



INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS
FÉDÉRATION INTERNATIONALE DES ASSISTANTS SOCIAUX
FEDERACIÓN INTERNACIONAL DE TRABAJADORES SOCIALES

Statement of IFSW Europe e.V. in support of social workers in Georgia

The International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW Europe e.V.) supports advocacy activities undertaken with various governmental structures and policymakers by our member organization, Georgian Association of Social Workers (GASW) to take adequate measures to protect and promote the rights and interests of social workers and their service users.

IFSW Europe urges all relevant stakeholders in Georgia to support GASW, as the professional body of social workers in Georgia, in its efforts to promote the systems necessary to ensure that all social workers are equipped with the needed knowledge and skills, as well as adequate working conditions to protect children and vulnerable adults from maltreatment and deliver quality services to those in need, as well as to ensure the best possible support to people at times of crisis.

We understand that our colleagues in the social work professional community in Georgia are seriously concerned over the working conditions of social workers at the Social Services Agency (SSA) under the Ministry of Labor, Health and Social Affairs of Georgia, where the increase in the responsibilities of social workers has led to the increase in caseloads, which are unacceptably high especially in large cities and regional centers. Moreover, social workers at SSA face serious obstacles in regards to the resources necessary to ensure their mobility (field visits). One more concern that we are advised about is related to inadequate infrastructure available to social workers, including but not limited to the lack of space at the agency locations to ensure service users' confidentiality.

The last but not least concern shared by GASW relates to discriminatorily low wages of SSA social workers as compared with the social workers employed in other governmental structures (e.g. in the probation, penitentiary, education and other systems), especially considering the much wider area of responsibilities undertaken by SSA social workers. All of the above mentioned factors increase the likelihood that social workers may not be able to adequately perform the tasks assigned to them and provide the service to their service users with due quality. Such conditions, coupled with excessive workload and infrastructure problems at work, may put social workers in a position where they may not be able to uphold their professional Code of Ethics and protect human rights.



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IFSW Europe supports GASW with its current appeal to policymakers to eliminate obstacles to the successful delivery of quality social work services to the citizens of Georgia. IFSW Europe does hope that Georgian Government addresses this issue adequately in order to be able to achieve the goals of the ongoing reforms. We will be looking forward to hearing updates about the steps to be taken for solving the above challenges. We are happy to be of help in the course of the change implementation and open to discussion during our visit in Georgia in late April, 2015.

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