



**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-fifth session

15 May-2 June 2006

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

Cyprus

Introduction

The pre-session working group examined the combined third, fourth and fifth periodic report of Cyprus (CEDAW/C/CYP/3-5).

**Constitution, legislation and national machinery for the
advancement of women**

1. The report highlights the definitions of discrimination based on sex and the principle of equal treatment in employment and vocational training legislation (paras. 12 and 13). Please indicate whether there is a definition of discrimination against women in accordance with article 1 of the Convention in the Constitution or in national legislation outside the employment sphere.
2. Please clarify the status of the Convention in domestic law. In particular, please indicate whether the provisions of the Convention are considered self-executing or whether specific legislation is required in order to harmonize domestic law with the Convention and make it fully enforceable.
3. Please provide information on whether the Convention has been used or relied on in the courts, and if so, give details of cases.
4. Concern has been expressed in the past about the persistence of discriminatory laws between women and men in a number of spheres. While the developments in legislative reform are noted, particularly in family and employment law as well as regarding violence and trafficking, please clarify whether any discriminatory laws

still exist and what efforts are being undertaken to review and rectify all legislation that discriminates against women in light of the Convention.

5. In its previous concluding comments, the Committee recommended special sensitization and training programmes in gender issues for all law enforcement officials and judges, particularly judges in family courts. While taking note of some training activities mainly addressed at members of the police force, please provide information on the full implementation of this recommendation.

6. While the budget of the national machinery for the advancement of women has increased since the last report, its general secretariat consists of only two professionals who are assisted by external experts to cope with the increasing workload. Please indicate what steps are being taken or contemplated to strengthen the national machinery for women, including its administrative structure, budget, human resources and executive powers, in line with the previous concluding comments of the Committee.

7. The report states that non-governmental organizations, especially women's non-governmental organizations, provided information for the preparation of the report and that the report was subsequently communicated to these organizations. Please provide information on the regular communication/cooperation channels or mechanisms between the national machinery and these organizations as well as the criteria adopted in regard to the non-governmental organizations chosen for such cooperation.

Stereotypes and education

8. The report notes that traditional social prejudices and stereotyped attitudes are the major obstacle to the advancement of women (para. 8). Please provide details on whether a comprehensive strategy exists to address the prevalence of stereotypes which inhibit the advancement of women and the efforts the Government has taken to eliminate stereotypes across all sectors and spheres in accordance with article 5 (a) of the Convention.

9. Please describe what efforts are in place to target men and boys to ensure that they actively contribute to the achievement of gender equality, including through sharing of family responsibilities.

10. The report notes two examples of initiatives at pre-primary and primary school levels to change attitudes and stereotypes on gender roles (paras. 115 and 117). Please describe in more detail how the education system at all levels actively promotes gender equality and the eradication of stereotypes and what national plans, priorities and strategies have been identified to eradicate stereotypes through the education system.

11. The report notes that more women than men are registered at tertiary institutions (para. 125) yet women remain underrepresented as teachers at university level, as well as in decision-making positions in Cypriot society and retain lower paying jobs in the labour market. What strategies has the Government put in place or envisaged adopting in order to ensure that women seek and obtain jobs commensurate with their academic achievements?

12. Please describe what time-bound strategies and targets are in place for increasing the number of female students in non-traditional fields of study, such as engineering, manufacturing and construction.

Violence against women, trafficking and exploitation of prostitution

13. Despite the ongoing initiatives to combat violence against women and the mechanisms put in place, namely the Advisory Committee on Family Violence, concern has been expressed about the persistence and prevalence of domestic violence (see for example the concluding comments of the Committee on the Rights of the Child CRC/C/15/Add.205 (2003) para. 45). Please provide updated statistics and information on the incidence of domestic violence and indicate what concrete steps are being taken to encourage women to make use of the provisions of the Violence in the Family (Prevention and Protection of Victims) Law 2000.

14. The Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography reports that foreign women working as cabaret performers are forced into prostitution (E/CN.4/1999/71, para. 114). Please provide information on the steps that have been taken, if any, to curb this phenomenon, and the outcome of investigations by the Commissioner of Administration regarding the status of entrance and employment of foreign cabaret artists (para. 94).

15. The report notes the vulnerability of the country to trafficking of women due to its geographical location (para. 88). Please provide available data on: trafficking in Cyprus; updated information on the situation and number of foreign women who are victims of trafficking; measures taken by the Government to assist and support these women and to prosecute traffickers; and results of initiatives described in the report to address this problem.

Participation in public and political life

16. Notwithstanding the recent appointments of women to high-level posts, the report notes that in 2001, eighty-five women were candidates in parliamentary elections, but only 6 were elected (para. 97). The report states that reasons for women's low representation in politics include the "invisibility" of women as well as conservative traditional features of Cypriot society (para. 100). Kindly indicate whether, beyond the measures indicated in the report, any special temporary measures in line with article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention are envisaged and whether any measures, including measures to reconcile public and private responsibilities, are being implemented to support the candidacy of women who are running for political and public office. This should include information on what plans are in place to encourage all political parties to introduce the quota system to increase the number of women on their electoral lists (para. 68).

17. Please provide information on women's participation in negotiations and resolution of the Cyprus conflict.

Employment

18. In the light of the significant legal reform undertaken in the areas of work and employment, namely in regard to equal treatment and vocational training, equal pay, social security, maternity protection and parental leave, what is the assessment made of the impact of these provisions on the improvement of women's situation in the labour market?

19. The report notes that, although the unemployment rate in Cyprus is low, women form the majority of the long-term unemployed in Cyprus. The percentage of women in long-term unemployment increased from 55 per cent in 1990 to 63 per cent in 2003 (para. 143). Please indicate the reasons for the increase as well as what plans are in place to address the problem of women's unemployment.

20. The report indicates that even though flexible forms of employment have not developed much, women constitute the majority of part-time workers (para. 141). Please provide updated sex disaggregated data of categories of part-time work and indicate whether there is proportional payment of pensions and social benefits to part-time workers.

21. The Parental Leave and Leave on Grounds of Force Majeure Law, 2002 recognizes the right of both parents to take leave from work to care for a child (para. 161). Please provide information about the practical results of this law and, in particular, whether men are taking advantage of this right and of measures to encourage them to do so.

22. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (E/C.12/1/Add.28, para. 13) notes that domestic workers enjoy little protection against being forced to work unduly long hours. Please indicate what measures the Government has taken to address the position of domestic workers, including measures to ensure that they benefit from existing labour legislation.

Health

23. The report states that there is an urgent need for an evaluation of the situation with regard to abortion, and that this issue will be explored in a forthcoming behavioural study with regard to AIDS, sex and sexually transmitted diseases (para. 171). Please provide details of the terms of reference of this study, and indicate how it will contribute to the full implementation of article 12 of the Convention and general recommendation number 24. Also state what measures have been taken to increase women's and girls' access to reproductive and sexual health services and to family planning in order to avoid unwanted pregnancies and women's recourse to illegal abortion.

Rural women

24. Please provide specific data and information on the position of rural women in Cyprus, including their access to education, health care and employment and participation in public and political life.

25. Please outline whether the national rural development policy contains a gender focus and details of the opportunities provided for women through the Rural Development Plan (para. 185).

Vulnerable women

26. Please provide information and sex-disaggregated data about the situation of immigrant women and women of racial and ethnic minorities and, in particular, what measures are in place to enhance their de facto equality in all sectors, including in employment, health, education and participation in decision-making.

27. Please provide sex-disaggregated data and information on the overall situation of asylum seekers and refugees in Cyprus, including whether gender-related forms of persecution are recognized in determining refugee status.

Family law

28. The report notes that emphasis is being placed on implementation of new legislation in the area of family law (para. 195). Please elaborate on the concrete steps being taken towards implementation of these laws and the results of any analysis undertaken to evaluate their impact.

Optional Protocol

29. Please provide information about steps taken to educate the public about the Optional Protocol, which Cyprus ratified in 2002.
