IN BRIEF

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WOMEN COUNT PHASE II

EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA

The issue

Since 2018, Women Count has played a pivotal role in advancing the quality and uptake of gender data in Europe and Central Asia (ECA). Despite these gains, persistent challenges remain:

- Weak policy, legal and financial environments pose barriers to progress. Chronic underfunding for gender statistics limits the ability to innovate in statistical operations and will create significant gaps in the ability to measure progress towards gender equality.

- Several critical data gaps limit understanding of key issues, including on gender and the environment, women's unpaid care and domestic work, violence against women (VAW) and intersecting inequalities.

- Lack of access and limited use of gender data pose challenges for evidence-based policymaking and monitoring progress on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Our response

In phase II, Women Count in ECA will work to:

- **Create an enabling environment**: Mainstream gender into national statistical systems (NSSs) through gender data assessments, the development of national strategies, action plans, programmes and priority gender indicators, and create customized hands-on curricula on gender statistics to deepen education.

- **Increase data production**: Support national statistical offices (NSOs) to collect gender data on VAW, women's economic empowerment (WEE), women's political participation (WPP), unpaid care and domestic work, and gender and the environment, through surveys and by reprocessing existing data to inform interventions; explore the use of administrative records and promote non-traditional data-collection methods to produce new data on key areas.

- **Improve data accessibility and use:** Expand partnerships with civil society organizations (CSOs) and the private sector to enhance data literacy among policymakers, youth, academia and women's rights advocates to fuel strategic advocacy on pressing gender issues at both country and regional levels; train NSSs to diversify the products and channels for the dissemination and communication of gender data.

Where we work

12
countries

Albania, Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Kosovo,[1] North Macedonia, Republic of Moldova, Tajikistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan.

Thematic Priorities

- **Gender and the environment:** Develop a minimum set of indicators to measure the gendered impacts of climate change as part of the National Priority Gender Equality Indicator Framework and integrate them into strategic advocacy.

- **Women's economic empowerment:** Undertake a full-scale time-use survey (TUS) in **Armenia**; launch a TUS module in household surveys in **Belarus**, **Kyrgyzstan** and **Moldova**; support research on valuing women's unpaid care and pilot a Structure of Earnings Survey in **Georgia**; and build NSS capacities to reprocess and analyse existing household and census data to generate evidence to inform targeted policies and investments.

- **Violence against women:** Support **Kazakhstan** to finalize its second national VAW survey report; help **Belarus** and **Kyrgyzstan** design and launch their first-ever national VAW prevalence surveys; strengthen data analysis and reporting in **Kosovo** via the country's Domestic Violence Case Management System Database; support a VAW prevalence survey in Moldova in 2025 (subject to funding); test unconventional ways to measure femicide in **Kazakhstan, Tajikistan** and **Uzbekistan**; study harmful social norms on VAW in **Kyrgyzstan**; and conduct research on the economic cost of violence in **Georgia**.

- **Women's political participation:** Integrate the topic of women's role in governance and political participation in gender datathons, bootcamps and exhibitions, inviting participants to craft compelling gender-data-driven media and art products to inform strategic advocacy on this topic.

Results in 2024

Creating an enabling environment

- **More countries in ECA are developing gender statistics strategies, action plans and priority gender indicators to drive evidence-based policies and accelerate progress towards gender equality**. In 2024, **Kyrgyzstan**, with support from UN Women, began developing its National Roadmap for Enhancing Gender Statistics, including the framework of priority gender indicators, through a collaborative and inclusive process. As

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[1] All references to Kosovo should be understood in the context of United Nations Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).

part of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Gender Statistics, over 20 ministries and agencies joined forces at a [Strategic Planning Workshop](#) in March and several consultative meetings in June to identify priority gender data needs, shaping the roadmap's design, baseline and target indicators. Set for finalization and adoption in 2025, this strategic document will guide statistical work and resource mobilization for gender data in the years ahead. In **Albania**, UN Women and the Institute of Statistics (INSTAT) fortified their 15-year partnership by [signing a Memorandum of Understanding](#) (MoU) to advance coordination, production, analysis and dissemination of comprehensive gender data. This collaboration prioritizes four key areas: enhancing INSTAT staff capacity; improving the quality and timeliness of gender statistics; increasing access to gender data for advocacy and policymaking; and boosting gender data literacy among government officials. This institutional commitment has already yielded tangible results, with Albania proposing 95 gender indicators to support gender-responsive budgeting, social protection policies and the SDG Roadmap. Particularly, six ministries developed a set of 31 indicators to integrate gender equality into their budgets, covering areas like jobs, education and social services. For Albania's new Social Protection Strategy 2024–2030, 52 indicators were designed to track poverty, job-seeking and disability, with 50% of them adopted as gender-sensitive performance indicators by the Government. The Ministry of Health and Social Protection has since initiated preparatory work to monitor the first year of the strategy's implementation in 2025. Additionally, 12 gender-specific indicators were proposed for the SDG Roadmap, with six adopted by the Government. Moreover, **Uzbekistan** completed its first-ever gender assessment of the NSS, identifying gaps and opportunities to build a more gender-responsive data ecosystem. Based on the assessment, a medium-term action plan was drafted to improve gender statistics and foster collaboration for advancing data production and use.

- **Three countries now have improved skills and knowledge in gender data production through targeted training**. Six NSO staff boosted their practical skills in coding TUS activities in **Armenia**, as well as validating diary data after a one-day training session in January, which enabled them to complete TUS data coding, entry and validation for the country's ongoing TUS. In **Belarus**, a 5-day hands-on VAW data-collection workshop in September equipped 49 supervisors and interviewers with a better understanding of VAW definitions, survey methodology, international practices and ethical standards. Following the workshop, the NSO of Belarus (BelStat) rolled out and completed data collection for its first-ever comprehensive VAW prevalence survey, with key findings set for publication in 2025. Furthermore, 20 staff in **Georgia**'s NSO (GeoStat) deepened their understanding of household satellite accounts, measuring and valuing unpaid care and domestic work, costing VAW services and designing a Structure of Earnings Survey (SES), as a result of training provided by UN Women in July. This culminated in the design and launch of the country's VAW costing study, unpaid care valuation assessment and preparations for its inaugural SES, three studies that will address critical data gaps on VAW, women's unpaid care and domestic work, and the gender pay gap.

- **In Albania, 11 gender equality focal points from three municipalities improved their skills in collecting gender data and are using these for policy development.** Building on the UN Women-SIAP Gender Statistics Training Curriculum, the training focused on the data collected by each municipality in fields such as domestic violence, social protection, education, Roma-Egyptian communities and economic aid. Following the training, local government staff in the Municipality of Pogradec began developing a Local Governance Action Plan, which integrates an intersectional approach considering the specific needs of marginalized groups.

- **NSOs from 18 countries in the region committed to advance gender-responsive planning and shared knowledge at the High-Level Gender Statistics Conference.** The event, organized by UN Women and GeoStat in July in Tbilisi, gave participants an opportunity to take stock of strategies and practices for collecting and using gender data in emerging areas, such as: measuring VAW, unpaid care work and gender pay gaps; data disaggregation; and gender data communications. Participants also committed to

advancing gender-responsive planning, coordination and advocacy for gender equality. As part of this commitment, in September **Albania** established the Inter-Ministerial Working Group on Gender Statistics under the leadership of the Ministry of Health and Social Protection with expert input from UN Women. Comprising 32 line ministries, agencies and academia, the group brings together statisticians and gender focal points to strengthen gender data governance. As part of the group's work plan, a needs assessment on capacity-building in gender statistics was conducted to identify key gaps and priorities. Based on the findings, UN Women will develop a targeted capacity-building framework to strengthen the technical expertise of group members. Building on the conference outcomes, UN Women will further support **Belarus** and **Kyrgyzstan** in conducting their first-ever VAW prevalence surveys, with the aim of completing them in 2025, and has hired a consultant to support GeoStat in **Georgia** in designing its first-ever SES, a key step in aligning with EU gender statistics requirements. The conference also fostered cross-country collaboration, with the **Türkiye** Statistical Office (TurkStat) invited to share its experience on statistical literacy and the compilation of a Gender Equality Index at a later event in North Macedonia, while **Italy**'s NSO (ISTAT) was invited to share its experience with building an Integrated System of Violence against Women data through a multi-source approach at a national conference in September.

Increasing data production

- **More gender data are being produced to measure and value women's unpaid care work in the region.** In **Georgia**, GeoStat finalized an [analytical report on building a satellite account of household production](#) and respective methodological guide, as part of the National Statistics Development Strategy and its action plan for 2024–2025. According to the report, unpaid household work is equivalent to 20.5% of total gross domestic product (GDP), with women carrying out 82.4% of this work. UN Women is using the findings to develop messages for an upcoming awareness-raising campaign to recognize and value unpaid care work, to launch in traditional and social media in 2025. UN Women continued to provide technical and financial support for the first-ever full-scale TUS in **Armenia,** including training for its roll-out and quality assurance. With data collection complete and a response rate of over 75%, data analysis is now underway, with results to be published in 2025. These results are expected to inform the country's Gender Strategy 2024–2028, particularly the section on paid care services, as well as the Employment Strategy 2024–2030. In **Belarus**, a new partnership was established with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and BelStat to design and implement the country's second TUS, to be completed in 2025. All these newly generated data will play a crucial role in shaping national policies promoting work-life balance, flexible work hours and family leave, as well as assessing progress towards SDG indicator 5.4.1 (*the proportion of time spent in a day on unpaid domestic and care work by men and women*).

- **Six countries in the region are closing data gaps to end violence against women and girls**. **Belarus** designed and implemented its first-ever comprehensive VAW prevalence survey, with data collection reaching a 87.9% response rate and key findings expected to be published in 2025. In **Albania**, UN Women partnered with the People's Advocate to produce femicide data using crime statistics for 2021–2023. During this period, 32 cases of women and girls being killed were recorded, with 24 classified as femicides, in line with the operational criteria as set out in the UN Femicide Statistical Framework. The resulting [factsheet](#) provides insights into the profiles of victims and perpetrators and examines criminal justice outcomes (only 9 convictions among the 24 femicide cases) through 15 gender-specific indicators, contributing to a stronger evidence base for policy and legal responses. Following the launch during the 16 Days of Activism on GBV in December, official letters with the main findings and recommendations were drafted and will be sent to relevant institutions in 2025, with follow-up meetings already organized. Additionally, efforts are underway to advocate, in collaboration with CSOs, for the inclusion of a specific provision in the new Criminal Code to designate femicide as a distinct crime. Further legislative improvements on VAW and femicide are being pursued, aligning with recommendations from international mechanisms, including the CEDAW Committee,

GREVIO and the Universal Periodic Review Working Group. Moreover, an upcoming legal review on VAW will be supported by the findings of these reports. This is the first national initiative in the Western Balkans to estimate femicide using the UN statistical framework. It was one of the priorities of the Femicide Observatory established in March 2024, under the People's Advocate office. In **Kazakhstan, Tajikistan** and **Uzbekistan**, UN Women collaborated with the School of Data and Data against Feminicide to support independent femicide research using non-conventional data sources, such as media reports and court rulings. With a standardized database containing over 50 common variables to ensure cross-country comparisons, Uzbekistan documented 305 femicide cases (2014–2024), Tajikistan recorded 146 cases (2018–2024), and Kazakhstan identified 113 cases (2018–2023). These findings are currently undergoing validation and are expected to be published in 2025 as a sub-regional snapshot, alongside a practical toolkit on conducting femicide research. Meanwhile, **Georgia** developed a methodology and completed data collection to estimate the costs of VAW, aiming to highlight its financial burden on survivors, their families, society and the State. With the methodology validated by national stakeholders in July, the draft report estimates the total cost of VAW at USD 0.9 billion, equivalent to nearly 3% of Georgia's GDP. The report makes the case that doubling the current investment in VAW prevention and service-provision (USD 43 million), would still represent just 10% of the cost of inaction, highlighting the potential economic gains from addressing the issue comprehensively. The final report, to be released in 2025, will provide critical data to inform resource allocation decisions by policymakers.

- **Georgia bolsters efforts to unveil gender inequalities in the labour market.** GeoStat began reprocessing Labour Force Survey data to generate new gender indicators, with three new indicators already included in the annual publication <u>Women and Men in Georgia 2024</u>. The key findings indicate that men have higher employment rates than women across all age groups, with the most significant gap observed in the younger (15–24) and older (55+) age groups. Additionally, women are five times more likely than men to be outside the labour force due to household responsibilities. This effort enhances the availability of gender data for policymaking, with work to continue in 2025 to further improve access to policy-relevant gender equality indicators. Furthermore, GeoStat prepared to pilot its SES, which will be a key tool to estimate the gender pay gap, providing more accurate and comprehensive insights for policymaking.

Improving data use

- **Georgia's VAW survey findings are fuelling awareness-raising and shelter donations.** The country's <u>second VAW survey</u>, undertaken by GeoStat with UN Women's support in 2022, generated gender data that have been used to spur advocacy for <u>long-term recovery support of violence survivors through economic rehabilitation</u>. As a result, Liberty Bank made a financial donation to a women's shelter, mobilized staff to contribute essential goods, and shared key findings on domestic violence to foster a culture of awareness and action within the company. This initiative demonstrates how data can catalyse corporate social responsibility and contribute to shifting societal attitudes on VAW. (See <u>Impact story 1</u>).

- **User-friendly data visualizations and platforms are enhancing the accessibility and use of gender data**. UN Women continued to support **Kyrgyzstan** to upgrade its <u>Gender Data Portal</u> – an interactive 'one-stop shop' for all gender statistics in the country. Through engaging narratives and data visualizations, the portal covers key themes – like population, education, employment, health, crime and violence, living conditions and decision-making. In 2024, the portal was successfully installed on the national server and is now operational, with an initial set of indicators approved by the National Methodological Council. It is currently under review by the Government's IT Council and set to go live for public use in 2025. UN Women has also been developing a Regional Gender Data Hub for **Europe and Central Asia** to expand user access to gender data analysis and visualization. To be launched in 2025, it will feature a gender statistics webpage, regional dashboard and thematic areas including population, work, violence,

leadership, education and the Gender Equality Index, enabling users to track progress on gender equality across the region.

- **More than 110 data users can now transform gender data into advocacy tools that drive meaningful change towards gender equality.** In July, 65 artists from **Central Asia** built their basic data literacy skills through a tailored virtual training as part of the unique *Art-Kazan* data art initiative. From this group, 18 artists were further selected for an in-person Art Residency to craft innovative data artworks addressing pressing issues, such as: violence against women and girls, biased gender norms and stereotypes, sexual and reproductive health rights, inequalities in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) jobs, the gender pay gap, feminization of poverty and specific challenges faced by older women. Post-evaluations found that 72% of participants were able to refine their creative concepts by integrating gender data insights in their artwork prototypes, a big jump from just 22% on the first day, reflecting a significant increase in their data literacy. The residency culminated in final pitches of their data-focused artwork, which were further refined with the help of substantive mentorship by UN Women and the School of Data. The most impactful pieces will be featured in an international exhibition in 2025. In addition, from June to September, 50 gender advocates in **Albania** strengthened their skills to navigate, analyse, interpret, visualize and communicate data using tools like Tableau and Canva. This culminated in a datathon held in October, where three teams were recognized for top product ideas focused on tackling gender bias towards women drivers, technology-facilitated violence and gender-responsive budgeting. With mentorship support from UN Women, these products will be further refined and prepared for publication and dissemination in 2025.

- **Data-driven storytelling is boosting public engagement on gender equality.** ECARO designed and executed a comprehensive communications plan, publishing the second issue of the regional programme brief, crafting 12 tailored social media packages and coordinating visibility for five major events, including a high-level Gender Statistics Conference in Tbilisi in late July. UN Women completed mentorship to the winning journalists of the 2023 Gender Datathon held during Tbilisi DataFest, helping to refine their gender data products. As a result, two infographics on period poverty and child marriages in **Kyrgyzstan** and a flipbook on women in politics in Kazakhstan were finalized, published and disseminated through social media channels. These efforts cumulatively reached over 279,441 people, engaging 20,348 people and generating 71 media clippings across web, social and traditional media. ECARO also designed and launched two dedicated webpages to centralize key information on Women Count's flagship initiatives: Femicide research in **Kazakhstan**, **Tajikistan** and **Uzbekistan** and the Art-Kazan data art project in **Central Asia**.

Plans for 2025

1. **Enabling environment:** Finalize a gender data assessment of Uzbekistan's NSS; develop and/or revise the national gender data road map and national priority gender equality indicators in Albania and Kyrgyzstan; bolster resource mobilization; expand partnerships with development actors and CSOs; develop data statistics training modules in Albania and Armenia; offer targeted training to data producers and users (Albania, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan and Moldova); finalize and roll out a CSO training curriculum on gender data and research grants, and organize a 3-day training on time-use data analysis and grants for researchers to develop thematic analysis on gender equality topics using TUS data in Georgia.

2. **Data production:** Support data analysis and launch the VAW survey in Belarus; support the design and implementation of pilot VAW surveys in Kyrgyzstan and Moldova; finalize data analysis of a full-scale TUS in Armenia and of a time-use module in Belarus; pilot the SES in Georgia; launch a mapping and assessment of key sources of administrative data in Albania; reprocess and analyse Labour Force Survey data to generate new indicators on

WEE (Albania, Armenia and Georgia); mainstream gender into Census data analysis and dissemination plans (Albania, Kyrgyzstan and Moldova); and finalize non-conventional data-collection initiatives on femicide (Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan).

3. **Data accessibility and use:** Launch and promote the Gender Data Portal in Kyrgyzstan and the Time-Use Data platform in Georgia, and integrate a dedicated regional Gender Data and Statistics webpage within UN Women's regional website; develop and finalize regional data and research knowledge products, including the regional SDG Gender Snapshot for ECA, sub-regional snapshots for Central Asia and Eastern Partnership countries, and a regional gender data availability report; finalize country-level data and research knowledge products, such as the Country Gender Equality Profile in Kyrgyzstan, TUS reports in Armenia and Belarus, country gender snapshots and factsheets (Albania, Armenia, Moldova, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan), and the second VAW survey report for Kazakhstan; conduct the gender data art exhibition in Central Asia; prepare digital campaigns to launch knowledge products; and compile at least two case studies documenting promising practices on gender statistics for knowledge-sharing and potential replication.