



Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

Distr.: General
26 February 2024

Original: English
English, French and Spanish only

Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

List of issues and questions prior to the submission of the ninth periodic report of Cyprus*

General

1. Please provide information and statistics, disaggregated by sex, age, nationality, disability, geographical location and socioeconomic background, on the current situation of women in the State party, to enable monitoring of the implementation of the Convention. In accordance with the State party's obligations under articles 1 and 2 of the Convention, and in line with target 5.1 of the Sustainable Development Goals, to end all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere, please indicate how the State party intends to improve the collection and analysis of data pertaining to the areas covered by the Convention, so as to support policymaking and programme development and to measure progress towards the implementation of the Convention and the promotion of substantive equality between women and men, including with regard to the specific areas covered in the present document.

Women's rights and gender equality in relation to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, recovery efforts and global crises

2. Please describe efforts made and mechanisms put in place to contend with the COVID-19 pandemic and its long-term impact and ways that those efforts and mechanisms may be applied in the State party's response to current and future crises, such as armed conflict, food insecurity, energy crises and other relevant areas. Please provide information on strategies taken to ensure that gender equality and the empowerment of women are fundamental requirements in addressing such crises and in elaborating adequate responses, including with regard to policies, the scope of essential services, assistance programmes, recovery efforts and the application of the rule of law. Please also provide information on measures taken to ensure the equal and meaningful participation of women in those processes and to ensure that such crises will not lead to a reversal of progress made in the protection and promotion of women's rights.

* Adopted by the pre-sessional working group on 21 February 2024.



Women and peace and security

3. In the light of the Committee's previous recommendations (para. 11),¹ please describe efforts taken to allocate sufficient human, technical and financial resources and develop effective tools to implement the national action plan on women and peace and security, 2021–2025, and to give the highest priority to the meaningful and inclusive participation of women at all stages and levels of the peace process, as well as in transitional justice processes, in particular in decision-making, at the national and local levels. Please also explain how the national action plan is applied to women and girls in the territory who are not under the effective control of the State party.

Women's access to justice

4. In the light of the Committee's previous recommendations (para. 17), please provide information on efforts:

(a) To enhance the knowledge among women and girls of their rights and of the available remedies to ensure them, including through the integration of women's rights and gender equality into curricula at all levels of education and in legal literacy programmes;

(b) To institutionalize systems of legal aid and public defence that are accessible, sustainable and responsive to the needs of women in a timely, continuous and effective manner at all stages of judicial proceedings;

(c) To facilitate access among women, in particular for disadvantaged groups of women, to free legal aid and ensure adequate coverage, gender-responsive eligibility criteria and the quality of such services;

(d) To eliminate gender bias, including through capacity-building and training programmes for the judiciary on the Convention and women's rights.

5. Please provide more details on measures put in place to ensure the effective implementation of the national action plan for equality between women and men, 2019–2023.

National machinery for the advancement of women

6. In the light of the Committee's previous recommendations (para. 19), please provide detailed information on steps taken:

(a) To increase the resources allocated to the National Machinery for Women's Rights to ensure that a clear focus on women's rights is maintained and that it is an effective high-level mechanism for initiating, coordinating and implementing gender equality plans, policies and programmes;

(b) To strengthen coordination between the various components of the national machinery by clearly defining their mandates and responsibilities and setting standards in relation to women's rights, conduct regular monitoring and evaluation of such coordination and ensure that the national machinery is represented at the regional and local levels;

(c) To ensure the full and effective participation of all stakeholders in the discussions on strengthening the national machinery for the advancement of women;

(d) To evaluate the implementation of the national action plan for equality between men and women, 2019–2023, develop a revised national action plan and ensure that gender mainstreaming is consistently applied in the formulation and

¹ Unless otherwise indicated, paragraph numbers refer to the Committee's concluding observations on the eighth periodic report of the State party ([CEDAW/C/CYP/CO/8](#)).

implementation of all laws, regulations and programmes across all ministries and decentralized government structures;

(e) To introduce and implement a policy of gender-responsive budgeting across all government departments.

National human rights institution

7. Please provide information on the steps taken to ensure that the Office of the Commissioner for Administration and the Protection of Human Rights, which was granted A status by the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions in 2022, has a specific mandate on women's rights and gender equality and is provided with adequate human, technical and financial resources to carry out its mandate.

Temporary special measures

8. Please inform the Committee of the State party's efforts:

(a) To review its constitutional and legislative framework to allow for temporary special measures in order to enable the full and equal participation of women in political and economic life, including on boards of directors;

(b) To apply quotas and other forms of temporary special measures, in accordance with article 4 (1) of the Convention and the Committee's general recommendation No. 25 (2004) on temporary special measures, in all areas covered by the Convention where women are underrepresented or disadvantaged, in particular in political and public life and in the labour and financial markets;

(c) To raise awareness among government officials and members of the parliament, the judiciary, political parties and the public of the non-discriminatory nature of temporary special measures.

Stereotypes and harmful practices

9. In the light of the Committee's previous recommendations (para. 25), please provide information on the following:

(a) The development of a comprehensive strategy with proactive and sustained measures to eliminate and modify discriminatory gender stereotypes, with a particular focus on women belonging to minority groups, who are often the target of hate speech and racially motivated violence, by revising textbooks and curricula and conducting awareness-raising campaigns directed at the public in general and at the media and advertising agencies specifically;

(b) Engagement with relevant actors and, whenever possible, the use of innovative measures to enhance a positive and non-stereotypical portrayal of women in the media and in advertising;

(c) Implementation of the Law on Combating Sexism and Sexist Behaviour of 2020;

(d) Efforts to collect disaggregated data on harmful practices and the related legal sanctions imposed on perpetrators in the State party and how information on ways to combat such practices is made widely available.

Gender-based violence against women

10. Please provide details on the establishment and operation of the multi-agency and cross-sectoral crisis centre Women's House, including how its cooperation with the police and social services is ensured, and the steps that are being taken to expand the reach of the centre so that it can provide services to survivors of domestic violence

across the entire territory of the State party. Recalling the Committee's previous recommendations (para. 27), please also provide the Committee with information on efforts:

(a) To enforce effectively the Law on the Prevention and Combating of Violence against Women and Domestic Violence and for Related Matters of 2021, its subsequent amendment (Law No. 117(I)/2022) introducing femicide as a separate, specific offence, and the Law on the Protection from Harassment and Stalking of 2021, and ensure that reports of gender-based violence against women are duly investigated, that perpetrators are prosecuted and adequately punished and that victims have access to appropriate redress, including compensation;

(b) To empower the National Coordinating Body for the Prevention and Combating of Violence against Women, created under article 39 of the Law on the Prevention and Combating of Violence against Women and Domestic Violence and for Related Matters, to coordinate and implement all existing policies on violence against women, while avoiding any overlaps with the functions of the Advisory Committee for the Prevention and Combating of Violence in the Family and set up a separate body entrusted with the monitoring and evaluation of the relevant policies;

(c) To allocate adequate human, technical and financial resources to the National Coordinating Body for the Prevention and Combating of Violence against Women for the systematic and effective implementation, monitoring and assessment of the implementation of the national strategy for preventing and combating of violence against women, 2023–2028;

(d) To encourage victims of gender-based violence to report their cases, and provide capacity-building programmes for judges, prosecutors, police officers and other law enforcement officials on the strict application of the relevant provisions in criminal law and on the gender-sensitive investigation of such cases;

(e) To increase the number and geographical coverage of shelters, ensure the availability of specialized and gender-sensitive psychosocial, rehabilitation and reintegration programmes and enhance State cooperation with non-governmental organizations that provide shelter and rehabilitation to victims;

(f) To establish a centralized database on all forms of violence against women to collect data on all forms of gender-based violence against women, disaggregated by sex, age, nationality and the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator, as well as on investigations, prosecutions, convictions, sentences imposed on perpetrators and reparations provided to victims with regard to such cases.

11. In the light of reports that gender-based violence, including domestic violence, are especially underreported among persons belonging to ethnic minority groups and foreign nationals, please provide information on measures targeted specifically at those groups to raise awareness of women's rights and the avenues available for reporting violence and obtaining protection, assistance and redress, as well as measures to counter stereotypes that may discourage reporting gender-based violence.

Trafficking and exploitation of prostitution

12. In the light of reports that the State party remains mainly a destination for trafficked persons and the fact that court proceedings take years to complete, please provide information on measures taken:

(a) To implement the national action plan against trafficking in human beings, 2023–2026;

(b) To ensure the effective enforcement of anti-trafficking legislation, including by providing judges, prosecutors, border police, immigration authorities and other law enforcement officials with mandatory training;

(c) To prosecute and punish in a timely manner all cases of trafficking in persons, especially of women and girls, and ensure that the sentences imposed on the perpetrators are commensurate with the gravity of the crime;

(d) To ensure, through its national referral mechanism, the early identification and referral of victims of trafficking in order for them to receive adequate support and protection;

(e) To ensure that women who are victims of trafficking, irrespective of their ethnic, national or social background and legal status, are not detained, charged or prosecuted for the unlawful activities that they have committed as a direct consequence of being trafficked and that, regardless of their ability or willingness to cooperate in the legal proceedings against traffickers, they receive effective protection and temporary residence permits;

(f) To increase the number and coverage of specialized shelters for victims of trafficking and provide victims with adequate access to health care and counselling;

(g) To strictly enforce existing legislation pertaining to private employment agencies and monitor their activities, with a view to preventing the trafficking of migrant women, including domestic workers;

(h) To collect data on victims of trafficking, disaggregated by sex, age, nationality and form of exploitation;

(i) To strengthen the assistance provided to women who wish to leave prostitution, including by providing exit programmes and alternative income-generating opportunities.

Participation in political and public life

13. In the light of the continued substantive underrepresentation of women in decision-making positions in politics and public life, please describe efforts:

(a) To strengthen the representation of women in decision-making positions in political life, in particular in the parliament, on municipal councils, in the Cabinet, as mayors, in the diplomatic service, in peace negotiations and in the judiciary, with a view to reaching the targets and quotas set out in the national action plan on gender equality;

(b) To adopt targeted measures, such as a statutory quota for the representation of women on the electoral lists of political parties and a gender parity system for the accelerated recruitment and appointment of women to decision-making positions in public administration;

(c) To carry out awareness-raising campaigns for politicians, journalists, teachers and members of the public of the fact that the full, equal, free and democratic participation of women on an equal basis with men in political and public life is a requirement for the full implementation of women's human rights;

(d) To train women in leadership, campaigning and constituency-building to prepare them as candidates;

(e) To put in place a comprehensive strategy with proactive and sustained measures to eliminate and modify the negative cultural attitudes and gender stereotypes faced by women in politics;

(f) To systematically collect data to monitor the progress of the representation of women in political and public life.

Nationality

14. In the light of the Committee's previous recommendations (para. 33), please explain the measures that have been put in place to facilitate the delivery of birth certificates to undocumented migrant women for their children born in the State party. Please describe how migrant women, including those in an irregular situation, are made aware of their right to obtain birth certificates for their children. Please indicate what steps are being taken to accede to the Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness.

Education

15. In the light of the Committee's previous recommendations (para. 35), please inform the Committee of the State party's efforts:

(a) To strengthen its strategies to address discriminatory stereotypes and structural barriers that may deter girls from enrolling in traditionally male-dominated fields of study, including science, technology, engineering and mathematics, information and communications technology and artificial intelligence;

(b) To ensure that the education on sexual and reproductive health and rights provided to girls and boys is comprehensive and age-appropriate;

(c) To implement a policy in all schools of zero tolerance of violence and harassment, including cyberbullying and online gender-based violence, that incorporates counselling services, awareness-raising efforts and effective reporting mechanisms;

(d) To continue to combat discrimination that hinders access by disadvantaged groups of women and girls to high-quality education, including through the adoption of temporary special measures, such as scholarships and the provision of free textbooks.

Employment

16. In the light of the Committee's previous recommendations (para. 37), please provide information on the following:

(a) Measures, including temporary special measures, to achieve the substantive equality of women and men in the labour market, including for highly qualified women, and establish special training programmes and counselling for unemployed women, including on the promotion of entrepreneurship among women;

(b) The provision of skills training and incentives for women to pursue non-traditional career paths and efforts to eliminate horizontal and vertical occupational segregation in the public and private sectors;

(c) Efforts to strictly enforce the Equal Pay for Men and Women for Equal Work or Work of Equal Value (Amendment) Law of 2014, including by imposing sanctions for non-compliance, and to adopt further measures to close the gender pay gap, including through gender-neutral analytical job classification and evaluation methods and regular pay surveys;

(d) Measures to increase access among women to full-time employment, including through the equal sharing of domestic and family tasks between women and men and by increasing the number and quality of childcare facilities and boosting incentives for men to take paternity leave;

(e) Steps to enforce the Equal Treatment of Men and Women in Employment and Vocational Training (Amendment) Law of 2014 and the Protection of Maternity (Amendment) Law of 2017 to ensure that mothers and pregnant women are not discriminated against in the employment sector, in particular in the private sector;

(f) Measures, including temporary special measures, to accelerate the equal participation of disadvantaged groups of women in the labour market;

(g) The development of a safe system for filing complaints relating to sexual harassment in the workplace and measures to ensure that victims have access to effective mechanisms and remedies;

(h) Measures taken to adopt the European Union directive No. 2022/2381 on improving the gender balance among directors of listed companies and related measures.

Women migrant domestic workers

17. Please inform the Committee on steps taken:

(a) To adopt a law regulating domestic employment, with adequate sanctions for employers engaging in abusive practices;

(b) To raise awareness among women migrant domestic workers of their rights under the Convention, including in a language that they understand, and monitor the activities of employment agencies;

(c) To enforce the right of women migrant domestic workers to change employers legally, and to ensure regular labour inspections of workplaces and employment contracts;

(d) To establish effective complaint procedures to enable women migrant domestic workers to lodge complaints against their employers without fear of reprisals, arrest, detention or deportation;

(e) To ensure that gender-responsive and accessible welfare services and assistance are provided to women migrant domestic workers, including undocumented workers, who are victims of abuse and exploitation, including legal assistance, medical and psychosocial care and access to adequate shelters.

18. Please provide information on the measures taken to ratify the Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189), the Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981 (No. 156), and the Private Employment Agencies Convention, 1997 (No. 181), of the International Labour Organization.

Health

19. Information before the Committee indicates that caesarean sections in the State party account for more than half of total births. Please provide information on measures taken to reduce the excessive reliance on caesarean sections, including by training medical personnel on natural birth and introducing stricter controls on the use of caesarean sections. With regard to the Committee's previous recommendations (para. 41), please inform the Committee about the following:

(a) The implementation of the general health system started in 2019;

(b) The availability and accessibility of affordable modern forms of contraception and reproductive health services for all women and girls;

(c) Efforts to fully apply the law allowing for abortion, and to guarantee access to safe abortion services and pre- and post-abortion counselling services in public and private hospitals.

Economic empowerment of women

20. With regard to the Committee's previous recommendations (para. 43), please inform the Committee about the State party's efforts:

- (a) To undertake independent, participatory and periodic impact assessments of the extraterritorial effects of its financial secrecy and corporate tax policies and its commercial activities on women's rights within the State party and on the ability of third States to mobilize maximum resources for the advancement of women's rights;
- (b) To strengthen the representation of women in decision-making positions in companies and on their boards of directors;
- (c) To prohibit all discriminatory provisions in insurance companies' policies;
- (d) To achieve substantive gender equality in sports management, including through the use of incentives for women in sports, as athletes and in managerial positions, in collaboration with civil society organizations.

Rural and disadvantaged groups of women

21. In the light of the Committee's previous recommendations (paras. 47 and 49), please inform the Committee about steps taken:

- (a) To enhance employment opportunities for and the autonomy of rural women by increasing incentives, including tax incentives, to encourage the development of businesses in rural areas;
- (b) To promote science, technology, engineering and mathematics, information and communications technology and artificial intelligence programmes in rural areas;
- (c) To amend provisions for migrant women to obtain a temporary residence permit in order to reduce their dependency on their partners and facilitate their access to family courts.

Marriage and family relations

22. Recalling the Committee's previous recommendations (para. 51), please inform the Committee of steps taken to adopt amendments to the family law to ensure adequate legal protection for children born to or adopted in the context of de facto and other civil unions and for women in de facto unions and upon the dissolution thereof, and to set the legal presumption of each spouse's contribution to property acquired during marriage at 50 per cent.

23. Please indicate what legislative and other measures are in place to ensure that domestic violence is taken into consideration in judicial decisions on custody and visitation rights and conduct training and awareness-raising activities for judges, mediators, lawyers, youth welfare officers and members of law enforcement agencies and local executive bodies to ensure that they are aware of the rights of women and children and of their own role in protecting victims of domestic violence and that they comply with provisions protecting women's rights.

Climate change and disaster risk reduction

24. Please provide information on the Cyprus Climate Change Initiative and explain how it translates into the adoption of a national climate change action plan. Please describe steps taken to ensure the participation of women in the development and implementation of the above-mentioned action plan and the incorporation of a gender perspective into adaptation and mitigation efforts, in line with the Committee's

general recommendation No. 37 (2018) on the gender-related dimensions of disaster risk reduction in the context of climate change.

Additional information

25. Please provide any additional information deemed relevant with regard to legislative, policy, administrative and other measures taken to implement the provisions of the Convention and the Committee's concluding observations since the consideration of the State party's eighth periodic report ([CEDAW/C/CYP/8](#)), in 2018. Such measures may include recent laws, developments, plans, programmes and ratifications of human rights instruments, as well as any other information that the State party considers relevant. Please also provide information on the measures taken to integrate a gender perspective into all efforts aimed at achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Please note that, further to the issues raised in the present document, the State party will be expected, during the dialogue, to respond to additional questions relating to areas covered by the Convention.
