



**International Convention on
the Elimination of All Forms
of Racial Discrimination**

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Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

**Information received from Georgia on follow-up to the
concluding observations on its combined ninth and tenth
periodic reports***

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* The present document is being issued without formal editing.



I. Follow-up Information

A. Follow-up information relating to paragraph 10 (a) and 10 (b) of the concluding observations CERD/C/GEO/CO/9-10

1. Paragraph 10 (a)

1. According to the Criminal Code of Georgia, crimes motivated by intolerance on discriminatory grounds are considered aggravating circumstances of legal liability.

2. Furthermore, combating discriminatory crimes and ensuring victim-centered investigations stands as a core priority for the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia. Within the established mandate, the Human Rights Protection and Investigation Quality Monitoring Department (the Department) conducts daily oversight of the response quality exhibited by police units throughout the country regarding criminal and administrative-legal cases within their jurisdiction. The Department ensures that appeals made to the police are processed in accordance with the appropriate procedural norms.

3. To enhance the quality of investigations into discriminatory crimes, the Department conducts various forms of training. The Ministry of Internal Affairs intends to maintain a systematic approach to training investigators on the identification and effective investigation of crimes motivated by intolerance based on discrimination.

4. Moreover, the Ministry of Internal Affairs is actively planning the specialization of investigators to respond effectively to crimes rooted in discrimination, thus improving the overall quality of investigations. This specialization initiative is currently in the advanced planning stages.

5. It is noteworthy in this context that the Ministry of Internal Affairs accords significant priority to the registration of crimes driven by motives of intolerance on discriminatory grounds. In the compilation of statistical data, particular emphasis is placed on the memorandum signed on September 23, 2020, between the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the General Prosecutor's Office, the Supreme Court, and the National Statistics Office. This memorandum led to the establishment of a unified annual report, published by the National Statistics Office, detailing statistics pertaining to crimes committed on the basis of discrimination and intolerance, released annually on the 1st of March.

6. It is noteworthy that, according to the statistics published on 1 March 2023, encompassing the period from January 1 to December 31, 2022, the Department monitored 1,802 criminal cases, where probable perpetration of crimes driven by discrimination and intolerance was identified, constituting a mere 3.3% of the total registered crimes recorded within the country in 2022.

7. From 1 March 2022, the Special Investigation Service of Georgia (the Service) investigates not only the facts of ill-treatment committed in the exercise of official powers, but also the violent crimes committed by the representatives of the law enforcement bodies off-duty. According to the legislative amendments, investigative jurisdiction of the Service was extended up to 48 articles/crimes of the mentioned nature. In addition, the investigative jurisdiction of the Service has been increased by 12 articles of the Chapter on Crimes against Human Rights and Freedoms of the Criminal Code of Georgia, which deals with freedom and inviolability of human privacy, obstruction of journalism, persecution and restriction of freedom of speech, as well as, crimes related to election procedures and the free expression of the wills of voters committed either by a public servant or an ordinary citizen.

8. The Service established the third unit, in view of categories and specificities of crimes that fall under its investigative jurisdiction. This unit entirely focuses on investigation of crimes against human rights and freedoms and allows the investigative department to have investigators specializing in different categories and types of crimes. These investigators investigate only a certain category of crimes, which contribute to the effectiveness of the investigation process and increase the rate of solved cases.

9. In the period from 1 January 2023 to 1 July 2023 (6 months), 17 persons were prosecuted for discrimination, including 16 persons for crimes committed on gender grounds

and one person for crime committed on political grounds. During the reporting period, 49 employees of the service have completed the training “Effective Investigation of Hate Crimes”.

10. In order to effectively investigate hate crimes, the Service works on the development of a guideline, which will make the investigation of hate crimes even more effective.

2. Paragraph 10 (b)

Implementation of the parliamentary Code of Ethics

11. To ensure openness and transparency of the supreme legislative body of Georgia, to promote integrity, honesty and responsibility among the Members of the Parliament (MPs) according to the applicable international standards as well as to prevent use of hate speech by state officials/politicians the Code of Ethics for the Members of the Parliament (Code) has been adopted. According to the Code, while implementing parliamentary power, MPs should be guided by the fundamental principles such as legitimacy, loyalty, equality, honesty, accountability, transparency and responsibility. Furthermore, the Code prohibits humiliating, rude, sexist, discriminatory speeches, appeals and actions, as well as any other use of hate speech by MPs. The Ethics Council was created to ensure the effective implementation of the Code. The Ethics Council shall review and monitor violation of provisions, including on the prohibition of hate speech. According to the Code, the Ethics Council shall have two Co-Chairs (one from the majority and the other from a parliamentary opposition). Due to constant changes in the composition of the Ethics Council, its Co-Chairs have not been elected yet. The Co-Chairs of the Ethics Council make a decision on the admissibility of the complaint and convene, open and preside over the Ethics Council sessions. The Ethics Council of the 10th Convocation is in the process of formation.

12. Alongside to the formation of the Ethics Council, an important aspect is awareness-raising for MPs on the issues envisaged by the Code. Article 5 of the Code provides obligation of the Parliament to ensure training for the MPs of each new convocation of Parliament in order to introduce the Code to them. The Training Centre of the Parliament of Georgia is in charge to provide training modules for the newly elected MPs to raise awareness of the Code. The training on the issues of parliamentary ethics was held for MPs of the 10th Convocation in 2021, February 9–10.

13. In order to provide organizational and technical support for the activities of the Ethics Council, the Secretariat of the Ethics Council was established, whose structure, functions and rules of operation shall be determined by the Rules of Procedure of the Ethics Council. As part of the implementation of the Code as well as ensuring professional training for relevant staff, the Secretariat of the Ethics Council, within the framework of the Council of Europe project, in 2022 completed an online training course on the General Policy Recommendation No.15 of the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) on the fight against hate speech. Within the competence of the Secretariat of the Ethics Council, the Secretariat participates in the workshops against hate speech organized by the Council of Europe Office in Georgia. In order to widen awareness-raising towards the issues considered by the Code of Ethics on a large scale for the staff members of the Parliament, the Training Centre of the Parliament of Georgia organized TOT program for interior trainers in 2023. In the framework of this program was created training module on the issues of parliamentary ethics for the staff members of the Parliament and pilot training was held.

Raising awareness regarding ethics and general rules of behavior in civil service

14. Furthermore, the Civil Service Bureau has the mandate to develop and implement programs that promote ethics, integrity, and accountability in civil service. Following the adoption of Government Decree No. 200, on 20 April 2017, which introduced the Rules of Ethics and Code of Conduct for Public Institutions (the Code of Ethics), the Civil Service Bureau took prompt action in collaboration with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) to raise awareness among civil servants about the contents and implications of the Code of Ethics. Between 2018 and 2019, the Civil Service Bureau conducted training sessions for up to 1,000 civil servants, providing them with a comprehensive understanding of the Code of Ethics.

15. In order to improve understanding of ethics and general rules of behavior in civil service, the Civil Service Bureau initiated an Ethics Mentorship Program in 2021. Mentors were carefully chosen and trained for the mentorship program, and mentees were selected from various public institutions. Since 2022, the Integrity Awareness Program continued to enhance the awareness and knowledge of ethical dilemmas among civil servants. Regular meetings are held under this program to discuss the most current issues regarding ensuring integrity and accountability in civil service. As a result, a network of civil servants working on integrity issues has been established, allowing employees to gain useful guidance and first-hand experience when dealing with ethical dilemmas. 250 civil servants from central and local public institutions have participated in mentorship sessions and meetings within the Integrity Awareness Program. To promote an organizational learning approach in civil service, participants in the Integrity Awareness Program host discussions at their respective institutions on the themes covered by the program. The Civil Service Bureau conducted online research to assess the effectiveness of the program. The survey results showed that 100% of those surveyed gave the Integrity Awareness Program a positive rating (with 75% of them giving the program an excellent evaluation). Additionally, 83.3% of respondents said they put the information they learned into practice, and 91.7% of those polled found the program helpful in their day-to-day jobs. Notably, 100% of the program participants would advise their peers to take part in it.

16. To establish uniform practices in public institutions of Georgia and promote ethical and behavioral standards while raising awareness of ethics issues, the Civil Service Bureau launched a digital learning course on ethics in civil service, available at www.ethics.gov.ge. The course's primary objective is to emphasize the importance of maintaining an ethical environment and integrity among civil servants. It also aims to enhance awareness of professional standards and corruption prevention mechanisms as outlined in Georgian legislation. The course is structured into learning and examination modules, with each thematic module comprising both theoretical principles and practical examples. Furthermore, it includes instances of unethical cases that civil servants may encounter in their day-to-day work. Upon successfully completing the examination module, civil servants receive a certificate validating their participation in the digital course. 328 civil servants have registered for the course as of September 4, 2023, and 71 of them have already completed it and received a certificate. This initiative equips civil servants with the necessary knowledge and skills to uphold ethical standards in their professional roles, fostering a culture of integrity within the civil service of Georgia.

17. As per the Statute of the Civil Service Bureau, the organization is responsible for studying the existing practices of ethics compliance among civil servants. The Civil Service Bureau collects annual statistical information on disciplinary measures imposed for disregarding or violating ethical norms and general rules of conduct in public institutions.

	2019	2020	2021	2022
Total number of civil servants subject to disciplinary measures for disregarding or violating of the ethical norms and general rules of conduct	77	25	23	52

Elimination of sexual harassments at the workplace

18. One of the main topics of the Code of Ethics is the elimination of sexual harassment at the workplace. In 2021, UN Women and the Civil Service Bureau of Georgia conducted a study on workplace sexual harassment in the civil service in Georgia. The study's goal was to generate evidence to guide policies in Georgia's civil service on preventing and responding to workplace sexual harassment. The study utilized a mixed-methods approach that combined quantitative and qualitative data. In total, 461 civil servants participated in an online survey. In addition, 35 semi-structured in-depth interviews were carried out with civil servants, as well as with representatives from government and civil society organizations. The study's findings aided in the development of sexual harassment prevention and response policies and mechanisms in different public institutions.

19. Since the Georgian Parliament passed legislation on the prevention and response to sexual harassment in 2019, an increasing number of state agencies established internal sexual harassment complaints systems with UN Women support. As of November 2023, 16 public institutions have already established an internal regulatory framework for responding to workplace sexual harassment cases within the organization.

Hate speech and discriminatory statements

20. According to Article 11, paragraph 3 of the General Rules of Ethics and Code of Conduct in Civil Service (approved by Ordinance №200 of the Government of Georgia of 20 April 2017), “A civil servant shall refrain from the use of hate speech and/or expressing discriminatory statements, which call into question the impartial exercise of his or her official authority”. The Law of Georgia on Civil Service (Chapter 10) further regulates the process of disciplinary proceedings for the breach of ethical norms, including the types of misconduct, mandate of the unit conducting the proceeding, time limits for inspection and various kinds of disciplinary measures.

21. According to the abovementioned Ordinance №200, the general rules of ethics apply to civil servants together with the special rules of ethics and/or conduct established for them by their respective institution. A number of state agencies have adopted detailed professional codes of conduct, such as the Code of Ethics of Police, the Code of Ethics for Military Servants etc.

22. It is worth mentioning that since 1 September 2023, the mandate of the Civil Service Bureau of Georgia has increased and became more focused on the oversight of integrity issues, statistical data and research. The Civil Service Bureau created a suitable methodology and tool to identify any potential gaps related to the implementation of the Code of Ethics. A newly established Department of Professional Development and Integrity within the Civil Service Bureau is mandated to systematically oversight the implementation of Code of Ethics based on the elaborated methodology with the aim to generate recommendations and plan future interventions accordingly. This approach will contribute to strengthening ethics and integrity within the civil service and promoting a more responsible and principled workforce.

Whistleblowing institution

23. The whistleblowing institution plays a crucial role in disclosing breaches of codes of conduct, exposing instances of corruption, fraud, and other law violations within public institutions. Within the competence of the Civil Service Bureau, possible whistleblowing cases for different years were recorded through the website (www.mkhileba.gov.ge) and is as follows: 2019 – 26 cases; 2020 – 81 cases; 2021 – 78 cases; 2022 – 30 cases.

24. Since the web portal is one of the key entry points to the whistleblowing mechanisms, as part of its efforts to improve the platform’s effectiveness, in 2021, the Civil Service Bureau initiated several upgrades to enhance user experience and functionality. Firstly, the website underwent significant improvements to make it more flexible and user-friendly. To further aid users, the Bureau introduced a video instruction guiding visitors on how to utilize the website effectively. Additionally, thematic banners were designated on the platform, making relevant information easily accessible. Moreover, a designated statistics table was added to provide users with relevant data. For additional convenience, a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) section was incorporated to address common queries and concerns. Lastly, recognizing the importance of mobile accessibility, the Civil Service Bureau resolved issues with the mobile version of the website.

25. In 2022, to align the legislation on whistleblowing with international standards, the Civil Service Bureau, in collaboration with experts, has developed proposals of possible legislative changes to enhance the whistleblowing system. The recommendations encompass specific measures aimed at providing robust protection for whistleblowers, establishing effective oversight mechanisms, and implementing monitoring processes to collect data concerning whistleblower protection.

26. In 2022, based on the amendments to the Law on Combatting Corruption, the Anticorruption Bureau was established with the mandate to develop and monitor the implementation of anti-corruption policy. From September 1, 2023, the mandate of the Civil

Service Bureau to administer the website (www.mkhileba.gov.ge) is fully transferred to the newly established Anti-Corruption Bureau.

Equality and Non-Discrimination

27. The equality principle, emphasizing that civil servants shall respect the dignity of all individuals and acknowledge the diversity present in their workplace is prescribed by Article 14 of the Code of Ethics. The article also mandates the establishment of an equal and non-discriminatory environment within the civil service. To promote equitable conditions and opportunities for various groups and foster a diverse workplace, the Civil Service Bureau has undertaken several initiatives. Namely, the Civil Service Bureau, with assistance from the UNDP, developed a concept document on Diversified Staffing in Civil Service in 2022 to help with the creation of an inclusive and representative environment in the Georgian civil service. This document serves as the basis for organizing future interventions in this area of focus. The concept paper was based on the findings of the qualitative study, which included an analysis of the Georgian legal system and current practices as well as interviews with target groups; namely, women and persons with disabilities. The concept document primarily focuses on recruitment and selection practices in civil service, contains general approaches to creating an inclusive civil service, best international and local practices, as well as the actions and mechanisms that must be put in place to ensure the introduction of diversity-oriented recruitment strategies and the establishment of appropriate working conditions.

Persons with disabilities in civil service

28. With UNDP assistance, the Civil Service Bureau developed a concept document for adapting www.hr.gov.ge to persons with disabilities (2022). Given that the online platform – www.hr.gov.ge – is the sole website where anyone can submit their applications online for any civil service position, the objective of the concept document is to ensure that all interested parties have equal access to the website and its services to begin a career in civil service.

29. The concept document is the product of desk research as well as findings from interviews and focus group sessions with persons with disabilities, human resources management departments of various public institutions, and State Employment Support Agency employees. The international experience with website adaption for persons with disabilities was examined. International online accessibility standards and examples of effective practices in the direction of their implementation were also considered. Additionally, various websites of government organizations adjusted for persons with disabilities were researched to better understand the present situation in Georgia. Consequently, proposals were developed for adapting www.hr.gov.ge to the requirements of persons with disabilities.

30. In 2022, the Civil Service Bureau, with support from the UNDP, undertook a study on Supporting the Employment of Persons with Disabilities in the Public Sector. The study's goal was to examine the features of employment of persons with disabilities in civil service. The study focused on the most effective methods of collecting data on persons with disabilities and analyzing the factors influencing their employment in the public sector.

31. To ensure the realization of the rights of persons with disabilities and to fulfill the obligations defined by Georgia's Law on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Civil Service Bureau approved an institutional action plan for 2022–2023, under which it conducts awareness-raising activities for civil servants about the rights of persons with disabilities and the importance of inclusive civil service. According to the action plan, the Bureau intends to develop a methodology for collecting and analyzing data on persons with disabilities.

32. The Civil Service Bureau has initiated trainings for civil servants on the legal status of persons with disabilities. In the first stage, approximately 30 employees of the Civil Service Bureau were trained, and in the second stage, 29 representatives from the Georgian ministries, the administration of the Government of Georgia, the office of the Parliament of Georgia, the administration of the President of Georgia, and relevant public agencies were trained. Types of disability, concepts, approaches, existing barriers, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), basic principles, rights, enforcement and monitoring, and forms of discrimination of persons with disabilities in the

workplace, as well as Georgian anti-discrimination law, and promotion of employment of persons with disabilities were covered during the two-day training.

Developing learning resources

33. Over the last years, the Civil Service Bureau, with assistance from donor and partner organizations, has actively collaborated with experts to develop a series of learning resources and videos referring to the Code of Ethics and its provisions. These materials were carefully chosen to fulfill a variety of instructional objectives and raise the knowledge of civil servants. The materials listed below were produced:

- The Commentaries on the Rules of Ethics and Code of Conduct for Public Institutions – the purpose of the Commentaries is to offer readers a comprehensive understanding of each principle and standard of conduct outlined in the Code of Ethics.
- Handbook on Ethics and General Rules of Conduct in Civil Service – this comprehensive resource equips civil servants with valuable guidance to effectively tackle and resolve ethical challenges they may encounter in their official capacity.
- Guideline on Ethics and General Rules of Conduct in Civil Service – is designed to provide civil servants with clear guidance on the appropriate behaviors and conduct within respective institutions. The Guideline follows the structure of the Code of Ethics and consists of three chapters: relations of a civil servant with the state; standards of professional conduct of a civil servant; interaction of a civil servant with the general public.
- Manual on Integrity in Civil Service: Corrupt Offenses, Conflict of Interest, and Incompatibility of Duties – offers a scientific and practical analysis of the concept of integrity within the context of civil service.
- Practical Manual on Integrity – covers three main sections: Integrity Policy, which explains integrity risk assessment and organizational policy determination; Conflict of Interest Management, addressing mechanisms for conflict prevention and practical approaches to management; and Enforcement Mechanisms, covering preventive and repressive measures for fostering institutionalization of implementing principles of integrity, and establishing ethical environment and organizational culture.
- Illustrative Guidebook on Integrity in Civil Service – provides civil servants with practical and accessible information for effectively addressing unethical behaviors within their institutions. It is a tool that showcases real-life scenarios and provides examples and relatable situations.
- Manual on Ethics Mentoring – the purpose of the Manual is to provide civil servants with typical situations and practical behaviors that occur in their daily work within the civil service. The manual focuses on presenting cases and identifying possible solutions to guide ethical behavior and professionalism.
- Guidebook on Conflict of Interest – covers a range of topics, including the concept of conflict of interest, revolving door, and effective mechanisms for eliminating conflict of interest cases.
- Guidebook on Gift in Civil Service – includes the topics of the purpose of regulating gifts, risks for accepting gifts in civil service, and mechanisms for disclosing a gift.
- Video contents on the following topics and principles from the Code of Ethics: integrity in civil service; transparency and openness; political neutrality; impartiality; economy and efficiency; loyalty; courtesy; collegiality; equality and diverse environment; sexual harassment in civil service.

B. Follow-up information relating to paragraph 14 (a), (b) and (c) of the concluding observations**1. Paragraph 14 (a)**

34. The Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia (MoES) is working closely with Roma children as well as their families in order to involve Roma children in education (in both kindergartens and schools) through various non-formal education activities with their Georgian peers, and thus encourage Roma children's integration in the community and society at large. Non-formal education projects are funded annually within the "Social Inclusion Program" for integration of several vulnerable groups, including Roma children. According to the data as of 2022, up to 50 Roma children are beneficiaries of early and pre-school education services, and up to 300 - are students at schools. In 2022, the Roma girl successfully passed the Unified National Exams and became a student at a higher education institution.

35. From 2020, a monitoring system for out-of-school children has been developed, within the framework of which, the MoES shares personal information with various government agencies and identifies children aged 6-16 who have never registered in school. As part of the monitoring of out-of-school children, 36 Roma adults were identified, whose school registration failed. Social workers continue to work with the families.

36. Additionally, since 2023, in order to promote higher education of the Roma, MoES is financing studies at the bachelor level of Roma students (Decree №324 of the Government of Georgia, 18/08/2023).

37. All 188 public institutions of preschool care and education, founded by the N(N)LP Tbilisi Kindergarten Management Agency, render their services to any applicant, under the Resolution №27-43 of 30 of June 2023 of the Tbilisi Municipality City Assembly on Adoption of the Rule of Funding a Voucher Allotted for Per Child/Pupil at the Public Institutions of Preschool Care and Education Managed by the Municipality, Introduction of the State Standard of Preschool Education, Registration and Enrollment/Exclusion of a Child/Pupil at the Public Institutions of Preschool Care and Education Managed by the Municipality.

2. Paragraph 14 (b)

38. MoES implements the Program "A Second Chance for Education with Social Inclusion". Beneficiaries of the Program are Roma youth living in different regions of Georgia.

39. In accordance with the objectives of the program, the funding provided for the public schools that are selected under the program, envisages development of clubs which unite young people with special educational needs and their peers from schools in the community around common interests. Other goals of the program are improvement of state language knowledge among the representatives of the minorities, increasing tolerance and acceptance of different cultures.

40. The clubs are developed based on the needs of each school and the beneficiaries. For example, there are reading and literature clubs for teenagers with linguistic challenges, where the beneficiaries of the program and their other peers read and discuss works of writers together. In ethnology clubs, beneficiaries and peers socialize and exchange information about the tradition and history. In order for peers to work together and exchange information, conferences are held under the program. A football club was opened in N5 Kobuleti Public School for Roma adolescents. Clubs are available in 18 public schools in total. There are English language, craft, mathematics, sport clubs as well. Currently, 78 Roma are engaged in various clubs.

41. Under the program active work is carried out with parents of the Roma adolescents. As a result, credibility towards education system has increased and parents allow their children to participate in activities organized by schools relatively easily.

42. With the help of non-formal education, the so called “invisible” Roma school-age children are engaged in formal education setting. For example: 3 Roma children were evaluated by a multidisciplinary team under the Ministry of Education and enrolled in age-appropriate classes in N1Senaki Public School in 2023.

43. Development of pre-vocational skills and visits to VET colleges was the topic of the clubs at N2 public school of Shaumiani village of Marneuli Municipality. This year, 2 young Roma continued their studies at Kobuleti VET College “Akhali Talgha” (new wave).

3. Paragraph 14 (c)

44. In order to prevent students dropout, regulations have been established since 2021 that oblige schools to respond effectively if a student is absent for 45 consecutive school days during the academic year.

45. At the first stage, in case of absence of a student, no later than on the 10th day, the class teacher is obliged to submit a written report to the school administration (reason for absence, description of the measures taken to include him in the educational process and the achieved result, etc.). After being absent for 20 school days in a row, social workers get involved in the process along with the class teacher. As soon as any form of violence against a child is detected, referral is carried out to relevant agencies: Ministry of Internal Affairs, State Care Agency.

46. In 2021, for the first time in the educational institutions of Georgia, Office of the Resource Officers of Educational Institutions (ORO) under MoES started to introduce a model of social work in schools, which has been developed together with local and European experts. More than 60 social workers have been hired by the Office of Resource Officers and deployed to 60 public schools. One of the main tasks of the social worker is to support schools to address high absence and dropout rates of the students, including ethnic minorities.

47. According to the Decree of the Minister of Education and Science of Georgia of 11 January 2017 on the Approval of the Rule for Enrolling a Student in a General Educational Institution and Suspending the Status of a Student and based on received information from schools and Educational Resource Centers, the Psychosocial Service Center of the Office of Resource Officers of the Educational Institution implements the following measures before the status suspension of the student: Identify the risks of suspending the status; Determine the reasons for the non-implemented measures to include the student in the educational process and/or assess the sustainability of the achieved results; Visit the student’s family and prepare a report; Draft an action plan and prepare a follow-up conclusion.

48. The Psychosocial Service Center identifies the reasons for each student’s absence from school and individually manages the case, consults the student and the parent, ensures the involvement of additional specialists and agencies as needed, works with the student, family to increase motivation, and promotes the formation of a supportive environment within the school community in order to reduce the risks of dropouts, as well as in the process of reintegration of the student in the school environment.

49. A sub-program for “Providing Shelter for Homeless Children” operates in the country as a part of the State program of “Social Rehabilitation and Child Care.” The purpose of which is to prevent the abandonment of homeless children or separation from their families, their psycho-social rehabilitation and integration, as well as providing them with safe housing (shelter). The sub-program includes the activities of a mobile group consisting of a social worker, a psychologist and equal educators, as well as providing a day care center for homeless children and a 24-hour shelter.

50. Identification of the needs of children living and/or working on the street is carried out within the framework of the sub-program for providing shelter for homeless children; finding/arranging the child’s identification documents; organization of outpatient or inpatient services. Providing the child with personal hygiene items and promoting his/her protection; Finding the child’s biological family and assessing the social environment; identifying the academic needs of the beneficiaries and promoting their satisfaction – promoting inclusion in the formal educational process. Provision of non-formal education, as well as ensuring the beneficiary’s involvement in cultural and sports-rehabilitation events, etc.

51. Currently, six mobile groups are operating throughout Georgia, of which four are in Tbilisi, one in Rustavi and one in Kutaisi. As for the shelters, five 24-hour shelters are functioning, specifically, three in Tbilisi, one in Rustavi and one in Kutaisi. There are also 5-day care centers operating throughout Georgia, in particular three in Tbilisi, one in Rustavi, and one in Kutaisi.

52. It should be noted that beneficiaries enrolled in shelters and day centers are involved in the educational process according to their age. One of the goals of the day shelter service is to facilitate the inclusion of the beneficiaries in the general education system. If the minor is not a beneficiary of the day care center and/or shelter, the mobile group works with the family and provides their support in order to ensure the education of the minor.

C. Follow-up information relating to paragraph 16 of the concluding observations

1. Paragraph 16

53. Georgia fulfilled all the components of Georgia's accession commitment to the Council of Europe concerning repatriation of Muslim Meskhetians¹ through establishing the comprehensive legal framework, as well as respective instruments and accordingly, ensuring relevant conditions and unhindered process for planned repatriation; specifically:

- The Law on Repatriation of Persons involuntarily exiled by the Former USSR from the Soviet Socialist Republic of Georgia in the 40s of the 20th Century was adopted on 11 July 2007. The displaced people (and their descendants) could apply to the State and obtain repatriate status based on the documents submitted under the established rule.
- The adoption of the law was followed by an active information campaign in all the countries where the descendants of displaced persons reside, aimed at informing the target group about repatriation opportunities and legal procedures.
- It should also be underlined, that the deadline for applying had been prolonged twice until 1 January 2010, in order to ensure that all potential applicants were provided with a reasonable time and opportunity to apply for repatriate status. As a result, 5841 adults applied to the State for the repatriate status; 1998 applications met the requirements set by the law and were granted the repatriate status (the status was derivatively granted to the minors as well, included in the applications and/or the minors born in a family after granting the status – totally, about 2600 people with repatriate status).
- The persons with repatriate status were enabled for obtaining Georgian citizenship in a simplified manner, implying, unlike to the requirements for other foreigners, to grant Georgian (conditional) citizenship to a person with repatriate status on the basis of merely a birth certificate and repatriate status documents.
- The law and the respective by-law set a 2-year term after granting the repatriate status for persons to apply to a State for obtaining Georgian (conditional) citizenship under a simplified procedure. After granting the Georgian (conditional) citizenship, a person has had to abandon the foreign citizenship within initially set another 2 years-term, which has further prolonged to 5 years, providing for automatic enforcement of the Georgian citizenship.
- Only 494 persons with repatriate status applied for (last in 2016) and all of them were granted conditional citizenship by the State. Though, none of the 494 persons with conditional citizenship renounced their citizenship of another country for Georgian citizenship to take effect. (It is noteworthy, that acquisition of Georgian citizenship and renunciation of the citizenship of another country is an individual decision of a person).

¹ The decision of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe N209 (1999) on Georgia's accession, the mentioned group of persons is referred to as (Muslim) Meskhetian population deported by the Soviet regime.