



GENDER EQUALITY AND EMPOWERMENT IN THE CREATIVE AND CULTURAL INDUSTRIES

REPORT FOR ARMENIA, AZERBAIJAN, GEORGIA
AND UKRAINE
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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ALL COUNTRIES IN THE EASTERN PARTNERSHIP REGION HAVE SIGNIFICANT AND COMPLEX GENDER-RELATED ISSUES INCLUDING: ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION AND OPPORTUNITY, POLITICAL INFLUENCE AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT, ALTHOUGH THERE ARE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN COUNTRIES IN SOME KEY INDICATORS. THE CREATIVE AND CULTURAL INDUSTRIES (CCI) HAVE THE POTENTIAL TO CHALLENGE THE GENDER INEQUALITIES AND UNEQUAL POWER RELATIONS MANIFESTED IN MANY AREAS OF THE ECONOMY AND IN DECISION-MAKING. THE POWER OF THE CREATIVE AND CULTURAL INDUSTRIES TO GENERATE INCOME, JOBS AND EXPORTS WHILE AT THE SAME TIME PROMOTE SOCIAL INCLUSION, CULTURAL DIVERSITY AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT IS ALREADY RECOGNIZED IN MANY COUNTRIES.

ACCORDING TO THE RESEARCH CONDUCTED IN JANUARY-MARCH 2018, THE MAIN GENDER-RELATED CHALLENGES THAT CCI PROFESSIONALS ARE FACING IN ARMENIA, AZERBAIJAN, GEORGIA AND UKRAINE ARE THE FOLLOWING:

1. THERE IS A GENDER GAP DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CULTURAL AND CREATIVE INDUSTRIES.

There is a visible gender difference in the business-related (creative industries) and culture-related (cultural industries) sectors. Architecture, IT, TV, commercial filmmaking, performing arts are considered as mostly male-dominated sub-sectors, while museums, galleries, libraries, documentary photo and video, publishing are often dominated by women. Design, advertisement and marketing has been found to be rather gender-balanced fields, which could be explained by their fast growth as industries (with a demand for professionals regardless of gender) and a larger number of young people working there. There are opportunities for employers to tap into if they narrow the gender gap - opportunity gap, wage gap, perception gap.

2. THERE IS A SALARY GAP BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN IN CCI.

There is a tendency for the technical and better-paid sectors to be predominantly occupied by men. There is no exact number but the field study conducted has demonstrated that there is a significant salary gap for men and women in the creative sectors. Several factors have an impact on this dynamic:

- professional and financial success is expected by society from men rather than from women;
- educational systems have deeply embedded gender-biased incentives for the choice of profession for men and women, e.g. with imbalanced introduction to the role models in different sub-sectors;
- the low level of women's self-confidence and resulting underestimation of the value of their work is mostly rooted in the two factors mentioned above as well as cultural norms and traditions that predefine the role of a woman as a mother, a housekeeper, a good wife.





3. THERE IS UNEQUAL DISTRIBUTION OF THE LEADERSHIP ROLES IN CCI.

Leadership and decision-making positions in the creative sector are mostly occupied by men, as was confirmed by our respondents in all sub-sectors. A leadership position is mostly perceived by the society as “*decent*” work, thus men receive more support for it from the family and wider public, while women are “allowed” to have fun creative jobs are considered a temporary hobby rather than a “serious” employment. Although the majority of our respondents think that being a good leader does not depend on their sex, there is clear evidence of a difference between the way of thinking and behavioural patterns.

4. THERE ARE SIGNIFICANT GENDER-RELATED OBSTACLES FOR WOMEN'S PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN CCI.

Lower economic activity of women was largely explained by the burden of parenting and care work; a flexible job is more desirable for women because they have to take care of their other responsibilities (they have to choose). In all countries where this study was carried out, it was confirmed that parenting and household duties are a much higher obstacle for achieving success for women than for men. At the same time, we did not receive many recommendations on possible solutions. Social norms and family traditions still seem to confirm this inequality as the “*natural way of being*”.

5. THERE IS A TENDENCY FOR UNDERVALUATION OF CREATIVE WORK WHICH HINDERS BOTH WOMEN'S AND MEN'S PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN CCI.

In the creative sector there is a general challenge that the value of creative work is not fully recognised by the market. Nevertheless, women tend to undervalue their work even more and accept lower-paid job offers because they are “*less competitive*” on the market due to eventual maternity leave and also due to the higher level of questioning of their professional level (especially in “*technology-related*” jobs). At the same time, men often tend to choose jobs which are less creative but better paid, because they feel the pressure to be “*the breadwinner*” of the family.

6. LOW GENDER AWARENESS IN CCI SIGNIFICANTLY INFLUENCES THE CREATIVE PROCESS.

There is definitely a business case for employers to create a comfortable working environment for both men and women, as this enhances creativity and productivity. According to our respondents, women are usually better communicators, while men tend to succeed better in work that requires higher concentration. At the same time, gender stereotypes were often listed as the factors that prevent women from innovation - their ideas are perceived as less valuable and they are often not confident enough to perceive critical feedback well. While men often do not feel safe enough to talk about gender issues because it mostly contains a “blaming” narrative. Such differences could be used as an opportunity for mutual learning and for enriching work dynamics and productivity.

7. CULTURE AND CREATIVITY ARE POWERFUL AGENTS OF CHANGE AND PROVIDE MULTIPLE OPPORTUNITIES FOR EMPOWERMENT IN THE REGION.

Culture and creative practices are efficient tools for promoting gender equality both in CCI and in broader society. Artists and creative professionals generate content which is broadly used in media, in public spaces, during large events. Their messages can directly influence gender awareness in society. Strengthening CCI as a sector of the economy provides decent jobs, sustainable working environment, formalisation of the economies, e-commerce growth, and increases markets' sophistication. All these factors are seen across the region as supportive trends for the professionalization of the sector and for gender empowerment within CCI and through CCI.

The study has also led to several observations based on geography and industries:

- Soviet heritage is a common challenge for all of the countries, including a lingering heritage of decorative gender equality in cultural and creative industries serving as a mental obstacle for evidence-based gender equality in cultural and creative industries; a generation gap between CCI professionals; and an outdated educational system that encourages a gender-biased way of thinking;
- Patriarchal societies in Georgia and Armenia still strongly influence the gender-related narrative in the sector;
- Religious norms (Muslim culture in Azerbaijan and respective Orthodox churches in the other three countries) are important factors influencing public gender-related discourse.



Moving towards a more gender-equal future and having the culture and creative industries contribute to this change is a complex process. There are various societal factors behind persistent gender inequality that make it difficult to tackle gender issues directly. Nevertheless, there are a variety of short-term and long-term opportunities that could lead to formal and informal, institutional and individual change, e.g.:

- Raising gender awareness among the main stakeholder groups connected to CCI;
- Strengthening the CCI markets as providers of decent jobs and equal opportunities for men and women;
- Increasing the capacity of creative professionals to deal with gender-related challenges;
- Enhancing the use of cultural and creative means for promoting gender equality;
- Applying a gender perspective for raising professional standards in CCI;
- Strengthening cooperation between civil society organizations and CCI professionals on promoting the values of human rights, human dignity, freedom of expression, etc.;
- Introducing systemic change in educational and professional orientation programmes in CCI.

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