, the Parliament of Georgia, with the guidance of the GEC, started incorporating GIA in the law-making process. For this purpose, the GEC created a working group with representatives coming from donor organisations and state agencies. Subsequent modifications were implemented to Georgia's Organic Law "On Normative Acts" in 2022, which aided in the development of the GIA's institutional framework and mechanism. The proposed legislative initiative's author and initiator are required by the implemented changes to prepare a GIA and provide an explanation of their respective perspectives on the potential effects of the initiative on gender equality. The amended provision mandates that GIAs be used in the process of drafting both new legislation and amendments to existing legislation.

Despite the changes done by the state regarding institutionalising the instrument of GIA in practice, further actions are highly needed in order to make the process coherent. To be more concrete, the Georgian Government has to allocate financial resources in order to encourage and strengthen the process of institutionalisation of GIA. For example, it is vital for the process to strengthen the capacity of the GEC, especially because the institution is in charge of checking GIAs at the parliament level. Additionally, the lack of capacities (human, financial, information), which is named as one of the core challenges in the process of GIA by the interviewed experts, has to be adequately solved. For this purpose, financial support must be provided.

The legal changes for the institutionalisation of GIA are partially implemented. Due to the fact that some changes were made in 2022 when Georgia's Organic Law "On Normative Acts" was upgraded, GIA became a mandatory step before adopting new legal amendments. However, the changes do not cover the scope of GIA equally and include changes only related to legislation. It is crucial to make GIA institutionalised not only for existing legislations or newly drafted legislation initiatives but also for other types of documents like policies, programs, and projects, as EIGE suggests (2016). Legal amendments are highly encouraged in order to build up a common legal ground for institutions to follow the same guidelines and share a systematic approach on how to prepare GIA and on which type of documents. The

current process of institutionalisation of GIA in Georgia is limited because of its scope and weak legal framework in progress.

Moreover, Georgia does not adequately evaluate the financial and human resources needed for the process of institutionalising GIA. Human and financial resources, lack of capacity-building activities at the national level, and high dependence on stakeholders' financial assistance as well as their expertise make it difficult for Georgia to take ownership of the process.

Experts highlight that the institutionalisation process of GIA in Georgia does not meet general requirements defined for institutionalisation process, mostly related to reinforcing national legislative framework, allocating financial resources and promoting sustainable capacity development activities. However, GIA in Georgia does not follow these actions: it does not provide a legal basis nor adequate financial resources for the process, and even if legal changes were initiated in 2022, actions do not clarify how implemented GIAs might be checked or monitored in general. Furthermore, it is not clear when and how GIA is used and on which occasion. GIA still does not have a systematic nature. Institutions and agencies have different approaches and motivation to conduct GIAs, experts say (For example, parliamentary committees prepare GIAs more often rather than ministries). The obligation for state agencies and institutions for conducting GIA is not defined by any law at national level, which could make an instrument of GIA routinized.

4.3 The take of GEC on GIA in Georgia

As discussed in Chapter 4, Georgia developed a comprehensive domestic legal framework to provide gender equality at the national level. The Law of Georgia on Gender Equality (2010) and the Law on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination (2014) are significant. Despite that, the responsibility of governmental bodies to provide GIAs has yet to be integrated into any laws. Even if some changes have been made in 2022 in Georgia's Organic Law "On Normative Acts," it is limited and covers only legislative initiatives. Experts and professionals, through the interviews, highlighted the necessity of declaring the

institutionalisation of GIA through domestic Law and making it mandatory for all governmental institutions and subordinated agencies.

The process of institutionalisation of GIA is still not well-framed due to some existing **challenges**, as revealed by interviewees. To better present these challenges, we divide them in two groups related to a) Resources (e.g., finances, human resources, information, and training) and b) Process (e.g., legislative and political background, actors involved, guideline, gender statistics, and piloting process of GIA). We also summarise the **needs** of the GEC on GIA. At the end of the section, we shortly collect positive aspects identified by the interviewees.

We start with an analysis of available **resources** found in Georgia regarding GIA and its adoption at the national level. The core actor in the process of institutionalisation of GIA in Georgia is the Gender Equality Council of the Parliament (GEC), which mainly leads the process and actively cooperates with the donor organisations. The partnership with stakeholder organisations is reflected in the GEC 2022-2024 action plan. Namely, UN Women, UNFPA, NDI, UNDP, and GIZ are highlighted as core partners in the GIA institutionalisation process. Despite the fact that the GEC is a parliamentary council, the most crucial actor in the process of institutionalisation of GIA, it still does not have financial support from the parliament. The regulation of the Parliament of Georgia, especially Article 78 (Standing Parliamentary Council for Gender Equality), does not include any notes on financing the GEC. Therefore, the GEC always faces the necessity of having a stronger secretary, with more qualified professionals joining (especially those who are trained in the field of GIA or gender mainstreaming in general). Regarding staff, the GEC mainly relies on international organisations (such as UN Women, NDI, and UNDP), which hire consultants for the GEC and provide expert help to the council. So, the GEC does not have an official budget, and all activities implemented by the council are driven by the donor organisations. Lack of financial support by the state regarding adopting GIA is named as a current challenge from the GEC as well as from independent experts. GIA has never been a top priority of the current government of Georgia since 2017 till now, never seen as a top task in political agenda, as experts note.

Adopting GIA into practice is a process that needs to be fully managed by the state. The GEC, primarily because of its lack of financial resources, **relied on stakeholders, mostly donor organisations**. Such strong participation of stakeholders in the process is a positive aspect and shows the openness of receiving help or expertise from partners to governmental

institutions. However, Georgia, particularly the GEC, has to lead in adopting GIA more effectively. Experts believe that the GEC and other governmental institutions have to declare their responsibilities toward the institutionalisation of the GIA. As one of the experts highlights:

“Governmental institutions have to take responsibility to manage GIA independently, without any assistance from any organisations. It has been years after 2017 and almost all types of assistance are already received by donor organisations. Even if it seems like a challenge for now, this is the only logical ending point of the process. The state has to take ownership of the process” (Interview 4).

The financial support, as the first vital element for the process of adoption of a new instrument. Financial support for GIA is not well-managed by Georgian authorities, experts highlight. As Moorghen (2014) believes, a proper institutionalisation of a policy evaluation instrument in practice should encompass the responsibility from the state on allocating adequate resources and provide better adoption of policy evaluation tools. In such a case, the state does not declare its will to institutionalise GIA in the state budget (Ministry of Finances of Georgia, 2024). Financial resources not only foster the institutionalisation of the specific instrument (in such case, GIA) but also foster the collection sex-segregated and gender-disaggregated data by the state in a more efficient way. Such data plays a crucial role for GIA, since it significantly helps to conduct evidence-based documents.

The other deceptive element is linked to available information and knowledge regarding the instrument among staff members. In the case of Georgia, the most important actors in the institutionalisation of GIA are the Gender Equality Council of the Parliament and the Government of Georgia including the Inter-Agency Human Rights Council and all eighteen Ministries. As we can see, GIA and especially awareness-raising training for parliamentary staff members is one of the objectives of the GEC action plan 2022-2024. As one of the deputy members of the GEC highlights, the GEC successfully managed to train its staff members with the coordination of donor organisations such as the UN Women and National Democratic Institute (NDI) in 2023. However, fragmented knowledge of GIA and its process still remains a challenge.

As Frey (2008) highlights in her overview of the German GIA case, states have to provide educational tools like courses, manuals, and booklets for bureaucrats and public servants and promote the broad consultation of actors to boost knowledge on the GIA and on its use. However, in the Georgian case there is a lack of knowledge related to GIA among parliamentary and governmental institutions staff members, especially for the GEC and the Parliament. Interviewees also highlight that even if the GEC provides staff members with training related to GIA, such activities are not sufficient, and extra supplementary work is needed. Such activities are especially important for governmental institutions like ministries, for example. Moreover, as experts highlight, even if some changes are made in the Georgian Organic Law “On Normative Acts” in 2022, staff members are not able to prepare adequate GIAs with proper analysis and assessments of legal initiatives. It is thus believed that continuous and updated training modules on GIA have to be managed with the assistance of donor organisations that have enough capacities and resources to guide the training process. Such expert assistance provided by donor organisations is highly valuable since only professional experts have multi-sectoral knowledge, as experts say.

Moreover, there is still the problem of gender sensitivity and scepticism toward gender-related issues among parliamentary staff in Georgia. An independent expert highlights, *“There is a scepticism among staff. They do not know what GIA is. Therefore, it is always a challenge to adopt something about which you do not know much. Not only this but also the word “gender” is still marginalised. They are afraid to work on gender-related issues which I think is caused by a lack of knowledge”* (Interview 4).

Stakeholders, mostly donor organisations, provide the resources (financial support and expertise). The process of institutionalisation of GIA is diverse and includes different actors in the process. However, the state has to take more responsibility and initiative to make the process self-managed and keep the stability of continuous training and capacity-building activities (Interview 4).

Donor organisations play an important role in capacity building and promoting awareness through the Georgian public sector. For example, the UN Women's office in Georgia organised a stock-taking meeting in April 2022 on the institutionalisation of the GIA in Georgia. As one of the experts notes in the interview, NDI took a crucial role in providing the process with the very first draft manual of the GIA in 2017-2018 as well, and the organisation

equipped the Parliament of Georgia with a meaningful training-module related to gender mainstreaming issues (including GIA) in 2020-2021 in order to rise gender-sensitivity among parliamentary staffers. Additionally, as Moorghen (2014) and Jacob, Speer, and Furubo (2015) underline, the state has to promote policy forums and meetings between analysts and officials to provide better knowledge and evidence on an evaluation instrument. States have to urge experienced, certified evaluators to participate in the process.

Human resource management is one of the crucial challenges in the process of GIA since the number of employees is limited at the GEC. Because the employees of the GEC are directly involved in monitoring the GIA documents made by the parliamentary committees, their responsibilities are increased. Furthermore, there are no no specific employees appointed in parliamentary councils for ensuring GIAs. There is the same challenge at ministerial level. Moreover, Political changes in Georgia are characterised by frequent changes in employees. Newly appointed chairpersons of parliamentary committees mostly support renewing staff members based on their personal preferences. Political instability and fast political changes in Georgian public policy make the process of GIA slower. As experts believe, proactive changes in Georgia's governmental cabinet cause instability in the policy process, namely, the adoption of GIA in practice. As an expert explains, in Georgian politics, there is a tendency for new decision-makers, for example, new prime ministers, to always come up with new ideas, which might cause a slowing of the process of GIA as well.

There are some challenges identified by interviewees in the **process** of GIA. To begin with, the process of institutionalising a new instrument requires legal and political support. Jacob, Speer, and Furubo (2015) believe that laws and regulations must support institutionalisation because they encourage actors to behave with greater accountability, openness, and transparency. In the case of Georgia, some gaps are found related to the political background and legal framework regarding GIA. Precisely, GIA is not integrated in national laws, nor seen in political agenda, as a top priority (Interview 4).

Another challenge regarding the process is related to fast political changes. According to one of the experts, rapid political changes damage the process of GIA. For example, when the prime minister changes in Georgia, all the staff resign. Such actions harm the capacity-building process. In such occasions extra financial and administrative resources are highly needed, in order to promote training for newly chosen staff members (Interview 4).

As we explained in Chapter 3, the manuals of the GIA process mainly follow the same approaches among different EU member states. The core approach to dealing with manuals, as a critical process guide, is drafted by the EIGE and includes several steps. As EIGE (2016) concludes, GIAs have to explain the content of the policy initiative, check gender relevance, conduct gender-sensitive analysis, weigh the gender impact, and draft findings and recommendations as the last step. In this regard, interviewees highlighted that the NDI played a crucial role in providing guidelines about the GIA and its process, steps, and technicalities at the very first stage of piloting GIA in Georgia, primarily in 2017-2018. Furthermore, with the significant assistance of NDI, the very first guideline of GIA developed by EIGE got translated into Georgian and became available for governmental institutions.

As Georgian experts believe, the Georgian guideline on GIA is prepared with complete accuracy and fully responds to all technical requirements underlined by the EIGE. However, the Georgian GIA does not analyse the aspects of the manual by EIGE nor adapts it based on the national context, especially regarding the existing challenges to gender equality. Interviewed experts believe that the guideline seems more formal in its structure than result-oriented because it is entirely taken from a European context. In other words, this means that a European Union's initiated body such as the EIGE develops the manual. Experts also highlight the necessity of integrating intersectionality in the guideline of GIA because the Georgian population is very diverse, including ethnic minorities i.e., mostly Azerbaijani and Armenian population, and has several internally displaced populations such as from Abkhazia after the civil war in 1992-1993, Ukrainians coming to Georgia after 2022) and other ethnic groups and sexual minorities.

Experts underline also that the piloting process of GIA at parliamentary level in 2017-2018 was an essential stage for the state to learn more about GIA and the process itself. Experts believe that after the last changes happening in 2022, GIAs became an integral part of governmental work. The Government of Georgia took some time to equip its institutions and bureaucrats, hired professionals and decision-makers with adequate knowledge of the instrument of GIA. One interviewee believes that the preparatory work and assistance given by the NDI to the GEC in adopting GIA was a crucial step of the process, especially before 2020. Another interviewee names some activities implemented through the process such as the NDI invitation of an international expert trained in GIA to provide awareness-raising sessions for

parliamentary staff, representatives of local civil society organisations, and the members of the GEC in 2017. In the meantime, the manual of the EIGE was translated into Georgian with the financial assistance and expertise of NDI. NDI took also a leading role in piloting the very first documents of GIA in Georgia titled the “Assessment of the Gender Impact of the Reform of the Labour Legislation and Gender Impact Assessment of Georgia's Drug Policy Reform” which was , prepared in 2017 by the parliamentary committee members, invited experts in gender issues and the full participation of the GEC. However, as experts state, some significant challenges have been seen in preparing the first GIAs especially in relation to gender-sensitivity related issues among staff members, the lack of knowledge on how to prepare an actual document of the GIA, the political willingness of parliamentary committees to take responsibility and even voluntarily to conduct GIAs. The lack of information and knowledge on GIA fostered donor organisations to lead the capacity-building activities and promote raise-awareness activities.

The GEC started incorporating GIA as an integral part of annual action plans of the GEC in 2017. The GEC aimed to promote preparing GIAs for all parliamentary committees at first. However, parliamentary committees and staff members could not make it. The main obstacle was a lack of information and lack of time, it took extra time and responsibilities from parliamentary committee staffers for which they were not prepared at first (Interview 2). The piloting process has to be seen as a valuable first step since international donor organisations, like NDI, for example, have put much effort into training public servants on GIA-related issues, as other experts note. Georgia started showing an open interest in GIA in 2017, even though it was unrealistic to do so then. Putting GIAs from 2017 till now into action plans of the GEC kept constancy of conducting GIAs and the continuous interest to reinforce capacities regarding the instrument, as one of the interview respondents says (Interview 2).

The very last point regarding the process-related challenges is linked to providing gender statistics (sex-segregated and gender-disaggregated data) in Georgia. Jacob, Speer, and Furubo (2015) state that institutionalisation encourages better, systematic data collection. As a complex process, GIA requires comprehensive work and analysis, for which adequate data, statistics, and numbers are highly needed. Geostat is a pivotal institution in Georgia dedicated to ensuring the existence of gender statistics. It has made commendable achievements in its efforts since the 2000s, but specific inadequacies persist in its overall efficacy. Despite the

notable progress, experts argue that Geostat's current endeavours must be more comprehensive. A notable deficiency lies in the absence of gender-segregated data, particularly in critical areas such as healthcare. This dearth impedes the development of evidence-based policies informed by a gender-sensitive approach, as highlighted by one of the respondents. Furthermore, one of the experts contends that gender statistics have not attained a prominent position on the Georgia government's agenda. According to the interviewee, gender-disaggregated data is a vital part of GIA, promoting evidence-based analysis. There are no sufficient financial resources given to relevant institutions in order to provide comprehensive data collection, which would strengthen the process of GIA in Georgia.

As we see, the institutionalisation process of GIA is still in progress. There are some **needs** identified by interviewees in order to strengthen the process of GIA at national level. Firstly, as one of the experts notes, it is crucial for the process to make GIA a mandatory tool throughout the legislative framework; otherwise, it is complicated to see the instrument as institutionalised. Secondly, it is crucial to provide continuous expertise and assistance to the process and especially to the GEC coming from international donor organisations, in order to provide coherent implementation of GIAs. As one of the experts believes, the Parliament of Georgia is not fully equipped with an adequate knowledge of GIA-related issues. Therefore, it is still in need of getting systematic guidance and assistance from stakeholders. Furthermore, as a member of the GEC highlights, it is important to upgrade study materials on GIA continuously and provide systematic training and seminars for hired professionals and bureaucrats on GIA with the assistance of stakeholders, since they have an adequate financial capacity to do so (Interview 3). Additionally, the need for expertise coming from stakeholder organisations is still much needed.

In the last part of the discussion, we summarise **the positive aspects** of the Georgian case. The first aspect is linked to continuous actions by the GEC on GIA. As we found out, Georgia declared its interest in GIA in 2017 when the GEC declared GIA as one of the essential assignments through the annual action plan (Jalaghania, 2021). Since then, the GIA has remained one of the activities defined by the annual plans published by the GEC every year. Experts highlight the importance of the state declaring its interest in adopting GIA and reflecting it in strategy documents or action plans. Therefore, state shows its openness to take the responsibility and commitment toward implementing gender mainstreaming tools in practice. Secondly, experts highlight a solid cooperation with gender experts and relevant

professionals with the GEC as an important aspect. The role of stakeholders, especially from international organisations, is crucial in adopting GIA. Donor organisations such as UN Women, NDI, and UNDP continue proactive collaboration with the GEC, providing capacity-building activities at parliamentary and governmental level.

4.4 Assessing the impact: GIA and good governance in Georgia

Putting gender equality issues in the policy planning stage can significantly boost the efficiency of policy initiatives and their outcomes, maximise results, and promote better compliance of policy content to the needs of social groups, including gender groups. When the state considers gender data, including sex-segregated and gender-disaggregated data, the planning process of policy initiative strengthens (EIGE, 2019). Therefore, thinking about gender components while planning policy helps states avoid “gender-blind” approaches and stick to providing equal opportunities for their citizens.

More than half (i.e., 52%) of the population of Georgia is female (Geostat, 2023). Therefore, the Government of Georgia has to take the women’s needs into consideration while planning policy initiatives, experts say. Experts note that the state must provide adequate public programs and services for both sexes, considering gender components and intersectional approaches. The institutionalisation of GIA would significantly assist Georgia in improving domestic policies and services by taking the needs of the sexes and all genders equally. As one of the experts notes, the *“adoption of GIA in work practice would significantly help us get trained better and learn how to work on public policies which aim to build up policies tailored to the needs of social groups”* (Interview 2). On top of that, experts believe that using GIA in practice would boost the well-being of citizens, and everyone would benefit from it equally.

Interviewees believe that adopting GIA would promote better governance in Georgia. Focusing on conducting GIA and implementing the necessities and needs of genders and other social groups significantly improves the policy-making process. Because GIA is an evidence-based evaluation tool, it provides a perfect opportunity for the state to implement public policies based on comprehensive research and analysis of the policy issue while taking the gender lens into account. Experts believe that the institutionalisation of GIA would be an

important statement by the state, saying that sex and gender perspectives are adequately taken into account by state policies.

As we mentioned in Chapter 1, the rule of law is one of the core principles for good governance. As one of the respondents highlights, the law-making process is active in Georgia, which means that adopting new laws or policies is not complex work, which sometimes needs extra work, such as coming back to adopted laws and reviewing and upgrading them on time. In such a case, experts believe that GIA is the most effective instrument that can make the law-making process more evidence-based, considering the needs of the genders and the effects of a new policy or a law on social groups. Improved law-making significantly affects the quality of laws and their outcomes.

“With the assistance of GIA, we can endorse new laws without fears that they might have side effects and risky influences on gender groups (Interview 1).”

Regarding good governance, experts believe that institutionalising GIA would help Georgia boost good governance principles in practice, such as participatory democracy, inclusiveness and equality, transparency, and citizen participation in the policy-making process.

Experts, through the interviews, argue that the institutionalisation of GIA as a process has to be expanded, including gender-sensitive analysis not only on draft laws or policy documents but also on public services and projects. Since GIA aims to maximise the outcomes of policy initiatives for social groups, it proportionally improves good governance as an approach oriented toward citizens. Expanding the scope of GIA in the case of Georgia would provide economic growth for the state, better implementation of human rights, and monitoring of public policies, especially for vulnerable groups, one of the experts says.

In summary, Georgia has made commendable strides in laying the groundwork for institutionalising GIA. However, the actual implementation of this instrument remains a significant challenge, primarily attributed to the state's limited capacities in terms of financial and human resources dedicated to the process. Weak law enforcement and a lack of awareness about GIA further compound the hurdles.

To successfully integrate GIA into practical work, sustained and proactive measures are imperative. Firstly, it is crucial to enshrine the responsibility of conducting GIAs for governmental institutions in domestic law. Adequate financial resources must be allocated, and human capacity must be strengthened through targeted investments in training and awareness programs. Enhancing expertise within the Gender Equality Council (GEC) and other relevant state bodies is crucial. Continual informative sessions and training initiatives are essential for government staff and the parliament of Georgia to ensure a comprehensive understanding of GIA. Expanding the scope and applicability of GIAs is pivotal, making it clear when and how the assessment is utilised and establishing protocols to verify the relevance of prepared GIAs. A comprehensive revision of the GIA process and its implementation by the state is necessary. The revision process includes refining the GIA manual by incorporating intersectionality, thus ensuring a more nuanced and inclusive approach. The state must take ownership of the adoption process, collaborating closely with stakeholders and civil society for more effective and inclusive integration of GIA into the decision-making framework.

To conclude, we identify some challenges regarding the institutionalisation of GIA in Georgia. These challenges are mainly linked to the process of GIA and the resources available. In particular, Georgia has gaps regarding the legislative framework because GIA is not incorporated into domestic laws. Financial funds as a main element of the process of institutionalisation, needs to be provided adequately. Donor organisations mainly support the GIA process. Donor organisations provide financial support and capacity-building activities, assist state institutions and agencies with information on GIA, and conduct training, guidelines, and awareness-raising activities. The GEC, as a leading institution in the process of GIA, continues to collaborate closely with donor organisations. However, the human and financial capacities of the GEC need to be strengthened. The GEC keeps GIA as a work priority, defined by the annual action plans. However, more capacity-building activities are still much needed. The institutionalisation of GIA would positively affect good governance in Georgia. Using GIA, good governance principles such as the rule of law, inclusiveness and equality, transparency, and democracy would be strengthened. Lastly, adopting GIA would foster the maximisation of public policy outcomes for all genders, as experts believe.

Chapter 5: Bringing together insights from institutionalisation literature and good governance with GIA in Georgia

With this thesis, we overviewed theories of institutionalisation and good governance at first, and then we tried to find a link between policy evaluation and its importance for good governance. For this purpose, we focused on GIA as an evidence-based evaluation tool that promotes gender equality and gender-sensitive policy-making. After reviewing some scholars and empirical studies published by international organisations, we find that GIA is an effective tool for states, significantly guiding institutions to ensure gender mainstreaming approaches in practice. The thesis investigated the relationship between GIA as a policy evaluation tool and good governance. To overview the causal relationship between them, we focused on the case of Georgia.

In this chapter, we collect key points from the literature review, summarise key findings and insights from the Georgia case, and highlight the meaning of GIA in the context of good governance in Georgia.

5.1 The link between theories of institutionalisation, good governance, policy evaluation, and insights from the case of Georgia

Institutionalisation is a complex process. Institutions have power to change rules, manage public actions, provide policies and manage the process of governance (Eisenstadt, 1964). Institutionalisation takes the focus on learning roles and characteristics of institutions who hold power and provoke changes in society by adopting policies, laws or ensuring actions. Institutionalisation requires a systematic analysis of those institutions, including learning of behaviours of people and groups within such institutions. As Bhasin (2017) believes institutional factors like norms, routines, schedules and social behaviours have to be analysed while overviewing the process of institutionalisation. Institutionalisation makes a frame of how things have to be done, in which way, how and by which institutions (Burns & Carson, 2000). After overviewing the case of Georgia and actions implemented by the Government of Georgia

regarding GIA, we conclude that not much analysis was done regarding the assessment of institutions before starting the adoption process.

Institutionalisation of policy evaluation should promote better governance especially by boosting principles of accountability and transparency. The process of institutionalising policy evaluation is difficult, requiring different actions. In particular, empirical and scientific studies show the importance of reinforcing legislative frameworks on policy evaluation when it is not adequately ensured by the state practices (Stockmann et al., 2020). We find out that Georgia does not incorporate GIA in laws, does not make an instrument mandatory for public institutions at all levels of government. Despite the current status of GIA and the latest legislative changes carried out in Georgia's Organic Law "On Normative Acts," (2022) it is difficult for initiators of new legislative drafts to conduct proper GIAs. There is still a lack of knowledge on GIA. Furthermore, we found an existing challenge regarding the knowledge of GIA among staff members in the parliament of Georgia and governmental institutions. Several interviews named the lack of information, lack of gender sensitivity as well as the vague information on GIA as important challenges that make the process of adoption and implementation of GIA harder in the country. Further actions and continuous training, as well as more capacity-building activities regarding sharing information, are highly needed.

For institutionalisation of policy evaluation at national level, states have to allocate funds and finances (Papazian and Baud-Lavigne, 2019). However, the process of GIA is mainly financially supported by donor organisations. Donor organisations allocate funds for activities, as well as provide expertise for the GEC, which is the coordinator of the process of GIA at national level. The financial and human capacity of the GEC still remains a challenge. Inadequate resources do not give much possibility to the institution to lead the process independently.

For institutionalisation of policy evaluation at national level, political willingness and strong support of the process by the public institutions are crucial (Papazian and Baud-Lavigne, 2019). In the case of Georgia, the political will and interest that is expressed through the state documents, like the current action plan (2022-2024) by the GEC. To make GIA institutionalised at national level and make it an integral part of the policy-making process, it is vital to make it reflected by strategy documents and action plans by public institutions.

Lastly, cooperation between institutions and policy evaluators are crucial for capacity-building activities and developing long-term approaches to the institutionalisation of policy evaluation instruments (Ahonen, 2015). The Government of Georgia and the GEC show a strong interest to cooperate with donor organisations. This is mainly because of information-related gaps on GIA, as well as lack of expertise within state institutions.

To sum up, Georgia has a strong background in piloting the instrument of GIA. As we overviewed in Chapter 1, institutionalisation is a process with an aim to make an instrument accepted and permanent, stable, and normative (Abeygunasekera et al., 2021). To do so, such actions as legal changes, budget allocations, and defining policy directions are much needed (Mosley & Charnley, 2013). However, Georgian experience toward GIA does not respond to the general components of the process of institutionalisation. Capacities of the state (mainly financial and human resources) were not adequately evaluated before the process of institutionalisation started. Moreover, institutions and their formal and informal rules are not well-learned. Such evaluations are important at a planning stage of institutionalisation, as (Scartascini & Tommasi (2012) note.

By reviewing best examples coming from EU member states and feedback given by Georgian experts, we believe that the scope of GIA should be expanded and include not only legislative acts and norms but also projects, policies, and programs. Meanwhile, it is important to strengthen core state actors in the process, especially the GEC, which takes the main lead in the GIA process. The GEC is highly in need of financial aid from the parliament and expands its cabinet by adding gender experts in order to provide better monitoring and evaluation of GIAs at the Parliamentary level, as well as oversee the whole process. Furthermore, the existing manual on GIA has to be improved, and intersectionality has to be integrated within. The manual has to adequately respond to the cultural and social contexts of Georgia.

If the aim of institutionalisation is to promote awareness and legitimacy for evidence-based policy-making that responds to the needs of gender groups in the state and promotes better analysis with a gender lens for the policy initiative at the planning stage, it is significant to conduct a proper data collection regarding sex and gender. Gender statistics are well managed in Georgia; however, some existing gaps of data in fields like healthcare, for example, have to be solved. Improving data collection with gender aspects would significantly promote ensuring better GIAs for policy initiatives and increase the efficiency of policies.

5.2 Contributions, limitations and conclusions of the Study

The **significance** of the thesis is crucial. As we already mentioned, not much scientific research has been prepared regarding the institutionalisation of GIA in Georgia, especially in relation to good governance. We believe that the paper has practical implications in the sense that it helps the Georgian bureaucracy, civil society, and decision-makers have a clear understanding of the process of GIA itself. The thesis provides an analytical framework for developed states from the EU, which might be taken as a focus on improving GIA at the national level in Georgia, therefore promoting good governance into practice. The thesis is a combination of theoretical and empirical analysis and maps out a comprehensive understanding of the process of GIA from both perspectives.

Conversely, some **limitations** of the research have to be highlighted. The lack of previous research studies on the topic, especially regarding the institutionalisation of GIA in post-soviet developing states or states with economics in transition, does not give us the possibility to explore similar cases regarding GIA in Georgia. Additionally, the available materials are mainly guidebooks, handbooks, frameworks, recommendations, and policy papers, not scientific papers researched and analysed by researchers in the field. The thesis investigates the Georgian case with the aid of data from secondary and grey literature as well as from interviews with four experts. Such analysis provides a first understanding of the process of GIA but does not allow us to make a precise picture of the process of GIA for all institutions in Georgia that are in charge of implementing the instrument. Nevertheless, we believe that the information given to the research study is a first step to fill a knowledge gap on GIA in Georgia. Moreover, it is crucial and meaningful for observing the process of GIA in Georgia and identifying current trends.

We believe that further research is needed to explore the characteristics of the process of GIA in Georgia due to the fact that Georgia showed a good background in piloting an instrument, and the process of institutionalisation of GIA is still in progress. The progress and needs of the state regarding the process have to be periodically learned in order to increase awareness of the ongoing process among decision-makers and bureaucrats and, therefore, promote better performance of the process.

To recap, receiving the EU candidate country status in 2023 promoted the process of GIA in Georgia. Georgia aimed to fulfil recommendations given by the EU from 2022 till the end of 2023. During this timeframe, Georgia named the institutionalisation of GIA as one of the main activities in order to comply with the ninth recommendation, which is related to conducting gender equality in the country. This research finds that some legal changes have been made in Georgia in 2022 in order to institutionalise GIA. Namely, conducting GIA became an integral part of Georgia's Organic Law "On Normative Acts," and responsibilities have been clarified for those who take legal initiatives. Institutionalisation of GIA still remains an integral part of the action plans published by the GEC. Moreover, continuous partnerships with stakeholder organisations are still in progress, which significantly helps the process of institutionalisation of GIA with financial aid and gender expertise.

Existing strong partnerships between the state agencies and stakeholders (mostly international donor organisations) significantly help strengthen the process. The state keeps its openness to cooperate with organisations with better human and financial capacities, taking gender expertise from it. However, the process still remains highly reliant on financial aid coming from international organisations. The Government of Georgia or the GEC has to start taking ownership of the process and improve its institutional capacities.

Lastly, GIA as an evidence-based instrument which helps state institutions to find out existing gaps at the planning stage of a policy initiative and boost implementation of gender mainstreaming, would significantly help Georgia to meet the needs of its citizens. A proper gender analysis of policy initiatives and assessment of potential outcomes would help the state to provide gender sensitive policies and maximise its outcomes, as well as promoting good governance principles.

Adopting GIA would not only help Georgia to provide a better policy evaluation approach but also assist in improving good governance principles at the national level. Mainly, the current stance of GIA has the potential to promote better law-making in Georgia. Moreover, conducting GIAs would help Georgia to boost inclusivity and participation of citizens in the process (throughout the consultation phase of GIA) as well as accountability because the instrument makes a vivid picture of existing issues regarding gender equality and promotes taking responsibility by the state in order to tackle existing problems. Additionally,

strengthening data gathering on gender-disaggregated data would help Georgia to reflect existing gaps in domestic policies and address gender inequalities more effectively.

Georgia has an excellent basis and experience in piloting GIAs. However, further actions are needed to finalise the institutionalisation of the instrument at the national level: the obligation of conducting GIA has to become a part of domestic laws. The Government of Georgia has to promote funds for GIA. The GEC has to continue tight coordination with stakeholders, upgrade GIA study materials and GIA guidelines, promote sustainable capacity-building activities, and continue training for public servants and bureaucrats on GIA.

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Appendix

The list of interviewees:

№	Position
1.	A former consultant at the Parliamentary Gender Equality Council of Georgia; An independent consultant in gender equality issues
2.	A former Senior Officer, National Democratic Institute of Georgia; An independent consultant in gender equality issues
3.	A deputy member of the Parliament of Georgia; A member of the Gender Equality Council of Georgia
4.	An independent expert in gender equality and human rights
