



**Convention on the Elimination
of All Forms of Discrimination
against Women**

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**Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination
against Women**

Pre-session working group

Thirty-seventh session

15 January-2 February 2007

**List of issues and questions with regard to the consideration
of the sixth periodic report***

Austria

1. The pre-session working group examined the sixth periodic report of Austria (CEDAW/C/AUT/6).

General

2. Please provide information on the process of preparing the sixth periodic report. This information should indicate which government departments and institutions were involved and the nature and extent of their participation, whether consultations were held with non-governmental organizations and whether the report was presented to Parliament.

3. Does the Government of Austria intend to remove its reservation to article 11 of the Convention, as recommended in the previous concluding comments?

Constitutional, legislative and institutional framework

4. The response to the previous concluding comments (recommendation 239, CEDAW A/55/38) cites three pending court proceedings dealing with equal treatment cases in the period from 1 September 2003 to 31 January 2004. Please provide overall statistical data pertaining to court proceedings on equal treatment during the reporting period, including the number of pending and concluded cases, their nature and their outcomes.

5. The report states that plans are in progress for the restructuring of the Equal Treatment Commission. According to the plan, the scope of the work of the Commission will be extended to monitor the equal treatment not only of women and

* The page numbering in this list of issues and questions refers to the English version of the report.

men in the workplace, but also of all persons irrespective of race, ethnic origin, religious faith, ideology, age, or sexual orientation, in all spheres of life (recommendation 235, response to CEDAW A/55/38). Please indicate what arrangements are in place to ensure that this expanded mandate does not lead to a weakening of efforts to eliminate discrimination against women; also explain the reason why, in the new structure of the Equal Treatment Commission, which comprises three senates, equal treatment of women and men is only ensured in the workplace, while in regard to race and ethnicity, it covers other spheres as well.

6. Please explain the statement made in the report under article 3 that the implementation of the gender equality principle in Austrian development policy “remains a challenge, not only for the Austrian Development Cooperation but also with regard to measures taken by the Austrian federal Government that have a potential impact on developing countries”.

Violence against women

7. In its concluding comments of 15 December 2005 (CAT/C/AUT/CO/3), the Committee against Torture expressed concern about the lack of available statistics and “detailed information on cases of sexual violence and on investigations, prosecutions and punishment of perpetrators of such violations” in regard to areas covered by the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. Please describe steps that are being taken to improve the situation and provide information on the question available to date, particularly as regards the impact on women.

8. The Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, has expressed concern about the lack of “accurate statistics available on the number of women abused annually” and on the precarious financial situation of women’s shelters in Austria (E/CN.4/2003/75/Add.1, paras. 1566 and 1568). In addition to information listed in the sixth periodic report under article 5 (a) please indicate whether there are any plans to conduct a population-based survey on violence against women. Please also provide statistics on the number of victims assisted in the Intervention Centres and women’s refuges, indicating whether the capacity and resourcing of the centres of assistance are adequate.

Trafficking and exploitation of prostitution

9. The report of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences (E/CN.4/2000/68, para. 70) listed Austria among the principal countries of destination of trafficking in women. While noting the developments mentioned in response to the Committee’s previous concluding comments (recommendation 228), please provide details on the type and scope of services for the victims of trafficking, including data on the number of victims recorded and on the judicial actions taken against the perpetrators of trafficking in human beings.

10. The report refers to the agreement that allows asylum-seekers holding a temporary residence to apply for a “health-check card” and work as prostitutes as the reason for a rise in registrations, especially among black African women (see p. 40). Please provide information on measures taken, including legislation, to suppress all forms of trafficking in women and exploitation of prostitution of women, and measures taken to address the vulnerable situation of these women that eventually leads them into prostitution.

Participation in political and public life

11. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in 2005 noted with satisfaction that half of the ministers of the federal Government were women (E/C.12/AUT/CO/3, B.5). At the same time, according to figures provided in annex II to the report, women continue to be underrepresented in decision-making, particularly in the Parliament, as well as in the government and parliaments of the provinces. Please describe measures, including temporary special measures in accordance with article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention, that the Government has taken since the consideration of the previous report to increase women's participation in decision-making at all levels.

Education and stereotypes

12. Please provide information on the findings of the special research project to evaluate awareness of the educational principle of gender equality and its implementation in schools, as mentioned in the report under article 5 (a), and any action taken in response to these findings. Please also provide information on any existing initiatives to address the matter of gender stereotyping in the media.

13. In its previous concluding comments (recommendation 241, A/55/38), the Committee requested that the State party introduce human rights education, in particular women's human rights education, into school curricula. Please provide information on steps taken to implement this recommendation.

14. The report provides information on the "APART extra" programme for women researchers with doctorates and research experience who are not eligible for "research grants under standard conditions" because they exceed the age eligibility criteria owing to the fact that they have interrupted their careers to perform parental duties. Please indicate whether an assessment of the gender-sensitivity of the "standard conditions" for awarding research grants has been undertaken, and measures taken, if any, to eliminate factual discrimination in this area.

Employment and reconciliation of work and family life

15. The report states that women constitute 85 per cent of part-time employees (response to recommendations 233 and 234). It also cites a recent study, in which 70 per cent of interviewed women part-time workers indicated family situations as the main reason for part-time employment, as opposed to only 10 per cent of men. What concrete measures, in addition to legislative changes discussed in the report under article 11, paragraph 2, does the Government intend to take to encourage better reconciliation of work and family responsibilities between men and women?

16. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights has expressed concern about women's disproportionate representation in poorly paid part-time jobs and the fact that women often receive lower remuneration than men for equal work (E/C.12/AUT/CO/3, D.10). According to statistics provided in the sixth periodic report, in 2001 women earned on average 28 per cent less than men (response to recommendations 233 and 234). Please indicate how the State party intends to address this situation further. The response should include information on the implementation of the guidelines "Equal Pay for Equal Work and Work of Equal Value".

17. In its previous concluding comments (recommendation 236), the Committee expressed concern about the disadvantages suffered by single women, especially never-married and divorced elderly women, with respect to retirement pensions and social security benefits. The report describes the amendment of the pension schemes, in response to the Committee's recommendation. Please elaborate in more detail how the specific situation and needs of the above-mentioned groups of women were taken into account in this reform. In particular, please explain to what extent the equalization supplements described under article 11, paragraph 1 (e), eliminate discrimination against women in pensions.

Health

18. Please provide information about the main findings of studies on the socio-economic factors influencing women's health undertaken in 2002 and 2003 (response to recommendation 237, A/55/38) and how they have influenced government policies on the issue since then.

19. According to the report, women's health centres are subsidized by the Federal Ministry of Health and Women's Issues "in accordance with the available budget" (response to recommendation 237). Please provide data illustrating the number of centres and the adequacy of subsidies provided to the centres in meeting the health needs of women. Describe what steps the Government is taking to address a possible shortage of subsidies.

20. Please provide sex-disaggregated statistics on HIV/AIDS in Austria, including in the migrant population, and elaborate on any awareness-raising campaigns and assistance programmes available in the country, both for the general population and vulnerable groups.

Situation of particular groups of women

21. In its concluding comments of 2005, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights expressed concern that 13 per cent of the Austrian population is exposed to poverty (E/C.12/AUT/CO/3, para. 14). Please provide data on this group disaggregated by sex and age, as well as information on targeted measures to alleviate poverty and social exclusion, especially among groups of women facing multiple discrimination, such as rural, older, disabled, ethnic minority and migrant women.

22. According to the report, approximately 41 per cent of all agricultural holdings in Austria are managed by women. However, only roughly one third of investment subsidies were paid to farms managed by women. Please provide an explanation as to why women's share of investment subsidies appears to be lower than their share of farm management.

23. Please elaborate on the findings of the study undertaken in 2003 entitled "Fundamental Principles of Gender-sensitive Regional Development" (article 3, "Spatial planning and regional policy"), on how these findings have influenced policy and whether special attention is being paid to rural and to older women.

24. The Committee, in its previous concluding comments (recommendation 229), as well as the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences (E/CN.4/2003/75/Add.1, para. 1568), have expressed concern with the situation of migrant women in Austria, in particular about human rights violations

by State officials. In its reply to the Committee's concluding comments (recommendation 229), the report states that "[i]n the event of suspicion of any form of encroachment by staff on asylum seekers, charges of an offence will be filed ...". Please provide statistics and information on the nature of any such charges and their outcomes.

25. Please provide an assessment of the impact of educational initiatives launched by the provinces targeting migrant women described under article 10 (e), "Educational provision for female migrants", taking into account the information in the report that they are "open to women alike" and that "all the programmes and courses on offer are devised with an eye to gender-specific aspects".

Optional Protocol

26. Please provide information on measures taken in order to make widely known the Optional Protocol to the Convention, which Austria ratified on 6 September 2000.
