

For participants only

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COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS  
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IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON  
ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS

List of issues to be taken up in connection with the consideration  
of the initial report of Iceland on articles 1 to 15 of the  
International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights  
(E/1990/5/Add.6)

I. General framework within which the Covenant is implemented

A. Land and people

1. Main characteristics of the country and its population. Socio-economic and cultural indicators: per capita income, inflation and unemployment rates over the last five years, fertility and infant mortality rates and life expectancy, percentage of the population under 15 and over 65 years of age, literacy rate.

B. General political structure

2. Political situation of the country, system of government and structure of the executive, legislative and judicial branches.

C. General legal framework within which human rights are protected

3. Judicial, administrative or other authorities competent in human rights matters.

4. Remedies available in cases of human rights violations and systems of compensation and rehabilitation.

5. Incorporation of the Covenant into internal law.

D. Information and publicity

6. Efforts made to promote awareness of human rights, and particularly those embodied in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, among the public and the competent authorities (how the texts of the various human rights instruments, especially the above-mentioned Covenant, have been disseminated, what agencies are responsible for preparing reports and whether the content of those reports is the subject of public debate).

II. Issues relating to specific rights recognized in the Covenant

7. Implementation of the rights provided for in articles 1 to 15 of the Covenant:

(a) Right of self-determination, as recognized in article 1 of the Covenant;

(b) Measures adopted, difficulties experienced and progress achieved with regard to the guarantee of the exercise of the rights embodied in articles 6 to 15, without discrimination of any kind as to race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status (art. 2 (2));

(c) Extent to which foreigners benefit from the rights contained in articles 6 to 15 of the Covenant;

(d) Measures adopted, difficulties experienced and progress achieved in ensuring, in accordance with article 3 of the Covenant, equality between men and women in the enjoyment of the rights set forth in articles 6 to 15 of the Covenant. In particular, please indicate whether complete equality of rights has been achieved in all branches of Icelandic internal law (civil, family, criminal and labour law). If any discrimination still exists, please state whether its elimination is regarded as a priority;

(e) Please indicate whether restrictions have been imposed on the exercise of the rights proclaimed in articles 6 to 15 and, if so, the reasons for such restrictions and the safeguards against possible abuses, appending copies of relevant laws, regulations and judicial decisions (arts. 4 and 5 of the Covenant).

Article 6. Right to work

8. Effects of the economic crisis on the employment of women and other vulnerable or disadvantaged groups (young people, elderly workers and foreigners).

9. Unemployment trends over the period 1982-1989 (table 3) by sex and age group and updated information on this question. Unemployment benefit coverage.

10. Please specify whether unemployment benefits are withheld from workers not belonging to a trade union (para. 31 of the report).

Article 7. Right to just and favourable conditions of work

11. Machinery for the establishment, monitoring and adjustment of minimum wages.

12. Social security scheme for housework and percentage of the population not protected.

Article 8. Trade-union rights

13. Way in which the Government guarantees the right of trade unions to establish national and international federations.

Article 9. Right to social security

14. Nature and ways of financing the social security scheme or schemes (public, semi-public and private).

15. Reasons for and financial consequences of the abolition of individual contributions referred to in article 57 of the Social Security Act.

16. Please state whether there is some social sector or group that is not protected by the social security system

17. Widowhood benefit schemes.

Article 10. Protection of the family, mothers and children

18. Measures to facilitate the founding of a family, such as subsidies or credits to facilitate access to housing and other benefits.

19. Protection of motherhood:

(a) Prenatal and postnatal medical and health services, and whether all women are entitled to them;

(b) Guarantees against dismissal for a reasonable period before and after childbirth;

(c) Any special measures which may exist in favour of mothers who are self-employed or work in a family business;

(d) Measures to help women whose husband has died or left home to support their children.

20. Protection of children and adolescents:

(a) Measures to prevent trafficking in children and adolescents, and their maltreatment, exploitation and abandonment;

(b) Provisions concerning work by children and adolescents, including minimum age for remunerated or unremunerated employment, regulation of working hours and leisure, prohibition or restriction of night work and penalties imposed for infringements of such provisions;

(c) Measures to prevent children and adolescents from being employed in work which is dangerous or harmful to morality and health, and penalties imposed for infringements of such measures;

(d) Statistical and other data on the number of children and adolescents in various age groups who are actually in employment, as well as the sectors and type of work concerned.

Article 11. Right to an adequate standard of living

21. Present standard of living of the population, in general and by social groups, and its development over the last five years.

22. Per capita GNP of the poorest 40 per cent of the population.

23. General description of the right to sufficient and adequate food. Sources of information that exist on this subject, especially studies on the nutritional situation and other monitoring measures. Situation of the most unprotected and vulnerable groups.

24. Right to adequate housing:

(a) Number of homeless individuals and families;

(b) Number of individuals and families without adequate housing or access to basic services (water, sanitation, electricity, etc.);

(c) Measures adopted to protect tenants;

(d) Number of persons whose housing expenses are beyond their means;

(e) Number of persons classified as irregular housing occupants.

Articles 12 to 15

25. Since the report does not provide any information on the implementation of the rights referred to in articles 12 to 15, please provide, in conformity with the Committee's guidelines, information on measures taken to implement those rights.

26. In addition indicate:

(a) Measures introduced to enable adults and elderly persons to enjoy the benefits of education and, in particular, the options available to them for completing their studies;

(b) Measures adopted to promote the right of adults and elderly persons to participate in the cultural life of the country and to benefit from cultural facilities and scientific progress.

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