



Photo: Marita Chanishvili

POLICY BRIEF

REGULATORY IMPACT ASSESSMENT ON C156 – WORKERS WITH FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES

Background

This policy brief summarizes the main findings of the Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) on the possible ratification of the International Labour Organization (ILO) Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981 (No. 156).

According to the Convention, the definition of ‘worker with family responsibilities’ is twofold, concerning (1) responsibilities towards one or more dependent children and (2) responsibilities towards other members of the immediate family. Georgia has not yet ratified the Convention, and its legislation does not contain yet the definition of worker with family responsibilities. However, the current legislation already allows for a limited level of protection, both for employees of the private and of the public sector.

The ISET Policy Institute team investigated the challenges faced by workers with family responsibilities, with a focus on two main areas highlighted by Convention No. 156: (1) the accessibility and availability of care facilities; and (2) inflexible working arrangements.

Challenges faced by workers with family responsibilities in Georgia

Having family responsibilities significantly affects the labour market outcomes of working-age individuals. Labour force participation, employment and wages can be negatively influenced by workers’ need to combine family responsibilities with work.

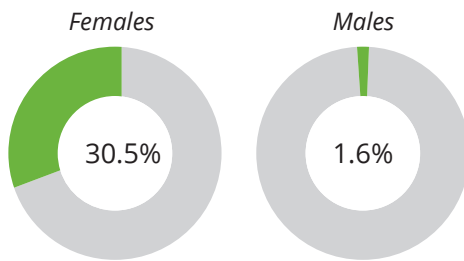
Usually, family responsibilities constitute a greater burden for women than for men, as can be seen from the following figures:

Figure 1: Average number of hours spent per week on caring for children and other family members



Source: UN Women survey data, 2018

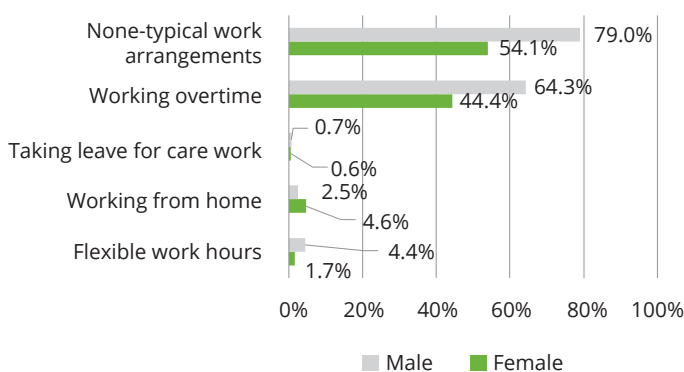
Figure 2: Proportion willing but unable to work due to family responsibilities, by gender



Source: Labour Force Survey, 2019

Interestingly, the lack of kindergartens and affordable childcare services does not seem to be a major reason for leaving a job in Georgia. Only 2.4 per cent of women report this factor as one of the main reasons for leaving their job. However, it is important to note that **29 per cent of the unemployed women citing the unavailability and unaffordability of childcare services as reasons for being unemployed belong to the poorest households.**¹ As figure 3 shows, flexibility, working from home and taking leave for care work were quite rare in Georgia before the pandemic, while working overtime and non-typical work arrangements² were prevalent³.

Figure 3: Distribution among different work arrangements, 2019



Source: Labour Force Survey, 2019

Notably, considering all hired workers living in a household with two or more members (including them) as workers with (potential) family responsibilities, it appears that more than **95 per cent of them are not fully covered by the legislative conditions necessary for reconciling work and family life.**

Conclusions and recommendations

The RIA exercise revealed that supporting equal opportunities and treatment for men and women workers in Georgia and guaranteeing workers with family responsibilities (especially the most vulnerable ones) a chance to balance work and family life require several actions that can be grouped into two main categories:

1. Providing a sufficient quality and quantity of affordable childcare and family services and facilities; and developing the awareness within society about the available childcare and family services and facilities
2. Guaranteeing the right of workers with family responsibilities to working-time arrangements compatible with decent work and an increased quality of life by:
 - o Extending the right to flexible work arrangements to all workers with family responsibilities
 - o Developing awareness within society about the right to flexible work arrangements and their benefits

The first objective can be achieved starting with regional or municipal-level surveys to build a clear picture of the needs of workers with family responsibilities, followed by the development of strategies and implementation plans at the central and local levels to develop childcare and family service facilities in the country, as well as raise awareness about the availability of such services.

Achieving the second objective, however, will require closing legislative gaps by, among others, introducing a formal definition for workers with family responsibilities, providing additional care days, and regulating overtime and night work for workers with family responsibilities, accompanied by active efforts to increase awareness within society (with a focus on employers and employees) about workers' right to flexible work arrangements and about such arrangements' benefits for companies, the economy and social welfare.

1. With an average monthly household income of less than GEL 500

2. Such as night, evening, shift and weekend work

3. Workers with family responsibilities, according to a **narrower definition**, are hired workers living in households with a person who is disabled, elderly (over the age of 79), chronically ill and/or a child under the age of 15.