

WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY

#Women
ForPeace

IN BRIEF



WOMEN'S INCREASED LEADERSHIP FOR RESILIENT AND PEACEFUL SOCIETIES

Photo Credit: UN Women

Where we work

Europe and Central Asia Region, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine

Key stakeholders/beneficiaries:

Georgia: IDP and conflict-affected women, rural women more broadly. Women employed in the private sector. Office of the State Minister for Reconciliation and Civic Equality, the Academy of the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Health, Labour and Social Affairs of Georgia and its Legal Entities under Public Law (LEPL) on IDPs, Eco-Migrants and Livelihood Agency, the Austrian Centre for Peace, and the NGO Taso Foundation, partners from the private sector.

Moldova: Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Bureau for Reintegration Policies, National Institute of Justice, National Free Legal Aid Council, Moldova State University, women in senior and middle-senior management, including from non-traditional sectors, women's professional associations from justice, security, and defence sectors, and relevant CSOs working on promoting human rights and WPS Agenda.

Ukraine: National Women's Machinery and EU integration offices; Parliament Committee on Ukraine's integration into the EU. Partnership between UN Women and the Government of Germany to launch the Alliance on Gender-Responsive and Inclusive Recovery during the Ukraine Recovery Conference in Berlin.

Regional level: OSCE and the Global Network of Women Peacebuilders.

The programme is implemented in close coordination with the United Nations Development Programme, which is implementing a programme on the green transition in Eastern Partnership Countries, funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark.

Implementing organization/partners:

UN Women Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia, UN Women Georgia Country Office, UN Women Moldova Country Office, UN Women Ukraine Country Office

Donor: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark

Contribution to UN Women Strategic Plan 2022–2025 Outcomes:

1. Strengthening of global normative frameworks, and gender-responsive laws, policies, and institutions,
4. Women's equitable access to services, goods and resources,
5. Women's voice, leadership, and agency,
6. Production, analysis and use of gender statistics, sex-disaggregated data, and knowledge, gender-responsive laws, policies, and institutions.

Contribution to UN SDGs:

SDG 5, SDG 8, SDG 10, SDG 16

INTRO

With the generous support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, the four-year multi-country programme "Women's Increased Leadership for Resilient and Peaceful Societies" is dedicated to advancing the implementation of UN Women's Strategic Notes for Georgia (2021-2025), the Republic of Moldova (2023-2027), Ukraine (2023-2027), and the ECA Regional Office (2022-2025). The programme carefully considers the unique political and developmental landscapes of each country while leveraging opportunities from EU integration. Crucially, it provides vital support to Country Offices, ensuring that women's priorities remain at the forefront of policy development, regional cooperation, and EU integration efforts.

BACKGROUND ON GENDER EQUALITY CHALLENGES

The political and security situation in Eastern Partnership countries remains volatile, marked by rising female poverty, insecurity, and technology-facilitated violence against women. Forced population movements further threaten progress on gender equality.

- In Ukraine, the ongoing war has caused the largest displacement crisis in Europe since World War II, disrupting regional peace and security. Despite challenges in gender expertise and data collection, Ukraine remains committed to advancing gender equality, using EU integration to enhance gender-responsive recovery and policy development.
- Moldova's security context, already fragile due to the unresolved Transnistrian conflict, has been further strained by Russia's invasion of Ukraine, which has also positioned Moldova as a key transit and host country for Ukrainian refugees. Despite these difficulties, Moldova's EU accession negotiations offer a unique opportunity to advance women's rights, particularly by embedding gender equality into foreign policy and constitutional reforms.
- In Georgia, political polarization has intensified with the introduction of the contentious 'foreign agents' law and an anti-LGBT legislative package. These developments present significant challenges to civil society, media organizations, women's participation, and marginalized groups. Moreover, these legislative changes have already impacted Georgia's EU integration prospects and strained its relationship with the United States. The upcoming parliamentary elections in October 2024 will be critical in determining the country's future path.
- Across these countries, women continue to face gender-based barriers to participation in political life, peacebuilding processes, and the labour market.

OUR APPROACH

The overarching goal at the regional level is to empower women and girls to have greater influence in building sustainable peace, resilience, and transforming the economy by creating spaces for their contributions and advocating for the protection of their rights.

In **Georgia**, UN Women enhances women's participation in conflict prevention and sustainable peacebuilding, with a focus on governance, ending violence against women, and economic empowerment. The project aligns with the 2021-2025 Strategic Note and targets outcomes in women's economic empowerment as well as peace and security.

In **Moldova**, efforts are directed toward addressing violence against women, including engaging survivors and vulnerable groups to raise awareness of their rights. The project also strengthens women's leadership and advances the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) agenda. This aligns with the 2023-2027 Strategic Note and aims to foster gender-responsive governance and dialogue around women's meaningful participation in decision-making, peacebuilding, and security.

In **Ukraine**, UN Women's initiatives align with the Strategic Notes for 2024 and 2025-2029 (under development), focusing on gender-responsive services for women affected by war and strengthening capacities for the WPS agenda.

To implement the Leave No One Behind (LNOB) principle, UN Women will prioritize engaging marginalized groups, including women and girls from ethnic minorities, internally displaced women and refugees, women from rural areas, and those affected by gender-based violence. Efforts will focus on outreach to these groups and addressing data gaps to inform effective policymaking and interventions.



Key achievements to date:

- Two national programmes for the economic empowerment of IDP women have been developed and are awaiting government approval in Georgia.
- *#SheLeads: Empowering Upcoming Women Leaders in Civic Engagement, Social Cohesion, and Decision-Making* – a programme designed for ethnic Abkhaz, Georgian, and Ossetian emerging women leaders (Georgia).
- Over 270 private sector entities have been mobilized around gender equality using the international platform Women’s Empowerment Principles (WEPs) to empower women in the workplace, marketplace, and community (Georgia).
- As a result of social mobilization efforts, 14 Self-Help Groups (SHGs) have been formed in Western Georgia, engaging more than 150 rural women in improving their socio-economic standings. Additionally, more than 340 women in target communities (not all SHG members) benefited from eight online and in-person trainings and simulation games.
- Ten capacity-building programs were implemented, with two in Georgia, five in Moldova, and three in Ukraine.
- A partnership was extended with one government authority in Moldova.
- Support and partnership were provided to 34 CSOs across Georgia, Ukraine, and Moldova.
- Seven dialogue platforms were established, and eight dialogue events were supported in Ukraine.
- At least 475 women in targeted communities in Lviv Oblast received psychosocial, informational, and legal support. Additionally, 347 individuals (322 women and 25 men) engaged in dialogue with duty bearers in Ukraine.
- **Gender Mainstreaming Success:** The Government of Ukraine approved the Ukraine Facility Plan, integrating gender equality and women’s empowerment (GEWE) across all sectors. Three national documents have been gender-mainstreamed and are awaiting approval: the Draft Law on Municipal Statistics, the Draft Updated Regional Development Strategy until 2027, and the Draft Strategy for Small and Medium Entrepreneurship Recovery.
- The **Alliance for a Gender-Responsive Recovery of Ukraine** was launched in June. The programme facilitated a partnership between UN Women, the Government of Ukraine, and the Government of Germany to inaugurate the Alliance during the URC in Berlin. The Alliance aims to unite the efforts of international donors (including 15 governments, such as Denmark), development partners, businesses, and CSOs to ensure that women meaningfully participate in recovery decision-making, that gender equality and women’s needs across all sectors are prioritized, and that a gender perspective is integrated into recovery funding and resources.
- A series of WPS dialogues were held at regional and sub-regional levels, including in Moldova for EaP countries and the South Caucasus. The Moldova dialogue brought together around 100 participants, including women activists, women-led organizations, human rights defenders, UN Women Regional Director, UN Women representatives from Moldova, Ukraine CO, and ECARO, UN Peace and Development Advisors, Director of NDPPA-DPO for Europe and Central Asia, the UNRC in Moldova, and ambassadors from Denmark, Sweden, and the head of the SDC Moldova office, as well as other development partners and UN Agencies (Norwegian Embassy to Moldova, OSCE, DCAF, UNDP, OHCHR, UNFPA, IOM). Participants discussed sustaining peace, social cohesion, and post-conflict recovery, sharing their concerns and priorities. They agreed on a unified position to represent the region in global platforms (e.g., Summit of the Future 2024, B+30) and outlined common actions to advance the WPS agenda and strengthen regional cooperation.
- UN Women’s internal communities of practice, covering areas such as Women’s Economic Empowerment and Care, WPS, Women’s Political Participation, Humanitarian Coordination, and Data, are established and actively support offices and partners in generating, documenting, and sharing knowledge and best practices.
- The **first regional knowledge sharing conference on gender statistics organized on 25-26 July** brought together over 60 senior statisticians and gender focal points from national statistical offices in Italy, Finland, Switzerland, Western Balkans, Türkiye, Eastern partnership countries and Central Asia, as well as researchers, and policy makers from international organizations. The participants took stock of the national strategies and practices for the collection and use of gender data for better policy-making, and shared progress made by countries to increase data availability in emerging areas such as violence against women, **unpaid care work**, and gender pay gap among other. It serves as a platform for peer learning exchange and knowledge transfer on the best European experience on addressing key challenges of gender statistics.

Key knowledge products developed:

- **ECARO brief Digitalizing Peacebuilding in the Europe And Central Asia Region: Women, Peace And Security National Action Plans**. The brief explores how digital tools can support peacebuilding in Europe and Central Asia, focusing on the WPS NAPs.
- The first-ever **Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion (DEI) Manual**¹ in the ECA region was developed by UN Women Georgia with Norwegian support to assist human resources and DEI professionals in WEPs signatory companies in designing, implementing, and tracking progress on workplace DEI policies. This initiative aims to foster inclusive corporate cultures. Building on these efforts, with significant support from Denmark, a third round of the Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion certification programme for Human Resources Professionals is currently underway, equipping them to develop and implement effective DEI practices in the workplace.

NEXT STEPS IN 2024

- **Georgia:** Focus on entrepreneurship training, capacity building for conflict-affected women, and establishing an IDP Women's Economic Empowerment (WEE) Programme. Implement an international leadership training program for women in the private sector, enabling them to advocate for change within their companies and in broader contexts. Introduce a diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) program aimed at equipping HR professionals to adopt DEI policies in their workplaces. Leverage Unstereotype tools to strengthen partnerships with leaders in the creative industry. Provide entrepreneurship training and mentoring to 80 rural women from disadvantaged communities, alongside start-up funding to help them launch their own businesses. Form 20 self-help groups (SHGs) to empower beneficiary women to effectively engage in advocacy, social activism, and entrepreneurship.
- **Moldova:** Conduct a situational analysis on women's access to justice; launch a mentoring program for CSOs providing legal aid to survivors of gender-based violence; engage women in non-traditional sectors for peer support and collaborate with the UN Adolescent and Youth Advisory Panel. Assess needs in the security and defense sectors and support the implementation of the National Programme on Women, Peace, and Security (WPS).
- **Ukraine:** Deliver gender training, run advocacy campaigns, research gender norms among Roma women, map women's organizations, and enhance government capacity for gender mainstreaming. Empower women through targeted initiatives and liaise with newly established Committees in the European Parliament and relevant DGs regarding the 2024-2029 plans.
- **Regional:** Advance the **WPS** agenda by continuing a series of dialogues with women peacebuilders and supporting women's rights defenders to implement WPS initiatives. Facilitate knowledge exchange between partners and offices, leverage international and global platforms (such as the Compact on WPS and the WPS FPs network) to amplify voices from the region, and launch a campaign commemorating the 25th anniversary of the WPS agenda. Assess the implementation of WPS National Action Plans (NAPs); for **WEE**, strategize around the economy of care to support the development of evidence-based policies and services by applying innovative tools and the 5R approach that promotes gender-transformative economic development. Regarding **Data**, strengthen the capacities of National Statistical Offices to align the production of gender-related statistics with the Acquis Communautaire on statistics. The main priority will be supporting the NSOs to collect data required for calculating the gender pay gap. Additionally, a regional snapshot on gender equality for Eastern Partnership countries will be developed to support data-driven advocacy and interventions at both the country and regional levels. For **EU accession**, support governments and partners in mainstreaming gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE) perspectives and norms into national and sectoral development and recovery policies, in line with international standards and the EU accession acquis.

¹ The manual was adapted by UN Women HQ to meet global needs and is now used as a resource by all UN Women offices and respective private sector partners worldwide. Please find more about the manual at: <https://bit.ly/4dWggF>